DUBAI
Knowledge المعرفة

Apple International Schoo...

National Agenda

Early years

Special educational needs and disabilities

Innovation

Inspection Report 2015-2016

Apple International School

Curriculum: UK

Overall rating: Acceptable

Read more about the school

www.khda.gov.ae

"Without challenges, we won't feel the taste of success and happiness"

Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum

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School Information

General information

Location	Al Qusais
Type of school	Private
Opening year of school	1994
Website	www.apple.sch.ae
Telephone	04-2638989
Address	Qusais 1, Behind Emirates Driving Institute PO Box 33963
Principal	Mrs Pranjala Dutta
Language of instruction	English
Inspection dates	7 to 10 March 2016

Students

Gender of students	Boys and girls
Age range	4-13
Grades or year groups	Foundation Stage 2 to Year 8
Number of students on roll	2257
Number of children in pre-kindergarten	0
Number of Emirati students	25
Number of students with SEND	149
Largest nationality group of students	Filipino

Teachers / Support staff

Number of teachers	140
Largest nationality group of teachers	Indian
Number of teaching assistants	29
Teacher-student ratio	1:16
Number of guidance counsellors	5
Teacher turnover	11%

Curriculum

Educational permit / Licence	UK
Main curriculum	UK / EYFS
External tests and examinations	IBT, Cambridge International
Accreditation	None
National Agenda benchmark tests	IBT

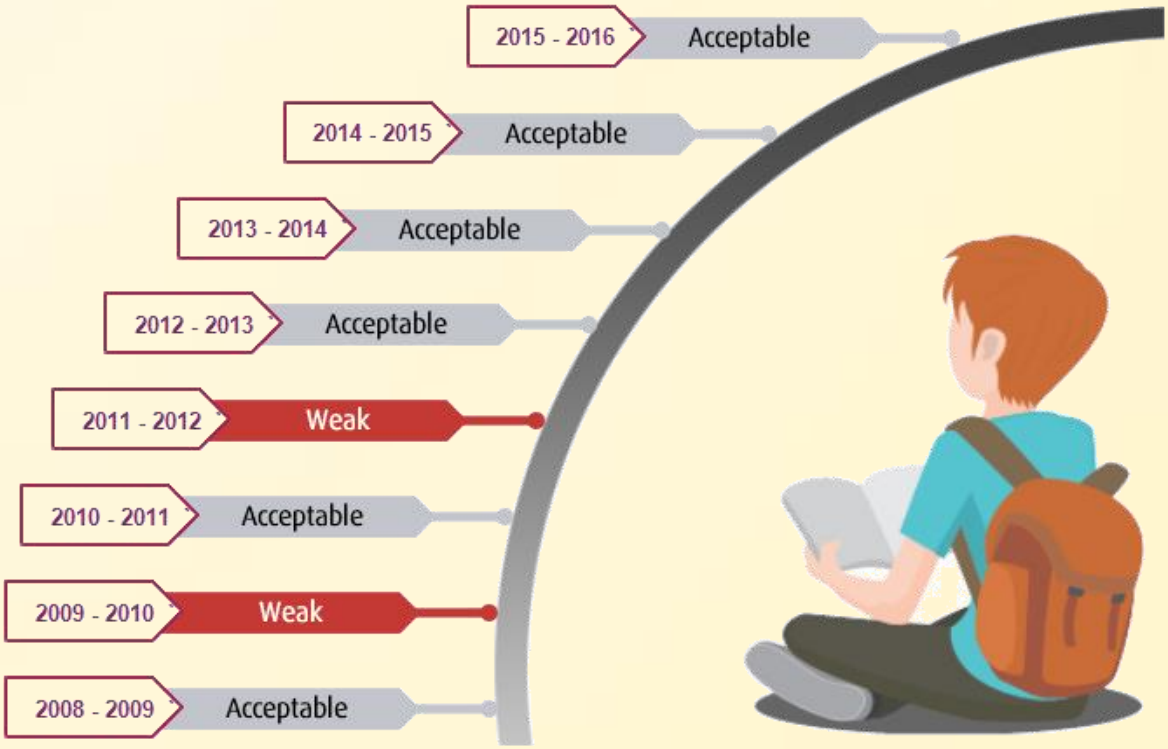
Summary for parents and the community

Apple International School was inspected by DSIB from 7 to 10 March 2016. 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 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.

KHDA family



How well did the school perform overall?

Overall, **Apple International School** provided a **good** quality of education for its students.

