




Al Arqm Private School

 Curriculum: MOE

Overall Rating:

Acceptable



"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 Barsha
Type of school	Private
Opening year of school	1990
Website	www.alarqam.ae
Telephone	00971-4-3400888
Address	Al Barsha 1
Principal	Mr. Amjad Al Jubr
Language of instruction	Arabic
Inspection dates	9 to 11 January 2017

### Teachers / Support staff

Number of teachers	70
Largest nationality group of teachers	Egyptian
Number of teaching assistants	18
Teacher-student ratio	1:11
Number of guidance counsellors	4
Teacher turnover	42%

### Students

Gender of students	Boys and girls
Age range	4 - 18
Grades or year groups	KG 1 - Grade 12
Number of students on roll	801
Number of children in pre-kindergarten	NA
Number of Emirati students	261
Number of students with SEND	29
Largest nationality group of students	Arab

### Curriculum

Educational permit / Licence	MOE
Main curriculum	MOE
External tests and examinations	NAP
Accreditation	NA
National Agenda benchmark tests	NAP, IBT



## 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.

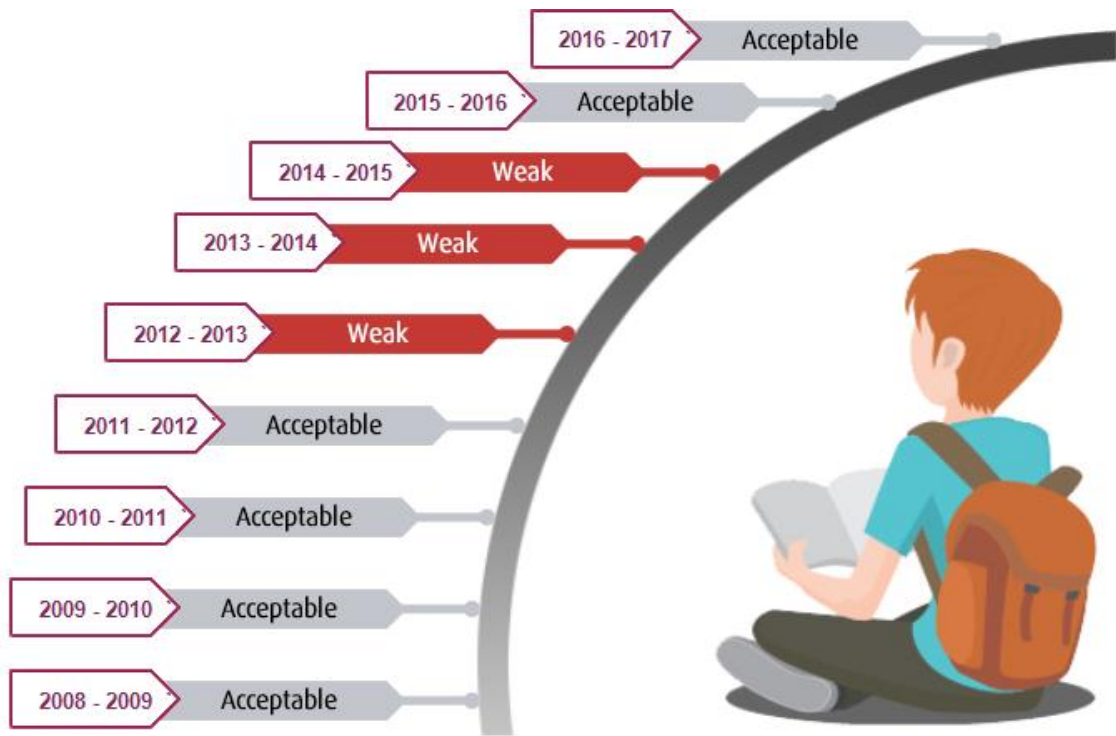
Inspection judgements are drawn from evidence gathered by the inspection team, including observation of students' learning in lessons, review of their work, discussions with students, meetings with the staff, parents and governors, and review of surveys completed by parents, teachers and students.

### 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 Al Arqm Private School



- The School opened in 1990 and improved its provision sufficiently in 2015- 2016 to become an acceptable school. The number of students on roll has decreased from over 900 in 2014 to 800 this year. The principal has been in post since 2014. Teacher turnover at the time of the inspection was 42 percent, compared with 30 percent in the previous year.
- Previous inspections have acknowledged strengths in students' attainment and progress in Islamic education and Arabic as a first language, and students understanding of Islamic values and their awareness of Emirati and world cultures.
- The three previous inspections have made recommendations to improve in the provision and assessment of English, mathematics and science, across all cycles. In addition, improvements were required to the curriculum and its adaptation to meet the learning needs of all groups of students. In addition, the leadership and management of the school required improving.

