



National Agenda



Early Years



Special Educational Needs



Innovation

Inspection Report 2015-2016

GEMS Our Own English High School

Curriculum: CBSE

Overall rating: Very good

[Read more about the school](#)



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“Great achievements remind us to be humble, but we should always be determined to do more”



Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum

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School information

<p>General information</p> 	<p>Location</p> <p>Type of school</p> <p>Opening year of school</p> <p>Website</p> <p>Telephone</p> <p>Address</p> <p>Principal</p> <p>Language of instruction</p> <p>Inspection dates</p>	<p>Al Warqa</p> <p>Private</p> <p>1968</p> <p>www.gemsoo-dubai.com</p> <p>04-2361335</p> <p>PO Box 3004, Al Warqa 3, Dubai.</p> <p>Mr. Thomas Mathew Koickal</p> <p>English</p> <p>19 to 22 October 2015</p>
<p>Students</p> 	<p>Gender of students</p> <p>Age range</p> <p>Grades or year groups</p> <p>Number of students on roll</p> <p>Number of children in pre-kindergarten</p> <p>Number of Emirati students</p> <p>Number of students with SEND</p> <p>Largest nationality group of students</p>	<p>Boys and girls</p> <p>4-18</p> <p>Kindergarten 1 to Grade 12</p> <p>10,142</p> <p>0</p> <p>0</p> <p>54</p> <p>Indian</p>
<p>Teachers / Support staff</p> 	<p>Number of teachers</p> <p>Largest nationality group of teachers</p> <p>Number of teaching assistants</p> <p>Teacher-student ratio</p> <p>Number of guidance counsellors</p> <p>Teacher turnover</p>	<p>449</p> <p>Indian</p> <p>36</p> <p>1:21</p> <p>2</p> <p>17%</p>
<p>Curriculum</p> 	<p>Educational permit / Licence</p> <p>Main curriculum</p> <p>External tests and examinations</p> <p>Accreditation</p> <p>National Agenda benchmark tests</p>	<p>Indian</p> <p>CBSE</p> <p>CBSE; IBT; CAT4; CEM; PIPS (BASE)</p> <p>CBSE</p> <p>IBT</p>

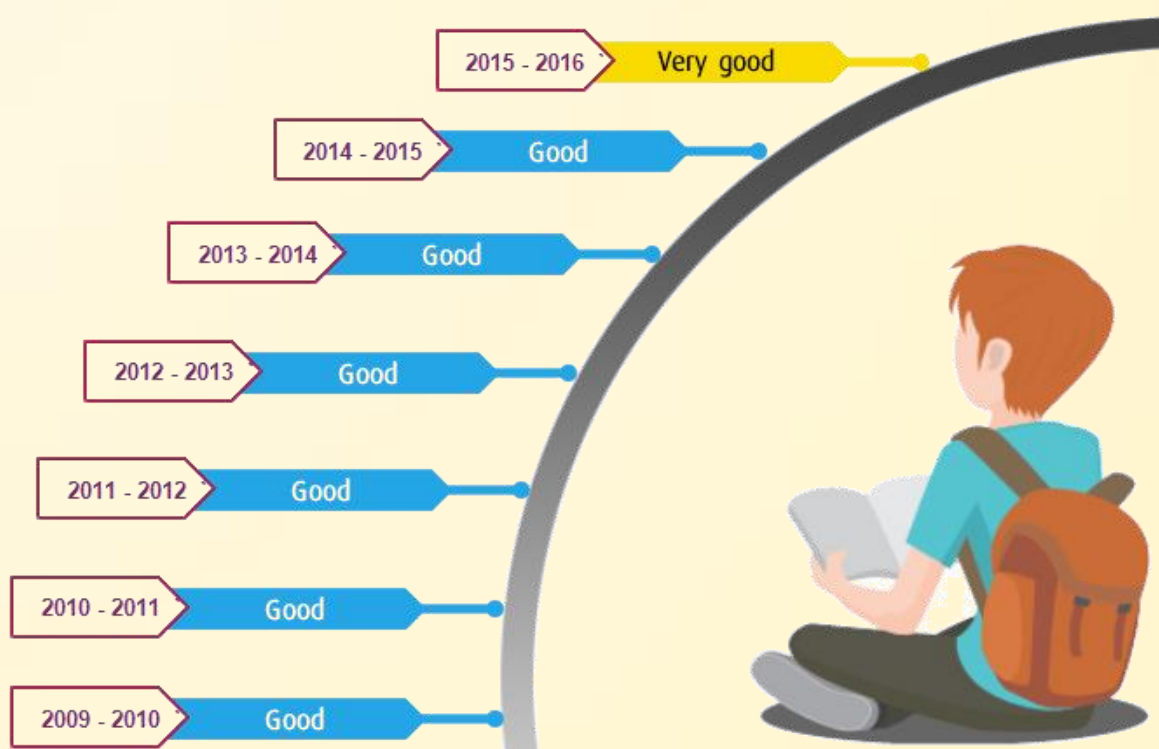


Summary for parents and the community

GEMS Our Own English High School was inspected by DSIB from 19 to 22 October 2015. The overall quality of education provided by the school was found to be **very good**.

