



German International
School Dubai

 Curriculum: German

Overall Rating:

Good



“We are keen to prepare the new generation that is ready to be creative and innovative to help us achieve our ambitions for even greater prosperity”

Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al-Maktoum



Contents

School information	3
The DSIB inspection process	4
Summary of inspection findings 2016-2017	6
Main inspection report	11
1. Students' achievement.....	11
2. Students' personal and social development, and their innovation skills.....	16
3. Teaching and assessment	17
4. Curriculum	19
5. The protection, care, guidance and support of students.....	20
Inclusion	21
6. Leadership and management	22
The views of parents, teachers and senior students.....	25



School information



General information	
Location	Academic City
Type of school	Private
Opening year of school	2008
Website	www.germanschool.ae
Telephone	00971-4-4562718
Address	P.O.Box 391162, Dubai
Principal	Gert Blach
Language of instruction	German
Inspection dates	5 to 8 December 2016

Teachers / Support staff	
Number of teachers	64
Largest nationality group of teachers	German
Number of teaching assistants	12
Teacher-student ratio	1:11
Number of guidance counsellors	1
Teacher turnover	25%

Students	
Gender of students	Boys and girls
Age range	3-18
Grades or year groups	KG 1-Year 13
Number of students on roll	706
Number of children in pre-kindergarten	84
Number of Emirati students	0
Number of students with SEND	56

Largest nationality group of students German

Curriculum	
Educational permit / Licence	German
Main curriculum	German / Ministry of Education
External tests and examinations	Thüringen
Accreditation	Deutsche Internationale Abiturprüfung
National Agenda benchmark tests	Not applicable



The DSIB inspection process



In order to judge the overall quality of education provided by schools, inspectors consider the six standards of performance that form the basis of the UAE School Inspection Framework (the framework). They look at children's attainment and progress in key subjects, their learning skills and their personal and social development. They judge how effective teaching and the assessment of learning are across the school. Inspectors consider how well the school's curriculum, including activities inside and outside classrooms, meet the educational needs of all students. They judge how well schools protect and support children. In addition, inspectors judge the effectiveness of leadership, which incorporates governance, management, staffing and facilities.

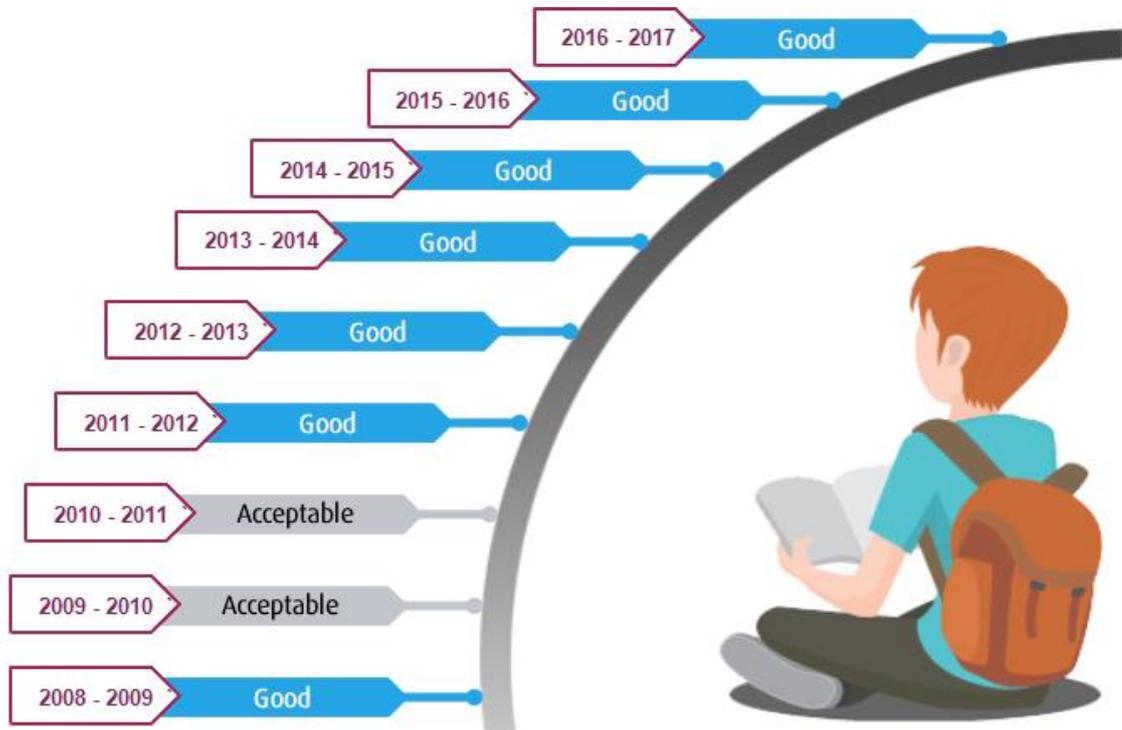
Inspection judgements are drawn from evidence gathered by the inspection team, including observation of students' learning in lessons, review of their work, discussions with students, meetings with the staff, parents and governors, and review of surveys completed by parents, teachers and students.