## Summary of inspection findings 2016-2017



**Al Arqm Private School** was inspected by DSIB from 9 to 11 January 2017. The overall quality of education provided by the school is **acceptable**. The section below summarises the inspection findings for each of the six performance indicators described in the framework.

- Students' attainment and progress are mainly acceptable in all subjects and cycles. Exceptions are; English, mathematics and science in Kindergarten (KG), which are weak, and progress in Cycle 1 Islamic education, and attainment and progress in English and mathematics in Cycle 3 which are good. Students' learning skills are acceptable in all cycles except in KG.
- Students' personal development is acceptable, except in Cycle 3 where it is good. Students across the school have a good understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures. Their skills of social responsibility and innovation are developing.
- Teaching in Cycles 1 to 3 is acceptable. Students are provided with too few opportunities to systematically develop their learning skills. The teaching and assessment in KG are weak. Teachers' understanding of best early years assessment or teaching practices is underdeveloped.
- The design of the curriculum is compliant with requirements but lacks an appropriate balance of skills, knowledge and conceptual understanding. Adaptations are not linked to assessment outcomes or specifically matched to the learning needs of different groups of students.
- The provision for the care and support and the health and safety of all students is acceptable.
- The director has set a vision for the school. He is supported in its implementation by the senior and middle management team. There are improving processes for evaluating the school to accurately identify weaknesses and design improvement plans. Partnership with parents, governance and the management of staffing, facilities and resources are acceptable.

## What the school does best

- Students' attainment and progress in English and mathematics are good in Cycle 3, as is progress in Islamic education in Cycle 1.
- The good understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures across the school.

## Recommendations

- The governing board, the director and the senior management team must, as a matter of urgency, appoint a well-trained, qualified and experienced KG leader.
- All leaders must support the development of KG teachers in best early years provision by:
  - developing an appropriate KG curriculum which incorporates best international practice in teaching and learning in an early years context
  - instigating a programme of professional development which would develop KG teachers' pedagogical skills
  - introducing a KG assessment strategy which will enable the school to monitor children's achievement.
- Improve the school's facilities and ensure that student learning is supported by a better range of resources.
- Improve the impact of teaching in Cycles 1 to 3 by:
  - ensuring staff use assessment information more effectively in lesson planning and classroom delivery
  - providing greater challenge through the development of problem solving and critical thinking skills
  - matching activities to the learning needs of all groups of students.
- Improve provision for students with SEND by:
  - providing clear advice and guidance to teachers and parents about their roles and responsibilities
  - providing relevant CPD to support teachers' constructing of measurable and achievable IEP targets
  - consistently monitoring the quality of provision for students with SEND across all sections and cycles of the school.

## 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:**

- The school meets the registration requirements for the National Agenda Parameter.
- Attainment against the National Agenda Parameter in English, mathematics and science is not secure.
- Data is analysed to identify students' strengths and weaknesses and to provide extra support to improve some areas of weakness. It is not yet used effectively to identify the required changes to teaching, learning and the curriculum to ensure that students develop the necessary skills for success against the National Agenda Parameter.
- The school has not fully identified, or implemented, the curriculum changes needed to deliver the skills and knowledge required for success in TIMSS and PISA testing. Opportunities for problem solving, investigation and in depth critical thinking are insufficient across the curriculum.
- Although lessons are often focused on real world examples, they do not provide sufficient opportunities for students to work independently or in groups to solve problems, to carry out investigations or do research. As a consequence students are not developing the skills required to be independent learners.
- Students know benchmark test results but are not provided with individual plans for improvement. The school lacks the resources in terms of books and technology to enable students to adequately develop research skills.

Overall, the school improvement towards achieving its National Agenda targets is not secure.

## 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 has embarked on a process to become more innovative in its school improvement. Early initiatives include new robotics and design and technology courses. Cycle 1 and 2 students are trained to collaborate when organising, designing and creating their group projects and models. However, innovative opportunities are not embedded consistently into all aspects of the school's curriculum.

Overall school performance


Acceptable

1 Students' achievement

		KG	Cycle 1	Cycle 2	Cycle 3
Islamic education 	Attainment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
	Progress	Acceptable	Good ↑	Acceptable	Acceptable
Arabic as a first language 	Attainment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
	Progress	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Arabic as an additional language 	Attainment	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable
	Progress	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable
English 	Attainment	Weak	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good ↑
	Progress	Weak	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good ↑
Mathematics 	Attainment	Weak	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good ↑
	Progress	Weak	Acceptable	Acceptable ↑	Good ↑
Science 	Attainment	Weak	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
	Progress	Weak	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

	KG	Cycle 1	Cycle 2	Cycle 3
Learning skills	Weak	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

