

Inspection Report



Dubai Modern Education School

2014-2015



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School information



General information

Location	Al Mizhar
Type of school	Private
Opening year of school	1996
Website	www.dmes.ae
Telephone	04-288-5115
Address	Algeria St., Al Mizhar 1, Dubai P.O. Box 61720
Principal	Hind Mohammed Lootah
Language of instruction	English in US section / Arabic in MoE Section
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	2682
Number of children in Pre-K	0
Number of Emirati students	1802
Number of students with SEN	88
Largest nationality group of students	Emirati



Teachers / Support staff

Number of teachers	166
Largest nationality group of teachers	Egypt
Number of teacher assistants	18
Teacher-student ratio	1:25 in KG 1:30 in other phases
Number of guidance counsellors	1
Teacher turnover	19%



Curriculum

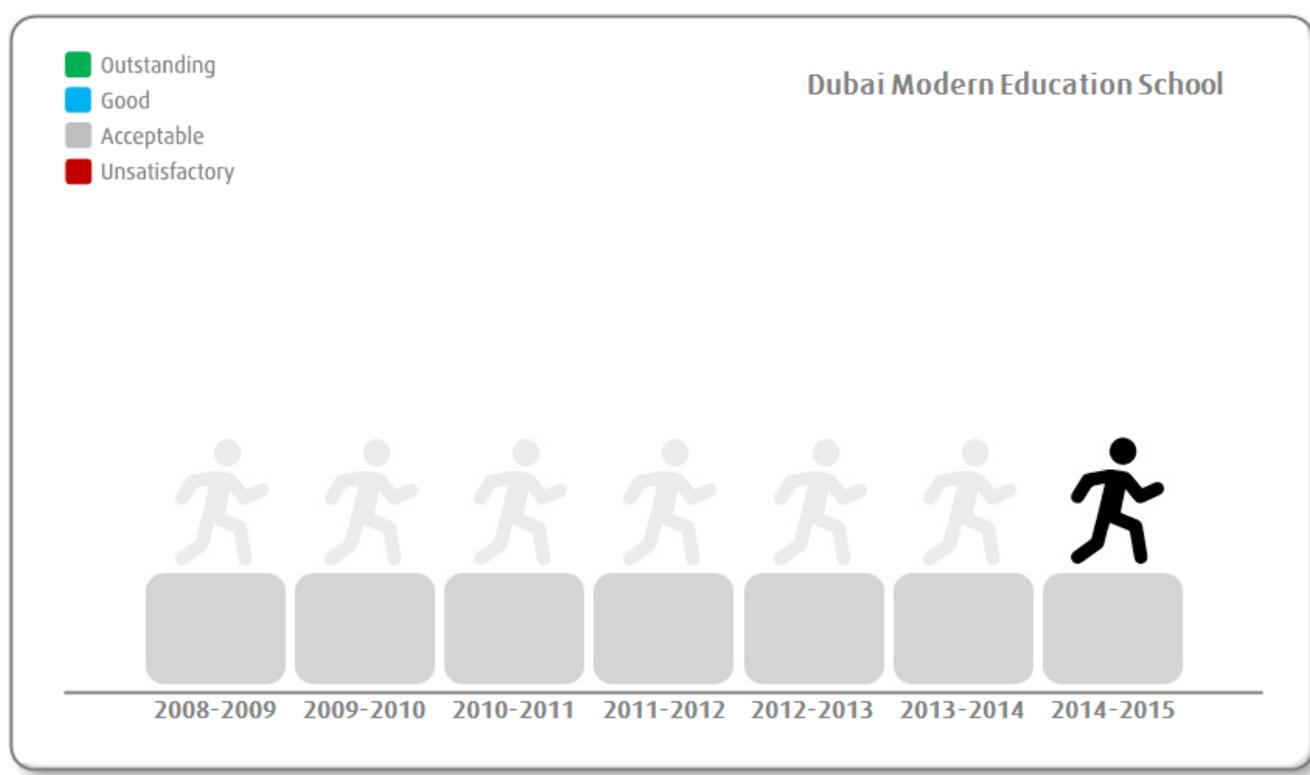
Educational Permit	US/MoE
Main Curriculum / Other	US / MoE
Standardised tests / board exams	MAP, SAT1, PIRLS, CEPA, NAP, IELTS
Accreditation	AdvancED



Dear Parents,

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

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



The inspection 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

- Students in all phases showed a well-developed understanding of Islamic values and their effects upon the UAE's society. Students also had a good appreciation of Emirati culture and heritage.
- The owners, leaders and teaching staff of the school, were committed to the inclusion of all groups of students, regardless of their needs.
- The school engaged parents and communicated well with them and the community, which provided enhanced learning experiences for students, particularly in the higher grades.

