

INSPECTION REPORT

2022-2023



DUBAI ENGLISH SPEAKING COLLEGE

UK CURRICULUM

OUTSTANDING

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SCHOOL INFORMATION

GENERAL INFORMATION

	Location	Dubai Academic City
	Opening year of School	2005
	Website	www.dessc.sch.ae
	Telephone	97143604866
	Principal	Christopher Vizzard
	Principal - Date appointed	1/9/2014
	Language of Instruction	English
	Inspection Dates	14 to 18 November 2022

STUDENTS

	Gender of students	Boys and girls
	Age range	11 to 18
	Grades or year groups	Year 7 to Year 13
	Number of students on roll	1845
	Number of Emirati students	43
	Number of students of determination	196
	Largest nationality group of students	UK

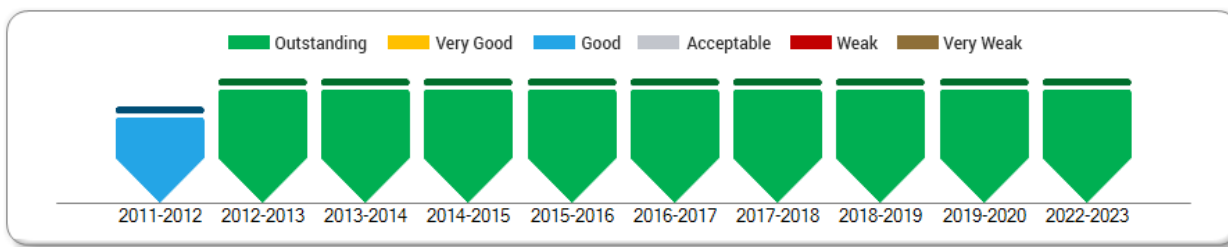
TEACHERS

	Number of teachers	170
	Largest nationality group of teachers	British
	Number of teaching assistants	23
	Teacher-student ratio	1:11
	Number of guidance counsellors	3
	Teacher turnover	10%

CURRICULUM

	Educational Permit/ License	UK
	Main Curriculum	UK
	External Tests and Examinations	GCSE, AS, A Level
	Accreditation	BSO

School Journey for DUBAI ENGLISH SPEAKING COLLEGE



Summary of Inspection Findings 2022-2023

The overall quality of education provided by the school is **outstanding**. The section below summarises the inspection findings for students' outcomes, provision, and leadership.

STUDENTS OUTCOMES

- In the secondary phase, students' performance in English, mathematics, and science is outstanding. In Post-16, progress has improved in mathematics and attainment has improved in English and science. Student's progress in secondary Arabic is now good in both courses. Progress in Arabic as a first language remains acceptable in Post-16. Students' performance in Islamic Education remains good in both phases.
- Students' personal and social development is outstanding. Students are courteous, behave exceptionally well and have mature attitudes. They collaborate very well in class. Their knowledge of the impact of Islam on life in Dubai is very good. They show initiative and a strong sense of environmental awareness and social responsibility. They initiate and participate in many charitable and diverse projects.

PROVISION FOR LEARNERS

- Teaching is outstanding in both phases. Teachers use their deep subject knowledge well to create very effective learning environments. They enhance students' knowledge and understanding through effective questioning. Teachers use assessment data very well to plan and organise learning, meeting the learning needs of most students. They use IT very well to support students' learning and to comment on their written work.
- The curriculum has a clear rationale. It is broad, balanced, and prepares students exceptionally well for GCSE, A level and BTEC qualifications. Students progress smoothly from the secondary to the post-16 phase. In the sixth form, students can take extended project qualifications and participate in an extensive range of societies. The very broad range of social, cultural, sports, and arts extra-curricular activities enrich students' experiences.
- The school's arrangements for the safety, care and welfare of students are very strong. Health, pastoral care, and inclusion staff are highly proficient. Relationships between members of staff and students are very positive and harmonious. Students' needs are identified accurately, and highly-effective support is provided. Excellent curricular and vocational advice prepares students well for university and other further educational pathways.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

- Outstanding leadership and very effective staff have enabled the school to enhance its already impressive performance. The school's approach to self-evaluation and improvement works very well. Parents are very happy with the school. Their children are thriving and communication with families is very effective. The school governors support the school very well and ensure that it is staffed and resourced to the highest standards, fully meeting students' needs.