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

	KG	Cycle 1	Cycle 2	Cycle 3
Personal development	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Good	Good	Good	Good
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Acceptable 	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

## 3. Teaching and assessment

	KG	Cycle 1	Cycle 2	Cycle 3
Teaching for effective learning	Weak	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Assessment	Weak	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

## 4. Curriculum

	KG	Cycle 1	Cycle 2	Cycle 3
Curriculum design and implementation	Weak	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Curriculum adaptation	Weak	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

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

	KG	Cycle 1	Cycle 2	Cycle 3
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Care and support	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable


## 6. Leadership and management

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

# Main inspection report



## 1. Students' achievement

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

- In Islamic education, most children attain age appropriate knowledge of Islamic concepts in line with Ministry of Education (MOE) expectations. They recite short Surahs of the Holy Qur'an with appropriate pronunciation. They demonstrate a basic knowledge of the life of the Prophet (PBUH) and memorise a number of Hadeeth and relevant supplications. Most children make expected levels of progress when measured against their starting points.
- In Arabic as a first language, most children understand their teachers' instructions and respond well to them. They can match familiar words to pictures and recognise the letters in the beginning, middle and the end of words. Children can write and understand the meaning of some words. They can sing a few rhymes by heart and communicate their understanding using appropriate short sentences. Most children make progress that is in line with MOE curriculum expectations.
- In English, the language and literacy skills of children, as a second language learners, are at the early stages of development. Overall their attainment and progress is below age appropriate levels. During their time in KG, children's writing skills develop at a slow rate. Although children can identify most letters and sounds of the alphabet their reading skills are only emerging. Some can recognise simple sight words in their books.
- In mathematics, children are beginning to acquire the key skills of counting, recognising and writing numbers, including those numbers and objects up to 10, but at a very slow rate. Some children can use everyday language to identify and describe two-dimensional shapes in their environment. Their use and understanding of addition and mathematical language is limited.
- Children's scientific knowledge and investigation skills are only beginning to emerge. They exhibit natural curiosity about things in their own environment. Although they develop some understanding of scientific concepts their development of critical thinking and problem solving skills is underdeveloped. Overall, by the time they leave KG, children's attainment and progress are below expectations.

Cycle 1		
Subjects	Attainment	Progress
Islamic education	Acceptable	Good ↑
Arabic as a first language	Acceptable	Acceptable
Arabic as an additional language	Not applicable	Not applicable
English	Acceptable	Acceptable
Mathematics	Acceptable	Acceptable
Science	Acceptable	Acceptable

- In Islamic education, most students attain levels that are in line with expectations. In lessons and their recent work, they demonstrate acceptable levels of knowledge, understanding and skill levels of most Islamic concepts. The majority of students are making better than expected progress when it is measured against their starting points in learning. Their recitation, memorisation and understanding of the Holy Qur'an is stronger than other aspects of the subject. In lessons, girls make better progress than boys.
- In Arabic as a first language, most students attain at levels that are in line with curriculum expectations. Most have good listening skills and use standard Arabic when responding to questions. They can identify the main ideas of a prescribed text. However, comprehension skills are underdeveloped, especially in free reading. In upper grades girls have well developed oral expression and writing skills but the boys are limited because they lack grammatical correctness. Overall, most students make expected levels of progress.
- In English, students' attainment levels in MOE tests shows that students in Grades 3 and 5 are at lower levels to those in other MOE curriculum schools. However, the standards of reading and writing have improved in the previous three years. Most students demonstrate confidence when speaking in class and in groups, with listening skills and grammar developing. Grade 5 girls express their ideas persuasively and communicate effectively illustrating acceptable progress.
- In mathematics, the majority of students demonstrate attainment which is in line with curriculum standards. Attainment against external benchmarking in Grade 3 is below national averages, although this improves by Grade 5. Most students make acceptable progress with girls performing better than boys. Trends over time are variable. Students' work with numbers and basic arithmetic is better developed than their age appropriate problem solving and critical thinking skills.
- In science lessons and in examples of students' work, most students demonstrate attainment and progress in line with curriculum requirements. School assessments show most attainment to be above curriculum expectations but external benchmark assessments indicate only a minority of students achieve expected levels when measured in external tests. More girls achieve above expected levels than boys. Students are better at recall of knowledge than understanding or applying it. Students are beginning to develop skills of observation but are given too few opportunities to use real materials and investigate, as a result, their enquiry skills are underdeveloped.