Areas for improvement

- Ensure that there are appropriately qualified senior staff to lead on the improvement of teaching, learning, assessment and the curriculum.
- Improve teaching by training leaders and teachers according to their needs, and by regularly reviewing the effects of such training upon school performance.
- Improve the self-evaluation and improvement planning procedures in the school to ensure that all stakeholders have a realistic view of its performance and know how to develop it.
- Use assessment data effectively to modify the curriculum and apply teaching strategies that meet the different needs of all students, including those with special educational needs.
- Promote independent and investigative learning across the school by ensuring that the learning environment is stimulating and appropriate learning resources, space and specialist learning centers, support this development.
- Clarify the roles and responsibilities of senior leaders and the governing board to promote genuine accountability for the school's performance.

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

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

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

Yours sincerely,

Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau
Knowledge and Human Development Authority

A closer look at Dubai Modern Education School



How well does the school perform overall?

Overall, Dubai Modern Education School provided an **Acceptable** quality of education for its students.

- Students' attainment and progress were acceptable in almost all subjects and phases of both the Ministry of Education (MoE) and the United States (US) curriculum sections of the school. However, knowledge, understanding and skills in mathematics and science in the middle phases were undeveloped. Most students had positive attitudes towards learning and were appropriately responsible for whatever tasks they were allocated. They could work together on common activities. However, students did not often engage in critical thinking activities and learning technologies were rarely used in lessons.
- Children in the Kindergarten were eager to learn and behaved well in and outside their classrooms. In the other phases, the behavior of the students was respectful and they demonstrated self-control in most instances. Students understood Emirati traditions well, but less knowledgeable about the world's other cultures. They could explain the effects of Islamic values on modern life and society in the UAE. Suitable 'Service Learning' programs helped students to become involved in the local community and aware of the environment.
- Most teachers knew their subjects well. They planned lessons using time and materials suitably to enhance student learning. Teachers generally knew the different needs of their students and designed lessons to meet their needs acceptably well. The school's assessment of learning was of an acceptable quality in all phases. Assessment data was collected, but was not sufficiently analyzed or used to enhance students' academic outcomes.
- The school offered an appropriately developed curriculum in the US section, delivering the Common Core State Standards in English and mathematics and those of California in other subjects. Curriculum design was acceptable across all phases of the school and there were improvements since the last inspection. In the MoE section, the curriculum was reasonably broad and balanced and met all regulatory requirements.
- Good arrangements were in place to ensure the health and safety of students through regular maintenance of the premises and well-kept medical records. Child protection procedures were inconsistently understood across the school. Students were provided with good support for their personal development. Support for students' learning was less effective for those with special educational needs.
- The school's leaders were committed to improvement. They had developed some aspects of the school. However, important areas such as teaching, students' learning skills and the curriculum had not improved sufficiently. Instructional leadership was ineffective. There were weaknesses in the schools systems of self-evaluation and improvement planning; the school's judgements did not accurately reflect the performance of the school. Although the school had succeeded in developing the links with parents and the community, its leaders and governors needed to provide better staffing, facilities and learning resources.

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



- Students with special educational needs made good progress in their personal and social development because staff members took good account of their individual needs and provided them with the support they needed to gain confidence. However, they made acceptable progress in their academic learning in most key subjects.
- The teaching strategies used to meet the needs of special educational needs students were variable in quality and effectiveness. For example, students with physical disabilities made consistently good progress in physical education lessons as a result of the effective modification of tasks and resources. Modifications and lesson planning in other subjects was not as successful in achieving the same level of success.
- When students were withdrawn to work with the special educational needs staff, they were provided with good support for their learning. Although most staff members were committed to supporting all students in their lessons, they did not always provide the personalised support which special educational needs students required to complete the tasks they had been given.

