



National Agenda



Early Years



Special  
Educational Needs



Innovation

## Inspection Report 2015-2016

The Millennium School

Curriculum: Indian

Overall rating: Very good

Read more about the school →



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“Great achievements remind us to be humble, but we should always be determined to do more”



Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum

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## School information

### General information



Location	Al Qusais
Type of school	Private
Opening year of school	2000
Website	www.gemsmillenniumschool.com
Telephone	04-2988567
Address	PO Box 32446. Dubai
Principal	Michael Guzder
Language of instruction	English
Inspection dates	26 to 29 October 2015

### Students



Gender of students	Boys and girls
Age range	4-17
Grades or year groups	Kindergarten 1 to Grade 12
Number of students on roll	2,927
Number of children in pre-kindergarten	NA
Number of Emirati students	0
Number of students with SEND	312
Largest nationality group of students	Indian

### Teachers / Support staff



Number of teachers	161
Largest nationality group of teachers	Indian
Number of teaching assistants	13
Teacher-student ratio	1:17
Number of guidance counsellors	4
Teacher turnover	21%

### Curriculum



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

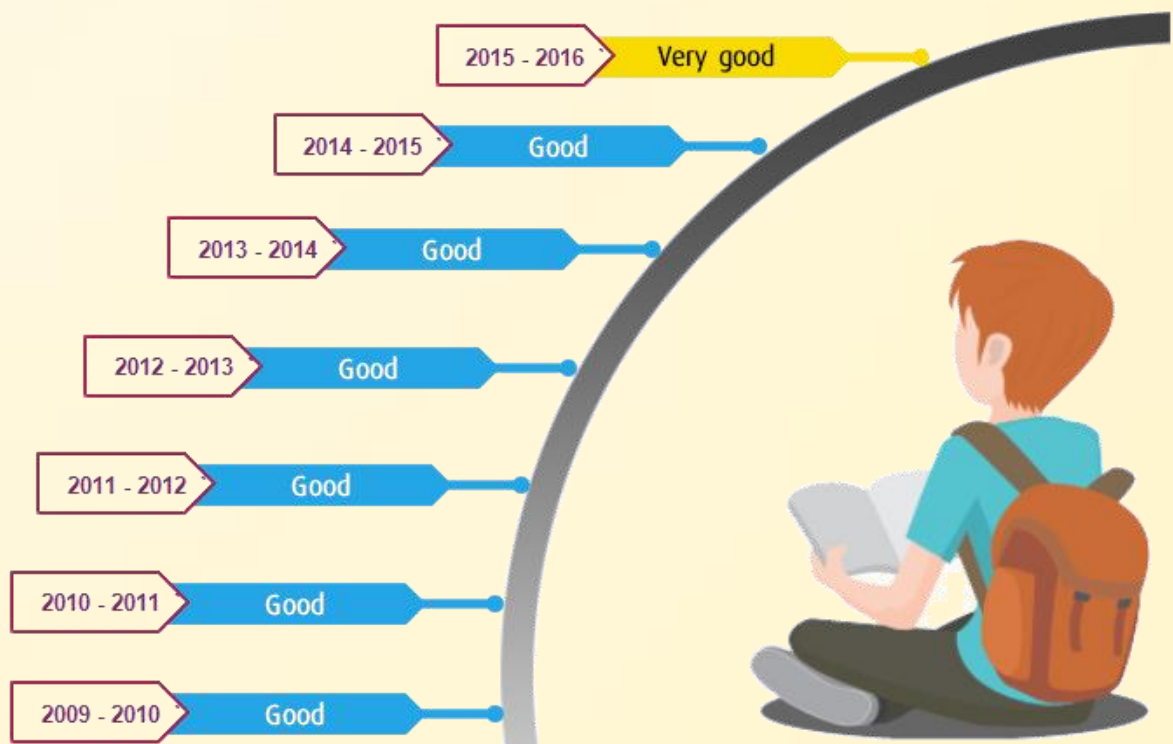


## Summary for parents and the community

**The Millennium School** was inspected by DSIB from 26 to 29 October 2015. The overall quality of education provided by the school was found to be **very good**.

In order to judge the overall quality of education provided by the school, inspectors considered six key standards of performance. Inspectors looked at children's attainment and progress in key subjects, their learning skills and their personal and social development. They judged how effective teaching and the assessment of learning were across the school. Inspectors considered how well the school's curriculum, including activities inside and outside classrooms, met the educational needs of all children. They judged how well the school protected and supported children. In addition inspectors judged the effectiveness of leadership and governance, including management, staffing, facilities and resources.

The inspection judgements were drawn from evidence gathered by the inspection team, including observing children learning in lessons, looking at their work, talking with children, meetings with the staff, parents and governors, and reviewing the parents', teachers' and senior students' surveys.





### How well did the school perform overall?

Overall, the Millennium School provided a **very good** quality of education for its students.

