




The Kindergarten  
Starters

 Curriculum: CBSE

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



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## School information



General information	
Location	Al Garhoud
Type of school	Private
Opening year of school	1990
Website	www.gemskgs.com
Telephone	04-2824090
Address	P.O. Box 4973, Dubai, United Arab Emirates
Principal	Asha Alexander
Language of instruction	English
Inspection dates	24 to 27 October 2016

Teachers / Support staff	
Number of teachers	234
Largest nationality group of teachers	Indians - 201
Number of teaching assistants	52
Teacher-student ratio	1:23
Number of guidance counsellors	3
Teacher turnover	10%

Students	
Gender of students	Boys and girls
Age range	4-11
Grades or year groups	KG 1 - Grade 5
Number of students on roll	5438
Number of children in pre-kindergarten	Not applicable
Number of Emirati students	0
Number of students with SEND	579
Largest nationality group of students	Indian

Curriculum	
Educational permit / Licence	Indian
Main curriculum	CBSE / Indian
External tests and examinations	NA
Accreditation	NA
National Agenda benchmark tests	IBT / CAT4



## 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.

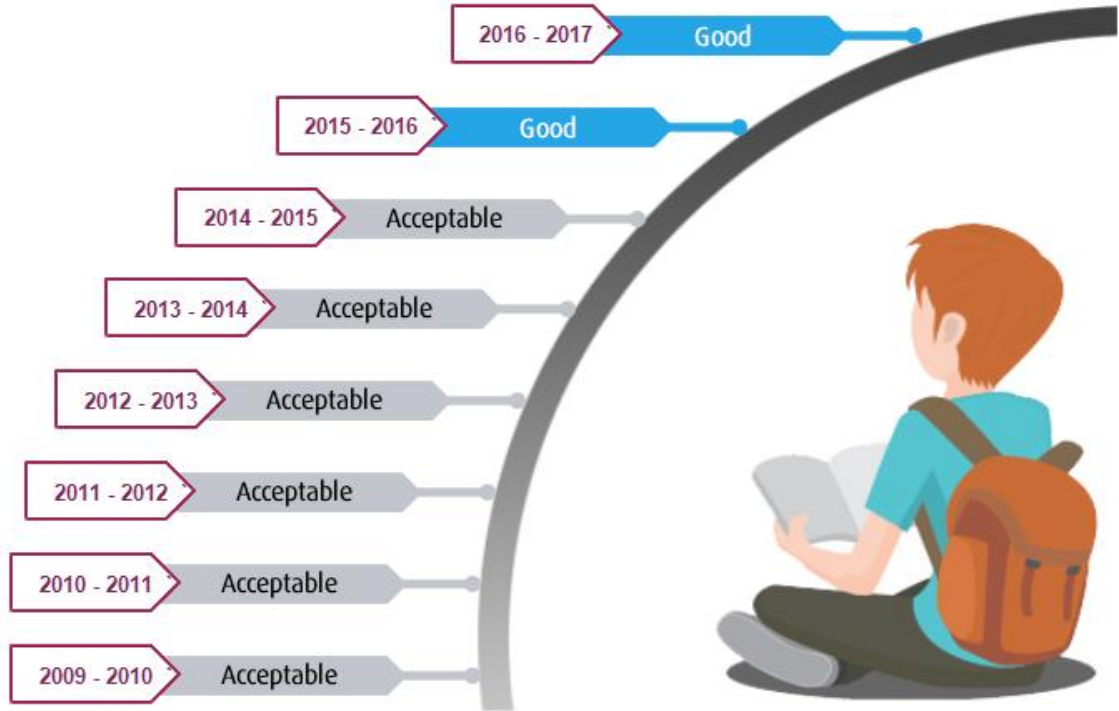
Inspection judgements are drawn from evidence gathered by the inspection team, including observation of students' learning in lessons, review of their work, discussions with students, meetings with the staff, parents and governors, and review of surveys completed by parents, teachers and students.

### 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.

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

## Inspection journey for The Kindergarten Starters



- The Kindergarten Starters School Dubai opened in 1990. It offers educational programmes based on the Indian CBSE curriculum from Kindergarten to Grade 5. The predominant population is Indian, with much smaller proportions of the students coming from a range of Asian countries.
- Over time the strengths of the school have been noted as its welcoming atmosphere, strong commitment to an inclusive ethos for students of all abilities and needs, and a broad curriculum on offer for girls and boys.
- Recommendations in previous reports highlighted the need to; improve Arabic, align standards with recognised international benchmarks, develop better provision for students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and resolve the overcrowding issues at all grade levels.