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

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

↑ Improved from last inspection

↓ Declined from last inspection

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

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

3. How good are teaching and assessment?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Overall school judgement

Acceptable

Key strengths

- Students in all phases showed well-developed understanding of Islamic values and their effects upon the UAE's society, and had good appreciation of Emirati culture and heritage.
- The owners, leaders of the school and the teaching staff showed a strong commitment to the school's inclusive ethos.
- The school engaged parents and established good communication with them and the community, which provided enhanced learning experiences for students, particularly in the higher grades.

Changes since the last inspection

- The students' attainment and progress in Arabic as an additional language had dropped to acceptable in the middle phase whereas, their progress in the elementary phases had improved to good.
- In the Middle School, student attainment in mathematics had declined to unsatisfactory; science, attainment and progress were also now unsatisfactory.
- Personal responsibility in the Kindergarten had improved to good.
- The assessment of learning in the Elementary, Middle and High School phases had changed acceptable.
- Curriculum design had improved from unsatisfactory to an acceptable quality across all phases of the school.
- The school's self-evaluation and improvement planning was now unsatisfactory, while parental and community links had improved to good.

Recommendations

- Ensure the immediate recruitment of leadership staff in key positions to provide more effective instructional leadership.
- Improve the quality of teaching by providing professional development programs to leaders and teachers based on their different individual needs, and by regularly observing them.
- Improve the self-evaluation and improvement planning procedures to ensure that all stakeholders have a realistic view of the school's performance and know how to develop it through: implementing more rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning; analyzing the students' internal and external assessment data more accurately; setting specific, measurable, and time-framed development objectives with practical actions and relevant success criteria.
- Use assessment data effectively to modify the curriculum and apply teaching strategies that meet the different needs of all students, including those with special educational needs.
- Promote independent and investigative learning across all phases and subjects by ensuring that, the learning environment is stimulating and appropriate learning resources, space and specialist learning centers, support this development.
- Clarify the roles and responsibilities of senior leaders and the governing board to promote genuine accountability for the school's performance.

 Improved from last inspection

 Declined from last inspection

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

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

- Children in the Kindergarten made acceptable progress in English as their second language. They were able to identify most of the letters of the English alphabet and pronounce the corresponding sounds. Older children were able to recognize a broad selection of high frequency words and blend some sounds to read short three and four letter words. In communication, the children listened attentively and followed instructions in class and during group activities. They understood the meanings of books and talked about features such as, the title and characters. They were also able to sequence a story. In role playing the children developed their language skills further with a few creating scenarios related to a theme.
- In mathematics, most children demonstrated an acceptable understanding of mathematical operations and skills that were in line with the curriculum expectations. They were able to rote count to 20, identify two-dimensional shapes and use one-to-one correspondence to solve addition problems. A few children were able to apply their understanding of mathematical concepts skillfully to other contexts.
- In science, most children had developed secure, age-appropriate knowledge and understanding of their world. Despite limited opportunities for investigation and exploration, they were able to describe why and how changes happened in the natural world. For example, they were able to explain that a plant needed soil, sun and water to grow.

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

- In Islamic Education, most students' recitation skills were in line with curriculum expectations. Students had clear understanding of the five pillars of Islam and the Islamic values. Their progress in learning Islamic etiquettes and morals was acceptable. However, their recitation skills were progressing at a slower pace.

- In Arabic as a first language, most students' listening skills were stronger than other language skills. Students in the MoE section, were developing their grammatical knowledge to an appropriate level. By Grade 5, students were able to find singular and plural forms of familiar words. In the US section most students were developing their reading skills to an appropriate level. Extended writing skills in both sections however, were underdeveloped. Progress with standard Arabic speaking skills and reading comprehension was less rapid for most students.
- In Arabic as an additional language, most students achieved the expected attainment levels. In Grade 1, most students could read words and short sentences and their speaking skills were developing appropriately. By Grade 5, most students were improving their all language skills, although speaking skills were stronger. Overall, the majority of students made better than expected progress across all four language skills in this phase.
- In English, most students' reading and writing skills were in line with expectations and progressing at acceptable rates. In the lower classes of the MoE section, boys and girls were able to name words, write them, and illustrate them. In both sections, students did not always use English while speaking. In the US section, students were able to use their journals for recording their ideas; however, their writing skills were underdeveloped. Progress across the two sections of the school was just acceptable.
- In mathematics, most students had basic calculation skills and exhibited appropriate understanding of addition, subtraction and place values. They were developing their skills of multiplication, division and of operations with fractions. Their enquiry and critical thinking skills however, were not well developed.
- In science, most students showed an age-appropriate understanding of scientific concepts, such as magnets, the objects they attract and how light travels. They made expected progress through proper use of hands-on activities. Nevertheless, their progress was sometimes hindered by the excessive focus of learning activities which focused on collecting facts and information, rather than developing the understanding of target concepts.