- Students' attainment and progress in most key subjects across all phases were very good or outstanding. Their attainment and progress in Arabic as an additional language remained acceptable.
- Students' personal and social development across all phases remained outstanding. Students' highly positive attitudes and exemplary behaviour contributed to the harmonious learning environment.
- The quality of teaching and students' learning skills were very good, with significant strengths in the kindergarten and secondary phases.
- The quality of the curriculum and the attention to health and safety were outstanding across all phases.
- The quality of support was very good in kindergarten and primary, and good in middle and secondary. The provision for students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) was good.
- Leadership, the partnership with parents, governance, management, staffing, facilities and resources were outstanding.



### What did the school do well?

- The very good and outstanding levels of achievement across all phases in almost all subjects
- Students' extremely positive attitudes, their deep understanding of Islamic values, and high degree of social responsibility and entrepreneurial skills
- The quality of teaching and learning underpinned by a challenging and engaging curriculum
- The extremely caring and supportive ethos in which students and staff alike are aware that they are valued
- The highly effective leadership of the principal and determination of the whole leadership team in driving continuous improvement.





### What does the school need to do next?

- Improve the quality of teaching and raise students' achievement in Arabic as an additional language by:
  - ensuring teachers take full account of the curriculum standards and use strategies in lessons which meet the different needs of students
  - developing teachers' skills in relating classroom learning to everyday life
  - supporting teachers in interpreting the curriculum in ways that engage and motivate students
  - sharing the successful methods used in different subjects with Arabic teachers.
- Further improve the very good quality of teaching and learning by developing teachers' confidence in:
  - encouraging students to take responsibility for their own learning
  - raising questions during lessons which promote reflection, higher level thinking and critical responses.



### How well did the school provide for students with special educational needs and disabilities?

- The school had effectively promoted an inclusive ethos for learning, led by the specialist expertise of the special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) team. Guided by a highly effective SEND leader, there was effective provision and support to enable students to make at least good progress in their personal development and academic learning.
- Students with SEND were effectively assessed, screened, and monitored to ensure their needs were identified and supported. Working in close partnership with parents, specialist SEND counselors provided students with well-designed programmes of individualised, personal support.
- The school kept parents well informed about their children's progress and personal development, and parents were highly appreciative of their regular communications with school leaders, teachers and counselors. Information about their children's academic progress was less frequently shared and this meant that parents were not always aware of how well their children were progressing during lessons in relation to their academic targets.
- The curriculum and lesson plans were successfully modified in the kindergarten and primary phase but less successfully in the middle and secondary phases, particularly in the boys section. Teachers were well advised and were aware of students' targets that were set out in individual education plans. Some teachers were not skilled at taking individual targets into account when planning activities designed to help students with SEND to make good academic progress in their day-to-day learning.
- Students' academic progress in most subjects was very good in the kindergarten and primary phases, and in the middle and secondary phases was good. Students made accelerated progress in their personal development across the school as a result of the high quality support provided by the specialist SEND counselors. Their academic progress slowed in the middle and secondary phases because lessons did not always include appropriate learning activities to help them accelerate in their academic progress.

### 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 intent 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. This academic year, KHDA introduced 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.

#### Main points:

- The school met the registration requirements of the National Agenda Parameter. Progress towards National Agenda targets was in line with current expectations.
- The school had developed awareness of the National Agenda at all levels from senior leadership to students. As a result, the National Agenda was incorporated into the school's daily practice. Staff had received extensive training and opportunities for peer lesson observations and visits to other schools to develop their skills in promoting critical thinking. Workshops and online resources had facilitated this further.
- The science, mathematics and English departments had mapped the Indian curriculum and cross-referenced elements with the assessment components in TIMSS and PISA. Staff had analysed where there were gaps. As a result, the curriculum had been amended with a sharp focus on critical thinking. There was systematic planning for students' progression in the three core subjects.
- Teachers extensively exploited most learning situations to develop thinking and problem solving skills. These were rarely contrived but were incorporated into logical and structured components in well planned lessons. However they were not included in the lesson plans.
- Students used a dynamic range of online resources both within the school and at home to develop their research skills which related to school assignments.

## Innovation in education

The *UAE Vision 2021* sets out the National Agenda 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'. It provides a basis for evaluating public and private schools in order to deliver a world-class education for all children in the UAE.

Innovation is driven by a commitment to excellence and continuous improvement. It is based on curiosity, the willingness to take risks, to experiment and to test assumptions as well as questioning and challenging the status quo. Being innovative is about looking beyond what we currently do well, identifying the great ideas of tomorrow and putting them into practice.