Judgements are made on a six-point scale

DSIB inspection teams make judgements about different aspects, phases and subjects that form the work of the school, using the scale below, which is consistent with the framework.

Outstanding	Quality of performance substantially exceeds the expectation of the UAE
Very good	Quality of performance exceeds the expectation of the UAE
Good	Quality of performance meets the expectation of the UAE (This is the expected level for every school in the UAE)
Acceptable	Quality of performance meets the minimum level of quality required in the UAE (This is the minimum level for every school in the UAE)
Weak	Quality of performance is below the expectation of the UAE
Very weak	Quality of performance is significantly below the expectation of the UAE

Inspection journey for German International School Dubai



- The German International School opened in 2008. It is a private school under the auspices of the Standing Committee of German Ministers of Culture. It has 706 boys and girls from Kindergarten to Grade 12, aged three to 18 years. The roll has increased by 32 from the previous year. The students are of several different nationalities and most have at least one parent who is German. Students speak a range of first languages. The principal has been in post since August 2013. Teacher turnover at the time of inspection was 25 per cent compared to 31 per cent the previous year.
- Previous inspections have acknowledged the high standards of attainment in almost all subjects, the strengths in students' personal and social development, their positive relationships with staff and other students, and the support provided by the governing body.
- Recommendations since 2013/14 have identified the need to improve: student use of technology; the use of assessment data to monitor students' progress and the performance of the school; the teaching of science in the elementary phase, and the quality of continuous self-evaluation procedures to improve the school.

Summary of inspection findings 2016-2017



German International School Dubai was inspected by DSIB from 5 to 8 December 2016. The overall quality of education provided by the school is **good**. The section below summarises the inspection findings for each of the six performance indicators described in the framework.

- In all core subjects in all phases, standards of students' attainment and progress are good or better. There are particular strengths in English across the school, and in Arabic in the elementary phase. Students demonstrate very good learning skills in most lessons, but there are too few opportunities for them to use technology to enhance their learning.
- Students' personal and social development is strong throughout the school. Staff are very successful in building on the foundation provided in the Kindergarten (KG). However, students' understanding of Islamic values and Emirati and other world cultures is less well-developed.
- The quality of teaching is very good in most lessons throughout the school. Assessment has improved but staff do not yet make sufficient use of assessment information to improve teaching.
- The curriculum is very good in the KG and good in the other phases. Sensible adjustments have been made to the curriculum to meet the learning needs of students.
- The school's approach to health and safety is very good and students are very well supported throughout the school. Those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) receive very good support.
- The quality of leadership across the school is good and has brought about improvements in several aspects of the school, most noticeably in the KG and elementary phases. Self-evaluation is acceptable. Overall, links with the parents and the community are good. Governance is very good and ensures the school is staffed with well-qualified teachers. The school has excellent premises and sports facilities.

What the school does best

- Students make very good progress in the KG, achieve very high standards in Arabic in the elementary phase and good or better standards in all other core subjects.
- Children's personal development is outstanding in the KG.
- Students collaborate very well with each other. Students' learning skills, and most teaching, are very good.
- The attention given to health and safety, and the support provided to students, including those with special education needs and disabilities, are very good.
- The school benefits from outstanding premises and resources.

Recommendations

- Senior and middle managers should improve self-evaluation and the school's methods of continuous improvement by:
 - Implementing a more robust approach to lesson observations in which teachers receive clear advice on how to enhance their practice; and
 - Monitoring the quality of students' work more closely.
- Further improve the effectiveness of assessment by:
 - Analysing and making better use of data to identify strengths and weaknesses in each subject and trends in performance;
 - Using data to improve lesson planning and the teaching of different groups of students;
 - Making better use of diagnostic assessment to provide better feedback to students to enable them to know their strengths and what they need to do to improve.
- Enable students in the elementary and secondary phases to make more frequent and effective use of technology to enhance their learning.
- Ensure that all adults employed by the school are trained annually in the school's child protection procedures.

Innovation in Education

The UAE Vision 2021 sets the aspiration 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' and provides a basis for evaluating schools in order to deliver a world-class education for all children in the UAE.



Promoting a culture of innovation:

- The school leaders have formed a team to promote innovation across the school. The student council shows initiative and enterprise by running a company which manages students' lockers and provides money for the school's social fund. In the KG and other areas, teachers are promoting critical thinking through asking students more challenging questions. The curriculum has improved with the addition of a robotics course to the afternoon activities programme. A special week is also set aside when teachers focus on developing students' learning skills for part of the school while other students go on a field trip.