- Students attained acceptable levels across most subject areas. Attainment in Arabic as an additional language was weak. Students made good progress in Islamic education in primary and secondary, in English in Foundation Stage (FS) and primary, and in mathematics at secondary. Most students were keen learners and cooperated well in learning activities.
- Students were courteous and well behaved. They took pride in their surroundings and helped to keep their school tidy and cared for the environment. They showed consideration towards others in raising money for charities. Senior students took on responsibilities very well.
- Teachers knew their subjects and had developed skills in different ways to engage students in their learning. All teachers planned lessons carefully but did not consistently encourage independence and critical thinking. Assessment was carried out systematically but teachers did not use it well enough to find out what students had learned during lessons.
- The recently introduced curriculum provided a positive framework for students to progress through the school. It linked well with the FS curriculum. However, teachers did not always match curriculum activities to all students' needs. Good attention was paid to developing students' knowledge and experience of the UAE.
- All staff took very good care of students and made sure they were safe in school. Healthy eating was encouraged.
- The principal and governors had a clear vision and ambition to continue to improve the school. They had been successful in introducing a new curriculum and developing management roles and teachers' expertise. The governing body had made significant improvement to the facilities and staffing.
- Parents felt very welcome in the school and appreciated sharing their children's education with teachers. Governors played an important role in supporting and quality assuring the school. They now needed to make sure they used more robust ways to measure academic progress accurately.

What did the school do well?

- The introduction of a new curriculum framework for primary and secondary students
- Students' personal and social development, particularly in the secondary stage
- The school's attention to health and safety
- Involvement of parents in their children's learning and in the life of the school.

What does the school need to do next?

- Improve students' learning skills and attainment by:
  - having teachers provide enough guidance in lessons so that students are clear about what they are meant to do and how they can improve their learning
  - developing students' independent learning and critical thinking skills consistently across year groups and subjects.
- Improve the use of assessment by:
  - ensuring teachers use ongoing assessment more effectively to identify clearly what students can do, and set challenging targets for improvement
  - adapting curriculum planning to meet students' individual learning needs, including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and gifted and talented
  - using more robust international standards of comparisons for students' achievement and progress.
- Improve leadership and governance further by:
  - developing middle management skills in identifying and sharing best practice in teaching and learning
  - ensuring more accurate evaluation and moderation of academic progress and achievement.

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

- Overall, progress for students with SEND was acceptable in most subjects.
- Parents received regular reports and often met with the members of the SEND department.
- The school was inclusive in its welcome of students with SEND, and its diligent planning helped to promote improved support and understanding by staff.
- Specialist support was generally well targeted for students but teachers did not always personalise each student's learning sufficiently. They were sometimes inconsistent in matching the curriculum to students' individual needs in the classrooms
- Parents were very positive about the care and support that their children were given. The SEND team were very accessible to parents and provided regular reports to them on their child's progress. They also offered them a range of helpful information, as well as SEND related training sessions.

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. The progress towards meeting the National Agenda targets was as expected.
- There was scope for a more systematic approach to raising awareness of the National Agenda linked to key targets across stakeholders. Teachers and governors were generally aware of the school's targets. Students were reasonably aware of the skills needed to achieve these targets. However, parents' awareness was limited. Teachers knew of TIMSS targets and of the value of internationally benchmarked tests, such as GL and IBT, but their understanding of how to use this data to measure progress was insecure.
- The school had recently introduced the Cambridge International Curriculum. It had an established practice of reviewing the curriculum in the light of TIMMS and PIRLS performance. This had continued and had supported the curriculum's alignment to TIMSS and PIRLS expectations.
- Strategies to develop critical thinking and inquiry skills were inconsistent, particularly in the lower primary phase. In the most effective lessons, students worked collaboratively and made progress; in the less effective, group and project work often lacked challenge. As a result, while students often participated in collaborative group work, often the work did not engage students effectively in research, discussion, enquiry and decision-making.
- Both the availability and use of resources were under-developed. Across most subjects, there was limited use of resources to enhance learning, with occasional use of tablet computers in class. Very good use was made of the school website to share curriculum content, homework and to manage communication with students and parents.

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:

- The principal had a good understanding of innovation as a national priority and encouraged the leadership team's and school governors' contributions to innovation through various projects. The school's capacity for developing a culture of innovation in learning and teaching was at an early stage of development, through ongoing staff professional development opportunities. The learning environment and facilities promoted students' creativity through new music, art, dance, outdoor learning areas, and a few technology initiatives. The curriculum was in the preliminary stages of integrating strategies that addressed student skills' development. Strands of innovation were featured through project-based learning and teachers' inquiry methodologies.

