

Inspection Report



American School of Dubai

2014-2015



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

www.khda.gov.ae



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School information



General information

Location	Al Barsha
Type of school	Private
Opening year of school	1966
Website	www.asdubai.org
Telephone	04-3950005
Address	P.O. Box 71188
Principal	Dr. Brent Mutsch
Language of instruction	English
Inspection dates	9 th - 12 th March 2015



Students

Gender of students	Boys and Girls
Age range	4-18
Grades or year groups	KG 1-Grade 12
Number of students on roll	1656
Number of children in Pre-K	0
Number of Emirati students	4
Number of students with SEN	109
Largest nationality group of students	US



Teachers / Support staff

Number of teachers	147
Largest nationality group of teachers	United States
Number of teacher assistants	48
Teacher-student ratio	1:11
Number of guidance counsellors	8
Teacher turnover	17%



Curriculum

Educational Permit	US
Main Curriculum / Other	US/ AERO / CCSI
Standardized tests / board exams	AP, SAT, PSAT, MAP
Accreditation	Middle States



Parents' Report

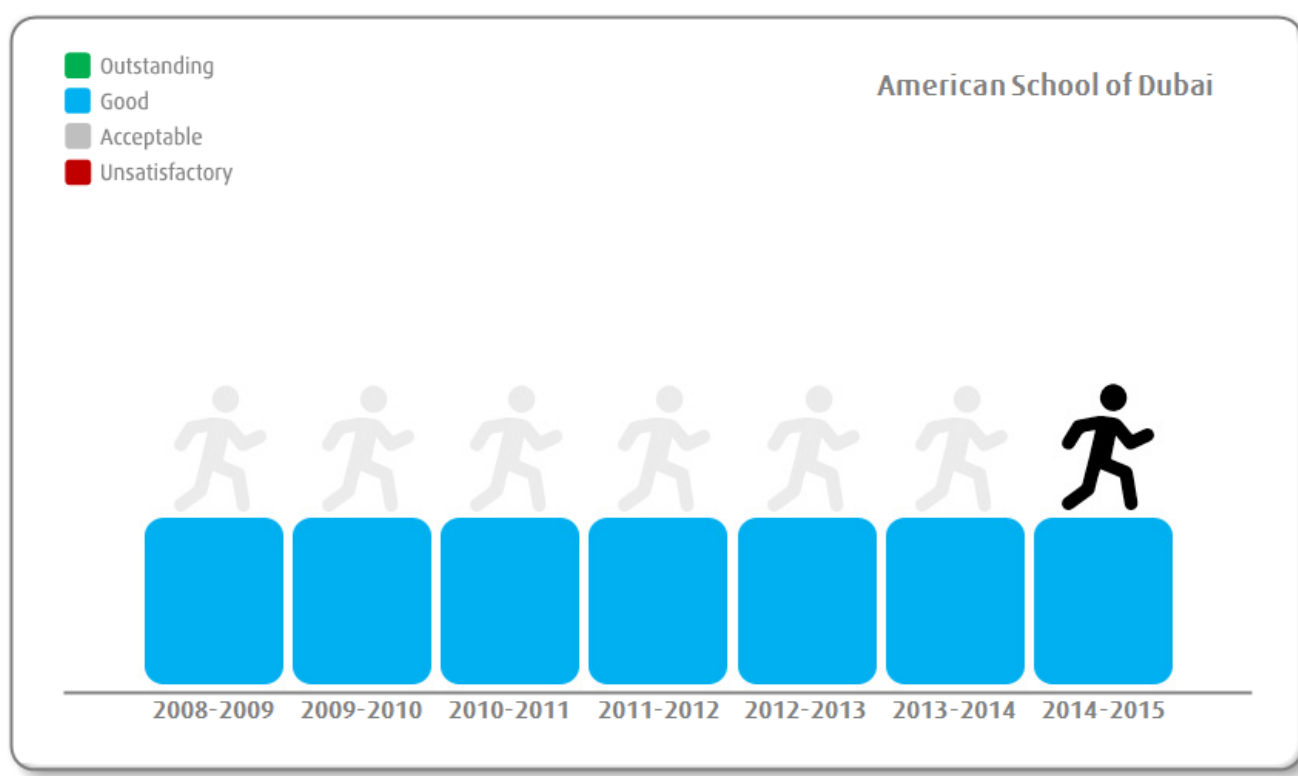




Dear Parents,

American School of Dubai was inspected by DSIB from 9th - 12th March 2015, and the overall quality of education provided by the school was found to be **Good**