## Promoting a culture of innovation:

- The principal had an intuitive understanding of the importance of innovation in the context of the UAE National Agenda, and a clear vision around how it had already promoted a culture of innovation. School leaders understood the need for a strategic plan to develop leaders' and teachers' capacities to embed innovation into teaching and leadership practices. There were well established programmes to develop student's critical thinking skills, generate new ideas and find solutions to real life problems found in Dubai and across the world. There were many examples of how the school developed students' innovation and entrepreneurial skills through the extensive range of extra-curricular programmes offered.



Overall School performance

Very good ↑

1. Students' achievement

		KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
<b>Islamic education</b> 	<b>Attainment</b>	Not applicable	Good	Good	Good
	<b>Progress</b>	Not applicable	Very good ↑	Very good ↑	Very good ↑
<b>Arabic as a first language</b> 	<b>Attainment</b>	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable
	<b>Progress</b>	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable
<b>Arabic as an additional language</b> 	<b>Attainment</b>	Not applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
	<b>Progress</b>	Not applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
<b>English</b> 	<b>Attainment</b>	Outstanding	Very good ↑	Very good ↑	Outstanding
	<b>Progress</b>	Outstanding	Very good ↑	Very good ↑	Outstanding
<b>Mathematics</b> 	<b>Attainment</b>	Outstanding	Outstanding ↑	Very good ↑	Outstanding
	<b>Progress</b>	Outstanding	Outstanding ↑	Good	Very good ↓
<b>Science</b> 	<b>Attainment</b>	Outstanding	Outstanding ↑	Outstanding	Outstanding
	<b>Progress</b>	Outstanding	Outstanding ↑	Outstanding	Outstanding

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
<b>Learning skills</b>	Outstanding	Very good ↑	Very good ↑	Outstanding

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

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Personal development	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding

## 3. Teaching and assessment

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Teaching for effective learning	Outstanding	Very good ↑	Very good ↑	Outstanding
Assessment	Outstanding	Very good ↑	Very good ↑	Very good ↑

## 4. Curriculum

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Curriculum design and implementation	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Curriculum adaptation	Outstanding	Outstanding ↑	Outstanding ↑	Outstanding ↑

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

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

## 6. Leadership and management

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



## Main inspection report

The Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau (DSIB) is responsible for inspecting and reporting on the standards reached by students and the quality of education provided in Dubai's private schools.

### Judgements are made on a six-point scale



Using this scale, the *Main inspection report* contains the judgements about the different aspects, phases and subjects that form the work of the school.

It provides the reasons for the answers to the questions in the *Summary for parents and the community*:

- How well did the school perform overall?
- What did the school do well?
- What does the school need to do next?

## 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	Outstanding	Outstanding
Mathematics	Outstanding	Outstanding
Science	Outstanding	Outstanding

- Children's attainment and progress in English were exceptional, with children rapidly acquiring new vocabulary and sight words. When judged against expectations held for children of this age nationally and internationally, their performance across the kindergarten in language development was high. Children were increasingly expressing their own ideas and creating sentences. Speaking, listening, reading and writing were all similarly secure and communication skills were progressing extremely well. All groups of children were progressing similarly well.
- Standards in mathematical development were to those in English in terms of attainment and progress. Rates of learning were significantly fast because the children made great strides in their progress towards attainment above that typically seen for this age group. Attainment and progress were outstanding in each year group and across the different groups of children in the phase.
- Attainment and progress in science was similar to the high levels achieved in English and mathematics. Scientific enquiry was very evident, with children actively engaging in a range of investigations, which promoted their progress and boosted attainment exceptionally well. Problem solving, thinking critically and hypothesising were to the fore, backed by exploration and investigation, in a range of contexts. As in other subjects, the different groups of students including those with SEND made rapid progress.

### Primary

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

- In the absence of international benchmarks, the majority of students showed levels of understanding of the Pillars of Islam and morals above curriculum and national standards. They could pray correctly in the school's mosque. Students made very good progress in lessons and in understanding Islamic worship, which contributed to their good attainment over time. There was little variation in the progress of different groups of students.

- In Arabic as an additional language, most students had secure listening and responding skills. They could recognise familiar words. Attainment was sufficient to enable them to take part in class conversations. Students' ability to read aloud and pronounce Arabic was in line with general expectations. Reading comprehension skills were at an adequate level. Writing skills were limited to copying familiar words and phrases. Given these general levels of attainment for most groups of students and without the availability of external benchmarks to moderate assessments against a larger sample of student populations, progress was judged to be acceptable.
- Results from external national and international tests indicated that attainment was high. Outstanding progress across the phase had brought these attainment results. The development of oral competence in English was a central feature of the teaching and learning in all classes and students readily engaged in lively debate and discussion. Contributions of peers were accepted with tolerance and patience and this led to an impressive development of oral skills. Consequently, the majority of students made very good progress from where they started.
- Attainment and progress were outstanding in relation to curriculum standards in mathematics throughout primary school. IBT benchmark tests for Grades 3 and 4 confirmed that, over the previous two years, students' attainment and progress were consistently outstanding. Students' attainment on average remained above curriculum, national and international levels. In most lessons, students made rapid progress, especially in solving mathematical problems and explaining their reasoning clearly to others. They used precise mathematical language because teachers insisted on it. Most understood that mathematical problems could be solved using different methods. Tracking of the progress students were making against curriculum standards showed that the progress of most students, including those with SEND, was better than expected.
- In science, the attainment and progress of most students was consistently at a high standard, above the expected level, and confirmed by internal and external assessments. Most students' work was maintained at a high level which was above international standards. As a result students made significant gains in their knowledge, skills and understanding. A wide repertoire of scientific skills were being learned which included hypothesising, experimentation, recording and analysis with synthesis towards new investigation. Progress at appropriate levels was similarly outstanding for different groups of students.