In order to judge the overall quality of education provided by the school, inspectors considered six key standards of performance. Inspectors looked at children's attainment and progress in key subjects, their learning skills and their personal and social development. They judged how effective teaching and the assessment of learning were across the school. Inspectors considered how well the school's curriculum, including activities inside and outside classrooms, 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 evidence gathered by the inspection team, including observing children learning in lessons, looking at their work, talking with children, meetings with the staff, parents and governors, and reviewing the parents', teachers' and senior students' surveys.





How well did the school perform overall?

Overall, **GEMS Our Own English High School** provided a **very good** quality of education for its students.

- A large majority of students made better than expected progress compared to their starting points. Kindergarten children made good progress in all subjects, including the development of their English language skills, because they were provided with stimulating tasks. Progress and attainment in all subjects, except Arabic as an additional language, across all phases of the school was good or better. In Arabic as an additional language in primary, middle and secondary phases, it was acceptable.
- The importance of learning was reflected in students' enthusiastic attitudes, attendance and attention to all aspects of school life. They had a clear, age-appropriate appreciation of many aspects of UAE culture. The empathy for people from other cultures was evident amongst students and staff. Students led activities that positively impacted upon the local community.
- Teachers had a good understanding of how students learned through assessment and they used this knowledge effectively to plan their lessons. Teachers made maximum use of time to ensure students learned a range of skills. Teachers asked searching questions and initiated discussions that made students think about what they had learnt so that they could explain their understanding in detail.
- The balance of knowledge, skills and understanding was very well promoted through the introduction of an outstanding range of stimulating curricular and extra-curricular activities. Senior students had a wide range of curricular options to choose from. Development of the curriculum to establish links across all subjects was a strength.
- Students were well cared for, safeguarded and protected by a well-implemented and comprehensive child protection policy. There was effective promotion of positive relationships and healthy lifestyles.
- A clear and challenging vision was promoted by the executive principal. The strong focus of the leadership, with the collective enthusiasm of all staff, significantly improved the quality of learning, teaching and student progress throughout the school. Parental engagement was a strong feature of the school. The school had responded well to the previous inspection by addressing all the recommendations.



What did the school do well?

- There was outstanding progress in English, mathematics and science in the secondary phase.
- Students demonstrated excellent behaviour and attitudes to learning. They had a very strong appreciation, knowledge and understanding of the heritage, values and aspirations of the people of the United Arab Emirates.
- Students had access to a stimulating, enhanced and improved curriculum that ensured full engagement and challenge for most students.
- There were outstanding health and safety arrangements which contributed to a very safe and secure environment for learning.
- There was very clear commitment, vision and strong sense of purpose by the school's leaders at all levels.
- There were excellent relationships within the school community which included a highly supportive, committed and involved parent body.



What does the school need to do next?

- Accelerate progress in Arabic as an additional language by:
 - ensuring teachers consistently prepare and plan lessons that challenge students of all abilities
 - improving the accuracy and use of progress data so that more lessons provide tasks that match students' abilities and provide challenge
 - creating specific opportunities within the Arabic curriculum for students to speak and write in Arabic.
- Increase the number of very good and outstanding lessons by ensuring expectations are high in all subjects.
- Improve teaching and learning in the Kindergarten and primary phases by:
 - providing differentiated activities which match the needs of all ability groups in every class
 - providing opportunities within every lesson for students to take responsibility for their learning
 - focusing on the development of students' learning skills.



How well did the school provide for students with special educational needs and disabilities?

- The school had a very inclusive vision and ethos, admitting students with a range of special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). Effective procedures were firmly in place to quickly identify the difficulties and needs of students new to the school, either in kindergarten or other year groups.
- Support for these students was carefully coordinated by the special educational needs department, so that their individual academic and personal needs were well met and monitored.
- The curriculum for students with SEND was thoughtfully planned and modified. Individual support from specialist staff helped to equip students with essential basic skills and life skills. Although the majority of teachers were able to their modify lessons appropriately, enabling students to make good progress and feel successful, this was still not so in all classes.
- Parents were well informed and involved with their children's learning and the special support they received. They were happy with the academic and social progress their children had made and grateful for the many opportunities the school provided.
- As a result of the school's strong support, most students made good progress against their individual targets, and the majority also showed better than expected progress. In Grade 10 exams, students with SEND usually attained at least expected levels in the core exam subjects and this was good progress from their starting points.