Cycle 2		
Subjects	Attainment	Progress
Islamic education	Acceptable	Acceptable
Arabic as a first language	Acceptable	Acceptable
Arabic as an additional language	Not applicable	Not applicable
English	Acceptable	Acceptable
Mathematics	Acceptable	Acceptable ↑
Science	Acceptable	Acceptable

- In Islamic education, most students develop knowledge, skills and understanding at levels that are in line with curriculum expectations. Most demonstrate appropriate knowledge in Islamic morals and faith. They memorise prescribed verses from the Holy Qur'an, applying rules appropriately. By the end of the cycle students can understand the general meaning from verses of the Holy Qur'an and identify key qualities of believers. In lessons, students make expected progress in developing most Islamic concepts.
- In Arabic as a first language, the attainment of most students is in line with curriculum expectations. Students' assessment results reflect variations between internal school tests and MOE test levels. Most students show good listening and comprehension skills. Girls demonstrate improving levels of comprehension but their free reading skills are limited. Grade nine boys demonstrate weak levels of grammatical understanding. Diagnostic testing at the beginning and end of the first term shows that most students make the expected levels of progress, with girls making stronger progress than boys.
- Students' attainment in English is broadly in line with curriculum expectations. A similar picture is shown in external benchmark tests, where students meet international standards. There is a stronger picture in Grade 9, where students' results show improvements. The development of reading skills is age appropriate. Overall, students' progress is acceptable in lessons.
- In mathematics, attainment measured against the school's curriculum standards is in line with age expectations and above expectation in Grade 9. Performance against international benchmarks in Grades 7 and 9 is variable but lesson observations, samples of students' work and internal data confirm acceptable levels of attainment. Students' progress is similar to expectations; there is little difference between the performance of girls and boys. There are improving outcomes over time, especially in the higher grades. Problem solving and thinking skills are underdeveloped.
- In science lessons and written work, most students achieve in line with curriculum expectations. School tests show a significant majority achieve above curriculum standards but a lower proportion do so in external benchmark tests. In general, girls make better progress in lessons and over time and attain higher standards than boys. Students show better acquisition of knowledge than their development of understanding and scientific skills. They are beginning to develop practical skills but have insufficient opportunities to problem solve or to carry out investigations and so skills of enquiry are underdeveloped.

Cycle 3		
Subjects	Attainment	Progress
Islamic education	Acceptable	Acceptable
Arabic as a first language	Acceptable	Acceptable
Arabic as an additional language	Not applicable	Not applicable
English	Good ↑	Good ↑
Mathematics	Good ↑	Good ↑
Science	Acceptable	Acceptable

- In Islamic education, most students attain at levels in line with curriculum standards. In lessons and in their recent work, most students develop adequate knowledge of the Holy Qur'an, the Pillars of Faith and the Seerah of the Prophet (PBUH). They memorise verses of the Holy Qur'an and apply correct recitation rules. From their starting points, most students make expected levels of progress. By the end of the cycle students can identify key principals in Islam and apply their knowledge in everyday contexts. Girls generally make better progress than boys.
- The attainment of most students in Arabic as a first language is in line with curriculum expectations. Assessment data, over the last three years, shows acceptable attainment. Most students can analyse and interpret prescribed literary texts. Girls express ideas both orally and in writing more fluently than boys. Periodic diagnostic testing indicates that most students are making the expected levels of progress, with girls making stronger progress than boys.
- A majority of students demonstrate good attainment and progress in English. In internal assessments, Grade 11 students were attaining at levels above curriculum standards. They participate enthusiastically in discussion, presentations, collaborations and problem solving, which supports better than expected levels of progress. Grade 10 girls can express themselves with strong viewpoints and make convincing arguments.
- In mathematics, attainment as measured against external examination results is above expected standards. Lesson observations, examples of students' work and internal data confirm good levels of attainment and progress. There is challenging work on complex numbers in Grade 10 and matrices in Grade 12. Content is more challenging in Cycle 3 and students are beginning to develop their independent learning and research skills.
- In science, Grade 12 students achieve good results in the advanced MOE examinations. In other grades assessments show a more mixed picture. In general most students show attainment and progress levels in line with expectations in lessons and over time. Students carry out practical work competently and safely, following instructions well. However, they do not have a secure understanding of scientific methodology. They have insufficient opportunities to investigate, hypothesise, plan and carry out a controlled investigation, or analyse results and suggest improvements.

	KG	Cycle 1	Cycle 2	Cycle 3
<b>Learning skills</b>	Weak	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

- Most students engage positively with their teachers and their class work. They demonstrate a capacity to take responsibility for their learning but the development of their skills is restricted, especially when teacher talk dominates the class. Children in the KG have little opportunity to think about their own learning; they are engaged in low level tasks that provide little challenge, for much of the time.
- Students are well-motivated and have a strong work ethic. They eagerly support each other and share their understanding of their work. They relish opportunities to explain their work to the class. However, younger students lack the vocabulary to describe their thoughts and ideas coherently. They work in groups but the purpose of the collaboration is not always apparent to students, limiting its impact.
- Students are aware that areas of learning can overlap. There are many links seen between science and mathematics, and social studies and Islamic education. Lessons regularly offer links to the real world. In science, there are meaningful discussions about steps individuals might take to address climate change.
- Opportunities to pursue investigations, independent research and enquiry are too few to develop students' critical thinking and problem solving independently. The use of technology as well as access to the internet is limited, further restricting the development of these skills.