The Best Features of The School:

- Students' outstanding study skills and examination results in English, mathematics, and science
- Students' exceptionally high standards of personal and social development, their sense of courtesy and their contribution to the life of the school
- Teaching, the quality of assessment, and curriculum design across the school
- Pastoral care and the support provided to students, especially those of determination
- The very strong leadership provided by the headteacher and the senior management team







Key Recommendations:

- Ensure that the very high standards of teaching are consistent across the school.
- In Islamic Education, make better use of internal assessment data to plan lessons more effectively and meet the learning needs of all students, and use external assessments to benchmark students' progress and attainment.
- Develop students' ability to speak and write extensively in Arabic.

Overall School Performance

Outstanding

1. Students' Achievement

		Secondary	Post-16
 Islamic Education	Attainment	Good	Good
	Progress	Good	Good
 Arabic as a First Language	Attainment	Acceptable	Acceptable
	Progress	Good ↑	Acceptable
 Arabic as an Additional Language	Attainment	Acceptable	Not applicable
	Progress	Good	Not applicable
 English	Attainment	Outstanding	Outstanding ↑
	Progress	Outstanding	Very good
 Mathematics	Attainment	Outstanding	Outstanding
	Progress	Outstanding	Outstanding
 Science	Attainment	Outstanding	Very good ↑
	Progress	Outstanding	Very good
Learning skills		Outstanding	Outstanding

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

	Secondary	Post-16
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

	Secondary	Post-16
Teaching for effective learning	Outstanding	Outstanding
Assessment	Outstanding	Outstanding

4. Curriculum

	Secondary	Post-16
Curriculum design and implementation	Outstanding	Outstanding
Curriculum adaptation	Outstanding	Outstanding

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

	Secondary	Post-16
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection/ safeguarding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Care and support	Outstanding	Outstanding

6. Leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership	Outstanding
School self-evaluation and improvement planning	Outstanding
Parents and the community	Outstanding
Governance	Outstanding
Management, staffing, facilities and resources	Outstanding

For further information regarding the inspection process, please look at [UAE School Inspection Framework](#)

Focus Areas

National Agenda Parameter



In 2014, H.H. Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister of the UAE, and Ruler of Dubai, launched the UAE National Agenda 2021. In 2015, KHDA launched the National Agenda Parameter, which is a method for measuring and monitoring schools' progress towards achieving the UAE National Agenda targets.

The following section focuses on the success of the school in meeting the National Agenda Parameter targets.

The school meets the registration requirements for the National Agenda Parameter.

	Whole school	Emirati cohort
Progress in international assessments	is above expectations	meets expectations

- A large majority of students is making better than expected progress in the international and benchmark assessments. In the most recent PISA test all students were performing at proficiency level 4 in reading, mathematics, and science.

	Whole school
Leadership: data analysis and curricular adaptation	is above expectations

- Leadership is very strong. Senior leaders manage assessment very well, including data analysis and the scheduling of assessment points in the school calendar. Middle leaders use assessment data very well in their areas of responsibility. Through visiting lessons and meetings with teachers, they adapt the curriculum well and continually improve the quality of teaching and learning in lessons.

	Whole school	Emirati cohort
Improving reading literacy and wider learning skills	is above expectations	meets expectations

- Leaders and teachers develop students' reading and wider learning skills very effectively. They make very good use of the school's comprehensive approach to data analysis to ensure that the development of learning skills remains a priority.

Overall, the school's progression to achieve the UAE National Agenda targets is above expectations.

For Development:

- Use information from data analysis to create more personalised learning opportunities to extend the most-able and higher-attaining students.
- Plan more activities in lessons to develop students' critical thinking skills.