Overall school performance
Acceptable

1. Students' achievement

		Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Islamic education	Attainment	Not applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable
	Progress	Not applicable	Good ↑	Good ↑
Arabic as a first language	Attainment	Not applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable
	Progress	Not applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Arabic as an additional language	Attainment	Not applicable	Acceptable	Weak
	Progress	Not applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable
English	Attainment	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable
	Progress	Good	Good ↑	Acceptable
Mathematics	Attainment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
	Progress	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good ↑
Science	Attainment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
	Progress	Acceptable	Good ↑	Acceptable

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Learning skills	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

2. Students' personal and social development, and their innovation skills			
	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Personal development	Good	Good	Very good ↑
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Good	Good	Good
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Good	Good	Good

3. Teaching and assessment			
	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Teaching for effective learning	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Assessment	Acceptable	Acceptable ↑	Acceptable ↑

4. Curriculum			
	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Curriculum design and implementation	Good ↑	Good ↑	Good ↑
Curriculum adaptation	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

5. The protection, care, guidance and support of students			
	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding	Very good ↑	Very good ↑	Very good ↑
Care and support	Good	Good	Good

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

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

- In English attainment and progress were above general expectations for children of this age. Children had developed their skills well in spoken English, listening attentively and with understanding, and in reading and writing. This was the case for the majority of children in lessons, based on what they already knew. Their knowledge and understanding were secure, and they were keen to pose and answer questions. They shared their ideas and used their phonic skills to blend words in their reading and writing. This meant they could apply their skills to write their own sentences. Children's skills in reading were progressing well because of the opportunities they had to read with an adult, practising new words until they could recognise these quickly.
- In mathematics, attainment and progress were in line with general expectations. Children could count accurately and make simple calculations. They had a sound understanding about two and three-dimensional shapes and could illustrate this. For example, they recorded their observations of the number of sides, corners or faces each shape had. Pattern making and sequencing patterns were a feature of some of their work. Practical work was not always used often enough for children to embed and consolidate their skills and increase their productivity. They had opportunities to explore capacity and volume, for example outdoors in the mini 'lab' and garden area. The lack of structure to these activities, at times, meant the potential of what children could achieve was not developed.
- Attainment and progress in science were broadly in line with expectations for children of this age. Children were developing adequate science skills because they had some, but not many, opportunities to explore, investigate and make discoveries. They had an understanding about living and non-living things and could explain the differences between these. The extent of practical work was limited. Children enjoyed examining different fruits and vegetables when they made their close observations of plants. They could then explain what they had observed and the different parts of plants. They were not able to investigate further or make their own predictions such as what changes might happen over time.

Primary		
Subjects	**Attainment**	**Progress**
Islamic education	Acceptable	Good ↑
Arabic as a first language	Acceptable	Acceptable
Arabic as an additional language	Acceptable	Acceptable
English	Acceptable	Good ↑
Mathematics	Acceptable	Acceptable
Science	Acceptable	Good ↑

- In Islamic education, most Arab and non-Arab students attained levels that were in line with (MoE) curriculum standards. Their Qur'an recitation skills and knowledge of Hadith were age appropriate. Most students attained adequate knowledge of the five pillars of Islam and the six pillars of Iman (Faith). They were also able to recall facts of the prophet's (PBUH) life such as his battles. Students had made good progress and developed secure knowledge of Islamic values such as truthfulness, Ithar (altruism) and gratitude, and they were able to connect these values to their own lives. As a result, their progress in lessons and overtime was good.
- In Arabic as a first language, most students performed at expected national curriculum levels in their listening and reading skills. Lower year groups performed better than higher year groups in primary. Year 5 students identified the main theme of a given poem, and the most able students recognized the metaphors in that poem. However, Year 1 students were not learning letters based on a sound phonic approach. Overall, students made adequate progress. They were developing their writing appropriately over time through various writing tasks, but their progress in speaking in standard Arabic was less secure. Girls performed slightly better than boys.
- In Arabic as an additional language, in the absence of external benchmarked expectations, most students attained broadly as expected in listening and reading skills. They were less secure in using phonics because of the teaching approach used did not promote this. Year 1 students knew simple words and recognised names for colours. They could understand and use common greetings. By Year 6, students were able to read and write short sentences. Students made adequate progress in their understanding of basic grammar such as different types of sentences. Progress in speaking and writing skills was less secure, particularly in upper primary.
- In English, students engaged willingly with their learning when given appropriate and stimulating input from their teachers. The level of attainment was broadly in line with expectations. In lessons and recent work, the majority of students made better than expected progress in relation to appropriate learning objectives. This enabled them to learn in those subjects where the medium of instruction was English. Students developed aspects of literacy well, along with an increasingly sophisticated use of grammar, syntax and vocabulary. They used their English skills effectively to support each other in classwork. A minority of students did not make expected progress in their English in relation to the curriculum objectives and this had a negative impact on their attainment.
- The attainment of knowledge of mathematical concepts across the phase was in line with curriculum expectations. Most students made acceptable progress in the development of their mathematical skills and understanding of concepts. For example, Year 2 students were able to recognise equivalent fractions and find, name and write fractions of a given length or quantity. Year 6 students were able to calculate missing angles on a straight line and within triangles. The development of deeper understanding was limited because assessment was not used sufficiently well to check students' progress and adapt the lesson activities in order to accelerate their learning. As a result, different groups of students did not always work or think as hard as they could and their progress slowed, as a consequence.