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

	KG	Cycle 1	Cycle 2	Cycle 3
<b>Personal development</b>	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good

- Most students have positive attitudes to their learning and are well engaged in lessons, with noticeable strengths in the Cycle 3 girls' section. Students respond to teacher directions and give answers willingly but do not have sufficient opportunities to reflect on their learning.
- Students respond well to feedback from adults and peers when it is provided and are encouraged to work collaboratively. KG children help each other. Most students feel safe in class and at school although there are occasional instances of boisterous behaviour, particularly in the boys' sections.
- Students, particularly in Cycle 3, take the lead in showing tolerance towards others and are proactive in their support throughout the school, especially to students with SEND. They feel valued and supported by their teachers, which leads to effective relationships.
- Students understand the reasons for making healthy food choices. These are often supported by classroom lessons on healthy lifestyles. In science, students develop a good understanding of food pyramids. Most students, both boys and girls, participate willingly in physical activities, although opportunities for sport are limited.
- Attendance is inconsistent and, at times, below expectations. This has an impact on student learning. The buses get students to and from school on time but too many students who travel by car arrive late for school. This reduces their chances of learning and sharing in school assemblies and participating the UAE National Anthem.

	KG	Cycle 1	Cycle 2	Cycle 3
<b>Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures</b>	Good	Good	Good	Good

- Students across the school demonstrate a strong understanding and appreciation of the values of Islam and how they influence local society. KG children show an awareness of Muslim dress code and the main Islamic practices during the holy month of Ramadan. Senior students proudly take part in various Holy Qur'an competitions and in leading congregational prayers.
- Students are knowledgeable and respectful of the UAE culture. All students show a pride in being part of this society and contribute to the various national celebrations. As they progress through the school, students are able to discuss the UAE in historical terms and compare the past to the current developments.
- Students demonstrate a strong understanding of their own culture. They show that they are mindful and respectful of the other cultures in school. Their awareness of wider cultures in Dubai is not as strong.

	KG	Cycle 1	Cycle 2	Cycle 3
<b>Social responsibility and innovation skills</b>	Acceptable 	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

- Students are responsible and contributing members of the school and wider community. KG children show a strong awareness of their growing role in the school community. In science there is an emphasis on what students can do to support others in the school.
- Most students are resourceful and have acceptable work habits. They show a determination to do well. They enjoy work, can be creative and enjoy taking part in projects. However, they often lack the initiative in taking the lead on projects. This reduces their risk taking and learning from their mistakes.
- Students have an acceptable understanding of environmental issues and sustainability. They investigate ways to improve their immediate school environment and solutions to local pollution problems. However, deeper knowledge of other global environmental issues is underdeveloped.

### 3. Teaching and assessment

	KG	Cycle 1	Cycle 2	Cycle 3
Teaching for effective learning	Weak	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

- Most teachers have a secure knowledge of their subjects and promote skill and understanding development at a suitable level, especially in Cycle 3. Teachers' knowledge of how students learn and how to develop engaging lessons is less secure, especially in KG where too many teachers have insufficient knowledge of children's strengths and weaknesses to provide the appropriate levels of challenge.
- Teachers' lesson planning is inconsistent and the use of learning objectives is not fully understood by all. Resources to support learning are insufficient. Teachers do not use technology confidently. Learning environments, particularly in KG, are uninspiring and the use of displays to validate work is inconsistent. An appropriate balance of skills and knowledge to support understanding is neither sufficiently planned nor taught.
- Relationships between students and teachers are generally positive, motivational and supportive of learning, especially in the girls' section. Questioning is regular but not used well to check for understanding and promote progression. Questions generally require only brief responses of factual information and are rarely followed up. Older students are confident enough to seek clarification and offer suggestions in lessons.
- Planning, particularly in KG, is often ineffective. Teachers work hard to support students who are struggling but able students are rarely challenged, even when different worksheets are offered. The deployment of teaching assistants does not have sufficient impact. Many seem unclear about their role in supporting learning. Across all cycles, creative teaching methods to encourage greater progression and offer more meaningful challenge are not evident.
- Activities involving critical thinking and problem solving are rarely observed; there are too many opportunities missed by teachers. A few examples are found in extra-curricular lessons and English classes of students researching and designing menus for healthy eating. Some lessons are dominated by teacher talk. This limits the scope and time for self-review, and results in students being reliant on the teacher for guidance.