## Summary of inspection findings 2016-2017



The **Kindergarten Starters** was inspected by DSIB from 24 to 27 of October 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.

- Attainment and progress for children in Kindergarten is good overall, with very good progress in English. Primary students demonstrate good attainment and progress across most subjects. In Arabic as an additional language, attainment and progress are acceptable. In science, they are very good. Students' learning skills across the school are good.
- The personal development of almost all students is outstanding. They have a very good understanding of Islamic values and demonstrate a strong awareness of Emirati culture and heritage. Across the school, most students display excellent responsibility for their environment.
- Teachers know their subjects well. Teacher and student interactions are positive, supportive and characterised by mutual respect. Most lessons are well planned with learning objectives, a variety of activities and summative assessments which are designed to build students' knowledge and skills. In a few lessons, teachers do not provide challenge or strategies to support all students learning.
- Curriculum design and implementation in primary is good, a decline from the previous inspection. In Kindergarten it remains very good, while the school's adaptation of the curriculum is good in primary and very good in KG.
- Arrangements for safeguarding students, including their care and welfare, are very good. Support for students is good. Improvements have taken place in the provision for students with special educational needs.
- Although the overall quality and impact of leadership is very good the school's self-evaluation and improvement planning are only good which represents a decline from the previous inspection. Partnerships with parents and the wider community are outstanding and governance is good. The overall management of staffing, facilities and resources are good because leaders ensure best use is made of the limited space and resources available.

### What the school does best

- Provision for children in Kindergarten is now consistently good, with language skills purposefully developed through a well-integrated curriculum.
- In primary, students develop good skills in most subjects, applying them well when they have opportunities to do so.
- The personal responsibility of students is excellent, with many examples across all grades where they demonstrate their ability to be effective members of the school and wider community.
- Teachers demonstrate very high levels of commitment to developing instruction strategies suited to the needs of their learners.
- The school ensures that all students are very well cared for and safeguarded.
- School leaders continue to empower this community of learners, parents and teachers to work very effectively for students' benefit. They continually seek out new ideas to enhance learners' experiences.

### Recommendations

- Reduce the numbers in each class, as a matter of great urgency, to support improved learning experiences for each student.
- Improve students' abilities in all key linguistic skills in Arabic as an additional language, through;
  - better leadership, teaching and assessment
  - effective promotion of Arabic as an additional language across all aspects of school life.
- Develop more accurate self-evaluation making use of all data about attainment and progress and information gained from monitoring.

## 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 intention 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. In 2015, KHDA launched 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.

### The following section focuses on the impact of the National Agenda Parameter in meeting their targets:

- Attainment based on the National Agenda Parameter benchmarks meets expectations in English, mathematics and science.
- The school meets the registration requirements for the National Agenda Parameter.
- There is a comprehensive analysis of the National Agenda Parameter data which enables the school to produce a detailed and full action plan. Student tracking has been developed to a very effective level that informs individual class teachers about the performance of their students.
- A comprehensive analysis was carried out following the TIMSS report which prompted changes of emphasis in areas of the curriculum, for example science looked at physical science and mathematics, geometric shapes. More recently, using the analysis of IBT results, further adjustments have been made and the school has supplemented the curriculum in earth sciences and number.
- There is a variable quality to the changes made to teaching strategies. Where teachers have understood the changes and have been able to implement them, student activities are effective. In mathematics, students working on a business and looking at profit and loss accounts make good gains in linking their work to the real world. However, in English, the student activities are less successful.
- Students have a superficial understanding of their results but recognise that there are targets set related to the tests for which they prepare. The development of research skills is not clearly evident in lessons. Independent learning is not always emphasised.

Overall, the school's improvement towards achieving its National Agenda targets meets expectations.



## 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:

- Students demonstrate a strong awareness of how to use learning technologies and are able to think innovatively when given the opportunity. The ability among most groups of students to create their own ideas is emerging across the various grade levels. Teachers are aware of the need to encourage critical thinking. However, lesson plans and teaching do not always identify how they will do this. Although leaders articulate a clear strategic vision of innovation development using both curricular and extra-curricular opportunities this has yet to be fully implemented.