National Agenda Parameter



In 2014, H.H. Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister of UAE, and Ruler of Dubai, launched the UAE National Agenda 2021, with education being a prime focus. The National Agenda includes two major objectives developed with the intent of placing the UAE among the most successful countries that provide world-class education. By 2021, it is expected that the UAE will feature in the top twenty countries in the 'Programme for International Student Assessment' (PISA) test and in the top fifteen countries in the 'Trends in Mathematics and Science Studies' (TIMSS) test.

In response to this, each participating school was issued a report on their students' performance in these international assessments and in addition, they were provided with clear targets for improving their performance. This academic year, KHDA introduced the National Agenda Parameter, which is a method for measuring and monitoring schools' progress towards achieving their individual National Agenda targets through the use of external benchmarking assessments.

Main points:

- The school met the registration requirements of the National Agenda Parameter. No attainment data from the National Agenda Parameter was available at this stage to make a judgement on progress made towards National Agenda targets.
- There was a clear understanding by students, teachers, parents, the school management and governors of the importance of the development of the skills required to advance the National Agenda.
- The curriculum in mathematics and science included an emphasis on the aspects of questioning, critical thinking and problem solving which promote higher level thinking, in line with the National Agenda. There was greater emphasis in English on comprehension. In all three subjects synthesis, analysis, explanation and exploration, as well as reasoning and research, had become features of the curriculum.
- Teachers implemented a range of age-appropriate strategies to develop critical thinking. This led to more effective questioning skills in the younger classes, and enhanced critical thinking and inquiry skills in the older classes.
- Students in the middle and high school phases used technology with familiarity and ease, independently following through on research or inquiry. All students used books, ICT and other resources for independent research.

Innovation in education

The *UAE Vision 2021* sets out the National Agenda for the UAE to be among the most innovative nations in the world. The National Innovation Strategy sets the context for 'innovation' and 'innovative leadership'. It provides a basis for evaluating public and private schools in order to deliver a world-class education for all children in the UAE.

Innovation is driven by a commitment to excellence and continuous improvement. It is based on curiosity, the willingness to take risks, to experiment and to test assumptions as well as questioning and challenging the status quo. Being innovative is about looking beyond what we currently do well, identifying the great ideas of tomorrow and putting them into practice.







Promoting a culture of innovation:

- School leaders at all levels, including the innovation coordinator, were significantly committed to this national priority. There was a tangible culture of innovation throughout the school, developed over the previous three years. The school made innovative use of internal and external spaces. These included the use of hallway 'niches', provision of a dedicated research and development room as an innovation hub, and conversion of outdoor spaces for agriculture and hydroponics purposes. Innovation skills were evident across the curriculum, which was enhanced by the many extra-curricular projects.

Overall school performance

Very good ↑

1. Students' achievement

		KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Islamic education 	Attainment	Not applicable	Good	Good	Good
	Progress	Not applicable	Good	Good	Good
Arabic as a first language 	Attainment	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable
	Progress	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable
Arabic as an additional language 	Attainment	Not applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
	Progress	Not applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
English 	Attainment	Good	Very good ↓	Outstanding	Outstanding
	Progress	Good	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Mathematics 	Attainment	Good	Good	Very good ↓	Outstanding
	Progress	Good	Good	Very good ↓	Outstanding
Science 	Attainment	Good	Good	Very good ↑	Outstanding
	Progress	Good	Good	Outstanding	Outstanding

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Learning skills	Good	Good	Very good ↑	Very good ↓

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

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Personal development	Very good ↓	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Good	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Good	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding

3. Teaching and assessment

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Teaching for effective learning	Good	Good	Very good ↑	Very good ↑
Assessment	Good	Good	Very good ↑	Very good ↑

4. Curriculum

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Curriculum design and implementation	Good	Very good ↑	Very good ↑	Very good ↑
Curriculum adaptation	Good	Very good ↑	Very good ↑	Very good ↑

5. The protection, care, guidance and support of students

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Care and support	Good	Good	Good	Good

6. Leadership and management

	All phases
The effectiveness of leadership	Very good ↑
School self-evaluation and improvement planning	Very good ↑
Parents and the community	Very good ↑
Governance	Very good ↑
Management, staffing, facilities and resources	Very good ↑



Main inspection report

The Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau (DSIB) is responsible for inspecting and reporting on the standards reached by students and the quality of education provided in Dubai's private schools.

Judgements are made on a six-point scale



Using this scale, the *Main inspection report* contains the judgements about the different aspects, phases and subjects that form the work of the school.

It provides the reasons for the answers to the questions in the *Summary for parents and the community*:

- How well did the school perform overall?
- What did the school do well?
- What does the school need to do next?

