



Modern Skills School

 Curriculum: US

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 Muhaisnah
Type of school	Private
Opening year of school	2006
Website	www.dubai-sms.com
Telephone	00971-4-2887765
Address	DUBAI , MUHAISANAH FIRST-P.O.BOX: 57475
Principal	Huda Al Samkari
Language of instruction	English, Arabic
Inspection dates	6 to 9 January 2017

Teachers / Support staff	
Number of teachers	106
Largest nationality group of teachers	Egyptian
Number of teaching assistants	35
Teacher-student ratio	1:16
Number of guidance counsellors	1
Teacher turnover	22%

Students	
Gender of students	Boys and girls
Age range	4-17
Grades or year groups	KG1-Grade 12
Number of students on roll	1735
Number of children in pre-kindergarten	0
Number of Emirati students	1538
Number of students with SEND	81
Largest nationality group of students	Emirati

Curriculum	
Educational permit / Licence	US
Main curriculum	US / MOE
External tests and examinations	SAT, PSAT, TOFEL, CAT 4, IBT, MAP
Accreditation	Candidate NEASC
National Agenda benchmark tests	CAT4, IBT, MAP.



The DSIB inspection process



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

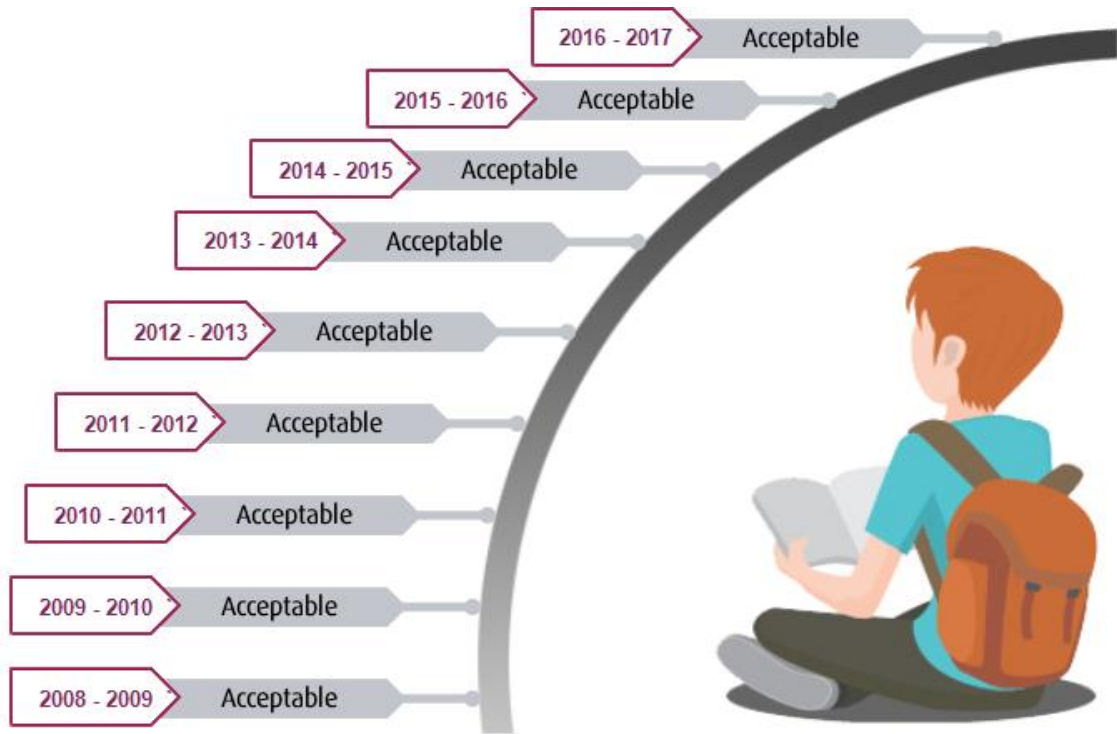
Inspection judgements are drawn from evidence gathered by the inspection team, including observation of students' learning in lessons, review of their work, discussions with students, meetings with the staff, parents and governors, and review of surveys completed by parents, teachers and students.