Overall school performance

Good

1 Students' achievement

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

	KG	Primary
Learning skills	Good	Good

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

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

## 3. Teaching and assessment

	KG	Primary
Teaching for effective learning	Good	Good
Assessment	Good	Good

## 4. Curriculum

	KG	Primary
Curriculum design and implementation	Very good	Good ↓
Curriculum adaptation	Very good ↑	Good

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

	KG	Primary
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding	Very good	Very good
Care and support	Good	Good


## 6. Leadership and management

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

- Children have well developed English skills in listening, speaking, reading and writing. KG1 children rapidly learn vocabulary and begin to speak confidently. Older children use precise, advanced vocabulary, for example, 'solution' and 'dissolve' in science. Children enjoy looking at books. As a result, they can read high frequency words and sentences to a good standard. By KG2 they write independently and for a specific purpose, such as recording their experience of an educational visit. By the end of Kindergarten, most children are linguistically ready for the demands of Grade 1.
- In KG2 children are working above expectations in mathematics. Children show a good understanding of numbers by using manipulatives and can show 'one more' or 'two more'. In KG1 they develop understanding of how to make repeating patterns using pictures, shapes and coloured sticks. By KG2 children can count to 20 accurately and begin to understand number bonds to ten. They have an increasing knowledge of using numbers in real life which is illustrated through role play such as buying fruit from a supermarket.
- In science enquiry lessons, teachers plan interesting, motivating activities. For example; in KG1 children shake cream, observing what happens, then spread the 'butter' on bread; in KG2 they identify and name substances, mix them with water and observe changes. In free flow activities in the shared activity areas, they gain an increasingly good vocabulary base. Their knowledge of scientific words extends beyond expectations for learners of an additional language. KG2 children begin to record and explain observations in pictures and charts. However, children are not yet developing independent, specific scientific skills in all science experiences.

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

- In Islamic education, the majority of students attain above Ministry of Education (MoE) curriculum expectations. They show good knowledge and understanding of the six pillars of Iman, the concept of worship, and the lessons understood from the life of Allah's prophets including Ibrahim (AS) and prophet Muhammed (PBUH). Their memorisation and recitation skills of The Holy Qur'an are less developed but improving. Students make better progress in their knowledge and application of the process of Wudoo. Students are not as secure in their application of knowledge and understanding when answering critical thinking questions.
- In Arabic as an additional language, most students show acceptable language skills against the curriculum expectations for additional language Arabic speakers. They demonstrate strong listening skills and communicate simple answers in familiar contexts appropriately. However, students make less progress with their reading skills. They are not always accurate when guessing the meaning of new words from the context. In addition, their writing skills are not strong. They make errors, particularly in the use of basic linguistic rules such as feminine/masculine and singular/plural forms.
- In English, the majority of students make better than expected progress against curriculum and international standards. Their reading and listening comprehension skills are good and oral communication is confident and effective within and beyond the classroom. Students' writing shows a sound understanding of punctuation and grammar, whilst more remains to be achieved in creative and independent writing. However, the extension and application of vocabulary is supporting improvement.
- Measured against curriculum standards, students' mathematical attainment exceeds expectations. International benchmarks indicate high performance levels for the majority of students in Grades 3, 4 and 5. Most students' results compare favourably with those of students internationally. Students have good mathematical skills but their development of independent enquiry and investigation skills to seek alternative ways to solve mathematical challenges is less evident. The range of activities, when matched to students' needs, enable all groups to make good progress.
- Grade 1 science students participate in activities related to the 'Engineering in Elementary' initiative. As a result, they can design, build and test a hand pollinator. They learn new scientific vocabulary and by Grade 2 are aware of additional scientific concepts. They participate in age-appropriate investigations, predicting, observing and drawing conclusions. Older students work confidently in a laboratory setting and complete reports accurately. They research using learning technologies, presenting what they have learned to peers. By the end of Grade 5 students have a strong grounding in scientific principles and methods.