Middle

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

- In Islamic Education, most students had adequate knowledge and understanding of Seerah, Hadeeth and Islamic concepts. Most students developed their knowledge of the Prophet's life appropriately and showed steady progress in understanding the Hadeeth and Fiqh. Student progress with the skills of recitation was slower than that of other aspects.
- In Arabic as a first language, most students' listening and speaking skills were in line with expectations. They could sustain genuine conversations using a reasonable range of words. They could read the familiar texts well, but were challenged when dealing with unfamiliar topics. Students' writing skills were weak. Most students developed their listening, speaking and reading skills at a faster pace than the skills of writing.

- In Arabic as an additional language, most students' listening and vocabulary acquisition skills were adequate. However, students were not confident in using their vocabulary in unfamiliar contexts. Most students could read simple texts but could not always understand their meaning. Their progress in writing was less rapid.
- In English, in both sections of the school, most students were able to use acquired new vocabulary from class readers in the different skills and tasks. Progress for those students new to the school was still underdeveloped. Most students were able to share their thoughts during presentations with reasonable accuracy and fluency. By Grade 8, most students analyzed literature acceptably well. Girls were generally progressing at a faster rate than that of the boys.
- In mathematics, a significant minority of students showed underdeveloped skills in algebraic thinking and geometry. Only a majority could compute, as expected, the area of a plane and three-dimensional figures. Most were making acceptable progress in computing problems of volume and converting metric units of capacity. Students' enquiry and critical thinking skills in both sections were less well developed.
- In science, only a majority of students demonstrated age-appropriate attainment and progress. Although students were able to complete some specific tasks, such as preparing and separating mixtures, they did not understand the underlying concepts and could not relate new topics to their prior learning. Students' progress was hindered by the low expectations teachers set for them and by the ineffective teaching strategies they applied.

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

- In Islamic Education, most senior students had age-appropriate knowledge of Fiqh and Shariaa. Their understanding of Hadeeth and the miracle of the Qur'an was in line with expectations. Students' developed their knowledge of Islamic concepts to an acceptable level. However, their recitation skills were weak and underdeveloped.
- In Arabic as a first language, most students developed their grammatical knowledge appropriately, particularly in the MoE section. Only a minority of students could use them functionally for extended writing, which was generally weak overall. Most students developed their reading skills to an acceptable level, particularly in the US section. However, reading comprehension and use of standard Arabic speaking skills were weak. By Grade 12, students knew about 'cultural stories' but were unable to analyze their elements in depth. Despite recent improvements, student progress with creative writing was still slow. Overall, girls made slightly better progress than boys.
- In Arabic as an additional language, most students acquired new vocabulary adequately. They could read simple texts but could not always understand their meaning. By Grade 9, most students could name different professions and say a few words about their characteristics. They could also give short introductions about themselves, including their hobbies and future professions. Their progress in developing their writing skills was acceptable.

- In English, the listening and speaking skills of most students were acceptable. Most students were able to express with reasonable accuracy and confidence their opinions of class readings. They were also able to identify plot structures and the themes of stories. Their knowledge and understanding of English grammar was in line with expectations; however, extended writing skills of most students were the least well developed.
- In mathematics, most students had acceptable algebraic knowledge and skills. They showed the expected progress in learning how to calculate the probability of events. More able students were progressing to an acceptable level with their understanding and application of advanced algebra and calculus.
- In science, through investigations and hands-on activities, students understood the basic concepts such as, Boyle's law and genetic translation. They developed their practical and laboratory skills, but progress was often hindered by limited challenge in lessons and hindered by excessive teacher talk and untimely interventions.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Learning skills	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most students had positive, responsible attitudes toward learning. Overall, girls were generally more engaged in learning than boys. In the weaker lessons, students listened and followed directions but did not initiate learning. • Collaboration was an integral part of many lessons in which students worked together on their learning activities. In the better lessons, students worked productively on common tasks in groups of four. • Students made many connections to the real world in Islamic Education and Arabic classes, something which was less well developed in other subjects. • Students did not often find things out for themselves. The development of their thinking skills was evident in only a few lessons. Student use of learning technology was limited across the school. 				