Wellbeing

The quality of wellbeing provision and outcomes is at a very high level:

- Wellbeing is prioritised across the school. To enhance the school's provision for wellbeing, two leadership posts have been created. Student advisors monitor students' wellbeing and are available to provide support. A student survey on wellbeing is regularly administered and results are made available to parents and students. House teams review survey data to identify barriers to the development of a strong sense of wellbeing.
- Members of staff strongly promote students' wellbeing. Students' personal and social development are monitored and discussed on a one-to-one with pastoral care staff. Staff provide their views through surveys and individual staff receive the needed care and support by the school. A range of student voice activities and staff coffee mornings promotes the sharing of information. The "You said. We Listened" programme is an effective way to engage both parents and students and here their views.
- The school's wellbeing curriculum is pro-active, re-active, implicit, and explicit. The GROW and LIFE programmes accessed by all students are dedicated to wellbeing enhancement, and are a core part of the weekly curriculum. Healthy lifestyles are strongly promoted and reflected in student behaviour. Data show that almost all students have strong relationships with adults in the school. Students demonstrate very positive attitudes and generally feel optimistic and happy.

UAE social studies and Moral Education

- The school has adopted the combined moral, social and cultural studies (MSC) integrated curriculum from Year 7 to Year 10. The content is taught as a separate subject for 60 minutes each week by humanities teachers. From Year 11 to Year 13, moral education is taught by form tutors for 40 minutes each week using a project-based approach.
- Teachers have excellent subject knowledge. Their strong and confident expositions engage and enthuse students. Lessons are effectively planned and make excellent use of technology. The curriculum is suitably linked to the required content. Resources include the approved MSC textbooks as well as guest speakers and outside visits. Parents and students receive termly progress reports.

Main Inspection Report

1. Students' Achievement

Islamic Education


	Secondary	Post-16
Attainment	Good	Good
Progress	Good	Good

- Students' memorisation and recitation skills are slowly improving. The recitation skills of non-Arab students in the post-16 phase are still developing. Students make good progress. However, teachers are not using assessment information sufficiently well when planning to meet students' learning needs.
- In the secondary phase, students understand the etiquette of supplication. They know how praying is related to the time of day and to different times of the year. They know about praying to seek guidance and eclipse prayers, and when and how to perform them.
- In the post-16 phase, students understand Islamic legislation and shariah law and how they are applied in social matters such as marriage and divorce. They are less competent in referring to the Sunnah and the Holy Qur'an for explanations.

For Development:

- Improve students' recitation and memorisation skills, especially for non-Arabs in the post-16 phase.
- Improve students' ability to refer to Sunnah and the Holy Qur'an.
- Use assessment to improve lesson planning and accelerate students' progress.

Arabic as a First Language

	Secondary	Post-16
Attainment	Acceptable	Acceptable
Progress	Good 	Acceptable

- Most students in the secondary phase have improved their language skills. In particular, students in Years 7, 8 and 9, can speak and write confidently in Arabic. They use correct grammar in written responses to questions and in their presentations to the class.
- In lessons and in recent work, secondary students make good progress overall. Their vocabulary and understanding of grammar have improved because of well-paced lessons and probing questioning.
- Listening skills are strong. Most students understand extended and complex spoken language. Reading with understanding is improving in the secondary phase. Although speaking and writing are improving across the school, students achieve only the expected curriculum standards.

For Development:

- Develop speaking and writing skills across the school.
- Ensure that internal assessments are aligned with external and international benchmark tests to give a more accurate picture of students' attainment and progress.

Arabic as an Additional Language

	Secondary	Post-16
Attainment	Acceptable	Not applicable
Progress	Good	Not applicable

- In Arabic as an additional language, most students attain levels of knowledge and skills which are in line with curriculum standards. Students continue to improve their listening, reading, and speaking skills.
- Listening skills are strong in the secondary phase. Most students understand teachers' instructions and respond appropriately. They read extended texts with some support. In free and guided writing, the majority needs considerable support.
- Students' conversational skills are developing well. They have more frequent opportunities to practise their language skills in a range of real-life situations.

For Development:

- Teachers should reduce their use of English in class and provide more opportunities for students to listen and read in Arabic.