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



The inspection 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

- Students' attainment and progress in English in all phases of the school was outstanding; their attainment and progress in mathematics in the elementary, middle and high schools was also outstanding, as was their attainment and progress in science in the high school.
- Students' demonstrated outstanding learning skills in all phases of the school.
- Students' personal, community and environmental responsibilities were outstanding.
- There was outstanding quality of provision for students' health and safety.
- The quality of the school's links with parents and the local community were outstanding.
- The management, including the staffing, facilities and resources at the school were outstanding.

Areas for improvement

- The Board of Trustees should act to ensure that the school provides Islamic Education to more than 500 Muslim students and Arabic instruction that matches the language learning needs of Arab students.
- Improve the quality of teaching in all grades and subjects so that it is consistently good or better.
- Improve teachers' skills in using assessment information to modify the curriculum and their teaching strategies to meet the learning needs of all students.
- Ensure all teachers are involved in the use of external assessments of learning so that teachers, students and their parents know how well the key subjects are being learned as measured against US and international standards.

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 American School of Dubai



How well does the school perform overall?

Overall, the American School of Dubai provided a **'Good'** quality of education for its students.

- Students made outstanding progress learning English in all parts of the school, leading to outstanding attainment of the curriculum expectations. Their attainment and progress in mathematics in the elementary, middle and high schools and in science in the high school was outstanding. The progress of children in the Kindergarten learning mathematics and science was good, leading to good attainment. Students learning Arabic as an additional language made acceptable progress in the elementary grades, but those in the middle and upper grades made unsatisfactory progress. The attainment of Muslim students learning Islamic Education and Arab students learning their first language were both unsatisfactory due to the lack of provision by the school. Students in all parts of the school were developing outstanding learning skills. They were learning to think for themselves, conduct investigations, communicate effectively and become independent learners.
- Students' personal, community and environmental responsibilities were of outstanding quality. Their understanding of Islamic values and their local cultural awareness ranged from good, amongst the younger students, to acceptable amongst the older ones, at age-appropriate levels.
- The quality of teaching was good across all phases of the school. It was strongest in English and mathematics and weakest in Arabic. The assessment of learning was similarly good in all parts of the school. Students in some, but not all, subjects and grades enjoyed the benefits of regular external tests to measure their learning against that of students in the United States and internationally.
- The curriculum quality was consistently good in all phases. The curriculum design to meet the individual needs of students was good in the Kindergarten. However, it was of unsatisfactory quality in the other phases. The learning needs of Muslim students and first language learners of Arabic were not being met.
- The provision for the health and safety of students was of outstanding quality in all phases. The quality of support for students was good in all phases. The quality of provision for students with special educational needs was acceptable.
- The quality of leadership at the school was good.

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



- Students with special educational needs made good progress in relation to their starting points.
- The school did not directly modify the curriculum for students with special educational needs. All students were expected to strive for the high standards set by the school, regardless of their abilities. The school did make a range of accommodations for them and allowed the older students some flexibility in the subjects they chose to study.
- Teachers knew their students well and, together with the specialist staff, provided effective support for them both inside and out of their classrooms.