Judgements are made on a six-point scale

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

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

Inspection journey for Modern Skills School



- The Modern Skills School was opened in 2006 and has been judged to be acceptable during DSIB inspections since its first inspection in 2008-2009. At the time of this inspection there were 1735 students aged 4 to 17 years old on the roll, almost all of whom are Emirati. The principal has been in post since 2013. Teacher turnover is 22 per cent, compared with 23 per cent the previous year.
- The three previous inspections acknowledged strengths in students' attainment and progress in Islamic education across the school. Students had strong levels of personal responsibility. Their understanding and appreciation of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures were generally strong. Relationships with parents were also noted as strengths.
- Recent inspection recommendations focused on improvements to teaching to enhance students' outcomes. Recommendations have also focussed on the need for the school to develop its self-knowledge through better evaluative practices, and to improve the clarity of leadership and governance.

Summary of inspection findings 2016-2017



Modern Skills School was inspected by DSIB from 6 to 9 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 phases, with the exception of Islamic education across the school, Arabic as a first language in elementary and progress in mathematics and science in the high school, which are good. Attainment in elementary and middle phase mathematics is weak. Students' learning skills are strongest in the high school phase, but in all other phases students have acceptable learning skills.
- Students' personal and social development are a highlight of the school's work. Judgements are at least good, with most being either very good or outstanding.
- The quality of teaching for effective learning and assessment in all phases is acceptable, except in the high school where teaching is good.
- The quality of the school's curriculum design and implementation and its curriculum adaptation in all phases is acceptable except in the high school phase where curriculum design is good.
- The school's provision for the protection, care, guidance and support of students across the school is good.
- The effectiveness of leadership, the self-evaluation and school improvement planning processes, governance and the school's management, staffing, facilities and resources are all acceptable. Partnerships with parents and the community are good.

What the school does well.

- The good attainment and progress across all phases in Islamic education.
- Students' personal and social development including their strong understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures.
- The school's good provision for health and safety, including arrangements for child protection and safeguarding, and its care and support for its students, including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

Recommendations

- The governing board should expand the senior leadership team (SLT) with an appropriate number of suitably trained, experienced and qualified teachers in the US curriculum, who support the principal to:
 - drive the necessary school improvements
 - take responsibility and be held accountable for improving the quality of self-evaluation, the accurate monitoring of teaching and the analysis of all school assessment data
 - improve the impact of teaching, by providing training for staff to better use external and internal assessment data
 - identify the learning needs of individuals and groups of students and better inform lesson planning and classroom delivery.
- Provide a curriculum which supports planning for student learning by:
 - offering increased, age appropriate, opportunities for skills development and higher order thinking as well as knowledge acquisition and greater challenge
 - building on the prior their learning, and enabling them to make better progress in lessons
 - ensuring continuity of progression and a strong match to all international assessments
 - using the school's internal review processes to identify and address weaknesses in their attainment, particularly in English, mathematics and science.

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 the school's targets:

- Students' attainment in the National Agenda Parameter is below expectations in science, mathematics, and English.
- The school does not fully meet the registration requirements for the National Agenda Parameter.
- The school carries out a basic analysis of the National Agenda Parameter. It does not do enough to enable teachers to make effective use of the data to differentiate instruction.
- The school meets expectations in adjusting its curriculum to increase the chances that its students will improve their scores in the TIMSS and PISA exams.
- The school puts in place cross-curricular projects that require critical thinking. Teaching strategies in the classroom still do not challenge students to consistently think deeply or critically in most subjects.
- Students have a general understanding of the UAE National Agenda and the role they play in achieving the national targets. They have started to use online resources to conduct research. However, most research occurs outside the classroom.

Overall, the schools 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 schools commitment to innovation is articulated and guided in its values statement, Examples of children's innovative and creative approaches are prominently displayed or demonstrated, for example, students with SEND have created a sensory garden, with wind and solar generation capability. Monthly school themes including carpentry, environmental modelling and robotics also promote innovation. A whole school thematic approach to its curriculum with pertinent topics such as globalization However, innovation is not yet systematically embedded into all areas of the curriculum.

Overall school performance

Acceptable

1 Students' achievement

		KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Islamic education 	Attainment	Not applicable	Good	Good	Good
	Progress	Not applicable	Good	Good	Good
Arabic as a first language 	Attainment	Not applicable	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable
	Progress	Not applicable	Good	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	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable ↓
	Progress	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable ↓
Mathematics 	Attainment	Acceptable	Weak ↓	Weak ↓	Acceptable ↓
	Progress	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good
Science 	Attainment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable ↓
	Progress	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Learning skills	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good

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

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

3. Teaching and assessment

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Teaching for effective learning	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good
Assessment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

4. Curriculum

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Curriculum design and implementation	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good
Curriculum adaptation	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