### Middle

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

- In Islamic Education, attainment was slightly above the curriculum expectations and national standards. The majority of students could understand a Prophet's Life (Seera) and realised the lessons from it. They made very good progress in understanding the importance of role models and connected this to the Prophet of Islam (PBUH). Different groups of students made similar progress in their lessons and over time.



- Standards reached in Arabic as an additional language, when judged against curriculum levels, were broadly in line with general expectations. Most students had secure listening and responding skills. They could recognise familiar words and a few sentences so were able to take part in class conversations. They were able to read words and pronounce Arabic script to an acceptable standard for their ages. These skills were in line with the general expectation for average progress. Reading comprehension skills were generally at an adequate level. Students' writing skills were just acceptable. Progress was similar for different groups of students
- Class observations, together with scores derived from school-based and international tests indicated that a large majority of students attained well above average in English. Their oral competence was very well developed. Students readily engaged in lively debate and discussion with their teachers. Students could read well with good understanding. They could use and apply what they read. The different groups of students made very good progress from where their starting points over time. This was the culmination of regular progress being made in lessons.
- Attainment in mathematics was very good. Benchmark tests confirmed that students' attainment has been very good over the last two years. The large majority of students demonstrated very good attainment during lessons. Practical work, such as drawing geometric shapes to scale, was done with care and precision. Students made rapid progress, especially when teachers challenged them through asking demanding questions. Despite remaining very good, IBT tests also showed that standards and progress slowed as students got older. This was caused by some dips in the quality of teaching.
- In science, attainment and progress was similar to that at primary level. Most students worked consistently at a high standard, confirmed by internal and external assessments which showed standards well above international levels. As a result, students made significant gains in their knowledge, skills and understanding. As in the primary phase, progress was similar for different groups of students. Students were learning key scientific skills including the setting of hypotheses, conducting experiments, drawing conclusions and then using analysis and synthesis to point to renewed investigation.

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

- In Islamic education, the majority of students demonstrated a high level of understanding of Islamic Laws (The Fiqh) and could connect them to their own lives with relevance and meaning. The large majority of students made better than expected progress in their understanding of the Islamic laws. The very good progress made in lessons by different groups of students was broadly similar.
- Most students studying Arabic as an additional language had secure listening skills and could respond to basic questions. They could use familiar words and a few familiar sentences when taking part in class conversations. They were able to read words aloud and pronounce Arabic script in line with general expectations. Students' reading comprehension skills were at an adequate level but their writing skills were weak.

- In English, students readily engaged in lively debate and discussion with their teachers. Most presented their viewpoints with clarity and conviction. Students' competence in textual analysis, and particularly poetry, was of a very high standard. Particular students were successfully encouraged to engage in critical thinking to shape their emerging ideas. Consequently, most students made better than expected progress from their starting points. The quality of writing was very high, presentation exceptional in terms of layout and good order, and most students were at ease in producing text in a variety of genres.
- Students' attainment and progress in mathematics, as measured against curriculum standards, were outstanding. Results in Grade 10 and 12 CBSE examinations over the previous three years reflected students' outstanding levels of understanding, skills and knowledge. The latest test results for Grade 12, whilst still outstanding, showed a sharp decline from previous years. Students found the increased emphasis on higher level skills, such as critical thinking and application of knowledge, challenging. Students' attainment and progress in most lessons was outstanding, due to expert teaching. They had a close knowledge and understanding of algebraic concepts, calculus, geometry and probability. Where teaching was not so demanding, students' development of higher level skills was slower. Most groups of students made accelerated progress for their starting points.
- As in the other phases of the school, the attainment and progress of most students in science were of a consistently high standard. Assessments confirmed this and outcomes were above international standards. Significant gains in students' knowledge, skills and understanding were evident in the progress made by different groups of students. These scientific skills and attributes were used at greater depth than those embedded in the earlier phases, the impact of excellent learning building on earlier excellent learning was very evident.