1. Students' achievement

KG

Subjects	Attainment	Progress
Islamic education	Not applicable	Not applicable
Arabic as a first language	Not applicable	Not applicable
Arabic as an additional language	Not applicable	Not applicable
English	Good	Good
Mathematics	Good	Good
Science	Good	Good

- Children made good progress in the development of their English language skills. They could speak in clear, grammatically correct sentences, had developed a good range of words in their vocabulary and wrote neatly in simple sentences.
- In mathematics most lessons were well planned. Children made good progress in developing their skills in recognising and using numbers, forming bonds between different numbers and learning about shapes.
- In science children enjoyed carrying discovering things about the real world around them. They also found excitement in carrying out small experiments and recording what they had found out. They made good progress because they were provided with stimulating tasks.

Primary

Subjects	Attainment	Progress
Islamic education	Good	Good
Arabic as a first language	Not applicable	Not applicable
Arabic as an additional language	Acceptable	Acceptable
English	Very good ↓	Outstanding
Mathematics	Good	Good
Science	Good	Good

- A majority of students were able to explain well the Pillars of Islam and the steps of Salah in detail and at a better than expected level. They were able to memorise short Surahs of the Holy Qur'an. Their progress in understanding the Pillars of Islam and the underpinning morals and values was strong. Their recitation skills were starting to develop.
- In Arabic as an additional language, most students had strong listening skills. They could play an active part in short conversations using the familiar previously-learnt words. Students' progress was steady in improving identification of Arabic letters and reading familiar words. Listening and responding skills were progressing within expectations for most students. Writing skills were underdeveloped.

- In English, teachers provided students with many opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills. Higher-order reading skills were being developed and students were able to infer from, and interpret a range of texts. Lessons were extremely well planned. The learning objectives were shared with students; as a result they knew what they were learning, which quickened their pace of learning.
- In mathematics, the majority of students worked above curriculum standards, particularly in their understanding of number and quantity, shapes and measurement. Students solved problems on their own or in groups. Some students were keen to take on challenges and showed clear understanding of numerical processes. They summarised their learning very well and explained it to others. Students were developing the ability to ask good questions, and to reason. They enjoyed active tasks in mathematics, including those using ICT. The majority of students made better than expected progress in internal testing as compared to their starting points. Progress in lessons in relation to the learning objectives was consistently good for the majority of students, including different groups within each class.
- Students achieved good standards in science as most of them acquired relevant practical and inquisitive scientific skills through their involvement in age-related experimental processes. Students progressively built on their early sound knowledge and understanding, and applied this understanding through their discussions and activities. For example, they could begin to explain bioluminescence in fireflies and plankton.

Middle

Subjects	Attainment	Progress
Islamic education	Good	Good
Arabic as a first language	Not applicable	Not applicable
Arabic as an additional language	Acceptable	Acceptable
English	Outstanding	Outstanding
Mathematics	Very good ↓	Very good ↓
Science	Very good ↑	Outstanding

- The majority of students had a good understanding of the Pillars of Faith. They showed strong progress in understanding the Seerah and Islamic Etiquettes. Recitation skills were not as well developed.
- Students' listening skills in Arabic were in line with expectations. Their speaking skills were underdeveloped due to the lack of opportunities to apply them. They were able to read familiar, pre-learnt phrases. Their writing skills were weaker. Most students made adequate progress in listening skills and steady progress in speaking and reading. Additional support required by some students to make progress was not always available.
- In English, most students demonstrated attainment levels above curriculum expectations as evidenced by their participation, discussion, presentation, and proficient completion of lessons. As a result, all groups of students made better than expected progress over time in relation to their starting points. They were able to read a variety of texts and write for a wide range of audiences, demonstrating excellent literacy skills. They were able to apply these skills in a wide range of different and sometimes unfamiliar contexts.

- Curriculum standards were exceeded by a large majority of students, most of whom approached mathematics with skill and confidence. Students were particularly engaged in lessons that provided specific levels of challenge, causing them to think through problems and use critical thinking and reasoning skills. Their foundational understanding of algebra, data use, number and geometry was strong. Students collaborated well when seeking solutions, asking questions or exploring options related to challenges. Most students were very familiar with learning technologies and used them skilfully in mathematical inquiry. A large majority of students consistently made very good progress towards their learning objectives and could succinctly state what they were learning.
- In science, students were excited by the investigative approach used, and made excellent progress. They developed strong enquiry skills and high levels of understanding. Students were able to identify and apply the particular scientific skills relevant to the task in hand. There was very good attainment, both in lessons and over time, partly as a result of enthusiasm from both students and staff for science. Resources were skilfully deployed to enable students to further their thinking and make connections to other areas of the curriculum.