Overall school performance

Good

1 Students' achievement

		KG	Elementary	Secondary 1	Secondary 2
Islamic education 	Attainment	Not applicable	Good	Good	Good
	Progress	Not applicable	Good	Good	Good
Arabic as a first language 	Attainment	Not applicable	Very good ↑	Good	Good
	Progress	Not applicable	Very good ↑	Good	Good
Arabic as an additional language 	Attainment	Not applicable	Very good	Good	Not applicable
	Progress	Not applicable	Outstanding	Good	Not applicable
Language of instruction 	Attainment	Good	Good	Good	Good
	Progress	Very good	Good	Good	Good
English 	Attainment	Very good ↑	Very good	Very good	Very good ↓
	Progress	Very good ↑	Very good	Very good	Very good
Mathematics 	Attainment	Good	Good ↓	Very good ↑	Very good
	Progress	Very good ↑	Good ↓	Very good ↑	Very good
Science 	Attainment	Good	Good ↑	Good	Very good
	Progress	Very good ↑	Good	Good	Very good
		KG	Elementary	Secondary 1	Secondary 2
Learning skills		Very good ↑	Very good ↑	Good	Very good

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

	KG	Elementary	Secondary 1	Secondary 2
Personal development	Outstanding	Very good	Very good	Very good
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Good	Good ↓	Good ↓	Good ↓
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Very good	Very good	Very good	Very good

3. Teaching and assessment

	KG	Elementary	Secondary 1	Secondary 2
Teaching for effective learning	Very good ↑	Very good ↑	Good	Very good ↑
Assessment	Good ↑	Good ↑	Good	Very good

4. Curriculum

	KG	Elementary	Secondary 1	Secondary 2
Curriculum design and implementation	Very good ↑	Good	Good	Good
Curriculum adaptation	Good ↑	Good	Good	Good

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

	KG	Elementary	Secondary 1	Secondary 2
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding	Very good ↑	Very good ↑	Very good ↑	Very good ↑
Care and support	Very good ↑	Very good ↑	Very good ↑	Very good ↑

6. Leadership and management

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

Main inspection report



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
Language of instruction	Good	Very good
English	Very good ↑	Very good ↑
Mathematics	Good	Very good ↑
Science	Good	Very good ↑

- In German, the majority of children demonstrate levels of knowledge, skills and understanding in their oral and visual communications that are above the Thüringen curriculum standards. They converse well in German and use it purposefully during play and with the teacher. They explore their environment and build very well the foundations for learning to read and write.
- The large majority of children are attaining levels in speaking and listening in English that are above the Common European Framework standards for second language English learners. They use correct English when communicating and expressing their thoughts and their needs. In lessons, the large majority of children are making better than expected progress in their listening and speaking skills in relation to the lesson objectives.
- The majority of children demonstrate an understanding of fundamental mathematics. They use patterns, models and relationships to explain their thinking. High achievers can solve problems and justify their answers with knowledge and skills above the curriculum standards. The large majority of children are making better than expected progress in applying mathematical concepts with understanding, as measured against learning objectives and in relation to their appropriate starting points.
- The majority of children demonstrate knowledge of the world around them that is above curriculum standards. They combine scientific knowledge with reasoning and thinking skills and can discuss their ideas. In KG2, children can hypothesise, investigate and use scientific tools. In lessons and over time, the large majority of children are making better than expected progress in making sense of the physical world and their environment.

 Elementary		
Subjects	Attainment	Progress
Islamic education	Good	Good
Arabic as a first language	Very good ↑	Very good ↑
Arabic as an additional language	Very good	Outstanding
Language of instruction	Good	Good
English	Very good	Very good
Mathematics	Good ↓	Good ↓
Science	Good ↑	Good

- In Islamic education, the majority of students attain levels that are above the Ministry of Education (MoE) curriculum expectations. They understand the differences between the pillars of Iman and the pillars of Islam, and between the prophets and messengers of Allah. They memorise and understand the prescribed verses of the Holy Qur'an such as Surat Al-Ikhlass. Their recitation skills of the Qur'an are underdeveloped. Students make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of the acts of worship and can apply the process of Wudoo before salat. However, their understanding of the main vocabulary of Hadeeths is not secure.
- In Arabic as a first language, the large majority of students make better than expected progress and attain levels that are above curriculum standards. This has been consistent in recent years. In lessons and in their recent work, they demonstrate very good progress in the four language skills in relation to the learning objectives and over time. All groups of students make better than expected progress in all four skills.
- In Arabic as an additional language, most students make better than expected progress in lessons and a large majority demonstrate linguistic skills that are above the expected curriculum levels for their years of study of an additional language. They understand well the main points from short passages of familiar language on a range of topics. They listen well and are rapidly developing their reading skills using contextual cues to work out the meaning of unfamiliar words. They can write simple sentences using the correct forms of adjectives and verbs, and they are beginning to use their knowledge of grammar to substitute words and develop simple presentations.
- In German, a majority of students across all grades make better than expected progress from their starting points and reach levels that are above curriculum standards. On entry to the elementary phase, students listen and speak well and can read and understand simple narrative texts. They can write letters and short words neatly. By the end of the phase in Grade 4, students talk and listen with confidence in an increasing range of contexts. Their writing, in a range of forms, is often lively, imaginative and interesting.
- In English, the large majority of students attain levels above the expected curriculum and German national standards. They are developing fluent reading skills and are very confident in their use of the spoken language. By Grade 4 they have progressed to the extent that they are able to carry out independent research online and in the library to produce a report for presentation to peers and teachers. Writing is the least well-developed language skill.