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Learning skills	Outstanding	Very good ↑	Very good ↑	Outstanding

- Students in all grades showed great enthusiasm for their learning. They enjoyed taking responsibility for their own learning and exploring ways in which they could use technology, the learning displays in corridors and their teachers to further develop their knowledge and understanding of their subjects. Students worked independently and collaboratively in theory and practical classroom activities, evaluating both their own progress and that of their peers. They were given frequent opportunities for collaborative learning which were well planned and purposeful. They responded well to this style of learning and were productive and showed good progress. In practical and investigatory work students engaged with the topic well and enhanced the learning of their peers in mutually supportive teams
- Often in the primary school, students gave presentations to the class on the outcomes of their research work and so enhanced their speaking and articulation skills, and their self-confidence. They consistently made imaginative and insightful connections between their learning and the world outside the school. They enjoyed researching the implications of their learning to the world of nature, industry and society.
- Connections between areas of learning were incorporated into lesson planning but not sufficiently evident in the class teaching. Some connections were rather contrived. However when used effectively, cross-curriculum links contributed significantly towards an understanding of a 'continuum of knowledge', especially between the sciences, humanities and mathematics.
- Teachers used enquiry-based learning very effectively with students undertaking research using online technology. Their presentations on the outcomes of their research were insightful and respected by their peers. Critical thinking was integrated into the learning process, with many imaginative and stimulating discussions and debates emerging. This was less well-developed in the primary and middle phases. The higher-order thinking which did occur led to an improved understanding of national and global issues.

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

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
<b>Personal development</b>	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding

- Students had extremely positive attitudes. Children in the kindergarten quickly learned to work and play together happily. For the most part, students across the school arrived at lessons promptly and were eager to learn. They respond very positively to opportunities to offer ideas and work independently, showing a high degree of self-reliance. They valued feedback on their progress from teachers and tried their best to improve.
- The school was a harmonious community. Students' behaviour was almost always exemplary. Students paid attention during lessons and were mutually supportive. Around 300 students had leadership roles and they set a good example for their fellow students in the roles they undertook around the school. Bullying was extremely rare and students generally resolved minor disputes amicably without need adult intervention.
- Students got on with one another and with adults extremely well. During lessons, they were quick to praise their classmates, often bursting into spontaneous applause to celebrate their achievements. Students showed mutual respect. This was illustrated vividly during a music lesson when Grade 6 students warmly interacted with older students from a local centre for people with severe special needs.
- Students were well aware of the need to adopt a healthy life style. Children in the kindergarten learned about the different fruits and vegetables and were beginning to develop an understanding of a healthy diet. Older students had a very secure understanding of the nutritional value of different foodstuffs and they reported that, for the most part, they chose healthy options in the school canteen. Students keenly participated in various health related programmes, such as dental awareness, obesity awareness and yoga for fitness.

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
<b>Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures</b>	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding

- Students had a very keen awareness, knowledge and understanding of UAE values, heritage culture and of global communities. They had very high level of awareness of Islamic values in UAE contemporary culture.
- Students had exceptional knowledge of the features and characteristics of Dubai and living in modern day society, and an increasing awareness of the past and nomadic life in the desert. They were very knowledgeable about the different emirates in the UAE. They were very articulate in their explanations of Dubai as major world city and how a wide range of cultures and backgrounds live in harmony. Students were extremely clear about the economic background of the area, and of the growth from seafaring activities to oil production. They were very conscious of the speed of change in Dubai.
- Students were very clear about their cultural heritage and the wide diversity of cultures and backgrounds.

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

- Students demonstrated their highly developed sense of social responsibility in many ways. They had instigated a wide range of worthwhile activities, showing a strong commitment to those less fortunate than themselves. These included projects in support of charities such as Breast Cancer Awareness, local clean-up drives and a 'lend-a-hand' campaign.
- Students showed great empathy and compassion when sharing classes with students with severe learning difficulties and disabilities. They were extremely resourceful. They devised many entrepreneurial schemes, for example, the 'Millennium Grand Carnival', 'souq day', and 'fruit salad day'.
- Student's excellent work ethic was evident in lessons and in their passionate commitment to everything they did. Students initiated and took part in many impressive projects concerning the environment. The 'Eco Warriors', for example, devised a scheme for conserving water across the school, including using the water from air-conditioning units to directly feed plants. An idea about conserving energy suggested by students was well received by Dubai Electricity and Water Authority (DEWA).