- In science, attainment was in line with curriculum, national and international standards. Most students demonstrated knowledge and understanding of scientific concepts and methodology. Progress was better. Students of different abilities were enthusiastic learners who made better than expected progress and often demonstrated good scientific knowledge in lessons. For example, practical investigations accelerated their acquisition of skills and problem solving opportunities, evident in all years, were often taken well. Students in Year 1 carried out investigations into simple forces such as 'push', 'pull' and 'twist'. Year 4 students were able to use appropriate techniques to undertake elementary investigations into sound and vibration. They were able to work in collaborative groups to share this knowledge and understanding with peers, using appropriate scientific vocabulary.

Secondary		
Subjects	**Attainment**	**Progress**
Islamic education	Acceptable	Good ↑
Arabic as a first language	Acceptable	Acceptable
Arabic as an additional language	Weak	Acceptable
English	Acceptable	Acceptable
Mathematics	Acceptable	Good ↑
Science	Acceptable	Acceptable

- In lessons and work samples, most students attained levels in the subject that were in line with MoE curriculum expectations. They had adequate Holy Qur'an recitation skills and their knowledge of Hadith was secure. They were able to refer to Hadith and some verses from the Holy Qur'an for evidence, and explained some of the lessons learned from the prophet's (PBUH) life and the lives of other prophets. Most students attained adequate understanding of Islamic concepts such as the Divine Fate (destiny), and Islamic values such as honesty and truthfulness. Their progress in lessons and work samples was good.

- Most students had adequate listening and reading skills in Arabic as a first language. Year 8 students were able to make simple comparisons between two sets of short poems about different perspectives of life. Less able students read with some mistakes. Nonetheless, most students reached adequate levels of understanding and made adequate progress. Students in both Years 7 and 8 were developing their writing skills using a school devised booklet with clearly written criteria. Their speaking in standard Arabic was less well developed. Progress from the start of the term, in classwork and against the school's baseline assessment, was adequate.

- In Arabic as an additional language, many students struggled in their reading and writing skills. They were below curriculum expectations, over time, based on their years of studying Arabic. A minority of Year 8 students were able to read short texts and find out the meaning of difficult words using a dictionary. Year 8 students were building their vocabulary by finding the meaning of prescribed words, using either the dictionary or the internet. Progress for the majority of students, from their starting points against internal assessment, was positive. Some students in Years 7 and 8 had not made acceptable progress because the curriculum was not modified to meet their needs.

- In English, most students built successfully on their English language and literacy. They reached acceptable levels and made the progress expected of them. In primary, a few engaged well with an increasingly wide range of texts, including poetry and descriptive, informative and persuasive texts. A few of the most able students wrote longer continuous prose using accurate spelling, grammar and punctuation.

- In mathematics, the attainment of most students was in line with curriculum expectations. Students in Year 8 had made good progress, particularly in geometry and measures, algebra, data analysis, probability and the use of formulae in calculations. There were indications that attainment was beginning to improve. For example, students were increasingly able to derive and apply formulae to calculate and solve problems involving perimeter and area of triangles and parallelograms. Students were aware of the relevance of mathematics to real life situations but were not provided with enough opportunities to apply their learning to solve relevant multi-step problems. Teachers' expectations of what students could achieve were not always high enough, with the result that the work was not always sufficiently challenging to help them achieve higher standards.
- In science, students continued to demonstrate knowledge and understanding that was in line with curriculum, national and international standards. Most students were able to make effective use of learning technologies in the classroom when they were available. Students could discuss and explain their learning effectively and respectfully and they were able to collaborate well with each other. Students in Years 7 and 8 had developed an awareness and understanding of the importance of science and its impact on the world they live in. In lessons, most students made expected progress which was in line with appropriate curriculum standards. However, insufficient opportunities to reflect on and evaluate their work in lessons inhibited better attainment and progress.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Learning skills	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

- Students generally took responsibility for their learning. This was more evident in secondary classes than in primary. When input from teachers was stimulating, students engaged willingly with their learning tasks. Children in FS were engaged, motivated and usually interested in the activities provided. They could make choices at times, for example when outdoors at physical play. In classrooms, children rarely initiated play.
- Group work was an important activity and most students worked well with their peers in these groups, particularly in science. On occasion, for example in mathematics, group sizes were too large to allow all students in the group to participate fully in the work of their group. In most cases they interacted with their peers in a courteous and respectful manner.
- In some classes, students related their studies well to the world, for example in Islamic education and in primary science. This aspect of learning was not sufficiently developed in mathematics. There were a few examples of lessons where students made links across subjects, for example in English with science but, in general, these aspects were not developed fully enough across all subjects.
- In a number of classes, and in clubs and year group meetings, such as the senior school weekly challenge session, students used their research skills and learning technologies effectively to investigate topics and ideas. Inquiry-based learning was a feature of the learning and teaching strategy of the school but had not yet led to consistent development of students' skills in this area.