- In mathematics, the majority of students demonstrate attainment that is above curriculum standards. Attainment against external benchmarking in Grade 3 is similar to national averages although internal assessments are more positive. A majority of students, and most groups, make better than expected progress as seen in lessons and their work. Trends over time are variable. Students have a good knowledge and understanding of number, but problem-solving and critical thinking are underdeveloped.
- In science, a majority of students attain above curriculum expectations for their age. This is an improvement over recent years. No external benchmarks have been used to compare against national and international standards. Most students enjoy the recently introduced themes such as animals in different habitats. A majority make better than expected progress in acquiring knowledge and understanding of science and can apply it well in a real world context. All groups of students make good progress in developing enquiry skills and are confident to present their findings to their peers.

 Secondary 1		
Subjects	Attainment	Progress
Islamic education	Good	Good
Arabic as a first language	Good	Good
Arabic as an additional language	Good	Good
Language of instruction	Good	Good
English	Very good	Very good
Mathematics	Very good ↑	Very good ↑
Science	Good	Good

- In Islamic education, the majority of students make better than expected progress and attain levels that are above curriculum standards. They have a secure knowledge of Islamic values, morals and Zakah and how it is different from Sadaqah. They understand concepts such as coexistence and justice and how they are linked to the Holy Qur'an and Hadeeth. Students are not always able to analyse, infer and apply lessons from the Seerah, such as the Hijra, with that of the importance of brotherhood and sisterhood in Islam. Their memorising and recitation skills of the Holy Qur'an are below expectations.
- In Arabic as a first language, the majority of students attain levels that are above curriculum standards. In lessons and in their recent work, they demonstrate good speaking, listening, reading and writing skills. Attainment levels have been consistent over the past three years. In lessons, the majority of students make better than expected progress in relation to their starting points and against the learning objectives which are aligned with the curriculum standards in all four skills.
- In Arabic as an additional language, the majority of students make better than expected progress from their starting points. They display levels of knowledge and understanding of the language that are above the curriculum expectations for additional language learners. Students understand opinions in a spoken passage. They can give a short prepared talk and answer questions on a range of topics. They can use some conjunctions in their writing and can apply their knowledge of the masculine and feminine forms of adjectives with few errors.

- In German, a majority of students attain levels that are above curriculum standards. They make good progress, particularly in their speaking and listening skills, and make significant contributions to discussions, varying how and when they participate. Students have a good understanding of the ways in which meaning and information are conveyed in a range of texts. Students' writing skills are less well developed; grammar and vocabulary are not always used accurately.
- In English, the large majority of students attain levels above curriculum and German national standards. Reading, listening and comprehension skills are very good and students are confident speakers who readily engage in discussion. They are skilled in the application of punctuation and grammar but less so in extended creative writing. Regular assessments shows that very good progress is being maintained, although this is not consistently reflected in the quality of work in students' books.
- In mathematics, a large majority of students make better than expected progress and attain levels above the curriculum standards. International benchmarking in Grades 6 and 8 is generally positive while lesson observations, work samples and internal data confirm very good attainment in quadratics, graphs, trigonometric functions and probability diagrams observed at the end of the phase. Students' performance in the Abschlussprüfung examination was good. SEND students make similar progress to their peers. Outcomes over time are improving especially in the higher grades.
- Levels of attainment fluctuate across the phase and across the three sciences. However, a majority make better than expected progress in acquiring knowledge and developing their understanding and reach levels that are above curriculum standards. This has been the case for three years. Most groups of students develop problem-solving skills which they use well in unfamiliar situations. They develop effective practical skills but are less skilled at planning and evaluating their own investigations.

 Secondary 2		
Subjects	Attainment	Progress
Islamic education	Good	Good
Arabic as a first language	Good	Good
Arabic as an additional language	Not applicable	Not applicable
Language of instruction	Good	Good
English	Very good ↓	Very good
Mathematics	Very good	Very good
Science	Very good	Very good

- In Islamic education, the majority of students attain levels that are above curriculum standards. They have a good knowledge of how Allah controls the world. They understand the importance of patience, perseverance and sincerity. They know the stories of Meryam and Prophet Isa (AS). However, students' recitation skills and their memorisation of suras are underdeveloped. In their recent work, students make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of the concepts of mercy and can differentiate between forgiveness from Allah and forgiveness between people. However, students are not always able to explain how Islamic concepts apply to their daily lives.

- In Arabic as a first language, the majority of students make better than expected progress and attain levels that are above curriculum standards. This has been the case for three years. Grade 11 students, for example, can read and analyse a poem well and explain the meaning of the vocabulary. In lessons and in their recent work, the majority of students can write independently to a high standard. In lessons, the majority of students make better than expected progress in relation to the learning objectives of the curriculum.
- In German, a majority of students make better than expected progress and attain levels that are above curriculum standards. Students develop their talk purposefully. They listen carefully and express their own ideas clearly. They comment on a wide range of texts. They identify and analyse information and ideas clearly. They show empathy with literary figures. Their narrative writing includes a good variety in structure and control of characters, events and settings. Their use of vocabulary and grammar often enables fine distinctions to be made.
- In English the large majority of students attain levels above curriculum and German national standards. They have a very good command of the structures and styles of written language which they can adapt to different contexts. This, together with their higher order thinking skills, enables them to analyse texts critically including Shakespeare's plays. In presentations and debate, students are articulate and confident and able to use the language to a very high standard. In lessons and over time the large majority make very good progress.
- In mathematics, the attainment of a large majority of students is above curriculum standards. This is confirmed by external examination results. Students' performance in the Abitur examinations was good rather than very good. Lesson observations, work sampling and internal data confirm very good attainment and very good progress with challenging work on differentiation in Grade 11 and three dimensional vectors in Grade 12. Most groups of students make better than expected progress. Trends over time are variable.
- A large majority of students make better than expected progress and develop a firm grasp of scientific knowledge. They demonstrate a good understanding of how to apply it and have a very good understanding of scientific method. However, only a majority of students last year achieved above expected standards in the Deutsche Internationales Abitur which was a lower performance than in previous years.