Secondary

Subjects	Attainment	Progress
Islamic education	Good	Good
Arabic as a first language	Not applicable	Not applicable
Arabic as an additional language	Acceptable	Acceptable
English	Outstanding	Outstanding
Mathematics	Outstanding	Outstanding
Science	Outstanding	Outstanding

- The majority of students had a good understanding of Islamic Etiquette, codes of dress in Islam and its morals and values. They developed their knowledge and understanding of Fiqh and women's rights in Islam. They participated well in lessons and were keen to demonstrate their understanding and knowledge. This enabled them to make good progress both in lessons and over time. Their recitation skills were still developing.
- In Arabic as an additional language, most students could read well in groups; their reading comprehension was less developed. Their listening skills were strong; writing was weak, especially in independent writing. Progress in listening and reading was in line with expectations. Progress in speaking with confidence was slower.
- Overall, the most students demonstrated outstanding attainment and progress in English at the secondary level. Their enthusiastic participation was evidenced in discussion, debate, presentations, collaborative problem solving and leading lessons. The way students were prepared to lead lessons enabled them to develop very effective and detailed literacy skills and apply them in quite unfamiliar contexts. Internal benchmarking assessments based on curriculum standards highlighted those skill levels.

- Most students performed at a consistently high level in mathematics, above age expectations. Their scores across all international and external examinations were very good to outstanding. Students' enthusiastic engagement in mathematical tasks, problems, proofs, realistic scenarios and enquiries contributed very well to their significant progress. Over the past several years, most students maintained consistently high levels of attainment. Their mastery of the mathematics curriculum was exceptionally high, as demonstrated in their thorough knowledge of secondary school mathematics, how it is applied in familiar or creative ways and its links to other subjects. Students, including the gifted and talented, used available opportunities and resources to gain an accelerated rate of learning. Support was given to slower students to assure strong progress.
- In science students made rapid progress that built on the very good scientific understanding and practical skills gained in the primary and middle phases. This led to good results in core science assessments in Grade 10. At the end of the secondary phase they were able to explain the physics of light guides and stationary orbits to enable digital communication. They used critical and new ways of thinking and analysing. They supported this thinking by using high level scientific skills which included observing, hypothesising and drawing conclusions.

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Learning skills	Good	Good	Very good ↑	Very good ↓

- Students generally participated enthusiastically and conscientiously in a wide range of learning activities. They understood the importance of learning and made the connection to their aspirations for the future. They were keen to take responsibility for their learning. They relished opportunities to lead the learning and did so confidently and effectively.
- Students enjoyed learning and worked well in pairs, small groups and independently. Collaborative work was focused and productive. Students were articulate in explaining their learning. They were able to do so in a way that moved both their learning and the learning of other students forward.
- Students were consistently able to make connections between in-class learning and real life scenarios from their own personal experiences and wider world issues. They were able to apply knowledge and understanding from other subjects appropriately.
- Students were independent learners, regularly engaging in enquiry, critical thinking and problem-solving. They used learning technologies confidently and effectively. In many lessons, students participated enthusiastically in a wide range of activities that encouraged and nurtured new ways of thinking and applying skills. Variable teaching styles did not consistently give students opportunities to utilise these learning skills in all phases, subjects and classes.

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

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Personal development	Very good ↓	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding

- Students demonstrated excellent behaviour and attitudes to learning; they were highly responsible and independent in their thinking. They worked collaboratively, confidently participated and led assemblies, projects and lessons. They willingly accepted suggestions from their peers and teachers on how to improve.
- Students were self-disciplined and resolved problems in an amicable manner. They were sensitive to the needs of others and consistently helped each other. Exemplary behaviour was evident across the school.
- In the secondary phase students talked to their teachers and arranged for extra classes for completion of the syllabus. There were strategies for contacting peers to get an update on the day in case of absence from the school. Students and staff were empathetic and sensitive to each other's needs. This resulted in very strong relationships which supported learning.
- Healthy living was a part of the school culture. Students mostly brought healthy, home-cooked food to school. The sale of balanced nutritious food items in the school canteen such as sandwiches, salads, yoghurt and baked items promoted healthy living. They were able to articulate how food choices they made supported healthy lifestyles.
- Most students came to school by school bus. The average daily attendance was good. Students were invariably punctual for lessons and other school events.

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

- The youngest of students were developing a keen awareness of the appropriate elements of UAE culture. Most students in the other phases had a clear appreciation of many aspects of UAE culture, the values of Islam and how it influenced contemporary life in the UAE. When prompted, students could talk about the importance of Zakat (charity) during Ramadan and how they had supported it. This was also reflected in the e-classroom and corridor displays.
- All students participated in the UAE National Day celebrations. They were able to talk about the history and culture of the UAE in a most respectful way and involve themselves enthusiastically in a range of cultural activities.
- Courtesy towards, harmony with, and empathy for, people from other cultures was evident amongst students and staff. Students appreciated their own culture. Different festivals were celebrated too.