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

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Personal development	Good	Good	Very good ↑

- Students were keen to learn and had positive attitudes towards their studies. They were friendly and helpful to staff and visitors alike. When given the opportunity, they showed that they were able to take responsibility for their own learning, particularly the older students.
- Students displayed very good self-discipline, particularly the girls and those in secondary phase. Their behaviour in class and around school was good. This contributed to the safe and orderly environment. A minority of students in the lower primary years were not well behaved and this slowed their own and others' progress. In FS, most children understood class routines and could play constructively with others.
- Students generally enjoyed respectful and mutually supportive relationships with their peers. Relationships between students and staff were consistently positive. This contributed to the purposeful learning atmosphere observed in most lessons. Students enjoyed contributing to the school community and made excellent contributions to the conduct of morning assemblies.
- Students demonstrated positive attitudes to healthy lifestyles. They understood the need to make healthy eating choices and the need for exercise to maintain a healthy fitness level. This was reflected in students' lunch boxes and their enthusiastic participation in physical education classes and sports activities.
- Attendance was good across all year groups. Students were usually prompt both at the start of the school day and when returning to their lessons following break-times.

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

- Students across the school appreciated the values of Islam in the UAE. They talked about the month of Ramadan and mosques and explained how people should be modestly dressed in public places. Both Muslim and non-Muslim students worked positively together in Islamic activities and projects. For example, a non-Muslim student designed a model for Ka'ba.
- Students across the school showed a good respect of the UAE heritage and culture. They talked about cultural activities and celebrations such as the National Day and the Flag Day. The senior students talked about EXPO 2020 and children in FS sang the UAE National Anthem enthusiastically in Arabic and presented interesting programmes about UAE, such as the UAE news they read in the morning assemblies.
- Students of different nationalities showed good awareness of cultural diversity in the UAE. They celebrated their own cultures and showed good respect to other cultures. They also talked about the interesting things they learned about from different cultures such as their food, clothes, celebrations and languages.

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

- Students and children understood their responsibilities as members of a school community. Older students took on responsibilities very well such as monitoring the playground and helping supervise younger children at bus time. All students showed consideration towards others by raising money for charities and joining in campaigns such as 'Dubai Cares', and food and pencil collections.
- Most children and students were keen to learn. They enjoyed their work and were happy to be involved in activities but sometimes lacked initiative. They took part in local events, visited places of interest and learned how business worked. Senior students were reliable, active participants and sometimes led projects. They had fewer opportunities to develop their enterprise and entrepreneurship skills.
- All students cared for their school. Most took pride in their surroundings and kept their school tidy. They took part in caring for the environment when they recycled materials and tended the school garden. They were well aware of environmental issues such as preservation of energy. Many primary students were active in the 'can -collection' campaign. Secondary students were aware about the importance of making Dubai a 'greener' society.

3. Teaching and assessment

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Teaching for effective learning	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

- Across all phases, almost all teachers had sufficient subject knowledge to teach effectively. They had developed skills to engage students in learning. However, teaching in Arabic was less skilled. In general, teachers' knowledge of how students learn was secure but they were not consistent in how they developed students to be independent learners. They missed opportunities to use questioning to deepen understanding or clarify their answers.
- Teachers planned lessons systematically and generally well. Lesson objectives were clearly communicated to students. Teachers planned a wide range of activities, but timing did not always ensure effective learning, nor were there appropriate modifications for different groups of students. The environment for learning was generally stimulating and positive but many classrooms were too small to enable a full range of teaching activities.
- Interactions between teachers and students were positive and respectful. They always included questioning of students, but often through closed questions, thus limiting opportunities for more open dialogue. In a few classes, more open questioning led to improved discussions. Teachers often missed opportunities to develop learning points from students' incorrect answers. Students were not always given enough time to predict and develop their thoughts.
- In all classes, teachers used differentiated tasks to meet the needs of three broad groups of students; high, average and low achievers. It was not clear how these tasks raised the performance of the least able to curriculum expectations or, in FS, how these tasks provided appropriate challenge for children who learned quickly. In many classes, the most able students provided valuable support to other students who struggled.