	KG	Elementary	Secondary 1	Secondary 2
Learning skills	Very good ↑	Very good ↑	Good	Very good

- Students are very well-motivated with a strong work ethic. They engage positively with their teachers and their learning assignments. They demonstrate a capacity to take responsibility for their learning but do not have as good an understanding of their own strengths and weaknesses.
- Students' collaborative work is excellent and peer support is strong. They are confident about sharing their ideas and explaining their work to the rest of the class or in assemblies.
- Students are aware that areas of learning can overlap and benefit from the cross-curricular links which some teachers build in their planning. Students' learning is enhanced at each stage by the links that are made to the real world; for example, the extended work in Grade 12 English on the theme of globalisation.

- Students demonstrate enterprise and are well capable of successfully pursuing independent lines of enquiry. The use of technology is developing but not widespread. Critical thinking and problem-solving are evident in some lessons, especially in science, but are underdeveloped in some lower secondary classes and in Islamic education and in Arabic.

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

	KG	Elementary	Secondary 1	Secondary 2
Personal development	Outstanding	Very good	Very good	Very good

- Children cheerfully enter the KG knowing that they are going to enjoy learning. Such positive attitudes are evident throughout the school. Students are keen to learn. They are supportive and empathetic when working together, demonstrating mature attitudes. Students are confident to seek help and feedback, and respond well to the comments of their teachers and classmates.
- Students behave very well. KG children respond extremely positively to the guidance of adults. They soon settle into school routines and learn to take turns and share. Across the school, students behave well at all times. They move around the school in orderly fashion and resolve any minor conflicts independently. Students say that bullying is extremely rare and are confident that any incidents would be dealt with effectively.
- The school is a harmonious community. Students from various backgrounds get along well, making friends across nationalities and cultures. They offer one another support and are especially ready to help students who are less confident. Relationships between staff and students are mutually respectful. A few students suggest that the school lacks a family atmosphere.
- Students are well-aware of the value of healthy eating and exercise. They are active during break times, organising and sharing sports and play equipment. Sports clubs are well attended. They understand the importance of a balanced diet and, for the most part, choose healthy options from the school canteen. Students appreciate the importance of safety. They know the potential hazards in using the internet.
- Students' enthusiasm for school is evident in their good rate of attendance. They arrive punctually to school and to lessons.

	KG	Elementary	Secondary 1	Secondary 2
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Good	Good ↓	Good ↓	Good ↓

- Students demonstrate a clear understanding of Islamic values, such as tolerance, and how they influence the present UAE society, and life in Dubai. They can provide a variety of examples of the values of generosity and kindness that influence people's lives. They understand the importance of wearing the appropriate dress in Dubai and the other emirates.

- Students appreciate the Bedouin heritage and the Emirati and Arabic culture that influence contemporary life in the UAE. They are aware of the history of the UAE. They participate in the key events organised by the school such as the National Day, the Iftar during Ramadan month and Eids. They also participate in the school's fashion show.
- Students have a good understanding and appreciation of their own and other cultures. From visits to the global village and other sources, they can explain the different types of food, dress and music of other countries. They embrace opportunities to meet and interact with students from other cultures in their school.

	KG	Elementary	Secondary 1	Secondary 2
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Very good	Very good	Very good	Very good

- Students take advantage of the opportunities to share their opinions and ideas on a range of topics which affect their lives at school. Class representatives meet regularly as members of the school council. They make a good contribution to school development, organising social, sporting and charity events. For example, letters from students to a nearby French school resulted in inter-school sports competitions.
- Students have a strong work ethic and, when there are opportunities for taking a leadership role, they take responsibility seriously. Older students have an entrepreneurial spirit. This is evident in their management of student lockers. Students in Grade 9, talk enthusiastically about internships in local companies for which they create a résumé and complete an application form.
- Students have a strong commitment to caring about the environment and seek ways to improve it. They develop and reinforce their awareness through topics about water, the protection of plants and energy conservation. The youngest children enjoy contributing to projects, such as making Christmas cards for sale at the Christmas bazaar. Students readily take part in re-cycling schemes and volunteer to work in projects such as 'Clean up the World'.

3. Teaching and assessment

	KG	Elementary	Secondary 1	Secondary 2
Teaching for effective learning	Very good ↑	Very good ↑	Good	Very good ↑

- Teachers have a good knowledge of their subjects. They have a secure awareness of how students learn. In the KG, a strong focus on learning through play and on personal, social and language development provides a secure foundation for children's future learning. As students move through the school, teachers generally adapt their approaches accordingly. They use a good variety of strategies, such as animations in science and geography, to illustrate increasingly difficult concepts.
- Teachers create a positive atmosphere conducive to learning. This is particularly effective in the Kindergarten. Teachers typically use resources well to support learning and use time efficiently. There are inconsistencies in planning. Some plans include explicit reference to what students will learn. Others focus too much on what the teacher will do and not enough on specific learning objectives for students at different starting points.