	KG	Primary
Learning skills	Good	Good

- In almost all lessons students are well-engaged. Where disengagement does occur, it is primarily the result of weaker teaching. When given appropriate tasks, either as individuals or groups, students are prepared to take on responsibility. However, in some lessons students wait for instructions and seek affirmation, particularly in the lower primary grades, rather than moving ahead independently.
- Generally, collaboration and co-operation are good. Students are mostly able to communicate their learning when asked. They support one another and group work features regularly in lessons, although outcomes are not always measured. Students often work in a group but it is not always purposeful and productive enough to support the higher level of progress.
- There are opportunities to connect the content of the lesson to the real world, and the UAE in particular. There is also evidence of many links to environmental issues. The school has introduced 'expeditionary learning' experiences in the wider community and links with other schools, to support this area.
- Tablets and laptops are widely used as research tools. Students show that they are very capable of using technology effectively. Although independent, critical thinking and problem solving skills have been introduced in lessons, there is less consistency in the challenge and expectation levels of the activities.

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

	KG	Primary
Personal development	Outstanding	Outstanding

- Students have extremely positive attitudes. These are demonstrated both within and outside lessons. Students value feedback on their progress and respond impressively in those situations where it is given.
- Students' behaviour is almost always exemplary. They display a high degree of respect for others and, as a result, difficulties are soon resolved. Bullying is rare.
- Students get on extremely well with one another and with adults. They show mutual respect, support one another in lessons and praise each other's achievements. It is a harmonious community.
- Students display a strong awareness of the benefits of healthy eating and physical activity. They participate enthusiastically in opportunities to promote wellbeing. They feel safe and cared for around the school.
- Attendance is very good and students are rarely late for lessons, reflecting their very good attitudes to learning.



	KG	Primary
<b>Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures</b>	Very good ↑	Very good ↑

- Students have a secure appreciation and understanding of the impact of the Islamic values on contemporary UAE society. They describe mosques and Friday prayers as important parts of UAE life. They appreciate the dress code in the UAE as a Muslim country and know well the traditional Emirati dresses and icons, which are on display around the school. They occasionally use Arabic in greetings outside the school.
- Students are very knowledgeable and respectful of the culture and heritage of the UAE. They are involved in national celebrations such as National Day, Flag Day and Islamic celebrations such as Eid at the end of Ramadan and Haj. They describe Dubai as an eco-friendly, modern city with people who are kind and helpful.
- Students demonstrate deep understanding, awareness and appreciation of their own national identities. They are knowledgeable of other world cultures through their international friends and through visits to places such as the Global Village. They strongly appreciate that Dubai offers them the opportunity to mix with different world cultures.

	KG	Primary
<b>Social responsibility and innovation skills</b>	Outstanding ↑	Outstanding

- Students participate wholeheartedly in constructive activities that benefit the school, the local community and the less fortunate, for charity. The school has been awarded the Dubai Philanthropic School Award and the SEWA Pioneer Award, recognising the excellent contributions made by the students.
- Through the school ethos and very regular assemblies, students consistently demonstrate a willingness to promote innovative ideas. They readily engage with initiatives such as 'Green Ambassadors' and adopt animals of endangered species. Students can be creative and exhibit entrepreneurial ability when given an opportunity, like building a model for a dream garden in the school.
- Students care for their school and collaborate with eminent societies like the Emirates Wildlife Society and the World Wide Fund to participate in environmental conservation activities. Students adopt endangered animals and are researching to spread awareness about protecting these animals, thus contributing effectively towards sustainability and conservation of wildlife, as well as their own environment.

### 3. Teaching and assessment

	KG	Primary
Teaching for effective learning	Good	Good

- Teachers know their subjects well and enjoy their roles as teachers. In some lessons, teachers do not adapt the programme, timing of instruction or challenge levels to meet the needs of students of different abilities, learning styles and dispositions. The general strategies used by some teachers, particularly in the lower primary, are not as effective in helping students learn and in those instances focus on content rather than skill building.
- Overall, lessons are well planned with learning objectives, a variety of activities and summative assessments which are designed to build students' knowledge and skills. Many teachers create stimulating and interesting learning environments. In the less successful lessons, ineffective classroom management interferes with learning. For the most part, resources are used well.
- Teacher-student interactions are positive, supportive and characterised by mutual respect. Questioning and dialogue are a part of almost every lesson and engage students in the learning process. In the best lessons, teachers encourage thought and reflection and result in meaningful discussions but, in a small number of lessons, questioning and discussion are at a too superficial level, leading to little development of critical thinking and independence.
- Teachers are well aware of the needs of their students, particularly those with SEND. They are able to provide appropriate levels of support and challenge for these students but at times, this is not sufficiently personalised or linked to the specific skill being developed from the many projects underway.
- Teachers clearly understand the importance and value of developing critical thinking, problem solving, innovation and independent learning skills. Some teachers are very skilful at using time, resources and challenging activities to enable independence, finding an alternative solution and linking students' thinking across their entire curricular experience.