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

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding	Good	Good	Good	Good
Care and support	Good ↑	Good ↑	Good ↑	Good ↑


6. Leadership and management

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


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	Acceptable	Acceptable
Mathematics	Acceptable	Acceptable
Science	Acceptable	Acceptable

- In English, the school's internal assessment information indicates that most children are working at age appropriate levels in all areas of literacy. In lessons, the integrated curriculum provides cross-curricular links, which allow children to use their speaking, listening, reading and writing skills in all content areas. This results in acceptable progress during lessons and in work, over time. The children use their English language skills to understand new vocabulary, communicate with their peers and to write numbers and letters.
- The knowledge and skills of most children are in line with the curriculum standards in mathematics. Their emerging abilities to apply these skills in real world contexts result in acceptable progress from their starting points and as measured against the learning objectives of the curriculum. Assessment information and children's work, indicates that most children have age appropriate number and operational knowledge and are able to demonstrate their understanding of measurement, geometry, addition and subtraction. However, a lack of challenge in most lessons prevents children from developing a deeper grasp and an ability to apply their learning.
- In science most children have an age appropriate understanding of the world, in line with curriculum standards. They make expected progress in lessons as they use their curiosity to investigate scientific concepts. In their daily activities and lessons, children's understanding of the weather, living and non-living things and healthy lifestyles are progressing as expected. This is confirmed in the school's assessment data. Children confidently use basic observation skills and discuss their learning, but their enquiry and investigative skills are in the early stages of development.

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

- In Islamic education, the majority of students are attaining at levels above curriculum expectations. In lessons, and in their recent work, the majority make better than expected progress, as measured against the learning objectives. Students have a good understanding of Islamic morals and values, such as respect for their neighbors and cleanliness. Their knowledge of the Pillars of Islam and the Day of Judgment are good. Students link their knowledge to other learning areas and their daily lives. Students memorize short Surahs, and their recitation skills and application of Tajweed rules are appropriate to their age.
- In Arabic as a first language, the majority of students demonstrate well-developed and consistently good attainment, which is above curriculum expectations, across most of the language skills. Students are increasingly using correct full sentences to respond to their teachers' questions. In lessons and over time, students make good progress in developing their reading comprehension skills and knowledge of basic grammar. However, students' notebooks and worksheets show only an acceptable level of writing skill.
- Most students' attainment in English is in line with grade level expectations, with better progress in oral language. Students make slow, but steady progress in reading, with most students at grade level by the end of Grade 5. In some classes, vocabulary work is effective as students use new words in a variety of ways. Young students use information communication technology (ICT) well, to model their language skills. Most students' writing skills are emerging.
- Internal data, and evidence seen in lessons, confirms that most students in Grades 1 and 2 reach expected curriculum standards in mathematics. They also make good progress in their understanding of place value and the four operations of number. Between Grades 3 to 5, their progress slows significantly. Internal assessments indicate that attainment is as expected in these grades. This is not confirmed by work seen in lessons or in MAP data, where only a few students reach the required standard. Attainment is especially weak in measurement, geometry and understanding of fractions.
- Students demonstrate acceptable knowledge and understanding of scientific concepts. Through teacher planned, and directed, hands-on activities, they extend their understanding of knowledge, but not their scientific or investigative skills. Although internal assessment data points to higher levels of attainment, external benchmark test data does not concur. Students' progress in lessons is acceptable, as it is often hindered by teachers' ineffective lesson planning, classroom delivery and poor use of resources.

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

- In Islamic education, in lessons and in recent work, the majority of students attain levels that are above curriculum standards. Students make good progress in their understanding of the reasons behind the Islamic Fiqh-Laws such as eating Halal food. They have a good awareness of the meanings of prescribed Hadeeth. Students link their knowledge of Islamic practices and morals to everyday aspects. They demonstrate good application of basic research using the internet to find out information. They apply Tajweed rules in Holy Qur'an recitation at an appropriate level.
- In Arabic as a first language, students' attainment levels are in line with the expectations of the MOE curriculum standards. Students' skills in using standard Arabic are improving to an appropriate level; their ability to use it in extended sentences is emerging. In lessons, students make acceptable progress in developing their reading comprehension. However, they make slower progress in developing literary analysis skills. More opportunities to write, and an enhanced curriculum, are enabling students to develop their extended writing skills.
- In English, most students attain levels that are in line with the curriculum standards, with speaking skills being the strongest. Most students' language use and reading scores in external assessments fall below grade level. However in class, they make connections between subjects well, and apply their experiences to new topics, such as the use of irony. Reading comprehension shows improvement for some students, while extended writing, for most, is limited.
- Students make acceptable progress in developing mathematical knowledge in Grades 6 to 8 but less than three-quarters of students attain levels in line with curriculum standards. Progress in conceptual understanding is slower than in other areas. Gaps in basic knowledge and under-developed skills such as reasoning and problem solving are hindering faster progress. Consequently, although acceptable overall, progress is not good enough in lessons or over time for most students to catch up and attain at expected curriculum standards. This is confirmed by internal data, and that obtained from international benchmark tests.
- Most students meet curriculum expectations in their knowledge and understanding of scientific ideas and principles. Internal assessment data, which points to high levels of attainment is not supported by results from external benchmark tests. Most students make the expected progress in lessons and in meeting the learning objectives. Progress is often hindered by a lack of hands-on work and insufficient challenge in the learning objectives.