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Good	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding

- Students frequently led activities that positively impacted upon the local community. Many social and volunteer opportunities supported the charity for the disabled. A number of students had been involved in designing resources to support the visually impaired in new ways.
- Examples of entrepreneurship included 'Our Own Blossom' gardening initiative. Students contributed effectively to the community and gained experience of professions while in school.
- Students were highly resourceful, innovative and creative; examples included their 'Singing Dustbin', 'Charity Box' and 'Honesty box' initiatives. There were 'Eco Advocates' in every class encouraging recycling.

3. Teaching and assessment

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Teaching for effective learning	Good	Good	Very good ↑	Very good ↑

- Teachers' subject knowledge was good and sometimes outstanding, especially in the secondary phase. Their good subject knowledge helped them give accurate explanations and ask searching questions. Teachers had a good understanding of how students learned and they used this knowledge effectively to plan their lessons. Where classroom assistants worked with students, they supported learning effectively.
- An increasing range of computers, tablets and other technological equipment was used by teachers to widen the learning experiences of students. The pace of learning was good and teachers made maximum use of the time available to ensure students learned a range of skills. Occasionally learning was slow, notably in Kindergarten, because teachers did not deal with noisy students who interrupted the learning of others. In Arabic teaching sometimes lacked work that was sufficiently challenging.
- Teachers had excellent relationships with students and this gave students the confidence to ask for help or advice when they needed it. Teachers asked searching questions and initiated discussions that made students think about what they learned so that they could explain their understanding and knowledge in detail.
- In most lessons teachers used what they knew about students' earlier learning to provide work that was closely matched to the needs of different individuals and groups. In the best lessons the quality of work to challenge pupils to the maximum was outstanding. In the kindergarten teachers did not always make good enough use of assessment information to help them plan suitable tasks.
- The range of opportunities for pupils to work independently, to initiate their own investigations and to think about how they could accurately explain what they found out was improving. In some lessons in English, mathematics and science, the ability to think critically was outstanding and played an important role in promoting students' enjoyment and achievement. This was particularly evident in the middle and secondary phases.
- Teaching in Arabic as an additional language was acceptable. Students made acceptable progress but their learning was not sufficiently personalized to support deeper understanding. There was little differentiation in the planning by teachers.

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Assessment	Good	Good	Very good ↑	Very good ↑

- The school had well-structured assessment procedures that were fully understood by almost all staff. The school had been effective in ensuring more consistency in how assessment procedures were implemented.
- Most teachers used a range of external, national and international assessments to measure the success of students and to set challenging targets. In kindergarten, teachers had customised an external assessment scheme to monitor students' progress but it was not yet fully embedded.
- In most areas of the school, teachers and leaders analysed student performance data extensively to monitor and record the achievement of individuals and groups of students over time. The majority of teachers assessed students' achievement accurately and kept detailed records of students' performance.
- Teachers used assessment information effectively to make sure students made the best progress they could. A very small number were less secure in using assessment processes to plan lessons, notably in Arabic, but were being supported to improve their skills to do this.
- Assessment data was used effectively to modify the curriculum and teaching in order to meet the needs of students. When assessment was very good it provided opportunities for students to both receive and give constructive feedback and take steps to improve their learning.

4. Curriculum

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Curriculum design and implementation	Good	Very good ↑	Very good ↑	Very good ↑

- The curriculum had a clear rationale to nurture individuality and enhance students' innate potential. It met the CBSE and UAE Ministry of Education requirements. It was broad, balanced and relevant to the needs of students and promoted tolerance of other cultures. In the kindergarten the curriculum was good. It had improved as a result of the introduction of skills-based curriculum.
- Continuity and progression were very well maintained through the schemes of work that were appropriate to the ages and abilities of the students. Assessments of students' work were used to modify the curricula for those who were underachieving. This progression and continuity in students' learning prepared them very well for their next phases in learning.
- Senior students had a wide range of curricular options to choose from. The school offered three streams of science, commerce and humanities with sixteen subjects and with different combinations. Students were also offered physical education as a theory subject. This met the students' needs very effectively and almost all students went to universities to study their chosen subjects.
- Development of the curriculum to establish links across all subjects was a strength. The links were very well planned. They motivated students and added to the enjoyment of learning. 'Innovex', the school exhibition that covered all areas and involved all students, established cross-curricular links that gave them an opportunity to put concepts learnt into practical use.

- The curriculum was reviewed regularly and findings were implemented effectively to extend and enrich students' learning. As a result of the review, the school decided to change the subject-based curriculum in the kindergarten classes to a skills-based one. The findings from the review were also used extensively to introduce creative projects to improve the academic and personal development of students.
- The school taught UAE social studies through both standalone and integrated lessons. For example, understanding the Five Pillars of Islam helped students improve their interactions with Emiratis and collaborate better on tasks. Connections were made across different contexts on similar themes and questions.