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

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

↑ 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	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Good	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable
Community and environmental responsibility	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding

3. How good are teaching and assessment?

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

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

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

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

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
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	Good
Self-evaluation and improvement planning	Good
Parents and the community	Outstanding
Governance	Acceptable
Management, staffing, facilities and resources	Outstanding

Overall school judgement

Good

Key strengths


- The key strengths of the school include the students' outstanding attainment and their progress in learning English in all phases of the school; their outstanding attainment and progress in learning mathematics in the elementary, middle and high schools and their outstanding attainment and progress in learning science in the high school.
- Students demonstrated outstanding learning skills in all phases of the school.
- Students' personal, community and environmental responsibility were outstanding.
- There was outstanding quality of provision for students' health and safety.
- The quality of the school's links with parents and the local community was outstanding.
- The management, including the staffing, facilities and resources at the school was outstanding.


Changes since the last inspection

- The rate of children's progress in learning mathematics in the Kindergarten had declined to good.
- The quality of teaching in the Kindergarten had declined to good.
- The assessment of learning had declined to a good quality from outstanding at the last inspection.
- The quality of the curriculum in the Kindergarten and the elementary phase had declined to good.

Recommendations

- The Board of Trustees should act to ensure that the school provides Islamic Education to more than 500 Muslim students and provide Arabic instruction that matches the language learning needs of Arab students.
- Improve the quality of teaching where it is known to have weaknesses, so that it is consistently good or better.
- Improve teachers' skills in using assessment information to modify the curriculum and their teaching strategies to meet the learning needs of all students.
- Expand the use of external assessments of learning so that teachers, students and their parents know how well the key subjects are being learned as measured against US and international standards.

 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	Outstanding	Outstanding
Mathematics	Good ↓	Good ↓
Science	Good	Good

- The children's progress in learning English was outstanding in terms of speaking, listening and reading and good in spelling and writing. This progress led to full attainment of the curriculum expectations. Most children were confident when speaking and listening. They could explain their ideas, speaking clearly and using a growing vocabulary. They usually listened well and responded appropriately. Most children read simple texts accurately and with understanding. They could express opinions about stories they had read or heard. They used more than one strategy, such as phonic and picture cues, when reading unfamiliar words. Most could write simple words and phrases. A few could write in sentences, and sometimes a sequence of sentences, using full stops appropriately. Letters were not always clearly shaped or correctly orientated. Words were not always spelled correctly but were usually phonetically correct.
- In mathematics, most children had good understanding of the concept of number, and could count, order and write numbers to at least 20; a few went well beyond 20. A majority also counted in 2s, 5s and 10s and represented 5s and 10s using their fingers. Most created and continued simple repeating patterns. They sorted objects by sizes, shapes and colours. They had good understanding when comparing the length and height of objects using non-standard measures. Their skills for investigating numbers and handling data were less well developed.
- In science most children knew the difference between living and non-living things. They knew that living things breathe, eat and grow. They could identify sources of heat from a list of known objects. With guidance from their teachers, they carried out an investigation into what plants need to grow. The majority had basic, age-appropriate understanding of a controlled test; they had each grown their own plants from seeds. They had basic knowledge of the life cycles of some sea creatures.

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

- In learning about Islamic Education, students' knowledge and understanding of the key principles and values of Islam were well below the expected levels. The school had made no provision for this subject.
- In learning Arabic as an additional language, students could decode Arabic letters and their listening skills were developing. They could read and comprehend only short, familiar scripts; most students struggled with correct pronunciation. Students did not develop their speaking skills appropriately. Their writing was limited to short, familiar phrases based on familiar vocabulary.
- In learning English, the youngest students could identify key details and read for purpose and understanding. They used a combination of illustrations and writing in simple compositions. By Grade 5, most students demonstrated a good command of English conventions when writing and speaking. Reading was enjoyed both in class for various activities and outside of the classroom for pleasure.
- In mathematics, students demonstrated excellent knowledge, skills and understanding in addition, subtraction, multiplication and division in the early primary grades. In the upper grades, students applied these four basic operations to fractions. Problem solving and abstract thinking skills developed well, as did their understanding of the concepts of perimeter and the areas of different geometric shapes.
- Students in science continued to develop their scientific thinking, understanding and skills. They increased their scientific vocabulary. They worked on practical projects that supported their conceptual development. By second grade they were able to create a habitat for earthworms using a jar and observed and recorded changes over a thirty day period. By third grade, students were studying rocks and minerals and conducting simple investigations. By the end of the elementary grades they could design a food web for a mangrove forest and make predictions about what might happen if the forest became depleted.