High		
Subjects	Attainment	Progress
Islamic education	Good	Good
Arabic as a first language	Acceptable	Acceptable
Arabic as an additional language	Not applicable	Not applicable
English	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable ↓
Mathematics	Acceptable ↓	Good
Science	Acceptable ↓	Good

- In Islamic education, the majority of students reach attainment levels which are better than expected when compared to curriculum standards. They also make better than expected progress in their understanding of Islamic morals and values. They demonstrate mature analyzing skills in discussing topics from an Islamic perspective, such as, using social media, ethics and Islamic dress code. Critical thinking is demonstrated when they discuss the reasons for the acts of worship. Their memorization and recitation skills are appropriate.
- In Arabic as a first language, students demonstrate attainment levels that are in line with the MOE curriculum expectations. Attainment levels are consistent with the previous year's levels. Girls, especially in Grade 12, display well-developed listening and speaking skills. However, the written language skills of boys are less developed. In lessons and over time, students make acceptable progress in improving their use of standard Arabic, knowledge of grammar and reading comprehension.
- Most students have proficiency in English which is at an acceptable level in relation to the curriculum standards. From Grade 10 upwards, external assessments show improvement in the use of the language, while reading is less strong. Most students use descriptive language when writing or speaking, with confidence and accuracy. Older students, particularly girls in Grades 11 and 12, create well-produced pieces of short writing, and demonstrate greater language fluency.
- In lessons, students attain standards in mathematics that are in line with the curriculum standards. School assessments confirm that in projects and internal tests appropriate curriculum levels are attained in most topics. Students make good progress in lessons and over time in the development of mathematical knowledge. Attainment continues to be strong in algebraic thinking but is weaker in geometry, statistics and probability. As in other phases, the majority of students do not have well-developed reasoning skills. Consequently, only a few students reach the required standard in international tests.
- Students' attainment is acceptable in the sciences. Most students meet curriculum expectations in their knowledge and understanding of concepts in chemistry, biology, and physics. In Grade 11, for example, students are able to express their understanding of photosynthesis using different models. Although their internal assessments point to higher levels of attainment, their external test results do not support these levels. The progress which students make in lessons is good as they are able to extend their understanding through challenging activities. Students' international benchmark data from year to year also points to strong progress over time.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Learning skills	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good

- Students show enthusiasm for learning and want to do well. They recognize when they find learning difficult, but they are not active enough to seek further explanation. As a result, they do not always know how to improve, and this slows their progress.
- During group work, students generally communicate well with each other, sharing knowledge and arriving at a consensus to complete tasks. When groups are too large and students are of mixed ability, the least able often become passive participants. A strength of students' learning skills is their ability to apply their understanding of Islamic values to their everyday lives. This is stronger in the high school. Occasionally, students complete projects that link learning to real life application. Their ability to make connections between prior learning across subjects is limited. Children in the KG need support when applying their learning to new contexts or their own experiences.
- While a few examples of students' innovation skills are evident, such as the robotics in the high school, this is not an intrinsic feature of students' learning. In lessons, they rarely take the initiative to investigate, or use technology to research in order to extend their knowledge and deepen their understanding. The skills needed to solve problems, such as reasoning, are not well developed.