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Curriculum adaptation	Good	Very good ↑	Very good ↑	Very good ↑

- The curriculum was effectively modified to meet the needs of all groups of students including those students who had learning difficulties. In the kindergarten, the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum was adopted to establish better cross-curricular links and improve children's knowledge and skills in all areas of learning. Students who were underachieving were given additional support to narrow gaps in learning.
- The curriculum promoted many opportunities for students to be creative and to lead and design research projects. Older students had created many new designs, such as a water cooler and a singing dustbin. Opportunities to engage in enterprise had enabled students to design costumes and grow vegetables, which were sold.
- There were many occasions during which students could learn about UAE cultural heritage, for example when they created their own heritage village. Visits to mosques and other landmarks in Dubai helped students to understand the history of Dubai and its culture.

5. The protection, care, guidance and support of students

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding

- Students were well cared for, safeguarded and protected by a comprehensive and well-implemented child protection policy. Policies and procedures were rigorously followed and applied effectively.
- Exceptional attention had been given and actions taken to ensure the health, safety and security of students in this school. The environment was fully safe and hygienic. Supervision to ensure these standards were maintained was systematic and thorough.
- The buildings and equipment were exceedingly well maintained and the records were exemplary.
- The premises and facilities were exceptional for all student groups. They provided an excellent environment for learning.
- Healthy lifestyles were promoted through a variety of awareness campaigns and special programs, and supported by the medical and nursing staff. Safe and healthy living was given a very high profile.

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Care and support	Good	Good	Good	Good

- Relationships between staff and students were mutually respectful and interactions were positive. Behaviour was managed well.
- Effective systems were in place to promote student attendance and punctuality. Students were punctual for lessons and all other activities.
- The school effectively identified and provided support for students with SEND and those who were gifted and talented, enabling them to make good progress.
- There was effective guidance and support for all students in the areas of wellbeing, personal development, future academic pursuits and careers. They were provided with helpful information and supported in using it.


Provision for students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)

The overall effectiveness of provision for students with special educational needs and disabilities	Good
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- The school had a very inclusive vision and ethos, admitting students with a range of educational needs and disabilities. Senior leaders worked closely with a skilled SEND team to coordinate provision for these students, planning for their individual needs and monitoring the impact of support on their progress and well-being.
- The school had effective procedures to identify the particular needs of students new to the school, either in KG or other year groups. Teachers quickly made referrals and a range of assessments, within school and from external agencies, were well used to identify students' difficulties and to begin to provide additional support.
- Parents were well-informed and involved with their children's learning and support. They stated that their children received the help needed to make good academic and personal progress. They welcomed the valuable support and guidance received from the school. Parents appreciated the regular informal and formal opportunities to discuss their child's needs and address any concerns.
- The curriculum and assessment for students with SEND was carefully organised and modified. Individual support was planned effectively to meet academic and personal needs and to equip students with the life skills needed for the next stage of their education. The majority of teachers were able to modify lessons appropriately. However, this was not evident in all classes despite training provided for teachers.
- The school's good overall provision enabled the majority of students to exceed expectations in their internal exams. In external exams in Grade 10, students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) usually attained at least expected levels in the core exam subjects. This represented good progress from their starting points. In lessons progress was more variable and depended on the quality of teaching.


6. Leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership

Very good 

- A clear and challenging vision was promoted by the principal and shared with the whole school community. The committed senior leadership team, together with an increasing number of middle leaders were developing rigorous systems and providing a clear direction. The leadership culture also enabled students to become leaders. They were given a wide range of leadership opportunities, for example as eco leaders.
- Focused leadership at all levels aimed at significantly improving the quality of learning, teaching and student progress throughout the school. The senior leadership team worked in a collaborative manner, engaging students, parents and teachers. Challenges still remained in improving the consistency of quality of teaching in the kindergarten and primary phases.
- Very good, supportive relationships existed between leaders at all levels and the broad learning community in the school. The engagement in 360 degree feedback had helped them better understand their strengths and weaknesses. The strong ethos of the school and high morale was evident in the quality relationships amongst students, staff and parents.
- The principal, vice-principal and senior team led from the front. Middle leaders were increasingly effective in accepting responsibility and accountability for standards within their areas of responsibility. This drive for improvement was shared by many class teachers and gave the school a strong capacity to develop further.
- Senior staff members were increasingly leading improvement activities. For example, the leaders of the three phases for mathematics were well-informed and shared a vision. They had instituted a number of new and interesting ideas, enlivening the curriculum for students, particularly in the years below the exam-based years (below Grade 10). Leaders ensured the school was compliant with all statutory and regulatory requirements.