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

- In Islamic Education, students' knowledge and understanding of the key principles and values of Islam were well below the expected levels, due to the lack of provision for this subject by the school.
- In Arabic as an additional language, students could listen and respond to their teachers. However, they had difficulties when trying to understand new vocabulary. Their reading skills were weak; they were not able to read confidently for specific information. Their writing was limited to answers to sets of written questions and showed no evidence of creativity or extension.
- In English students could read and comprehend complex literary texts proficiently. They wrote essays that included referenced citations that supported their analysis of the assigned readings. By Grade 8, students were familiar with purpose, audience and tone; they produced clear, coherent writing. They used their sophisticated writing skills in their extended writing, including settings and supporting details along with correct spelling, grammar and punctuation.
- In mathematics students were able to apply the concepts of constants and variables to the solving of linear equations. Their graphing skills extended to plotting linear equations, finding slope, and determining reciprocals. A minority of students were able to factorise and solve second degree equations.
- In science, students were confident at using the scientific method. They frequently used information technology to support their learning, constructing models to demonstrate concepts. Grade 6 students worked in groups to make structures that could withstand the force of seismic waves. Grade 7 students were able to calculate their own carbon footprints. Grade 8 students had a good understanding of atomic structures.

High		
Subjects	Attainment	Progress
Islamic Education	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Arabic as a First Language	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Arabic as an Additional Language	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory
English	Outstanding	Outstanding
Mathematics	Outstanding	Outstanding
Science	Outstanding	Outstanding

- In Islamic Education, students' attainment of the curriculum expectations was unsatisfactory. Students' knowledge and understanding of the key principles and values of Islam were well below the expected levels, due to the lack of provision for this subject by the school.

- In Arabic as an additional language, students could listen and respond to their teachers but they had difficulties understanding new vocabulary. Their reading skills were weak; they were not able to read confidently for specific information. Students' vocabularies were not well developed; they were very basic. Their writing was limited to answers to sets of written questions and showed no evidence of creativity or extension.
- In English, students read extensively across different genres. They could analyze and annotate texts with increasing sophistication. Students' writing skills included research, reflection and revision for a range of tasks, purposes and audiences. Most students' work was done on their personal laptops, enabling them to research and draft new writing simultaneously. Grade 9 students demonstrated good understanding of the concept of rhetoric. They could distinguish between the connotations of words. In Advanced Placement classes, students studied literature for their writing assignments which they completed outside of classes. Most students made excellent progress on very rigorous course work.
- In mathematics, students demonstrated a complete range of mathematical skills from basic algebra to integral calculus. Students demonstrated skills, knowledge and understanding needed to apply geometric theorems and trigonometric functions to solve complex geometric diagrams. They were able to solve trigonometric identities, and use differential and integral calculus to solve problems of area, volume, and related rates. They also used statistics to analyze data, find standard deviations, and used derived information to define trends and make predictions.
- In science, students studied chemistry, biology, physics and environmental science. They designed investigations, conducted scientific research and completed findings using scientific method. Students in biology were able to list and explain the stages of meiosis. Physics students designed their own investigations to demonstrate aspects of velocity; they identified independent and dependent variables. Environmental science students participated in discussions about changes in agricultural production. They considered the impact on human health and the environment. Students generally attained at very high levels and those in Advanced Placement classes did college level work.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Learning skills	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding

- Students in all grades consistently took responsibility for their own learning and were fully engaged in their lessons. They eagerly responded to questions and could explain the reasons why they answered as they did.
- Across the grades, students collaborated with their peers in group and paired work. They were able to do this for sustained periods of time. They contributed to group work by assuming various roles, actively supporting their peers. Their self-awareness helped them to communicate learning effectively and clearly.
- Almost all students were able to apply their learning to the real world and made connections between different areas of learning.
- Especially in the high school, students were well-developed critical thinkers and problem solvers. Regardless of the subject, students were able to apply their knowledge to solve problems and develop solutions.
- The use of information technology by students across the school was commonplace and highly developed. They were able to use it for a variety of instructional activities and made it an integral part of their learning.