	KG	Cycle 1	Cycle 2	Cycle 3
Assessment	Weak	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

- Internal assessment procedures are linked to the syllabus requirements of the MOE and are consistently applied across Cycles 1 to 3. In KG there is no coherent set of expected standards; assessments therefore lack rigour and consistency.
- No assessments are carried out in KG to identify children's starting points. In Cycles 1 and 2, MOE, NAP and international benchmark tests are used. In Cycle 3 the MOE examinations in Grade 12 are used as benchmarks. The school is not yet consistently using data to set targets for improved learning performance.

- Assessment data is sometimes analysed well. It is used to identify areas of weakness in students' skills and to enable effective additional support for underperforming students. It is not yet used consistently to inform target setting for individual students. In KG, assessments are not systematic or coherent and do not provide sufficient information on which to base improvement planning.
- Teachers use assessment data to group students but do not consistently use this data to plan appropriate work or adjust teaching strategies. The less able are not supported to meet the lesson objectives. The more able are not challenged to think more deeply about their work. In KG, assessment information is not used to inform teaching or curriculum adaptation.
- Teachers have a reasonable understanding of individual students' strengths and weaknesses but this is less secure in KG. Their written feedback, giving guidance on how to improve, is lacking. As a result students' ability to develop as independent learners and provide opportunities for parents to help their children improve, are diminished. In a few lessons, particularly in English, students assess their own and others' work.

#### 4. Curriculum

	KG	Cycle 1	Cycle 2	Cycle 3
Curriculum design and implementation	Weak	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

- The curriculum has a clear rationale and meets the amended MOE requirements. It is broad but does not provide adequate balance. The focus is on knowledge acquisition rather than on the development of skills and deeper understanding. The school is in its early stages of mapping students' skill levels.
- Curriculum planning across most cycles is based on the MOE framework. The activities follow a logical scope and sequence. The curriculum builds upon students' previous knowledge and provides appropriate continuity and progression for most subjects. However, there are too many gaps in the provision for KG children to help them develop holistically and prepare them for their next educational phase.
- Curriculum choice for older students is limited to a choice between a science or literature stream. Students in Grade 12 are offered life skills. Other options are made available to students through extra-curricular activities. Curricular options in KG are very limited; there are no free choice activities to develop independent learning.
- The development of cross-curricular links between subjects is inconsistent. In KG, children do not always transfer learning between different subjects. Cross-curricular links are stronger in Islamic education, science, mathematics and social studies.
- The school conducts an annual review of the curriculum to ensure adequate provision in most subjects to meet academic and personal development of most students. As a result, some adaptations have been made, including in English, Mathematics and science lessons.
- The school teaches the MOE social studies curriculum in the Arabic language. It establishes links with other curricular areas such as Islamic education, Arabic, art and science. Teachers plan lessons appropriately to incorporate concepts, knowledge and skills of the UAE social studies framework and its textbooks. Teaching sufficiently engages students in discussions. In better lessons, students work collaboratively but their critical thinking and research skills are still under-developed. They are assessed through end of topic tests, to monitor students' progress.

	KG	Cycle 1	Cycle 2	Cycle 3
<b>Curriculum adaptation</b>	Weak	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In KG there are few curriculum adaptations. At higher levels, adjustments to the curriculum adequately meet the learning needs of most students. As a result, more subjects, for example Arabic and science, now offer students more opportunities to be creative and learn through investigation. Other developments support older students in gaining qualifications necessary for their next steps in learning beyond school.</li> <li>Subject-based clubs and activities offer students in Cycles 1 to 3 opportunities to follow their interests in languages, art, mathematics, science and further study of the Holy Qur'an. Well-planned opportunities for critical thinking and problem-solving in the senior mathematics club are not yet consistently matched by activities in other subjects. Enterprise activities and community links are not yet well-developed.</li> <li>The social studies curriculum develops all students' knowledge and understanding of UAE history, culture and ambitions. Weekly UAE culture and heritage clubs provide additional support for students. In the KG, opportunities to enrich children's understanding of the UAE social studies topics are just emerging.</li> </ul>				