English

	Secondary	Post-16
Attainment	Outstanding	Outstanding ↑
Progress	Outstanding	Very good

- Students achieve high levels of attainment in both the secondary and post-16 phases. Their progress is better in the secondary phase. Internal test results in both phases align with international benchmark test results. The PISA reading results are very strong.
- Listening and writing skills are well developed in both phases. Students listen attentively and write extensively. The international benchmark results indicate a dip in reading skills in the middle of the secondary phase. A minority of students does not participate sufficiently in class discussions.
- The school has programmes and activities to accelerate reading. Not all lessons consistently support all students in developing their language skills. Emirati students' attainment and progress are inconsistent, particularly in speaking.

For Development:

- Ensure that gaps in reading skills are addressed.
- Provide opportunities which allow all students to develop their speaking skills.

Mathematics

	Secondary	Post-16
Attainment	Outstanding	Outstanding
Progress	Outstanding	Outstanding

- Students demonstrate outstanding achievement in mathematics. Their work, in both phases, is of an exceedingly high standard, resulting in consistently successful outcomes in GCSE and A-Level examinations. Emirati students and students of determination make progress similar to that of their fellow students.
- Secondary students show increasing confidence in their work. They make exceptional use of technology and demonstrate excellent performance, especially in algebra and geometry. Opportunities to consolidate work and to develop problem-solving skills are occasionally missed.
- Post-16 students competently apply their prior knowledge to increasingly challenging topics. They confidently solve quadratic inequalities and explore geometric sequences. Critical thinking skills are highly developed. Students make links across mathematics and apply their knowledge to unfamiliar contexts.

For Development:

- Provide secondary students with sufficient time to consolidate their work and to develop their problem-solving skills.

Science

	Secondary	Post-16
Attainment	Outstanding	Very good ↑
Progress	Outstanding	Very good

- The rate of progress increases as students move through Secondary because they gain an overview of different topics, use scientific vocabulary, and develop their learning skills. New knowledge builds successfully on prior learning.
- Younger students link the chemistry of respiration to the physiology of breathing and diseases of the lungs. This successful approach supports deeper understanding in later years.
- Post-16 students are very effective, independent learners in Science. They work accurately and safely with practical equipment and chemicals. They consolidate their understanding by group discussion of advanced topics such as the ultrastructure of cells. Emirati students achieve as well as others in the first two years of Secondary.

For Development:

- Find innovative ways to challenge the highest-attaining students.
- Provide more opportunities to develop reading skills in science lessons, particularly for students who have lower reading ages.

Learning Skills

	Secondary	Post-16
Learning skills	Outstanding	Outstanding

- Learning skills are equally strong in both phases. Students are mature, confident learners. In most lessons, they are active, display enthusiasm, and positive attitudes, and respond well to challenges. They demonstrate strong communication and collaboration skills.
- Students are frequently enterprising, independent, and self-reliant. They take responsibility for their own learning and learn from one another. They often demonstrate insightful responses in their work. Students in each phase use learning technologies in highly effective ways.
- In a few subjects, students do not have enough opportunities to strengthen their critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Some lack opportunities for independent learning, as they rely too much on teachers for direction.

For Development:

- Provide opportunities for all learners to develop their learning skills.

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

	Secondary	Post-16
Personal development	Outstanding	Outstanding
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students demonstrate high levels of respect and personal responsibility in all aspects of school life. They listen, respond and act on personal feedback. They continually take risks in their learning and show high levels of resilience. Students are self aware. They feel supported to take the lead in resolving difficulties in a mature manner, seeking out guidance when appropriate. They build strong relationships with their classmates. Students initiate and plan peer mentoring. Older students are effective role models and mentor younger students. Students participate enthusiastically in the excellent provision for sports and physical activities. They are fully aware of their own physical and mental health and have an excellent understanding of how to stay healthy. 	

	Secondary	Post-16
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Very good	Very good
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students have a clear understanding and appreciation of Islamic values and how these influence themselves and daily life in the UAE. They participate well in various Islamic celebrations and events. Students highly appreciate and have a good knowledge of Emirati culture and heritage. They celebrate all national events. They value the safe and inclusive environment of the UAE and the opportunities it provides for them and for all members of society. Students are proud of their own culture. They are very knowledgeable about the many cultures and nationalities present in the school. They are aware of the tourist attractions, arts, and heritage of the UAE. 	