### 3. Teaching and assessment

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
<b>Teaching for effective learning</b>	Outstanding	Very good ↑	Very good ↑	Outstanding

- Most teachers had a very secure understanding of their subject. They generally used imaginative approaches and this led to enthusiastic, well-measured participation by students during classes.
- Lesson planning was very effective. Staff created an atmosphere where students felt confident in contributing to lessons, especially in the kindergarten and secondary school. Students knew the value of learning through mistakes and were not frightened to respond to questions when they were unsure. In the kindergarten and primary phases, staff had made very effective use of corridors, providing many engaging learning activities.
- Interactions between teacher and students were invariably lively and productive. The teaching was underpinned by a continuous process of questioning. However, there was a lack of challenge in a few lessons in the primary and middle phases.
- A creditable effort was made by teachers throughout the school to provide for the needs of groups of varying ability. In most lessons observed there was a deliberate focus on individual needs. The level of challenge for some of the most able pupils, including the gifted and talented, was less consistent.
- Teachers made an honest effort to develop students' competence in critical thinking and problem-solving. These competences were demonstrated as a regular element of the questions, answers and activities in many classes, but this was an inconsistent feature across subjects and phases.
- The teaching of Arabic as an additional language was satisfactory across the school in terms of its impact causing students to reach broadly acceptable standards and make acceptable progress.



	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Assessment	Outstanding	Very good ↑	Very good ↑	Very good ↑

- Assessment systems were well established and they were closely aligned to board requirements. Internal assessments systems were consistent and coherent across all phases. Students' academic progress and personal development were closely monitored and recorded in portfolios and anecdotal records. A range of tools including rubrics, self-assessment, entry level and exit level assessments, and objective trackers was used to track the progress of individual students.
- The school rigorously benchmarked students' academic outcomes against external examinations and board examination results. Students took external examinations such as PISA, IBT, and CAT 4 in order to evaluate their performance using national and international data. Grade level and subject meetings included setting targets matched against international standards.
- The school analysed assessment data carefully to track the progress of individuals as well as groups. This successfully identified any major learning gaps and informed subsequent planning. Individual targets were agreed and used well to focus learning
- Most teachers had very good knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of their students. However, some lessons did not include enough specific feedback to students, especially in English in the middle and secondary phases. Students' work in all core subjects was marked regularly and the feedback given by the teacher was generally constructive across the school. Written feedback was best in the primary phase. In the secondary phase, written feedback was often rather cursory.

#### 4. Curriculum

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Curriculum design and implementation	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding

- The curriculum had a very clear rationale aligned to the national vision for the UAE. Systematic planning ensured ample opportunities for students' physical, social and emotional development. Curriculum quality was consistent and coherent across all phases, providing opportunities to enhance knowledge, understanding and skills through practical experiences.
- The curriculum was very well planned to ensure structured progress in all subjects. Continuity of learning was smooth and students were well prepared for their next phases of education. Senior school students were well prepared for board examinations as well for entry into higher education colleges.
- A wide range of curricular choices were provided that encouraged talents, interests and aspirations. Students in Grades 11 and 12 made appropriate choices between science, commerce and humanities. Within these areas, there was a wide range of range options, Hindi, Urdu and Malayalam. Students across all phases had extensive opportunities to participate in extra-curricular activities suited to their interests and aspirations.



- Cross-curricular links were planned purposefully and systematically. They were managed well by teachers to enhance students' transfer of learning between different subjects. For example students were able to make meaningful links with different subjects, such as science, geography and economics while working on a 'solar city' project. However, not all the teachers were as successful as the best in establishing such links in classroom teaching.
- The school conducted regular and rigorous reviews of the curriculum in relation to national priorities and students' individual needs. The curriculum was systematically developed to ensure good provision in all subjects and relevant activities to meet the academic and personal developmental needs of students. This had led to modifications in key subjects in order promote critical thinking, in keeping with the National Agenda.
- The curriculum for social studies is integrated into knowledge and understanding of the world in kindergarten. It follows the guidelines provided by the CBSE in most of the rest of the school and is offered on a thematic or integrated model. This is linked to concepts and ideas in the Ministry of Education (MoE) curriculum. Coverage has not yet been mapped against the MoE curriculum. Cross curricular links are strong. Social studies is not offered in Grades 11 and 12.

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
<b>Curriculum adaptation</b>	Outstanding	Outstanding ↑	Outstanding ↑	Outstanding ↑

- The school was very successful in ensuring that teachers modify the curriculum to meet the needs of almost all groups of students. Teachers incorporated modifications for students with SEND. The progression for individual students as set out by the curriculum was tracked. However, not all teachers were as successful as they might have been in providing necessary curriculum adaptations to support students with SEND in order accelerate their progress.
- Students were motivated to take part in self-enrichment activities with great enthusiasm. These included science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM); the 'Best Buddy' programme, Round Square (an international organization which promotes personal development) and Model United Nations. Projects such as the Save Nepal Campaign, together with discussions and debates with international students, resulted in benefits for both the community as a whole and the students' academic and personal development.
- A wide range of innovative and coherent learning experiences were embedded in school curriculum to promote a better understanding of UAE culture and heritage. Special assemblies and visits to museums, mosques, and other historic places helped students in understanding UAE society. An Islamic exhibition illustrated the respect in which the Islamic culture was held and provided non-Muslim students with a ready source of information.
- The school provided two Arabic lessons totaling 80 minutes weekly in KG 2.