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

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Personal responsibility	Good 	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most students displayed positive attitudes toward school and their work. They behaved well in the classroom and were receptive to feedback on how to improve. • Behavior was respectful overall and interactions between students, their teachers and each other were courteous. However, the behaviour of boys, particularly in the US section, was not always to an expected level. • Positive relationships among teachers and students contributed to the effectiveness of the lessons and the daily life of the school. Students reported that bullying was not an issue, and that they felt safe at school. • Most students made good choices with regard to healthy living and eating. They participated regularly in health and physical education classes and linked these activities to their overall health and personal well-being. • Attendance was acceptable. Punctuality of some students was more variable especially concerning morning arrival at school. 				

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Good	Good	Good	Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The majority of students had a good understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures. Students explained well the effects of Islamic values upon modern life and society in Dubai and the UAE. Children in the Kindergarten and students in the Elementary phase were able to explain in detail about the main aspects of the life of a Muslims. In the upper grades, students understood well the Emirati culture and its influence upon the multicultural life and residents in Dubai. Students appreciated the richness of their own cultures and took pride in them. Their understanding of other cultures around the world was still developing. 				

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Community and environmental responsibility	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students were developing their community responsibilities through the 'service learning' program, which provided suitable opportunities for community involvement, such as paying visits to Senior Citizen Homes. Student discussion and surveys had prompted some changes within the school, for example, having a shorter day on Thursdays. Most students enjoyed carrying out assigned projects but many lacked the inventiveness to initiate them. Students could be creative but rarely displayed leadership skills. Girls showed greater aptitude than boys. Children in the Kindergarten were also enthusiastic and responsive learners who often displayed a good sense of work ethic even at such an early age. Most students were aware of important environmental issues. Some students participated in cleaning the seashore and made recycling bins for a neighboring school. However, awareness of the conservation of resources was not evident in the school. 				

3. How good are teaching and assessment?

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Teaching for effective learning	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most teachers knew their subjects well and could teach them to an acceptable level. Nonetheless, pedagogical understanding and application varied significantly across the school. The majority of teachers planned their lessons appropriately and used time and resources acceptably well. A minority of teachers planned and implemented well-designed lessons with a good variety of activities. In some lessons, lack of structure and planning meant that students did not attain measurable lesson objectives or make the progress they were capable of achieving. Teacher and student interactions, including the use of dialogue and questions, were overall acceptable. In the better lessons teachers asked questions aimed at developing high levels of student engagement; however, this was not common practice. Far too often, teachers dominated the learning which prevented student activity, resulting in a lack of meaningful and relevant learning 				

- Teachers typically recognized the needs of different students, but lessons were inconsistently planned to ensure good progress by all students.
- At times, teachers provided some opportunities for the development of critical thinking and enquiry skills, but these were not common features of many lessons. As a result students were not often encouraged to reflect upon their learning.
- The quality of teaching in Arabic as first language was inconsistent across both sections of the school. Although most teachers had secure subject knowledge, their knowledge of how students acquire language was limited. Objectives in lesson planning focused too often on grammar in the MoE section and on reading in the US section. Questioning by teachers were often closed and did not lead to the development of language or the promotion of critical thinking.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Assessment	Acceptable	Acceptable ↑	Acceptable ↑	Acceptable ↑

- Internal assessments were adequately linked to the curriculum expectations, but the evaluation criteria and weighting sometimes produced some grade inflation.
- There was insufficient alignment between internal and external assessment data in some phases and across some subjects. Comparison of school outcomes, with national and international benchmarks through the NAP and MAP examinations, occurred. However, this analysis was not used to foster improvements in teaching and with the support of learning.
- The school analyzed assessment data at a basic level which related to individual students, as well as to groups of students.
- The analysis of assessment data, however, did not as yet, have a strong influence upon curriculum modifications, teaching practices, nor the progress that students made in lessons.
- Teachers' knowledge of their students' strengths and weaknesses was only acceptable. Across all phases teachers did not know their students sufficiently well to provide appropriate learning challenges on a consistent basis for them. The written feedback given to students was limited, and did not always give them enough guidance on how to improve their work.