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

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Personal responsibility	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students were very respectful and courteous; their relationships with both adults and each other were excellent. Students showed responsible attitudes towards their learning. Students showed excellent levels of self-discipline when working alone or collaboratively. Through curriculum content and guidance from specific teachers, almost all students were aware of and made healthy lifestyle choices. Attendance at school was good overall. 				

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Good	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students in the Kindergarten and the elementary phase demonstrated good understanding of Islamic values. They developed good understanding of the relevance and effects of these values upon life in Dubai. This understanding was less evident in the middle and high phases; students knew little about these values and their relevance to their own lives. Most students understood well the heritage and cultural aspects of life in Dubai. However, students struggled to identify some aspects of life in other Emirates. Students demonstrated a good appreciation of their own cultures and understood the importance of knowing about other world-wide cultures in order to co-exist. 				

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Community and environmental responsibility	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students showed a clear understanding of their responsibilities as members of the local community. This was exemplified by their dedication to preserve the environment and conserve natural resources. Students were generally proactive and critical of issues related to their learning and school life. Their environmental awareness was substantial. They could clearly pin-point the issues relating to pollution and the importance of energy conservation. Younger students found it difficult to elaborate on environmental changes and were not able to articulate ways to solve these problems. 				

3. How good are teaching and assessment?

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Teaching for effective learning	Good 	Good	Good	Good

- Almost all teachers knew their subjects well and understood how to teach them. This helped students develop good understanding of important concepts and skills and how to apply them to new learning. Most teachers had well-developed understanding of how students of different ages learn.
- Almost all teachers planned their lessons well and matched tasks and activities to the grade level curriculum expectations. However, the Kindergarten teachers' planning did not always identify what students needed to learn. As a result, there were insufficient opportunities for the children to develop independently. Information technology was used at sophisticated levels and as a primary resource and this supported students' learning in all grades. Good quality lesson plans provided depth, breadth of challenge and high expectations of most students but for Arabic lessons, teachers' plans were of inconsistent quality.
- Positive teacher and student interactions ensured that students were active participants in achieving meaningful and relevant learning. Teachers interacted well with their students, motivating and inspiring them. The learning environments ensured that lessons were appropriate and significant. In Arabic, teacher and student interactions did not provide enough learning opportunities for students to engage in the use of the language.
- Teachers' strategies were varied to meet the learning needs of most students, however, this was not consistently done in all subjects. In some classes, teachers had good expectations of all groups of students and provided challenging work for them. In the Kindergarten, there was no evidence of teachers recording the children's development during class activities. Some tasks required more varied approaches to ensure that all students' learning needs were met, especially during discussions, when critical thinking and oral responses were required.
- The teaching of Arabic was inconsistent and often unsatisfactory. Teaching strategies in Arabic lessons did not engage students to use and practise the language in new contexts.
- The skills of enquiry, reflection and critical thinking were promoted in almost all classes. These were integrated at a very sophisticated level in the Middle and High Schools. Almost all lessons involved enquiry, providing students with opportunities to explore real-world situations when acquiring new knowledge. For example, a Grade 7 English class integrated historical facts to enhance the new task of writing historical fiction. Teachers used cooperative learning strategies and demonstrated highly effective questioning skills. These deepened students' understanding, interdisciplinary connections and application of their knowledge to new contexts.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Assessment	Good ↓	Good ↓	Good ↓	Good ↓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In most classes across the four phases, internal assessment processes were linked well to the school's curriculum standards to provide valid measures of students' academic development. The school benchmarked students' attainment of the curriculum in mathematics and English against appropriate international standards through external assessments. However, this was not done to ascertain the students' learning of science. In most classes, internal test data was used to track students' progress and teachers knew their students' strengths and weaknesses well. However, some assessment information was not always accurate, detailed or analysed well. For example, some data sets showed different results between the subject departments and the school divisions. In the Kindergarten, there was no aggregate data for mathematics; there was no clear overview of the children's progress over time. In the three other phases, the school used an online tracking system to monitor students' progress regularly against the curriculum. Assessment information was used adequately in planning lessons. However, there was less evidence of the use of assessment data to inform teachers of those students requiring differentiated learning opportunities. The implementation of the "Pursuits" and "Flex" programs provided student support and extension classes as measures to enhance the curriculum. The use of data to inform instruction was not consistent; some but not all teachers did this well. The linking of internal and external assessment data needed further development. Teachers had good knowledge of their students' strengths and weaknesses and provided support, comments and follow-up. Students were involved in assessing their own learning through the use of rubrics and portfolios. For example, Grade 10 students reviewed a recent assessment and evaluated their learning during the class. Student-led conferences involved setting goals, collecting evidence and reflecting on their academic progress. In Arabic, rubrics were not used and teachers were less constructive in helping their students improve. 				