	KG	Primary
Assessment	Good	Good

- Assessment processes internal to the school are carried out consistently and linked to the requirements of the curriculum. However, in Arabic they are not as reliable. Islamic education assessments are weighted too heavily in favour of knowledge and insufficiently towards application.
- Benchmarking, using the IBT tests, is carried out in the top three grades. The tests cover mathematics, English and science. There are no external benchmarking tests for Arabic and Islamic education and therefore no comparative data is available. In addition to IBT the school uses CAT 4 and ASSET to enhance further their knowledge of student performance.
- Assessment data is analysed extensively and student tracking sheets show progress within grades. Formative assessments are aligned with the students' performance in the external benchmarking tests. The data are accurate and facilitate the tracking of progress over time. They are less effective in Arabic, therefore not fully helpful to students in improving their work.

- The use of assessment has an impact on planning and influences how teachers address students' needs. However, the use of the data is not sufficiently consistent to meet the needs of all groups. Planning using the data identifies three levels of learners for which tasks are prepared. Further attention is being given to ensure the level of challenge accurately matches the needs of students with different abilities.
- Most teachers have a good knowledge of their students. They identify strengths and improvements required. Written feedback for students is frequently seen in their workbooks. The comments are not always sufficiently detailed, lacking specific information on how to improve. Students have targets set in their subjects. Teachers make good use of self and peer-assessment, which helps the students understand what is required of them.

## 4. Curriculum

	KG	Primary
Curriculum design and implementation	Very good	Good ↓

- The school curriculum identifies the development of age-relevant skills, knowledge and understanding through a wide range of activities, expeditions and projects. This is particularly clear in KG. There is an over-reliance on completing projects, which does not sufficiently link the skills students need to develop in the core curriculum areas. The curriculum has a clear rationale and is aligned to meet UAE National Agenda goals.
- The mapping of the syllabus and topics is carefully and collaboratively managed. An analysis of the subject requirements has led to blended lessons, particularly in Kindergarten. The school promotes e-learning supported by software for mathematics and reading which ensures that most students learn systematically and are prepared for the next phase of education adequately.
- Students are provided with a range of activities to identify and pursue their interests and aspirations for the future. The facility of reading e-books or generating ideas in the 'Design Atelier' provides a large majority of students with opportunities to think independently.
- Within lessons, cross-curricular links made by teachers are meaningful and assist students' transfer of learning between different subjects, particularly in KG. Well-planned and effectively managed links between subjects in the curriculum documentation are not always reflected in lesson plans or the teaching.
- Mechanisms are in place for the review and development of the school curriculum during the common planning time allocated to teachers. This is based on the inputs received from various sources, including the analysis of the International Benchmark Tests, TIMSS, ASSET and the feedback received from other subjects. The school maps the curriculum to meet the academic and personal development needs of most students.
- The United Arab Emirates' social studies programme is included in the daily lessons. However, it is not taught or assessed formally at any grade level of the school. There is no time or period allocation for the United Arab Emirates social studies on the timetable.

	KG	Primary
<b>Curriculum adaptation</b>	Very good ↑	Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The curriculum is adequately modified to meet the needs of most but not all groups of students. It is most successfully modified to meet the needs of students with SEND. Teachers plan for differentiated work but this is not consistently transferred into practice. There is less differentiation in Arabic as an additional language lessons. There are more modifications in KG, especially around teachers' use of time.</li> <li>There are many clear examples of curriculum enhancement throughout the school. However, these enhancements are not sufficiently embedded, sometimes limiting their contribution to academic and personal development. There is a variety of extra-curricular activities, including sports and robotics, and the school has established links with the community through 'expeditionary learning' and other projects.</li> <li>There are many references to the values, culture and society of the UAE. The school has added extra time, as appropriate, to improve the recitation of The Holy Qur'an. The curriculum also provides increasing opportunities to raise the awareness of Islamic values and icons for non-Muslims. KG is more developed in terms of planned opportunities for linking the curriculum with UAE society.</li> </ul>		