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

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Personal development	Very good	Good	Good	Very good ↑

- Students display positive and responsible attitudes towards school and want to succeed. They are eager to learn and open to feedback on how to improve. In the high school phase, students are self-reliant and often take the initiative to lead assemblies and special projects.
- In general, students display positive behavior and relate well to others. They are courteous towards their teachers and are self-disciplined, interacting well with other students. They are aware of the code of conduct and classroom rules, which results in a calm and orderly school atmosphere.
- Students cooperate and help each other during lessons and other activities. Student leadership is evident in the higher grades, making positive contributions to the school community. Most students are willing to help others, including those with SEND. In the KG children are especially accepting of each other and readily help their classmates in lessons.
- Almost all students are committed to following safe and healthy lifestyles. They make good choices and participate in activities, in and out of school, to support healthy lives. Students are enthusiastic about their learning in health related school projects.
- Attendance in all phases is at least good. Procedures are in place to encourage punctuality, which results in more students arriving to school and classes on time. Students are aware of the link between school attendance and success at school.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Very good ↑	Very good	Very good	Outstanding

- Students across the school demonstrate a clear understanding of the values of Islam and their influence on Dubai and the wider UAE society. They are clear about the impact of Islamic values in the transformation of Dubai into an attractive city to foreigners. Students ensure that visitors feel respected and appreciated.
- All students demonstrate their pride of the UAE. They provide detailed explanations of the key cultural and heritage features of the country. High school students have a deep appreciation of the richness of the culture and heritage, and its contribution to the evolution of the UAE.
- Overall, students' knowledge of cultures from around the world is developing positively. However, boys in the lower and middle grades of high school show a less secure knowledge. Students enjoy participating in the school's global week activities to develop their understanding of other cultures. Most could compare and contrast a range of other cultures with their own.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Good ↑	Good	Good	Very good

- Students, especially those in the high school, understand their responsibilities to the life of the school. Members of the student council have a well-developed sense of civic pride. They freely contribute to the wider community through a variety of volunteer activities.
- Students demonstrate a positive work ethic. Many, including KG children, actively participate in clubs and competitions. Older students are given advice so that they can start to make decisions about their future careers. They also have a growing awareness of the economic decisions that they will have to make as they grow up.
- Students, including those with SEND, can talk about a range of critical world-wide environmental issues. They appreciate environmental initiatives to raise awareness and promote a culture of environmental sustainability. They participate in projects to improve their school environment. The student body has initiated an ongoing recycling scheme, and the students with SEND actively promote the sensory garden.

3. Teaching and assessment

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Teaching for effective learning	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good

- The majority of teachers use their secure subject knowledge to provide students with suitable explanations of the intended learning in their lessons. However their understanding of pedagogy within the subjects they teach is variable. It is weak in some subjects, particularly in the elementary and middle schools. In the KG, teachers' understanding of how young children learn is generally sound.
- Lesson planning is generally detailed and includes learning objectives linked to curriculum standards. The best lessons fully engage students in learning and they result in good progress. This is most consistently seen in Islamic education and in most subjects in the high school. Too often in other subjects, for example in mathematics and science, time is not well used. Consequently, ambitious lesson plans are not always fully delivered to support better student achievement.
- Teachers' interactions with students are caring and encouraging. This ensures they are willing learners. Where questions are used well, discussions and dialogue develop quickly and purposefully, particularly in high school English lessons. However, this level of questioning is not common in most subjects and phases. Typically, questions are used to superficially check students' knowledge of facts or methods. They are often not probing enough to encourage deeper thinking and understanding.
- In Islamic education, teachers successfully vary lessons to promote all groups of students to make good progress. In the majority of subjects, although teaching strategies are varied, they do not provide high enough expectations for the most able, or give consistently effective support, for those who find learning difficult. Consequently, students of different ability do not receive enough challenge to move their learning on sufficiently.
- Problem solving, independent investigation and evaluation are not routine features of enough lessons. In a few lessons, particularly in the high school, students are encouraged to use technology for independent research. However, this is rarely developed further. There are few additional challenging tasks that require students to think critically and draw their own conclusions.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Assessment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

- Regular internal assessments to evaluate students' achievement occur in all subjects. The school links these appropriately to the curriculum. However, in some subjects internal assessments do not produce an accurate picture of students' attainment. In KG, the data collected from observations is not always reliable. Some teachers do not evaluate the curriculum standards appropriately.
- The school is beginning to benchmark its students' outcomes against international benchmark assessments more rigorously. The school is developing a more realistic view of its students' achievements as it compares them to international standards. The analysis and use of these results is still at an early stage. To date, there has been little impact on the curriculum or on teachers' planning.