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

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Curriculum quality	Good ↓	Good ↓	Good	Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The curriculum, with the exception of Arabic as an additional language, was broad, balanced and standards-based. The development of both knowledge and skills was a key feature of the curriculum, as was the students' personal and social development. The curriculum focused on developing students who were thinkers, communicators, contributors, active learners, leaders and role models. Curriculum planning and progression allowed students to move from phase to phase in a seamless manner. Graduating seniors were prepared well to attend colleges and universities in the United States, Europe and Canada. The curriculum was enriched in numerous ways and was creative, innovative and interesting for students. The recently introduced 'Pursuits' and 'Flex' programs offered more than a hundred classes for enrichment, extension and support. Cross-curricular links were in place, particularly in the lower grades but were not as regular a feature in the middle and high school. 				

- The curriculum in all phases provided for the development of independent learners who could think critically and demonstrate '21st Century' skills. In the Kindergarten, children were able to demonstrate these skills on occasion, but the curriculum did not provide enough opportunities for them to make choices and become independent.
- The curriculum was reviewed on a regular multi-year cycle, but informal review and revision were impeded by full teaching loads. Consequently, the subject leaders had insufficient time for this type of work.
- Islamic Education for Muslim students and Arabic for first language learners were not offered at the school.

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

- The needs of Muslim students and those with special needs were not fully met. There was no appropriate modification of the curriculum to do so. Muslim students were not able to participate in Islamic Education and Arab students could not take Arabic as a first language; these subjects were not offered. Arabic as an additional language was provided in Grades 1 to 5 and became an elective in Grades 6 to 9, with an inadequate curriculum in these grades.
- The school offered a wide variety of curriculum choices including Advanced Placement classes in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, plus world languages, history, economics, music theory, statistics and visual arts. High school students also benefited from a large number of elective classes which included information technology, the performing arts, geography, business studies, public speaking and international relations. In addition, the school offered high school students the opportunity to enroll in a 'Virtual High School' program.
- The provision for extra-curricular activities was a strong feature of the curriculum's design. Students across the school participated in athletics, the arts and academic enrichment programs. There were athletic teams, clubs, student performances, as well as leadership and service opportunities.
- Curriculum links with the community were numerous and involved students working and volunteering in the community and beyond. The 'Week Without Walls' was a part of the Middle School program and allowed students to develop and act on their empathy and compassion for others.

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

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Health and safety	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding

- The care and welfare of students, including child protection, was outstanding; it had been made a top priority. Policies and procedures had been established that focused on child protection and internet safety.
- The facilities were safe, hygienic, and fully secure. There was a full-time physician and nursing staff, a well-trained security force, closely monitored transportation services, and all staff had supervisory assignments during students' free time. Emergency drills were conducted on a regular basis.
- The school was clean, attractive, and well-maintained. Record keeping was thorough and repairs were scheduled with students' safety as a top priority.