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

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Curriculum quality	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

- The curriculum had an acceptable rationale, breadth and balance in both sections of the school. Although it followed the requirements of the school's stated curriculum, it promoted the acquisition of knowledge by students, rather than their understanding and skill development. The MoE curriculum was fully compliant with the MoE statutory requirements, using the appropriate textbooks and workbooks. The US curriculum was based on the Common Core State Standards and the Californian standards and delivered through the use of textbooks from the US.
- Both curricula were planned for continuity and progression. Although recent training had targeted developing teachers' skills in curriculum planning and modification the output was still at a basic level, with a lack of understanding about how well to meet the various learning needs of students. In both sections of the school, the curriculum was heavily decided by the scope and sequence of textbooks used.

- Enrichment opportunities were offered through planned events, student activities and other community service projects. The best example of curriculum enrichment was the 'Service Learning Program', which linked students from Grades 9 through to 12 with community organizations such as the Latifa Hospital. Nevertheless, the curriculum did not promote independent learning in the lower grades. In some subjects, particularly science, there were opportunities for student projects and presentations.
- There were links across subject areas, for example, in the higher grades the creative engineering project linked science, mathematics, geography, and technology. These links were less well developed in other phases. Cross-curricular links were stronger in Arabic and Islamic Education lessons. Opportunities for the development of independent learning and critical thinking skills were inconsistently available; these were more frequent in the girls' than in the boys' lessons.
- Subject departments reviewed their curricula on a regular basis, mainly by the new curriculum committee. The reviews resulted in ineffective modifications of the curriculum and a lack of improvement in students' learning outcomes.
- In Arabic as a first language, the scope and sequence in the curriculum was not clearly defined. Planning for progression was broadly acceptable. It was built on previous curriculum content. However, students were not always well prepared for the next stages of their education. The curriculum was not regularly reviewed in the MoE section.

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

- The curriculum design had improved since the last inspection, and was now planned appropriately to meet the learning needs of most students. The US and the MoE sections of the school made some adjustments to meet the different needs of most groups of students. The school's leaders recognized the wide range of their students' needs, particularly those with special learning needs and also including the gifted and talented.
- There was relatively limited choice of subjects that students could study, and there was an acceptable number of elective courses in the High School. The MoE section students had more choices than those students in the US section, as they were able to choose the business, science, or literary streams in the upper grades. In the US section, the High School offered curricular choices in business, science and arts. Other subject choices in all grades included art, computer technology and physical education.
- The curriculum design included strong community links. It provided some opportunities for students to choose subjects that followed their interests in the higher grades. This was an area for further development in the lower grades. The Kindergarten had activities which helped children make personal connections, and the 'Service Learning Program' in Grades 9 through to 12 gave students the experience of engagement and real application of their learning within the Dubai community.
- The school offered five 60-minute sessions per week for all of the 380 Arab children in Early Years; classes were provided for Arabs and non-Arabs and the programme provided targeted letters and basic vocabulary at the development of Arabic at first language level.

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

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Health and safety	Good	Good	Good	Good

- Specific training and literature had raised staff and students' awareness of potential child abuse, despite child protection procedures and staff responsibilities being unclear overall. The procedures to protect students from the potential dangers of the internet were detailed and integrated into lessons.
- Health and safety procedures and processes were consistently monitored, evaluated and reviewed. As a result, the school had a comprehensive set of guidelines in place, for example, to ensure the maintenance of equipment. Fire evacuation plans were visible around the school and staff had been trained in the use of fire equipment; regular drills were held and recorded.
- The school complied with the mandatory health care regulations of Dubai. Records were systematic and securely kept. Good supervision and procedures for tracking buses and for checking the maintenance of vehicles ensured effective levels of student safety.
- The school was mostly clean and well maintained. Ramps were in place for access by the disabled, although some ramps had a gradient that was too steep for wheelchair use.
- Students were given sound advice about healthy living. All students were provided with good opportunities to take regular exercise. Habits such as a healthy diet and personal hygiene were promoted regularly in the girls' section.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Quality of support	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