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

	KG	Primary
<b>Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding</b>	Very good	Very good
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Safeguarding is highly effective in the school. The policies in place are shared with the community and applied effectively. This includes raising awareness about the dangers of cyber-bullying.</li> <li>The school is a very clean and provides a secure learning environment where staff and students feel safe. Supervision to ensure that standards are maintained is systematic and thorough. Safety checks occur regularly and remedial work is carried out as required. Supervision of students in school and on the buses is exemplary.</li> <li>The school premises are well-maintained and regularly checked. Deficiencies are promptly remedied. Incidents involving harm to students and the action taken are meticulously recorded by the medical staff.</li> <li>The school provides an excellent physical environment which supports students' care and learning needs but some classrooms are too small for the number of students that have to be accommodated.</li> <li>Lessons, assemblies, displays of work and awareness campaigns by the medical staff all contribute to the promotion of a healthy lifestyle. The campaigns are followed up to ensure students receive opportunities to make healthy choices.</li> </ul>		

	KG	Primary
Care and support	Good	Good

- Purposeful, secure relationships exist among all staff and students. Student behaviour is very good and is promoted and managed very well throughout the school.
- The management of attendance and punctuality is very good. Staff work hard to ensure that parents understand the systems and the impact that good attendance has on student progress.
- Thorough systems are in place to identify students with SEND. Intervention and support processes have firm foundations and staff in the Achievement Centre work with class teachers to modify provision to match needs. The identification of gifted and talented students is not as well established, so challenge in lessons is frequently not high enough.
- The school provides effective support for most students with SEND; systems have been strengthened and most students make good progress, showing improved outcomes. Some students are taught in the Achievement Centre by experienced, knowledgeable staff. Work done in this facility is not always transferred to mainstream classes systematically, so that class teachers can take this work into account when planning their lessons.
- The designated inclusion leaders, together with class teachers, provide a supportive environment where students can thrive. This good support for students both motivates and challenges them, especially in speaking, reading and early writing. Transition procedures from Grade 5 onwards are well established and provide students with a confident start into the next stage of their education.

## Inclusion

### Provision and outcomes for students with SEND

Good

- Leaders have made effective changes to the quality of SEND provision across the school, which is good. The improved leadership has put in place a thorough approach to ensure that systems bring about improved progress for students. Key staff understand how all students learn and bring this expertise to the work of the SEND staff. Training is having a positive effect on teachers' work in classrooms.
- Procedures for identifying students with SEND are secure. Students are identified early in their school careers and experienced staff are involved in determining needs and adjusting provision. There is determination that no student should be missed and a range of assessment procedures are implemented to determine the support needed.
- Parents are very positive about the school and its procedures to support their children. They are very pleased with the open contacts they have with the school and are keen to help their children's learning.
- There is a range of good examples of students' individual needs being met effectively. However, more work is needed to improve the quality of teaching and the support in classrooms. Students working with staff in the Achievement Centre are taught well and supported.

- Progress of students with SEND is monitored and the analysis of what students can and cannot do informs next steps. Although progress is good, even greater rigour of procedures, improved differentiation in lessons and improved knowledge of how to teach to individual needs are required.

## 6. Leadership and management

### The effectiveness of leadership

Very good

- The principal and senior leaders articulate an exciting vision based on creating a culture of thinking. This is gradually being embedded across the school community. Most leaders are committed to, and demonstrate increasing capacity for, making the necessary curricular and instructional changes required to suit the new direction.
- Leaders at all levels are focused on increasing students' achievement. They are successful in promoting an inclusive school. They communicate and are implementing strategies designed to improve attainment and increase the rate of progress for all groups of students.
- Excellent relationships exist across most sections of the school. Whilst communication of key messages for the school community is regular, some leaders do not understand how teachers should best implement these new priorities.
- Capacity is sufficient to deliver long-term improvement. However, further fresh thinking and more focused strategies are needed to develop a more manageable primary curriculum suitable for students' needs and teachers' abilities. Leaders bring innovative approaches to some aspects of the challenges to improving the quality of learning experiences.
- The strong collective accountability of all leaders, working closely with staff, has ensured student achievements are strong, particularly in science. They display a willingness to secure similar success in all subjects and develop stronger assessment and self-evaluation systems to support it.