	Secondary	Post-16
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Outstanding	Outstanding
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students demonstrate a sense of responsibility and show care and concern for the school and for others. They enthusiastically take up leadership responsibilities. They contribute greatly to the life of the school and wider community through their student council, Houses, and clubs. Most students display a very positive work ethic. Throughout the school, students are encouraged to be innovative and creative. They display these skills in many contexts. They take responsibility for initiating and managing many school events. Students show an exceptional understanding of environmental sustainability. Their high level of awareness is evident in their involvement in recycling activities and in taking care of the school environment. Most students deeply understand why the environment is an important part of the curriculum. 	

For Development:

- Provide students with more opportunities to initiate and lead UAE cultural activities.

3. Teaching and assessment

	Secondary	Post-16
Teaching for effective learning	Outstanding	Outstanding

- Teaching is equally strong in both phases. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and high expectations of students. They often provide stimulating learning environments. A few teachers are less secure in their understanding of how students learn. They talk excessively and dominate lessons.
- The most effective teaching ensures that students are active and challenged. Most teachers use time and resources very effectively. Students are supported very well. A few teachers do not provide sufficient thinking time for students to consolidate their learning.
- Teachers' questioning promotes deep thinking and insightful responses. Very high standards of enquiry, research, problem-solving, critical thinking, and independent learning skills are routine features of lessons. Innovation is a strength in a few subjects.

For Development:

- Ensure that best practice in teaching is shared among all teachers.
- Continue to develop and improve teaching in Islamic Education and Arabic.

	Secondary	Post-16
Assessment	Outstanding	Outstanding

- The highly-efficient online data management system collates and rigorously analyses data from a wide range of internal and external sources. It provides comprehensive, live information on students' attainment, progress, and personal development.
- Middle leaders and teachers have in-depth, up-to-date knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of individuals and groups of students. They use this skillfully and effectively to set targets for individual students, and to adjust curriculum planning and teaching to maximise students' progress.
- Teachers' excellent understanding of students' needs, enables them to provide evaluative and constructive written comments on their work. Students respond by taking action to improve their performance. The online access to current assessment information for parents and students, strengthens home-school partnerships.

For Development:

- Provide individualised extension work for the highest-attaining students.

4. Curriculum

	Secondary	Post-16
Curriculum design and implementation	Outstanding	Outstanding

- The curriculum has a very clear rationale. It fully meets the requirements of the National Curriculum for England and prepares students exceptionally well for external examinations. Courses promote academic rigour, and personal development. Leaders have increased time allocations to meet requirements.
- The curriculum is continuous and progressive. The extra-curricular provision is rich and extensive. The ‘Super Curriculum’ allows students to develop their knowledge further with the extended project qualification. An extensive range of societies encompasses medicine, law, debating, and philosophy.
- Leaders and teachers have integrated technology very effectively across the school. Members of staff support literacy well and promote reading across the school. They regularly review the curriculum and update it as part of the school’s self-evaluation processes.

	Secondary	Post-16
Curriculum adaptation	Outstanding	Outstanding

- School staff plan an ambitious curriculum which is modified to allow many students to learn in their own ways and at their ownpace. It provides a wide range of opportunities for all students to cultivate, develop and stretch their abilities and interests.
- Teachers support the development of pupils’ reading skills very effectively through targeting those whose skills are below their reading age. Vocational courses provide opportunities for students to pursue BTEC courses in enterprise and entrepreneurship, sport, hospitality, and creative media.
- The MSC course enables students to develop an excellent understanding of the UAE culture and society of the UAE. This understanding is furthered in design technology, for example, where students take inspiration for their designs from local artists.

For Development:

- Continue to keep the curriculum under review to remain as upto date as possible with the most progressive developments.