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


	KG	Cycle 1	Cycle 2	Cycle 3
<b>Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding</b>	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An appropriate policy supports procedures for the safeguarding of all students. There are protocols and procedures to protect students from abuse, including bullying and cyber-bullying via the internet and social media. Roles and responsibilities for all staff are outlined and the policy is communicated to parents. Bullying is dealt with promptly and effectively when it occasionally occurs.</li> <li>The school environment is safe, secure and hygienic. Transport supervision and monitoring is effective. Gate security is well managed; all visitors are required to sign in and wait at reception. The supervision of students is effective throughout the day. The school meets all legal and regulatory requirements.</li> <li>In general, the school premises are maintained to an acceptable standard but they are dated. A number of classrooms require upgrading and refurbishment. The school clinic maintains secure, accurate and detailed records of all health related issues.</li> <li>Overall, the school premises and outdoor facilities provide a safe and secure physical environment. They are generally fit for purpose, although the facilities for physical education are limited. In general the learning environments are adequate but many require an upgrade. Only the lower floors are accessible for students with mobility difficulties but the ramps are in need of refurbishment.</li> </ul>				

- The school collaborates with parents to ensure that healthy living is a priority in all cycles. The school's medical team actively promotes a range of educational health initiatives in collaboration with the physical education department. Healthy meals and snacks are available in the school canteen.

	KG	Cycle 1	Cycle 2	Cycle 3
<b>Care and support</b>	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Across the school, relationships between staff and students are mutually respectful and are often warm and cordial. In all cycles, almost all teachers manage student behaviour well, with good behaviour being the norm. Bullying behaviour is rare and dealt with appropriately.</li> <li>There is a lack of consistency in the implementation of procedures to ensure that students' attendance and punctuality meet acceptable levels. Teachers monitor attendance daily and promptly address instances of absence and late-coming but there is insufficient follow up with students and their parents.</li> <li>Arrangements to identify students with SEND have improved. As a result, students' needs are more accurately recognised, with a sharper focus on identifying barriers to students' learning and their personal development. Arrangements to identify gifted and talented students are not in place.</li> <li>Classroom support for students with SEND is inconsistent. Not all teachers provide the required levels of well-focused support. The SEND team provide some training, guidance and advice to teachers but this is not always applied effectively or consistently.</li> <li>Social and personal development programmes advise students about expected behaviour and how to make suitable friendships. Students are well-supported with advice on how to revise for examinations. Older students benefit from visits to and from universities, and the additional support offered by the school.</li> </ul>				

## Inclusion

### Provision and outcomes for students with SEND

Acceptable 

- Senior leaders provide clear direction to the work of the SEND teachers across both sections of the school. They have a clear commitment to the inclusion of students with SEND in all aspects of school life. Parents are not sufficiently aware of the roles and responsibilities of teachers and how to access support.
- There are increasingly accurate procedures for the identification of students with SEND. Fewer students face barriers to their learning and personal development. Supportive external advice and guidance is available. There is an awareness of the need to upskill teachers.
- Parents of students with SEND receive regular reports on their children's progress. However, not all parents are fully involved as active partners in their children's education. Arrangements which enable parents to contribute to individual education plans (IEPs) are not fully developed. Advice and guidance about the support that they can provide their children at home, is limited.
- Teachers support students with SEND increasingly effectively through the better matching of work to the stated targets, within IEPs. However, students' progress and personal development targets in IEPs are not yet consistently measured or monitored. The progressive development of students' independence both in their learning and their personal development are not specified in the IEPs.

- Most students make acceptable progress in their learning and personal development. The tracking and monitoring of students' progress, using more measurable and timely targets, requires improvement.

## 6. Leadership and management

### The effectiveness of leadership

Acceptable

- The director and his senior management team promote and communicate the school's revised and expanded vision throughout its community. Included is a strong commitment to the UAE national and Emirate priorities including Islamic values, Arabic, inclusion and the national identity. However, its implementation has yet to have impact on all aspects of the school's operations.
- The senior management team, including the director, are seeking to develop a more positive school learning culture with higher standards of student achievement. They and teachers only have a developing understanding of the curriculum, and best practices in teaching, learning and assessment. This is more evident in Cycles 1 to 3. Their understanding of best practices in the KG is not secure.
- Stronger communication with stakeholders, including teaching staff, has resulted in a greater sense of purpose. Relationships are being strengthened, due to more precise role definition and increased opportunity for collegial input. Regular senior management meetings to set direction and address pressing issues have promoted a more inclusive approach.
- The director aims to build middle leaders' capacity and is beginning to instigate practices to develop distributive leadership. Currently the many new middle leaders, while committed to change, require upskilling.
- The actions of the director and the senior management team have improved some aspects of the school such as student behaviour, the broadening of the curriculum and some improved access to technology. However, aspects of the school's performance and standards, particularly in KG, are weak. Many initiatives to innovate and improve the school have yet to have a significant impact on student achievement.

### School self-evaluation and improvement planning

Acceptable

- The school's self-evaluation processes are becoming increasingly secure. The school is beginning to make use of a range of external data, including examination and international benchmark tests, as well as a narrow range of internal assessment data. The use of this data is helping the school to identify its strengths and areas for development but it is not used consistently or with enough precision.
- All teachers are monitored for the quality of their teaching and its effect on student learning using a range of criteria. Feedback to teachers includes possible next steps for their improvement. However, the outcomes of this process are yet to inform the school's professional development programme.