### School self-evaluation and improvement planning

Good ↓

- Although processes for self-evaluation are in place that identify most key priorities for improvement, monitoring and analysis are not rigorous enough to be fully accurate in every phase or department.
- Leaders identify most of the areas of best practice in teaching. They are in the process of establishing a systematic approach to sharing best practice and develop the thinking skills of all students and staff.
- Staff are committed to self-evaluation and improvement planning to ensure outcomes for students are consistently improved. However, the self-evaluation processes are not yet supported by the consistent and systematic use of accurate data to inform all their priorities for improvement.



- Although most of the recommendations from the previous inspection report have been addressed, insufficient success has been achieved in addressing the detrimental effect of overcrowding on primary students' learning experiences.

**Partnerships with parents and the community**

Outstanding

- Parents have great confidence in the school and its leadership. They report that the school has been transformed in the last five years through better opportunities, livelier classrooms, more active learning and better progress. Parents feel consulted and that suggestions made are acted upon.
- Parents feel well informed about their children's academic progress. They know the teachers and senior staff and have access to them. Parents of students with SEND report they are well informed and are pleased that their children are identified for additional support. They have regular contact with SEND personnel which enables them to understand the learning needs and to help their children at home.
- Reporting to parents is of a high standard. Regular reports comprehensively indicate students' next steps and progress rates. Parents particularly appreciate information about their children's personal and social development.
- The school makes significant and sustained contributions to local and international communities, utilising local community expertise to aid students' learning. Competitive sporting activities are held with other schools. Staff participate in KHDA workshops about Arabic teaching and development and specific activities including celebrating the International Day of Families.

**Governance**

Good

- Governors actively support the senior leaders to ensure that a more focused approach is in place to listen to the voice of the community. Resourcing of the school is supported by clear investment planning. Different groups of stakeholders are exerting a positive influence on the decision-making of governors and encouraging greater involvement from the whole school community.
- School leaders are consistently held to account by governors for all operational and qualitative aspects of work through strategic processes. In-depth analysis of external data on student performance and measurement of the impact of senior leaderships' actions on teaching quality are regularly and effectively conducted by governors.
- Governors are increasing their influence on overall provision and in particular, teaching and learning quality. Plans are in place to address their most essential priority which, is the overcrowding of students. Careful, strategic and highly supportive long-term planning is beginning to be established in line with the school's vision.

Management, staffing, facilities and resources

Good

- Routines for the efficient running of the school day are very well developed. The procedures are generally very effective. However, there is some loss of learning time at some transition points between lessons.
- Most teachers are well-qualified and all receive opportunities for regular professional development to enhance their teaching skills. In addition, there are weekly phase planning meetings. These enable staff to review students' progress and make adjustments to the content and delivery of the curriculum.
- The school building and outdoor facilities are adequate. In Kindergarten, in particular, every available space is used for learning and students benefit from the specialist resources available. In the better lessons, teachers make full use of the facilities to enable students to make progress. However, overcrowding has a detrimental effect on learning in many instances.
- A range of relevant, good quality resources are available to support the curriculum. Teachers and students have easy access to these resources and there are many examples of equipment being used for students to conduct research and enhance their learning experiences. The growth in student numbers, however, puts pressure on space.

## 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	
<p>Parents*</p>	2016-2017	778
	2015-2016	871
<p>Teachers</p>	202	
<p>Students</p>	1	

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

- Nearly all parents who responded to the survey said that their children enjoy school and that they are satisfied with the quality of education. They also said that their children are safe in the school. However, some parents raised concerns around the development of literacy skills, the large class sizes and the large content of the curriculum.
- A few parents comment that there is over reliance on learning technologies and not enough focus on the use of books for reading. Nearly all parents who responded feel well informed about the next steps in their children's lives and all say that they are involved in their children's education. Some parents raised concerns about bullying but bullying was not supported by evidence from the inspection.
- Over two hundred teachers responded to the survey. Their responses were mostly positive in all areas.

## 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](mailto:inspection@khda.gov.ae)