- The school shares information from the monitoring of individual students' progress with parents. However, too often, the rubrics which are used are seen merely as checklists and not used to their full effect. Insufficient information is provided on how students can improve their work.
- The school has developed new processes and procedures to help it to use assessment information to better influence teaching and the curriculum. Most teachers, however, have yet to make sufficient use of this information to diversify their teaching methods. Consequently the learning needs of different groups of students and appropriate levels of challenge are not always provided.
- In lessons, teachers' support for students' learning varies across the school. In the better lessons, teachers provide students with effective feedback that helps them increase their progress. However, most of the written feedback, which teachers provide, lacks clear improvement strategies. In a few better lessons, especially in Islamic education, students use peer- and self-evaluation well to identify their next steps in learning.

4. Curriculum

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Curriculum design and implementation	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good

- The curriculum has a clear rationale and is reasonably broad and balanced. It follows the requirements of the curriculum and statutory requirements. The school uses the Common Core Standards (CCS) and California standards for English Language Arts and Mathematics, and Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). The teaching of skills is not fully balanced. Subjects taught in Arabic follow the UAE Ministry of Education (MOE) standards.
- External data indicates that students have gaps in their learning in most key subjects. Therefore, the continuity and progression of the curriculum as it is taught in the school is not fully aligned to the official curriculum. The California standards are not effectively developed.
- There are some curricular choices offered to students. However, it is not immediately clear which courses and electives are offered in the high school. Neither is it clear how the high school courses provide progression. Students' opportunities to develop their interests in non-academic subjects are met primarily through extra-curricular choices.
- In each phase there are some good examples of cross curricular links. Some enhancements to the Arabic and Islamic education curricula are successful. In the better lessons, students have opportunities to make connections between subjects and to real life examples. Opportunities for independent learning and research occasionally take place.
- The review and development of the curriculum is regular. There are improvements, but overall this area of curriculum design and implementation is developing. Although the curriculum is clear, the understanding of how to implement it and how to blend the needs of students to the standards, is not secure across most grades or subjects.

- The UAE MOE social studies curriculum is carefully planned and is taught in Arabic as a separate class from KG1 to Grade 9. From Grades 10 to 12, English is the language of instruction. The curriculum provides for continuity and progression. Teachers further enrich the curriculum with a range of activities within the classroom. High expectations and lessons that include critical thinking and innovative activities, allow students to be challenged, to make connections between the UAE and the wider world and to incorporate Islamic values into their lives.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Curriculum adaptation	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

- Teachers are provided with workshops on modifying instruction to better meet their students' learning needs. However, this is not influencing teachers' daily planning and lessons. The SEND staff provide targeted support for learning within the classroom and in small group and one-to-one settings which are adapted to the needs of students with SEND.
- The school provides many opportunities for participation in enrichment activities, designing projects, and using technology. Students with SEND actively participate in the sensory garden project. Solar and wind powered energy generates electricity. Vegetables are grown organically. However, the school's day to day curriculum does not provide sufficient opportunities for engaging students across the school, apart from participation in a variety of weekly clubs.
- The school is closely tied to the culture, and reflects the values of the UAE, in the curriculum and throughout the campus. Islamic education, life skills, Arabic languages, and social studies classes focus on culture and UAE society in daily lessons, with field trips to places of interest in Dubai and the UAE.

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

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding	Good	Good	Good	Good

- All of the school's staff are adequately trained in, and regularly updated about, safeguarding issues. Child protection procedures are effective. The school delivers programs and provides well-informed documentation for students and parents, to protect students from cyber-bullying and the unsafe use of the internet, including social media. Clear expectations, consistently applied by all, ensure that bullying is an extremely rare event.
- The school buildings are safe, secure and hygienic. Daily safety checks are thorough; informing prioritized programs of maintenance. Student dispersal and school transport at the end of the school day are well managed. Procedures for safe and secure storage in science laboratories, in the clinic as well as elsewhere in the school are in place and effective. A strong medical team adds value to the well-being and safety of students.