- Teachers had made a promising start to the introduction of inquiry-based learning approaches as a result of recent training. However, they were not always fully confident in developing students' critical thinking skills, innovation and problem solving skills. Teachers of Islamic studies made effective use of students' critical thinking skills.
- Teachers' subject knowledge in Arabic was adequate but they were less skilled in how students learned. Their planning consistently referred to the four language skills differentiated to three levels of challenge. In Arabic as a first language, teachers' questioning in a few lessons developed students' higher order thinking skills, particularly in secondary. In Arabic as an additional language, many lessons used the same activities for all ability groups so did not meet students' needs.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Assessment	Acceptable	Acceptable ↑	Acceptable ↑

- In almost all subjects, internal assessment procedures were linked appropriately to the school's curriculum standards to provide realistic measures of students' progress.
- The school had made a start in developing benchmark assessments against the outcomes of national and international standards. International assessments had been developed widely across the school and offered more comprehensive information for all students. These were still at an early stage to measure students' level of attainment and progress accurately against wider international expectations or to predict students' potential for their achievement.
- Analysis of assessment data was systematically organized but it was not sufficiently well developed to provide reliable information in order to set students appropriately challenging targets. Information about students' progress did not provide staff with sufficient information to plan and set progress targets which could be shared with students and parents.
- Teachers used the results of assessments to measure progress during the year but this was not consistently or accurately done across all subjects and phases. As a result, it did not always inform teaching or lead to effective teaching, learning and curriculum planning.
- Staff gave written and oral feedback to students but this was not consistent across the school. Where written feedback on how to improve was given, it often lacked sufficient detail to help student to know how best to improve the quality of their work. There was not always enough follow up from teachers to check that the improvement advice they had given had been followed. Student assessment of their own work was at an early stage of development.

4. Curriculum

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Curriculum design and implementation	Good ↑	Good ↑	Good ↑

- The school followed the English curriculum for the early years in FS, and Cambridge International. Both curricula had breadth, relevance and balance across subjects, ages, abilities and areas of learning. The curriculum ensured students' knowledge was being developed but, at times, understanding and skills were not promoted sufficiently.

- The curriculum was planned to allow continuity and progression. The curriculum incorporated provision to meet the needs of most students, including those with SEND and gifts and talents. Preparing students for the next stages in their education was considered carefully and transition arrangements for the youngest children eased the process when they first started school, enabling them to settle quickly.
- The curriculum contained enrichment activities covering a wide variety of events, trips and excursions to engage the students in their learning. For example children in FS visited the Dubai museum, the heritage village and attended a range of clubs, including cookery and music. UAE culture featured regularly within the curriculum. Older students covered topics about Dubai, such as energy conservation and environmental issues.
- The school had developed an integrated approach to the curriculum which allowed links to be made between subjects. Students in the oldest grades were given the opportunities to experience life skills situations such as financial literacy. Through social studies, students developed the knowledge, concepts and skills in geography and history in the UAE and beyond.
- The curriculum was under very regular review to ensure it was cohesive and comprehensive. The development of the curriculum was being tackled very seriously and, since the previous inspection, the school had adopted a structured curriculum for Years 1-8. The review of the curriculum had helped to identify where any specific gaps might lie which would need to be tackled through adjusting the structured underlying curriculum.
- The school provided an acceptable curriculum in both Islamic education and Arabic. Both followed the MoE curriculum and were fully compliant. The Islamic education curriculum was enhanced through effective links to social studies. Provision for Arabic as an additional language lacked cohesion and effective progression in skills development. Weaknesses were the result of limited understanding of how to differentiate tasks effectively.
- The school provided UAE social studies as a standalone subject taught in English. The social studies curriculum was broad, balanced and age appropriate. It covered the history of Dubai, traditions and economic stability. In addition, it was enhanced with lots of extracurricular activities done by the school and links were also made by teachers of other subjects.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Curriculum adaptation	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

- The school had begun to modify the curriculum to make it more appropriate to the needs of all students. The modifications and their implementation across all subjects and phases were not yet sufficient. They were not able to support all students with diverse abilities and special learning needs. In many lessons, students were not sufficiently challenged or well enough supported as individuals to make adequate progress.
- The curriculum provided some opportunities for students to engage in activities promoting enterprise, and innovation. These were not consistently present in the core curriculum. The National Agenda content served to enrich the curriculum in both English and science. The range of extra-curricular options enhanced students' learning experiences and supported the personal, creative and social development of students.
- Social science classes and participation in a variety of school and community events had helped students to establish their understanding Emirati culture and UAE society. Student trips to important cultural and historical sites, classroom-based projects and the school's recognition of national celebrations had enabled most students to develop both an understanding and an appreciation of the culture they live in.

- Arabic was provided regularly for children in FS 2. They focused on letters, songs and stories which offered opportunities to develop phonemic and basic phonologic awareness.