- The school's development plan and departmental action plans are based upon identified priorities from the previous DSIB inspection report. Included are targets to improve students' performance in National Agenda testing. There have been some resulting improvements in students' achievement, notably for students in the higher grades.
- The school is on a journey of improvement. It has a more clearly defined and focused sense of purpose and approach to school improvement. There has been some progress towards meeting the school's development targets. Nonetheless, the impact is variable with many actions not being fully embedded into practice. Overall, the learning ethos across the school has improved, with some better teaching being evident.

#### Partnerships with parents and the community

Acceptable

- Parents are increasingly engaged and involved in the life of the school. Parents interviewed were supportive of the school and the recent positive changes initiated by the school's director. The views of parents are occasionally considered by the school. However, parental input does not consistently support the raising of academic standards, punctuality and attendance.
- The director and the senior management team are using a broad range of methods to effectively communicate with the parent body. In KG, weekly children's development reports are provided. The school promptly informs parents of any personal, social and behavioural issues. The school's online management system provides them with real-time information on their children's academic progress.
- There is termly formal reporting on students' attainment. In KG, a comprehensive array of academic, social and emotional aspects are shared with parents. In higher grades, the MOE report format, which only provides grades, is used. Neither report provides parents with information on progress or the required next steps in their children's education.
- Parents and students participate in the community celebrations of the Flag Day, Commemoration Day and National Day. They work with the Emirates Environmental Group and benefit from an association with the Al Wasel Sports Club. There are limited opportunities to participate with other schools in sporting and cultural competitions.

#### Governance

Acceptable

- The composition of the governing board has recently been expanded to include a parents' representative. However, the board only meets formally twice a year, reducing the opportunity for prompt responses when issues arise. The owners obtain an understanding of the school's operations through weekly visits.
- The governing board support the school's vision for the holistic development of students' skills and knowledge, while enhancing their Emirati and Islamic values. The Governors are becoming more attuned to expected levels of academic, social and personal development and are increasingly holding the school's staff and leaders to account for better levels of student achievement.

- The governing board has ambitious and aspirational expectations. Identified weaknesses in the school's provision are being addressed. However, the board has not yet employed a suitably experienced and trained KG leader or provided sufficient resources to address identified weaknesses across the school.




<b>Management, staffing, facilities and resources</b>	Acceptable
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- Better planning and more established, secure routines and procedures have improved the school's day to day management. Students confidently know their timetables; they are well prepared for each class. The director and the senior management team effectively monitor the management of school each day by engaging in academic walk-throughs. They hold regular review meetings with supervisors to evaluate attendance, discipline and maintenance issues.
- The school has a full complement of staff. However, staff turnover in recent years has been high. New academic supervisors are benefiting from increased in-school training and additional responsibilities. Teaching staff, particularly in the boys' section, require increased, targeted training to enhance their professional skills. The identified gap in leadership knowledge and expertise of early years' provision requires urgent attention.
- The development of an additional specialist building, including new science laboratories, libraries, technology and sporting facilities are planned to enable staff to provide more challenging independent research and personal development opportunities. Most learning areas are of adequate quality but access issues have not been sufficiently addressed.
- Resources are generally inadequate. The libraries do not have sufficient books to encourage reading for pleasure or research. There is insufficient in-class technology to support research. KG children do not have water, sand or building resources to support their independent learning.

## 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	
 <b>Parents*</b>	2016-2017	55
	2015-2016	27
 <b>Teachers</b>	61	
 <b>Students</b>	93	

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

- More parents, but a similar number of teachers and students, completed the surveys this year compared to last year.
- Most parents that responded to the survey are satisfied with the quality of education provided.
- All parents agree that their children gain a good understanding of the importance of Islamic values in Dubai and almost all felt that their children develop a good awareness of the UAE and other cultures.
- Almost all parents agree that the school promotes literacy and a love of reading Arabic. They also agree that their children learn well most of the time due to good teaching, are safe at school and while on school transport.
- Most students that responded to the survey agree that they read Arabic well and a large majority feel that they read English well.
- Overall, a large majority of students agree that they are happy while at school, that they are treated fairly, that they are safe, and that teachers provide affirmative comments and believe they can succeed.
- A majority of students feel that the school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities and a range of interesting activities. Contrary to the view of inspectors, students also feel a good range of resources including technology is provided to support their learning.

- Almost all teachers that responded to the survey are supportive of almost all aspects of the schools operations. A few have reservations about student safety and a lack of professional development to support their teaching.

## 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)