- The premises and facilities offered a wide range of opportunities for students to explore their talents and interests, and all facilities were accessible to persons with physical disabilities.
- Food services provided healthy choices for lunch and the campus was replete with displays encouraging healthy living.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Quality of support	Good	Good	Good	Good

- The relationships between the staff and students were very good. Among students there was a tone of mutual respect and students welcomed and supported new members of the student body.
- Attendance and punctuality was good as a result of effective monitoring. A new student badge system was being implemented to document attendance and further improve security with regard to the picking up and dropping off of students.
- The admissions policy with regard to special needs students needed further development; not all students with special needs were admitted to the school.
- The learning materials for special needs students needed further development. Students were provided with the same learning materials as the rest of their classmates, but did receive additional instructional and testing time.
- There was a full time staff of counselors and a psychologist readily accessible to all students. The well-being of students was closely monitored, and this information was used to provide effective guidance and support to students.

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

- Well qualified leaders wanted the best for their students and worked hard to provide for them. Most students with special needs had appropriate support plans. Their progress was monitored and regularly reviewed. The school did not admit all students regardless of ability. Only students whose needs could be met within the existing curriculum provision and staff expertise were admitted.
- A range of assessment tools and systems were used to identify additional needs. The identification of 'Learning Difficulty 1' students did not match the widely accepted definitions. There were no students identified as having multiple learning needs.
- The school did not directly modify the curriculum in line with the abilities of students with special needs. The expectation was that all students would reach the high standards expected by the school. Classroom teachers had the same expectations for all, regardless of their ability. They knew their students well and provided additional support when needed. High levels of additional specialist support were also provided in proportion to students' needs. The older students had some choice about the subjects they could study.

- Parents of students with additional needs were consulted from the outset. They were involved and included on a regular basis. Effective communication systems facilitated two-way sharing of information. Reports were personalized and provided detailed information about students' progress.
- Students made good or better progress during lessons due to the high levels of support and small class sizes. The school's data also indicated good progress by these students. However, the school's assessment practices were not well-developed and the use of data was an area for development.

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

	Overall
The effectiveness of leadership	Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All senior leaders shared a common, well-articulated vision of what the school's many purposes were. Specifically, they understood the development of students as a complex process requiring collaboration by the entire school community. The senior leaders and almost all other leaders had common aspirations for the various programs. Some subject leaders were less clear on these matters than others. • The distribution of leadership at the school was broad and articulated clearly. There were effective teams in many areas of the school which worked together for the benefit of students. The new literacy and numeracy coaches helped to improve the quality of teaching and learning. Leaders and teachers were mutually supportive in their efforts to provide high quality learning experiences for students. • Relationships amongst the senior leaders were productive. Regular meetings were held to monitor the school's priorities and devise strategies for achieving them. Communication by and amongst all leaders was regular and almost always clearly done. Leaders, teachers, support staff members, parents and students knew what was required of them by the school's demanding program. • The school's leaders almost always demonstrated the capacity to improve the school. New staff in key positions had been hired to address areas of weakness identified by previous inspection teams. There was an evident capacity to find innovative solutions to problems. The middle and high school schedules had been fully revised to improve curriculum options, enrichment and support for students having difficulty in their academic work. • The leaders' recent efforts had resulted in noticeable improvements in the school's overall performance. The support for students with special educational needs had improved. At the same time, leaders had sustained good or outstanding learning outcomes for students in English, mathematics and science from the Kindergarten through to Grade 12. 	

	Overall
Self-evaluation and improvement planning	Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school had established regular processes for self-evaluation. These drew upon assessment information, stakeholders' opinions, external visitors' reports and the formal reviews of performance conducted by the Board of Trustees. There were short, medium and long term action plans in place to focus improvement efforts on the specific steps needed and the criteria for success. Consequently, the leadership team had a largely accurate understanding of how well the school was achieving its stated mission to challenge and inspire each student. 	