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

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding

- Care, safety and welfare of students were of paramount importance. Safeguarding was taken very seriously with a range of policies to ensure students' safety. Staff were very aware of procedures. Any concerns were articulated clearly. The school had rigorous procedures for protecting students, of which parents are aware. Child protection and bullying incidents were taken very seriously, addressed and resolved.
- Records were kept meticulously on the different aspects of health and safety, risk assessments and building maintenance. Security was backed by extensive and comprehensive record keeping
- The school was safe and kept very clean. Risk assessments were undertaken and the supervision of transport was rigorous. Staff were trained as fire wardens. Fire drills took place four times a year, one involving the civil defence. The security systems had been carefully thought through and strategically placed security cameras gave excellent surveillance.
- The premises were suitable, and very well-maintained, with a range of facilities such as a swimming pool which was monitored and risk-assessed very regularly.
- Health and well-being were promoted through healthy eating, exercise and taking preventative measures. Medical staff were proactive in advising on prevention measures and ensuring the students and staff received the best possible care. Students with special health problems were supported by the doctor and team of nurses. Staff were trained in first aid, including 15 trained in pediatric first aid.

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Care and support	Very good ↑	Very good ↑	Good	Good

- Students and staff enjoyed very positive and purposeful working relationships to ensure their success and enjoyment of life at school. Well established systems and procedures for managing students' behaviour meant students were kept safe and free from harm.
- The school was effective in promoting high levels of attendance with rates for the younger students above those found in most countries. The provision ensured that students were routinely punctual, both to school and to lessons.
- The school had well established systems and processes for identifying, screening and monitoring students with SEND, as well as the most able students. As a result, their personal development needs were very well supported and their academic needs were generally well provided for, particularly in the kindergarten and primary phases.

- Students with SEND, and those who are gifted and talented, were exceptionally well supported in their personal development as a result of the very high quality support they valued and received from the counselors. These students' academic development was well considered and planned for in the kindergarten and primary phase, but this was not yet consistent in the middle and secondary phases. At times in lessons, particularly in the boys' section, the students' academic progress was not necessarily considered as thoroughly as it should by their teachers and this hindered the progress made by some students.
- The well-being and personal development of students underpinned everything the school did to ensure students were successful and enjoyed their time at the school. Information about students was widely shared with teachers and support staff, and as a result, senior students were guided well in making choices about their next stages and steps in education and careers.

### Provision for students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)

#### The overall effectiveness of provision for students with special educational needs and disabilities

Good

- Senior leaders had effectively promoted an inclusive ethos and had appointed additional specialist trained and qualified professionals in the SEND team. There was a specialist SEND counselor in all phases. The SEND leader, a member of the senior leadership team, was highly effective in strategically leading the SEND policy, practices and provision. Improvements included more detailed individual education plans and the setting of individual learning targets. These were beginning to have impact on improving teaching and learning, but were not fully embedded or monitored rigorously across all phases.
- The school had detailed processes for identifying student needs. These were consistently applied upon students' entry to the school and periodically reviewed throughout the year. Baseline assessments, a wide range of appropriate screening tests and information provided by parents, were used to identify accurately students' individual needs and to plan provision to support their personal and academic development. This ensured that most students had access to a well-designed and supportive individual programme of personal support.
- The school kept parents well informed about their children's progress in their personal development. Feedback included daily updates in relation to the targets set for their children. Information about their child's academic progress was less frequently provided. This meant that parents were not always aware of how well their children were progressing during lessons or in relation to their academic targets. Parents were encouraged to be fully involved in the design and implementation of their children's educational programme. They benefitted from high quality advice and support from the specialist SEND team.
- Curriculum and teaching plans were successfully modified in the kindergarten and primary phase to take account of students' individual needs, which resulted in them being well supported in their day-to-day learning. This was less evident in the middle and secondary phases, where teachers' planning did not routinely provide a sufficient range of appropriate activities and support for students with SEND. This hindered the progress they might otherwise have made. This was particularly found in the boys' section. Though teachers were well advised and supported to know precisely the needs and IEP targets set for their students, some were not skilled in translating these into meaningful and appropriate activities for the students.

- Students' academic progress in most subjects was very good in the kindergarten and primary phases. In the middle and secondary phases it was good. Students' progress in Arabic and Islamic education was acceptable. Students made accelerated progress in their personal development as a result of the high quality support provided by the specialist SEND counselors. Their progress against challenging targets for personal development was carefully recorded and monitored. Less evident in practice was the tracking of students' progress in meeting academic targets.