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

	Secondary	Post-16
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding	Outstanding	Outstanding

- The school provides an extremely safe and secure environment for learning. All staff are trained and regularly briefed on all aspects of care, welfare, and safeguarding. Child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures are the school's highest priorities.
- Arrangements to ensure health, safety, and security are meticulous and comprehensive. All areas are maintained to a high standard and cleaned throughout the day. Students are always supervised well on site. All college procedures and policies are reviewed and updated annually.
- The premises and facilities provide a welcoming and supportive environment for all. The school fully provides and promotes a safe and healthy lifestyle. All parts of the school are safe and accessible to all students.

	Secondary	Post-16
Care and support	Outstanding	Outstanding

- Staff-student relationships are very positive. The House system and the associated staffing provide an excellent basis for supporting students. Staff are well aware of the social, emotional, physical and intellectual needs of the students. Tutors and pastoral staff monitor the development of all students closely.
- The school's arrangements for managing attendance and punctuality are highly successful. Inclusion staff are skilled at identifying barriers to learning for students of determination. They put in place successful strategies which are implemented well by most class teachers.
- Members of staff promote students' care and welfare very well. They provide dedicated support for students' college and university applications at home and abroad. Students are very well prepared for higher education and the world of work.

For Development:

- Develop creative approaches to challenge the highest-attaining students across the curriculum.

Inclusion of students of determination

Provision and outcomes for students of determination

Outstanding ↑

- The leadership of inclusion is very strong. Inclusion has a high priority in the school. Specialist staff are very well trained and have a wide range of skills and qualifications. This area of the school's work is well resourced.
- All students are assessed on admission and information is shared with the inclusion team. Students of determination are skillfully assessed by specialists. Inclusion staff compile individual education programmes (IEPs) and student profiles in collaboration with students and their parents.
- Communication with parents is excellent and takes place regularly, through meetings, telephone calls, and email. A software platform facilitates highly-effective communication with the inclusion team.
- Teachers make very effective modifications to the curriculum and adjustments to their teaching in line with the advice in the student profiles and IEPs. Less attention is focused on the needs of the highest-attaining students.
- Members of staff monitor closely the progress which students of determination make across the curriculum and share this information with parents. They also monitor closely the involvement of students of determination in the wider aspects of school life, in-House activities and in extra-curricular activities.

For Development:

- Improve the training for learning support assistants.

6. Leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership	Outstanding
School self-evaluation and improvement planning	Outstanding
Parents and the community	Outstanding
Governance	Outstanding
Management, staffing, facilities and resources	Outstanding

- The headteacher, senior and middle leaders communicate the caring and inclusive vision of the school very successfully. They have high aspirations for the whole school community. They innovate and work effectively to maintain and enhance the impressive standards of the school. The roles and responsibilities of all staff are clear. The school's approach to line management works very well.
- The school has a thorough approach to self-evaluation. The process provides accurate information on the school's strengths and development needs and informs planning. Leaders make very good use of data to implement the ambitious and comprehensive improvement plan. As a result, teachers and leaders have improved outcomes in some subjects, but not yet in Islamic Education. Leaders' supportive and reflective approach to evaluating and improving lessons is very effective.
- Parents hold the school in high esteem. They are very well informed and can readily contact the school to discuss any matters of concern. The very effective use of an IT platform provides up-to-date information on their children's progress. End-of-year reports provide clear information on students' attainment, their targets, and next steps in learning. Form tutor reports give insights into students' personal and social development. Leaders have developed productive links with the local and wider community.
- The board of trustees supports the school very well and carries out its duties assiduously. The board is very well structured with five relevant subcommittees. Its membership includes parents, the chief executive officer, and an appropriate range of highly-qualified professionals who apply their expertise well for the benefit of the school. The board holds the school to account very effectively. It funds the school well and has enhanced the staffing in Islamic Education and Arabic.
- The school is managed very effectively and runs smoothly. It is very well staffed with well-qualified and highly-skilled leaders and teachers, who are very ably assisted by an extensive team of support staff. Professional training is highly effective. The school has exceptionally good facilities for teaching, learning, and recreation. They include extensive shaded areas, sports, and performing arts facilities. The provision of classroom resources is very good across the school.

For Development:

- Improve the impact of leadership in Islamic Education.

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 QA.Schools@khda.gov.ae