- Regular monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance, including those of teaching and students' learning, had taken place. The three school principals had conducted classroom visits to establish the quality of teaching and kept records to help teachers improve. In addition, the instructional coaches helped identify the skills of teachers and students that could improve. Thus, the leaders knew the strengths of students and which skills they needed to improve.
- The improvement planning process had resulted in well-focused goals that had been achieved. There were significant revisions to the schedule, new leaders of information technology and Arabic, a team of teaching and learning coaches, a revised handbook for parents and common curriculum planning processes in all grades. The identification of specific teaching needs had resulted in the hiring of new, more experienced staff members from the United States to enhance the learning experiences of many students.
- Several improvements over time had collectively improved the school across a range of important aspects, but the school had not been successful in meeting the first recommendation in the previous inspection report which was to comply with the requirements for the provision of Islamic Education and Arabic for first-language students. Despite this significant shortcoming, other improvements that had been made were evident and genuine.

	Overall
Parents and the community	Outstanding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parental involvement in the life of the school occurred at very high levels. There was direct parental representation on the Board of Trustees as well as a highly active Parent-Teacher-Student Association. Parents participated in the development of the school's strategic plan and the planning of the new Middle School building. They had sponsored a series of visiting speakers, most recently on the topic of leadership. • Communication by and with the school included daily SMS messages, a newsletter sent by electronic mail, conferences with teachers and telephone conversations when necessary. The parent community enjoyed open access to the school's senior leaders. Parents were frequently greeted in person in the mornings and were welcome visitors in all three school offices at any time. • Reporting by the school was regular and detailed. Recently revised reports were comprehensive and helped students and parents understand academic progress in detail. Reports included achievements across the subjects, personal development and aspects for improvement. • Community links were very strong and engaged students in local, regional and global learning experiences. Students contributed as volunteers by means of a variety of local projects to assist other students and some of the less fortunate people living in Dubai. 	




	Overall
Governance	Acceptable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Board of Trustees involved parents directly and indirectly in its operations. It consulted regularly and widely with all stakeholders, including students and teachers. It had a record of responding quickly and constructively to the concerns of stakeholders on most important issues. • The Trustees ensured accountability for school's actions and outcomes by monitoring the work of the Superintendent and the three school principals regularly. Communication between the Board and the Superintendent was frequent, detailed and directly related to the identified priorities for improvement. The Board brought expertise from different fields of work to enhance the operation of the school in many ways. 	

- The Board's influence on and responsibility for the school's performance were both evident. It had taken direct action to address some key development needs by, for example, releasing funds for the hiring of two new senior leaders and other staff members. The Board ensured that statutory requirements were met, with the exception of the provision of Islamic Education to Muslim students and Arabic lessons to first language learners.

	Overall
Management, staffing, facilities and resources	Outstanding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The management of the daily life of the school was very effective. All sections and programs ran efficiently to the benefit of students. • Almost all the teaching and support staff were highly qualified. There were subject specialists in place, as well as counselling, coaching and medical staff to support students in other ways. • The premises and learning environments were of consistently excellent quality. There were dedicated rooms for learning subjects in the high school, several large playing fields, indoor sports facilities, play grounds, computer labs and a swimming pool for students to enjoy. • The quality and range of resources for effective teaching and learning were considerable. All programs were well resourced to provide high quality teaching and learning experiences to students. 	

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	275	25%
	Last year	290	29%
 Teachers	119		76%
 Students	253		47%

- Only a quarter of the parents responded to the survey. About half the students and most teachers responded.
- Parents, teachers and senior students were very positive in their opinions about the school's provision and outcomes.
- Almost all agreed that progress in learning was good in English, mathematics and science, but that it was less than good in learning Arabic.
- On the other key aspects of outcomes and provision, almost all stakeholders expressed very positive beliefs. The significant exception was the belief amongst a third of senior students that the school's leaders did not listen to, or act upon their opinions. A second exception was the belief by a few students that the school had not managed incidents of bullying effectively.

*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