5. The protection, care, guidance and support of students			
	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding	Very good ↑	Very good ↑	Very good ↑

- The school had developed rigorous safeguarding procedures. Improvements included enhanced transport arrangements such as GPS tracking devices on all buses and ongoing training for drivers and escorts. All school members were aware of cyber-bullying and child protection policies. There was regular safeguarding training for staff, and students were well aware of how to deal with bullying should it occur.
- Record keeping was very good at all levels, and new procedures had been introduced to further improve site security and premises and equipment maintenance. Fire drills were undertaken regularly and records were up to date. Appropriate risk assessments were carried out before all activities outside the school.
- The school environment was very safe, clean and secure. Student supervision was of a very high standard and necessary safety checks were regular and rigorous. There was little evidence of litter and students were aware of the need to care for their working environment.
- The school was accessible to all students currently enrolled. However, it did not have lifts to accommodate any potential students or staff with mobility needs.
- Students were supported very well to follow heathy lifestyles. In lessons and around the school, the messages were reinforced. For example, opportunities to be active in PE and gymnastics, and eye-catching displays of healthy food and activities. In addition to input by staff, the school used a variety of visitors and external agencies to develop student awareness of how to stay safe and lead a healthy lifestyle.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Care and support	Good	Good	Good

- Staff-student relationships were characterised by care and mutual respect. They were good across all phases and supported the development of positive student behavior. Most teachers demonstrated effective classroom management skills that led to teaching environments that were conducive to positive learning.
- Good levels of student attendance and punctuality had been achieved through the school's deployment of an efficient reporting, recording and monitoring system. Issues of concern were followed up promptly and successfully. This had had a positive impact in the ongoing involvement of students in school life.
- Policy documents clearly outlined the school's practices and procedures which supported the identification of students with SEND, as well as students who were gifted and talented. The school promoted collaboration with students and their parents to inform the development of accommodations and modifications to support classroom learning.

- Support for students with SEND was provided through in-class support and individual teaching in a learning support room. Classroom teachers were responsible for providing in-class support. An inconsistent approach across phases to the delivery of appropriate curriculum modifications and differentiation limited the progress of many students. Support for gifted and talented students was through a designated programme to develop their individual interests, abilities and skills.
- The welfare officer and the personal and social development team monitored students' welfare closely. Classroom teachers also provided personal guidance and advice to their students. Students in their final year benefited from a developing careers guidance and transition programme. Good quality careers and subject choice advice enabled them to be well prepared and informed as they moved to the next stages of their education.

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

The overall effectiveness of provision for students with special educational needs and disabilities	Good ↑

- The governors and senior leaders demonstrated a commitment to inclusion. The school admitted students with a range of SEND, and had taken steps to improve provision further through investing in additional staffing, resources and professional development for teachers, which continues to be an ongoing need. The five members of the school's expanded SEND team were well qualified and appropriately experienced in working with students with SEND.
- The identification process was well developed and effective, and there were good policies in place. The school's admissions policy did not fully reflect the inclusive nature of the school. A range of effective formal and informal assessment methods were used to identify student needs. Individualised education plans (IEPs) were well matched to the needs of students, but were not well used to monitor progress.
- Partnerships between the school and parents of students with SEND were strong. Parents were well informed, were welcomed in school. Information sessions were well designed to help parents understand their child's needs and abilities, and to guide them in supporting their child at home. Parents attended IEP meetings twice a year to discuss their progress. Parents had not yet been invited to contribute to the IEP.
- Specialist support was generally well targeted but the personalisation of learning and modification of the curriculum was less consistent and effective in the classrooms. Many teachers took account of the modifications and accommodations to be made in their lesson plans and, in addition, differentiated the outcomes for students with SEND. However, some inconsistencies in lessons, limited the progress of students.
- Students with SEND made good, and sometimes very good, progress in their personal, social and emotional development. When the students' IEPs were used effectively within the classroom, students made good academic progress. This was not consistent across the school and, sometimes, the progress of students with SEND was negatively affected by the underestimation of their needs and abilities and the lack of effective classroom support.

6. Leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership	Acceptable

- The principal, with the support of the governing body, had set a clear vision for taking the school forward. All leaders at senior and middle management level were committed to improving the quality of education for all students. The school's inclusive ethos and approach had ensured students and their families were welcomed and supported.
- Senior leaders understood the importance of developing consistency in learning and teaching throughout the school. They had successfully introduced a new curriculum framework in the primary and secondary stages, and were developing teachers' understanding of effective teaching and learning. These had not yet resulted in raising attainment and offering consistent high quality of learning for all students.
- The development of a middle management team had already shown impact in the distributed leadership responsibilities. Subject and stage leaders provided helpful support to class teachers, including team teaching and sharing practice. The middle leadership team was at an early stage in their management expertise and experience and in the development of their skills in accurate and consistent evaluation of teaching quality and students' progress.
- School leaders and governors had a clear determination to continue to improve the quality and capacity of educational provision. They were less accurate in evaluating the level of progress made by students in relation to their starting points or baseline assessments. Nonetheless, they had an appropriate understanding of what they needed to do next to make continuous improvement.
- Senior leaders had been successful in introducing a number of important developments. These had had a positive influence in supporting the quality and range of students' learning opportunities. The school had made sure it followed and complied with all necessary regulations. The foundations of improvement had been established. Students' level of performance had been sustained but had not yet been raised significantly.