School self-evaluation and improvement planning

Very good 

- Self-evaluation had improved due to clear, coherent and well-understood guidelines. A more distributed leadership team had identified strengths and areas for development and appropriate priorities for future development across the school. These had been incorporated into the action plans, school development plan and longer-term strategic planning.
- The school had responded well to the previous inspection by addressing all the recommendations. For example, the leadership had reviewed and acted upon specific staff recruitment and developmental needs in the Arabic department. More students were now using technologies to enhance their learning skills and understanding.
- School self-evaluation was increasingly rigorous. Evolving competence and commitment at all levels was very good. Roles and responsibilities were clearly defined and aligned to whole school priorities that were aimed at improving learning outcomes and the students' experiences at school. This was evident in improvements to the curriculum provision.
- The school had adopted a realistic and appropriate focus within set timescales. The collective enthusiasm and active engagement of most staff was a key factor in raising teaching and learning standards in the middle and secondary phases.

Partnerships with parents and the community

Very good ↑

- Parental engagement was central to the school community; the ready access to the 'parent liaison' member of staff was appreciated by parents. 'Our Own Voice' was a group of 34 parent representatives, members of the senior leadership team and a governance representative. This enabled parents to become effective partners in improving their children's education.
- Frequent, high quality communications ensured parents were kept very well informed. Parents spoke of open and transparent communication with the school; any feedback or opinions were given due consideration by the school's leadership and the governance. For example, there had been open discussions about changes to the examination regime.
- Written reports to parents indicated whether their children were performing at, above or below expectations in relation to their next steps in learning. Regular meetings between teachers and parents to discuss target setting and progress were well attended. Parents valued the school's information portal for gathering details about their children's achievements.
- Extensive partnership arrangements with other schools and the broader community and were effective in supporting students' development. Parental strengths and interests were deployed to give them an active role in the school. The school enjoyed very good links with the community and other schools in Dubai and beyond. These positive aspects of the school enhanced students' learning and achievements.

Governance

Very good ↑

- Governors could clearly articulate the school's strengths and areas for development. They were dedicated to engaging in well-supported improvement actions. School leaders and corporate officers worked closely with the parents to better understand their perspectives. For example, officers attended parents' meetings, there were regular, in-depth surveys and parental engagement programmes brought the parents and corporate officers together in their shared ambition to improve the students' personal and academic development.
- The executive principal was held accountable for day-to-day matters. The leaderships' effectiveness and stakeholders' satisfaction were monitored through regular surveys and fed into the school's self-evaluation. The school's leadership benefited from the 'critical friend' role of governance which provided the necessary sharp focus on continually raising standards.
- Governance had responded to the previous report recommendation to reduce student numbers in classes and improve staff-to-student ratios. Kindergarten 1 class sizes had been set at a maximum of 25 children and an organic programme of reducing class sizes was being introduced over a period of time. The provision of comprehensive staff training programmes was a strength, sharing good practice and new ideas.




Management, staffing, facilities and resources

Very good ↑

- The day-to-day management of this very large school was very good. Timetabling was skilfully organised and daily procedures ran smoothly. There was, overall, a quiet efficiency which was evident in all aspects of the working of the school.
- A strong management feature was the enhancement of the role of middle managers to develop distributive leadership. Almost all staff were appropriately qualified and deployed. Induction procedures for new staff were thorough and the monitoring of their progress was detailed.
- Premises were of very good quality and extremely well maintained. They were well used to promote student achievement and maintained in a way that was conducive to quality learning.
- The ICT resources acquired since the previous inspection had further enhanced students' learning opportunities. A wide range of resources had been provided to promote very effective teaching and learning.

The views of the parents, teachers and students

Before the inspection, the views of the 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	
Parents 	2015-2016	4543
	2014-2015	3623
Teachers 	432	
Students 	2120	

*The number of responses from parents is based on the number of families.

- Overall, almost all parents were satisfied with the school, although a minority of students were not satisfied.
- Almost all parents stated their children made good progress in English; most felt this for mathematics and science. In mathematics, a few students felt they were not making good progress; a minority did not know.
- Almost all teachers felt that students developed a good awareness of other cultures and an understanding of the importance of Islamic values in Dubai. This contrasted with a third of students feeling that they had no or limited opportunities to learn about Emirati heritage.
- Almost all teachers felt the school offered a good range of extra-curricular activities; a large minority of students were not satisfied with these. Almost all teachers felt that parents and students were kept up to date about student progress. Parents supported this view, and expressed their satisfaction with assessment, marking and reporting.
- Parents, teachers and students strongly agreed that students were safe in school and on the school buses.

If you have a concern or wish to comment on any aspect of this report, you should contact inspection@khda.gov.ae