- Relationships between the staff and students were primarily positive. In most lessons, students' behaviour was managed well; however, boys indicated that their learning was occasionally disrupted, in a minority of subjects, due to the weak classroom management of their teachers.
- The school had adequate systems to monitor students' attendance and punctuality. Parents were contacted on the first days of absences and late arrivals were recorded. The school's procedures had not been effective in ensuring that all students arrived on time at the start of the school day or in bringing about improved levels of attendance.
- The school was fully inclusive and admitted students regardless of their physical or intellectual ability. Good systems had been introduced to identify students with special educational needs.
- One-to-one support, particularly for the speech and language development of children in the Kindergarten, was good. Support during lessons in other grades, was varied in quality and effectiveness. The personal support provided to students with special educational needs was of a good quality and enabled them to make better progress in becoming confident members of the school community.
- A new system of career guidance had been implemented to improve its effectiveness. Students confirmed that members of the staff were available to listen to their concerns. Girls were more confident than boys that their concerns would be taken seriously and acted upon.

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"> In this fully inclusive school, senior leaders and governors, together with the newly appointed special educational needs supervisors, demonstrated strong commitment to students with special educational needs. The policies and procedures provided teachers with clear expectations regarding curriculum modification and support for learning. The supervisors regularly monitored the relevant documents and reviewed the progress of their students. The expertise of the special educational needs supervisors was used well to ensure the early identification of students' needs. However, staff members lacked the appropriate expertise to ensure that specific identification of and/or support for students with complex learning difficulties were provided. Planning for individual support was good. It ensured that the resources and tasks given to students were modified to meet their needs. Curriculum modification and support for students in regular lessons were varied in quality and effectiveness. These were most effective in the Kindergarten and for those with physical disabilities. Curriculum modification and support for the older students, did not take sufficient account of the gaps between the attainment of special educational needs students and their peers. This provision led to acceptable academic progress but stronger personal progress. Almost all parents expressed deep levels of appreciation for the quality of support that they and their children experienced in the school. The school respected the opinions of parents and included them in setting goals and reviewing progress. Students with special educational needs made acceptable progress in their academic learning. Most students made good progress in their personal and social development. Physically disabled students made good progress against their individual starting points. However, their academic progress in Islamic Education remained unsatisfactory. 	

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

	Overall
The effectiveness of leadership	Acceptable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school had renewed both the vision and mission, and its leaders had ensured that stakeholders had better knowledge and understanding of these. Leaders showed commitment and dedication and provided a general direction for developing the school's provision and outcomes. Nonetheless, their instructional leadership skills were still developing, particularly in the US section. Leaders at all levels had clearly defined roles and responsibilities. They had positive attitudes toward change and development. Yet, the school lacked staff members in key positions with expertise for leading improvements in teaching, learning, the development of the curriculum and assessment. This was predominantly evident in the US section of the school. Relationships between the various leaders of the school were professional. The Principal and her senior management team firmly believed in giving autonomy to middle leaders; however, they did not sufficiently ensure accountability for their students' results. The effective interpersonal skills of the senior management team helped to build open communication between all levels of leader, teacher and student. 	

- Leaders in different positions showed varied capacities to improve the school by applying effective measures. They were mostly positive, never complacent, and worked towards school improvement. Most leaders displayed a responsive approach toward external evaluations, which in turn, helped to support school development even further.
- The leadership team had not met complete success in improving the school's key indicators of performance. A few areas had improved, but the quality of teaching was still inconsistent across the subjects and grades. Curriculum development was only just beginning and systems to assess learning had yet to inform decisions about modifications to the curriculum and teaching strategies within the classroom.

	Overall
Self-evaluation and improvement planning	Unsatisfactory 
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Although the school gathered data and collected evidence from various sources, these were not analyzed accurately and effectively to reflect the performance of the school. This resulted in an overly optimistic self-evaluation. Although senior leaders were aware of the school's major challenges and had set clear priorities, some of the strengths and weaknesses had not been correctly identified. • Owners of the school evaluated the performance of senior leaders; however, appraisals were not systematic and lacked a clear set criteria. Senior and middle leaders had monitored the quality of teaching and learning through lesson observations. Although the school provided teacher training courses based upon the previous inspection recommendations, the effects had been limited. These in-service programs did not yet meet the developmental needs of teachers and leaders. • External support had enabled the school to produce various development plans. However, these plans did not contain clear achievable objectives, practical procedures or measurable success criteria. The effects of these plans upon provision and students' outcomes were not evident. • The school made little progress in meeting the recommendations from the previous inspection report. The school's vision and mission were revised and new action plans were produced; however, these had limited effects. Although the school had recently introduced internationally recognized external assessments, subject leaders were unable to validate their internal test data against international standards. 	