School self-evaluation and improvement planning	Acceptable

- The school had developed systematic procedures to evaluate its quality of provision. All teachers were included appropriately in the initial school self-evaluation and professional development to take forward improvement priorities. The introduction of a wider range of information had helped the school to identify their priorities more effectively. The school was less accurate in judging the rate and levels of progress made.
- Senior and middle managers conducted comprehensive observations and monitoring of classroom teaching. They provided helpful feedback to teachers and shared the strengths and development needs. They used the information from all observations well to analyse teachers' needs. This was used to identify professional development requirements more accurately.
- The school's leaders had drawn up clear and appropriate action plans. These addressed the key areas for development highlighted from the last inspection report, and additional areas identified from the school's own self-evaluation process. Senior management had been less effective in evaluating how well the priorities had been implemented and the progress made.

- Most priorities from the previous inspection report had been implemented. A wide range of resources and professional development had been provided to support staff. A coherent curriculum had been introduced across the primary and secondary stages and linked appropriately with the FS to allow students a smooth progress through the school. Not all aspects of development were fully embedded in consistent practice across the school.

Partnerships with parents and the community

Very good ↑

- Parents felt very welcomed and involved in the school. They appreciated sharing in their children's learning, and the help they received from teachers to support their children at home. Through the parent association, parents had effective ways to offer their views to the school leadership. Their suggestions were acted upon regarding their children and making improvements to the school.
- The school had a wide and very helpful range of methods to let parents know about the school and their children's learning. Positive examples included the use of online communication to share lessons and project plans. This allowed parents to support their children more effectively in their work at home and school.
- Progress reports were shared regularly and covered the breadth of subjects which the students studied. Parents particularly appreciated when teachers highlighted students' interests or talents, with suggestions on how they could be developed. More focused attention on informing for the next steps in individual student's learning was still developing.
- The school had developed productive links with the local and wider community. Close links with other schools supported the sharing of educational practice and learning experiences for students, including competitions and sporting events. Students had gained positive experiences from taking part in charity fund raising and cultural events within the UAE. Business and international school links had further extended effective community collaboration.

Governance

Good ↑

- The governing body had a wide representation of stakeholders, including parents and staff. Regular surveys were conducted to seek the views of parents and staff, and acted upon to improve the school. Examples included significant changes to facilities and a wider range of extra-curricular activities. Governors had individual responsibilities and linked effectively with departments and key members of staff.
- The principal sent monthly update reports to the governors. Members of the board visited the school regularly for events. They also conducted learning walks to gather information and observe students and their work. The quality assurance director regularly monitored and discussed the quality of provision with the school leaders. Evaluations of academic progress were not yet robust or accurate enough.
- Governors played an important role in supporting the prompt action to make improvements in the school following the previous inspection visit. They had provided sufficient additional resources to make a wide range of improvements, including the recruitment of additional teaching staff and support for professional development. This had enabled the school to make positive steps in improving the educational provision.

Management, staffing, facilities and resources	Acceptable ↑

- The school operated efficiently on a day-to-day basis. Timetabling made appropriate use of the teaching rooms. There were effective systems to manage the attendance of students and their use of buses.
- The school was adequately staffed with a suitable number of teachers to deliver the curriculum. Most teachers were appropriately qualified and deployed across the school. All teachers have benefitted from regular professional development.
- The maintenance of the premises was managed well. The accommodation had been significantly improved by the adaptation of one building to develop a multi-purpose hall, library and activity room. However, teaching areas were often too small for the number of students in them with a consequent adverse impact. The school had no lifts which meant access to the upper floors was limited for those with mobility needs.
- Although there had been improvement in the availability of resources, the quality and range remained limited. Many teachers made their own teaching resources and students often brought resources from home, particularly tablet computers. The school was continuing to improve the resources available to support 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**	639
	2014-2015	395
Teachers	119	
Students	0	

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

- Almost all parents, who responded to the survey, were happy with the education provided by the school. They felt their children progressed well in English, mathematics and science, a minority did not feel progress was as good in Arabic. A significant minority did not think teaching in Arabic was done well.
- Parents agreed that teaching methods and resources were appropriate. They thought their children were developing personally and socially. They felt they were aware of themselves and others, and their responsibility to caring for the environment.
- Almost all considered students were kept safe in school. A few expressed concerns about aspects of safety on school and buses. A minority did not feel the school dealt well with bullying incidents.
- Parents were very positive about the support for students with SEND. They felt fully involved and informed by the school and helped to support their children at home.
- Teaching staff were very positive about the school. Almost all, who responded, thought students enjoyed being at school and were developing their social skills and understanding of other cultures. They felt the school was well led but a small minority did not think their views were acted upon by the leadership team.

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