- The buildings and equipment are mostly in good order and are well maintained. Maintenance, medical and incident logs and records with actions as appropriate are up to date, detailed and kept securely. Regular and effective drills are conducted for fire and evacuation.
- The school environment is safe and inclusive. Personal accessibility plans are in place for those with such needs. Ramps and lifts are in place so that accessibility is not an issue. Students are kept safe and secure at all times during the school day.
- Healthy living programs are promoted by the medical team, working well with the physical education (PE) department. The school's canteen provides a range of healthy food choices. A body-mass index (BMI) assessment has been completed for all students and an intervention program is in place. Its impact, particularly for girls, has been positive.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Care and support	Good ↑	Good ↑	Good ↑	Good ↑

- The school presents as a calm, friendly, welcoming atmosphere. Students are supportive and helpful to each other, in and outside the classroom. Their relationships with staff are positive. A discipline policy is in place, providing consequences in six incremental steps. This is well understood by staff and students.
- Good attendance is maintained through close monitoring of students and the high expectations of staff. Parents are contacted immediately when students are late or absent. Attendance checks by supervising staff are regular. The school has daily procedures for welcoming students and processing latecomers.
- There are adequate identification measures for students with SEND, on admission to the school. Enrolled students are screened to identify those requiring SEND support. Gifted and talented students are identified by the school through international benchmark testing for enhancement and support.
- Students with SEND receive support from classroom teachers, from a variety of sessions with SEND instructors, and from shadow teachers, when provided. Training and coaching is provided to teachers to help them address the learning needs of students with SEND, but curriculum adaptation is not always evident in classroom instruction. The gifted and talented students are provided with trips, workshops, and clubs on campus to enhance their progress.
- All students are provided with guidance and counselling throughout their school years. The school advises and supports students applying to college by hosting fairs, developing exam technique, through visits to universities, and providing scholarship information, to support them when making their university and career decisions.

Inclusion

Provision and outcomes for students with SEND

Good ↑

- The school is committed to being a fully inclusive school and as a result is open to the enrolment of students with SEND. The leadership has ensured an effective program of instruction for students with SEND. They maintain a highly qualified SEND staff to instruct students and to guide teachers.

- The school seeks to identify students with SEND on entry to the school, when possible, and screens enrolled students for those in potential need of a referral for SEND services. The school is committed to identifying students in the early years so that it may provide the earliest intervention possible.
- Parents of students with SEND are well informed of their children's progress. They are appreciative of the high levels of communication through direct or indirect contact, including progress updates. Parents have regular meetings throughout the year to write and review their children's individual education plans (IEP). Parents are invited to meetings and workshops on pertinent topics.
- The SEND staff provide content specific workshops as they guide teachers in designing lessons that meet the needs of students with SEND. This professional training is provided to improve teacher skill level and effectiveness. However, many teachers are not yet making the necessary modifications to their planning to meet the specific needs of students with SEND
- Most students with SEND are making better than expected progress as a result of support provided by SEND teachers, in addition to the instruction provided in the mainstream classroom.

6. Leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership

Acceptable

- The senior leadership team (SLT) has set a clear direction for the school. It emphasizes the continued development of a child-centered, inclusive school, which is guided by strong Islamic values, UAE culture and Arabic language provision. The guiding statements and the UAE national and Emirati priorities, written in Arabic and English are prominently displayed and actively promoted.
- The SLT has a developing knowledge of the CCS curriculum. Their grasp of the practicalities and analysis of National Agenda parameter assessments is an emerging feature. Senior and middle leaders have a very broad ranges of responsibilities, resulting in high workloads. This reduces their ability to effectively monitor classroom practice to ensure consistency and to support further development.
- Communication, particularly regarding required improvements to classroom provision, has improved. Opportunities for systematic consultation, collegial working and distributive leadership are emerging, with senior and middle managers and subject leaders meeting regularly. However, more clarity and strategic planning is required to enhance commitment, competence and a positive morale at all levels.
- The SLT has a sound knowledge of many aspects of the schools operations and a clear grasp of its developmental needs. Leaders set realistic targets and lead a number of key initiatives for change. However, the full impact of these initiatives on student learning is often diminished by the continued high staff turnover and insufficient time for full implementation.
- The SLT have been successful in improving the school's performance in the areas of Islamic education, health and safety and aspects of its provision for students with a SEND. The SLT ensure that the school meets all statutory and regulatory requirements.

School self-evaluation and improvement planning

Acceptable

- The school's self-evaluation processes involve input from most stakeholders. Parents and students are surveyed regularly. Committees analyze a range of external and internal data. However, inaccurate analysis of data, results in an inflated view of students' achievement, and an inaccurate understanding of the school's areas for development and overall strengths.
- The SLT and middle leaders systematically monitor the quality of teaching and learning across the school. Teachers are regularly observed, formally during classroom observations and informally, during learning walks and brief pop-ins to lessons. Recording of observations is systematic and comprehensive and based upon a common pro-forma. Trends in teachers' strength and weakness inform professional development programs. Not all lessons observed were judged accurately.
- There are school-wide and department improvement plans. Almost all are designed with targets, allocated responsibilities, and resource requirements. Targets for this year's whole school improvement include; operational excellence, teacher training, relationships between school and parents and school growth. However, the effectiveness of all improvement plans is limited by a lack of clearly measurable outcomes to clearly define effectiveness.
- There have been small improvements to many of the targets identified in the school's improvement plans and the previous inspection recommendations. Enhancements to the provision for SEND and Islamic education have been implemented. Improved care and support, including the attention and care given to the physical and emotional health of students by the clinical staff, have enhanced the personal development of students.