- Underpinning all lessons are the positive relationships between teachers and students. Consequently, students are usually confident seeking clarification and offering suggestions. Warm, purposeful interaction typifies teaching in the KG where staff provide constructive feedback and encourage children to think. Probing questions that demand insightful responses are an increasing feature of lessons, although there are inconsistencies. Teachers routinely use modern technology, such as interactive screens. In contrast, students do not make sufficient use of technology to enhance their learning.
- Teachers are generally adept in planning tasks to challenge the more-able students and in providing support for those who are less confident. Additional teachers and teaching assistants are deployed effectively in many lessons, for example, to support students who are in danger of falling behind or who have specific learning difficulties. Occasionally, the most-able students, and those who have particular gifts and talents, are not fully challenged in order to deepen their understanding.
- Children’s independence is promoted very successfully in the Kindergarten through a wide range of practical activities. KG staff encourage children to follow their own interests. Activities which involve critical thinking are a developing feature. These are more evident in Grades 11 and 12 when students compare texts in English, investigate relationships between functions in mathematics and devise investigations and practical work in science. Opportunities for exploring ideas more deeply are less apparent in some lower secondary classes, and in Islamic education and Arabic.

	KG	Elementary	Secondary 1	Secondary 2
Assessment	Good ↑	Good ↑	Good	Very good

- Internal assessment systems are consistent across the school. Regular testing across all subjects provides measures of students’ academic performance that are carefully linked to curriculum standards. Assessments provide useful information on student attainment and progress. Ongoing assessment is used better in Grades 11 and 12 than in other parts of the school. In Arabic, assessment lacks validity and reliability as students are assessed on levels below their years of study.
- The school participates in a range of external assessments including DESK in the KG, competence tests in Grades 3, 6 and 8, the Abschlussprüfung examination in Grade 10 and the Arbiter examination in Grade 12. The school undertakes some analysis of the performance of students against these examinations. In the Kindergarten tracking is improved and is more individualised and progressive. School leaders do not use external benchmarks sufficiently to confirm the validity of internal assessments.
- The school’s assessment procedures ensure that leaders have considerable data about individual students. These data are used to identify attainment and progress including offering additional support to those who are falling behind. Monitoring of student progress over time and the identification of patterns and barriers to achievement are underdeveloped. Recent work has considered the attainment of boys and girls but other comparisons, including the performance of SEND students, higher attainers or different ethnic groups, are not pursued.
- Assessment information is used effectively in some areas of the school to influence teaching. For example, assessment information identified a weakness in problem-solving in mathematics so the school purchased new books and developed further resources resulting in improved performance. There is less evidence of assessment influencing the curriculum in other areas.

- The majority of teachers have a good knowledge and awareness of the strengths and weaknesses of individual students. Feedback in the KG is consistently constructive. Elsewhere, feedback is given orally but books are not regularly marked and offer students limited helpful guidance on how to improve their work. Student self-evaluation is undertaken regularly but not always monitored to ensure accuracy and follow up. Better practice is seen in Grades 10 and 11 where students critically assess their performance and set their own targets.

4. Curriculum

	KG	Elementary	Secondary 1	Secondary 2
Curriculum design and implementation	Very good ↑	Good	Good	Good

- The curriculum has a clear rationale and is based on the curriculum of the state of Thüringen in Germany. It is competence-based and provides students with a balanced programme which aims to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding. In the KG the plan effectively follows a thematic, integrated, play-based approach with language acquisition and social skills development at its core. Islamic education, Arabic and UAE social studies follow the MoE curricula.
- Detailed planning ensures consistency as well as continuity and meets the needs of most students so that they are prepared for the next phase of education and for their future careers. Secondary 2 teachers are part of the Middle East regional group to ensure planning complies with the national standards for the German Internationale Abiturprüfung.
- Curricular choices comply with the rules and regulations of the German national education system. A broad range of extra-curricular activities is offered and takes account of students' interests, talents and aspirations.
- Cross-curricular links are evident between some subjects especially in the KG through the thematic approach. In the elementary phase, planning across subjects supports and enhance the development of scientific understanding. In the secondary 2 phase, geography and history are taught in English to extend students' language skills.
- The school undertakes periodic reviews of the curriculum but is not sufficiently rigorous to meet fully the academic and pastoral needs of all students. Changes have been introduced, mainly in the KG and elementary phases, to cope with the growing number of students arriving with limited German language skills.
- UAE social studies is integrated into the curriculum and provides a balance between knowledge, skills and concepts. The plan provides some meaningful cross-curricular links and ensures continuity as students move through the school. Learning in class is enhanced through assemblies, Arabic parents' participation in special celebrations, and visits to such places as Zayed University. There is no formal assessment of the subject.