	Overall
Parents and the community	Good 
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school informed parents on a regular basis about their children's progress and personal development. Parents were aware of the school's priorities and policies and played effective roles in the education of their children. • The school established reliable means of communication with parents through text messages and an online system called Paradigm. Parents were informed of important events and their concerns were quickly and appropriately addressed. • Reports were sent to parents on a regular basis, and these gave them a clear explanation of their children's academic results. The reports, however, did not provide parents with sufficient information on how their children could improve their learning. • The school established productive links with the local community, particularly in the higher grades, through a program called, 'Service Learning'. This program allowed students to make positive contributions to others through proactive community service. 	

	Overall
Governance	Acceptable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school had two main boards, the Board of Trustees and the School Board. These had good representation levels, comprising community members with varied expertise and backgrounds, in addition to those of other stakeholders. The school sought parents' and other stakeholders' views by administering surveys and consulting with the Parents' Council. Although the school had a clear description of the roles and responsibilities of these two boards, in practice, the roles often overlapped, thereby, reducing its overall effectiveness. The Principal considered the two boards supportive of her in almost all aspects of her work. She and her leadership team provided both boards with reports about the school's performance and including student outcomes. Developmental needs were discussed and decisions made mainly at School Board, level with final endorsements from the owners, particularly with issues related to expansion, facilities, recruitment and budgeting. However, the indistinct roles of the School Board and the senior managers limited the capacity of the Board to hold leaders firmly to account for the school's actions and outcomes. Despite plans for developing the premises and funds had been allocated by the School Board as well as funds to support the professional development for teachers, these had yet to result in the overall improvement of the school. However, it had provided appropriate support for the school to meet the statutory requirements for both the Ministry of Education and US sections of the school. 	

	Overall
Management, staffing, facilities and resources	Acceptable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school had a wide range of procedures and efficient systems to ensure the effective daily operation of the school. Administrative staff members were well briefed and carried out their roles diligently. Teaching staff were suitably qualified in their subject expertise but less than half of the staff held a relevant teaching qualification. The inconsistent levels of English language proficiency by the staff, often led to misconceptions in class that slowed students' progress. A lack of expert staffing, particularly to fill senior positions, had a negative effect upon the rate of school improvement. Staff training was regularly provided to enhance the various skills of teacher but it had not resulted in good teaching throughout the school. The school premises were well maintained. Access was sufficient for all staff members and students, irrespective of their levels of mobility. Some classrooms rooms, particularly for boys in the US section of the school, were too small and not conducive to active learning. The learning resources provided were of sufficient quality. Some improvement was evident; for example, those created for supporting students with special educational needs. In mathematics, there were insufficient practical resources to help students deepen their understanding of mathematical concepts. 	

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	110	7%
	Last year	184	15%
 Teachers	184		88%
 Students	509		69%

- Fewer than ten per cent of parents responded to their survey, but most teachers and about two-thirds of senior students did.
- Almost all survey parents were satisfied with the quality of education available at the school.
- Most parents believed that their children were making good progress in all key subjects and that they enjoyed learning and had acquired good learning skills.
- A large majority of parents expressed satisfaction with the leadership of the school. They were pleased with the quality of teaching and resources available to their children.
- Although parents were mostly positive about all other aspects of the school, a minority of them believed that the school did not provide their children with a wide range of subjects and activities.
- The majority of students believed that their teachers were qualified and that the learning opportunities met their needs; however, a significant minority of them thought that their teachers were not skilled nor sufficiently qualified.
- Students indicated that they made good progress in all subjects and were prepared for life after graduation.
- About a third of students believed that their counterparts did not behave well, and one fifth of them believed that the school did not manage incidents of bullying well.
- Only a majority of students were happy with the range of subjects and activities provided by the school.
- Teachers expressed satisfaction with their roles in the school and their ability to provide good education for their students.

*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