Partnerships with parents and the community

Good

- Parents express high levels of satisfaction with the school's emphasis on care, Islamic values and UAE culture. Most support their children's education. There are active parents' committees and a parents' advisory council. Parent bodies are increasingly influential in decision making. Their views of the school's provision are sought through surveys and electronic feedback. Multiple forms of communication are used to inform parents of their children's progress.
- Parents welcome the school's open door policy. Teachers and leaders are approachable and provide increasingly comprehensive academic information. Web based information systems enable parents to access their children's progress information.
- End of semester and end of year reports provide additional detail on children's progress to parents. The KG reports are particularly informative, providing a broad range of academic social and emotional information. Reports do not however, provide clear next steps for student's learning.
- The school has an increased emphasis on community support and internationalism. Their charitable support is broad ranging and includes fundraising, environmental and well-being campaigns, which enhance aspects of student development. Through the efforts of the principal, an increasing array of sporting and cultural events with other schools is being offered.

Governance

Acceptable

- The governing board, comprised of the owners, is well attuned to the needs of the school and its community. The board is readily accessible to parents, through the owners' school based representative as well as through direct contact. A parent advisory council enables constructive engagement of parents and the board. Both groups hold regular meetings to discuss and respond to pertinent issues.
- The board keeps an eye on the school's progress and the effectiveness of the school's SLT. It is aware of, and monitors, the school's progress toward National Agenda targets and improved levels of student achievement.
- The governing board maintains a broad overview of the school, and guides the SLT where needed. They support the school in meeting its promise to parents and its statutory requirements. They actively consider future options that reflect its vision for the school.

Management, staffing, facilities and resources

Acceptable




- The day to day operations of the school run efficiently and smoothly. The split between the boys' and the girls' sites and the size of the buildings leads to occasional staff tardiness, especially during lesson changeovers. Staff supervision is adequate and the movement of students through the buildings is generally well managed.
- The school is adequately staffed, although the capacity of the SLT is limited in some areas. There is insufficient evidence that an emphasis on raising standards of teaching and learning across the school is having a significant impact. Too many teachers, though secure in their subject knowledge, require additional training to understand better how students learn. SEND staff have relevant subject expertise and are generally well deployed.
- The school offers a pleasant and stimulating environment for students. Indoor and outdoor areas are well maintained and resourced. There is an impressive sensory garden, developed and led by students with SEND. Specialist facilities for art, science, information technology and PE are available and rooms and spaces are adequate to meet the needs of the curriculum.
- In most curriculum areas and phases, staff ensure that the relevance and range of resources is at least adequate to support effective teaching and learning. Resourcing in science, does not allow for a highly practical and investigative approach.

The views of parents, teachers and senior students



The views of parents, teachers and senior students

Before the inspection, the views of the parents, teachers and senior secondary students were surveyed. Key messages from each group were considered during the inspection and these helped to form inspection judgements. A summary of the survey statistics and comments from those who responded to the survey follows:

Responses to the surveys		
Responses received	Number	
 Parents*	2016-2017	67
	2015-2016	51
 Teachers	25	
 Students	89	

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

- Almost all parents who responded to the survey agree that students in the school are well behaved and respectful to teachers and are receiving a good understanding of the importance of Islamic values in Dubai. They feel that their children are safe at school and are well-informed about their progress including their next steps to learning.
- A minority of parents do not agree that teachers provide help for their children to develop the skills to use technology, to conduct research or to be creative and curious.
- A minority of parents do not feel that the school promotes their children's literacy and love of reading in Arabic, or that the school offers good careers advice and guidance.
- A minority of parents, students and a few teachers that responded to the survey agree that the school does not provide a good range of extra-curricular activities.
- A large majority of parents agree that the school is well led, although more than a few parents and students feel that their views are not listened to, or acted on by teachers or leaders.
- Most students agree that they read English and Arabic well, and have a good understanding of Islamic values.
- Almost all teachers have a positive view of the school.

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