	KG	Elementary	Secondary 1	Secondary 2
Curriculum adaptation	Good ↑	Good	Good	Good

- Modifications are made to the curriculum to meet the needs of almost all groups of students. In German, additional support is provided for students with lower attainment levels. Opportunities for students who are gifted and talented to demonstrate their abilities are adequate but not fully developed. Curriculum modification for secondary 2 phase students is very effective.
- Most students are motivated by a range of interesting opportunities offering a variety of activities to promote their creativity. Across all phases they take part in art activities such as the KHDA initiative, '100 ideas to make school a happy experience'. Students are successfully encouraged to read. The school provides students with suitcases filled with exciting and interesting reading material as part of the UAE reading year.
- The school effectively brings UAE's heritage to life by taking part in events such as Flag Day, National Day and Eid celebrations. Arabic parents participate in the school's festive activities enriching students' experience with food and traditions. Links have been successfully established for female Secondary 2 students with Zayed University. Supported by staff members, students take part in the Dubai "Top 100 Student Leadership Program".

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

	KG	Elementary	Secondary 1	Secondary 2
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding	Very good ↑	Very good ↑	Very good ↑	Very good ↑

- The school has an effective approach to preventing bullying, including cyber-bullying, which is understood by most staff and students. Students are taught about safe internet use. The child protection policy is comprehensive and teachers are aware of it, but training on how to apply it is not routinely provided for all adults employed by the school.
- The school is a very safe, clean and secure environment. There are regular and thorough safety checks. Students are very effectively supervised on buses and in school. Drop off and pick up arrangements are very effective and there are rigorous emergency procedures including regular fire drills.
- The school has a clear plan to take over full maintenance responsibilities for its buildings. It has appropriate contracts and records in place. Medical staff assiduously care for the health of students, maintain detailed records and store medicines securely.
- The school provides an excellent, bright and airy environment with admirable sports facilities. The KG has been enhanced by adding more shade to the play areas and provides a superb learning environment. With the exception of the Grade 4 corridor, most areas of the school are accessible to those with mobility difficulties.
- The school very successfully promotes healthy lifestyles both within the curriculum and through programmes led by the committed medical staff.

	KG	Elementary	Secondary 1	Secondary 2
Care and support	Very good ↑	Very good ↑	Very good ↑	Very good ↑

- Staff and students are very respectful and friendly towards each other and enjoy positive and purposeful relationships. Expectations for behaviour are clear and understood. Students appreciate the simplicity of the disciplinary system, but there are few positive rewards.
- Attendance and punctuality are managed well and both are enhanced by a strong work ethic on the part of the students and a respect for learning by parents. The movement of students from one classroom to another between lessons is orderly.
- Almost all students with special education needs and disabilities (SEND) are accurately identified, and a large minority has received external support in this process. Whilst these expert reports, resourced by parents, are worthwhile and helpful, there is considerable expertise within the school to provide informal identification, followed by curriculum support. Gifted and talented students are identified formally using information from a range of sources.
- The large majority of students who have SEND have personalised plans for their learning and support that are influenced by teachers' knowledge, parental perceptions and the skills of the SEND staff. Teachers know the students well and classes are small, so they are able to make informal adjustments in lessons to enable them to make progress. The provision to support gifted and talented students is being developed.
- Students trust their teachers and the staff at the school to deal with problems effectively. Students moving between the elementary and secondary phases receive support, in consultation with parents, to ensure a smooth transition. Careers guidance is appropriate. The school offers formal monitored internships in the local business community.

Inclusion

Provision and outcomes for students with SEND

Very good

- The leadership of the SEND department is effective and energetically drives the development of the service. However the written policy for admissions does not adequately reflect the inclusivity that the school provides. Similarly, the SEND policy gives little explanation about how the service actually works in the school.
- Almost all students with SEND are accurately identified. A large minority has an external assessment which provides diagnostic and educational information. This is supplemented by the expertise of the specialists within the school.
- Parents are largely very supportive of recent developments in the SEND department and, in particular, the enhanced level and quality of resourcing. They are active participants in planning to meet their children's needs and receive clear information about progress. Staff are accessible to them and deal with most of their concerns and issues quickly and sensitively.
- The SEND department includes teachers' and parents' views very well to formulate useful and effective learning plans. Most lessons are good or very good in meeting SEND students' needs. However, there is a minority of teachers, spread across the phases of the school, who are inexperienced and less confident in planning lessons to meet all needs and abilities.

- The large majority of students with SEND make at least good progress because teachers have time to monitor their learning in small classes. Progress is good because learning plans are well formulated and teachers know the students' learning needs very well. Specialist teachers enable excellent progress when teaching individuals or small groups using a personalised curriculum, thus supporting their learning in their mainstream classes.

6. Leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership

Good

- The principal and senior leaders have a vision of providing a high quality German education which enables students to transfer easily to a German school without repeating any years. Leaders are committed to enabling SEND students in the school to have an appropriate education. However, the written admissions policy does not reflect the inclusive practice evident in the school.
- Most leaders across the school have a good knowledge of the German curriculum and effective teaching, learning and assessment practices. They are successful in promoting a positive learning culture across the school and improving students' personal and social skills. This is beginning to have a positive impact on some academic achievements.
- Relationships between senior leaders and teachers are generally positive. Communication within the school is good. Leadership is shared well among the senior team. Teachers lead a number of quality groups which are charged with improving aspects of the school. Responsibilities are delegated to subject coordinators but they are not held fully accountable for the performance in their areas of responsibility.
- Leaders are aware that further improvements can be made but they have not established fully effective procedures to take the school forward in all subjects and all phases. An innovation team has been formed and aspects of innovative practice are beginning to emerge in the KG and other parts of the school.
- Senior and middle leaders have improved aspects of the school since the previous inspection, such as the introduction of a better science programme in the elementary stage, the introduction of external diagnostic assessments in the elementary and secondary phases, and well-conceived transition arrangements for students when they progress from one year to the next.

School self-evaluation and improvement planning

Acceptable

- The school does not have a systematic and rigorous approach to self-evaluation. Although information from internal and external assessments and other sources is used by staff, approaches to improvement planning are inconsistent.

- The quality of lessons is monitored by middle and senior managers, but feedback provided to teachers on how to improve practice is not sufficiently focussed. Insufficient attention is given by leaders to the quality of students' work and no clear action points for improvement arise from lesson observations. The school does not fully analyse the data it has on the performance of students or relate it to the quality of teaching and learning.
- The school does not have an effective system for ensuring continuous improvement. Plans exist but they are not well formed and they do not act as drivers for ongoing development and improvement.
- The school has made improvements over the last three years but has remained good overall. There has been some progress in addressing the recommendations from the last inspection but there has been little improvement to the effectiveness of self-evaluation procedures.

Partnerships with parents and the community

Good

- Parents are welcomed to the school as exemplified by the fortnightly social mornings in school and the increased consultation with parents of students with SEND. Generally, parents feel that their views are valued and that they are able to contribute to the life of the school.
- Most parents find teachers approachable and helpful. Lines of communication are open and staff usually respond to problems and questions in a timely fashion. Parents are kept informed of school events and are a valued part of the school community. School decisions and policies are not always explained in ways that help parents to understand them and their underpinning rationale.
- School reports are informative and enable parents and students to know about progress and attainment. Reports also comment on the personal development of the students and any particular successes or participation in competitions and extra-curricular activities. However, they rarely give helpful insight about the next steps in learning and what students should do to progress more quickly.
- The school is an active member of the organisation for German International Schools and increasingly takes part in local networking events. Staff have developed links with a number of organisations in Dubai for the benefit of students.

Governance

Very good

- The governing body is comprised of elected parents with monthly meetings involving the Parent's Council, school managers, representatives of students, teachers and other workers. Governors seek the views of parents on particular issues through surveys and through informal contacts and feedback from parents.
- The board takes account of inspection reports and German Government inspections for information on the quality of the school's provision. The principal provides regular reports to the board on aspects of the school's performance. Board members' abilities to scrutinise the schools' academic performance and hold the school to account are underdeveloped.

- The governing body demonstrates its commitment to providing a high quality German education for all students by making available the excellent facilities and ample staffing and resources to bring about improvements.

Management, staffing, facilities and resources

Very good ↑

- The school is very well-organised and managed very efficiently on a day-to-day basis. Display screens are used well to communicate timetable changes to staff.
- The school is staffed with well-qualified teachers, including those with a responsibility for SEND. Secondary teachers, especially, have a very good knowledge of their subjects and how to teach them. Training is provided regularly for teachers on a range of relevant aspects of education but it is not provided for classroom assistants. Training of all adults employed by the school on child protection is not undertaken routinely.
- The outstanding premises and facilities provide a safe and secure learning environment with very good sports facilities which together support the delivery of a broad and varied curriculum. The KG is a bright, spacious and welcoming learning environment. However, most other classrooms do not celebrate sufficiently students' work.
- The school is very well equipped with learning resources in classrooms and laboratories to facilitate teaching and enhance learning. These include very good audio facilities in foreign language teaching rooms, as well as interactive white-boards in classrooms.

The views of parents, teachers and senior students

The views of parents, teachers and senior 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*	2016-2017	337
	2015-2016	188
 Teachers	57	
 Students	135	

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

- Almost all parents who responded to the survey are satisfied with the quality of education provided by the school for their children. They feel that their children are safe and enjoy school.
- These parents think that the school reports and meetings with teachers keep them informed about their children's progress. However, almost one quarter of parents are not sure whether the school deals with bullying well and almost one third do not know if the school helps prepare their children to use the internet and social media safely.
- Almost all teachers who responded to the survey are very positive about all aspects of the school.
- Almost all students who responded to the survey feel that they have a good understanding of the importance of Islamic values in Dubai.
- Most students who responded are satisfied with the quality of education provided by the school. A minority think the range of subject options and extra-curricular activities is limited, and that there are insufficient opportunities to develop their leadership skills.

What happens next?

The school has been asked to prepare and submit an action plan to DSIB within two months of receiving the inspection report. This should address:

- recommendations from DSIB
- areas identified by the school as requiring improvement
- other external reports or sources of information that comment on the work of the school
- priorities arising from the school's unique characteristics.

The next school inspection will report on changes made by the school.

Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau
Knowledge and Human Development Authority

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