## 6. Leadership and management

### The effectiveness of leadership

Outstanding

- School leaders kept a close eye on the quality of provision and outcomes achieved by students. They were well aware of the vision and direction they were setting. They knew where improvements could be made, continuously seeking ways of eliminating any barriers to learning.
- The principal was supported by an extremely competent leadership team and had been very successful in developing the school. There was a strong ethos of collective responsibility which underpinned the successful drive for improvement. Leaders ensured that the school was compliant with statutory requirements.
- There was a culture of mutual trust that underpinned the high quality professional relationships across the school. Individuals and teams were empowered to devise and initiate improvements. There was an ethos of collective responsibility and a strong team spirit where all staff knew that they are valued.
- Under the wise guidance of the principal, leaders successfully promoted the school's shared values. Expectations were communicated very effectively to all members of staff.
- Leaders across the school were extremely well informed about best practice in teaching and learning. This enabled them to offer constructive guidance to colleagues and set appropriately challenging expectations regarding students' achievement. There was a strong focus on ensuring all groups of pupils do as well as they can, in keeping with the school's aim to be as inclusive as possible.

### School self-evaluation and improvement planning

Very good 

- Leaders had a very good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. The analysis of external and internal assessments in order to evaluate students' achievements had been strengthened. This generally provided an accurate picture from which to construct action plans. The assessment of Arabic was not consistently accurate, which meant that the basis for action planning in this subject was insecure.
- School leaders kept a close eye on the quality of teaching. The heads of each section, subject leaders and supervisors all made an effective contribution. The process was systematic and took account of students' progress in lessons and achievement over time.
- Improvement planning was a model of good practice. The plans were well-founded on the results of self-review. The intended outcomes for students were made clear by the inclusion of specific criteria. Responsibilities were defined and the resources allocated to support the initiatives. There were clear links in plans to the national priorities.




- The school had made very good progress in following the recommendations of the last report. There had been improvements in the quality of teaching and learning. This had led to quicker progress and higher standards in Islamic education, English, mathematics and science in the primary and middle phases. The outcomes in most subjects in the kindergarten and secondary phase remained outstanding. The curriculum had been refined effectively and the quality of support for students had also improved.

#### Partnerships with parents and the community

Outstanding

- The close partnership between the school and parents made a significant contribution to students' achievement. In the kindergarten, they routinely helped their children at home and made contributions to their children's 'learning journals' which went back and forth from home to school every two weeks. Parents willingly gave talks to older students about career opportunities. A parent focus group provided an effective conduit for information and suggestions.
- Parents appreciated the regular communications through newsletters, circulars, emails and SMS messages. They were extremely well informed about their children's progress. Consultation meetings were extremely well attended. Information available through the portal and the school's 'open door' approach meant that parents felt confident in raising any questions face-to-face with staff.
- Written reports were comprehensive and provided a wealth of information about students' academic achievements and personal development.
- Partnerships with other local schools were strong. This was exemplified in the links with a local school for challenged individuals. Students from this school visited weekly and fully integrated into lessons under the 'Best Buddies' scheme. The school worked closely with the Emirates Environment Group to promote environment awareness, and the Dubai RTA to promote traffic awareness. The school actively supported many awareness programmes such as Breast Cancer Awareness.

#### Governance

Outstanding 




- Although parents were not members of the governing body, governors sought their opinions frequently through questionnaires and a direct 'hotline'. Governors took parents' comments seriously and gave them careful consideration. They implemented changes when appropriate, for example fire-safety was fine-tuned at a parent's suggestion.
- The governing body provided an appropriate balance of challenge and support. The governors ensured that there were clear lines of accountability so that staff were fully aware of their responsibilities for the actions the school was taking and the impact on students' learning and development.
- The governing body included eminent educationalists who had a very positive influence on the school's performance. Governors ensured that the school was well staffed and had ample resources. They took a strategic approach to reducing class sizes. Classes in the kindergarten had been reduced to 27 children, in line with Ministry of Education requirements and, when students left certain grades, their places were not necessarily filled, despite requests from prospective parents.



Management, staffing, facilities and resources	Outstanding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school ran smoothly because staff worked cohesively. Weekly departmental meetings helped ensure agreed policies were implemented. The timetable was managed effectively using software.</li> <li>• Leaders were successful in recruiting, training and deploying teachers. Teachers were deployed effectively according to their experience and expertise. Every effort was made to retain good teachers. There were ample opportunities for teachers to further develop their skills, including in-house training sessions and outside courses.</li> <li>• The school buildings were well maintained and accessible to almost all. The premises and furniture in the kindergarten were well chosen and in keeping with the school's approach to learning in the early years. The furniture in Grades 1 to 8 had been replaced to allow more space in classrooms for group work and practical activities.</li> <li>• There were sufficient specialist resources, including computer and science laboratories. There was Wi-Fi access across the school. In the lower grades, laptops and tablets were available and increasingly used during lessons. A 'bring your own device' scheme for older students was well established. The primary school 'learning corridor' provided a useful extension to classroom space.</li> </ul>	

## The views of the parents, teachers and 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> 	2015-2016	1057
	2014-2015	899
<b>Teachers</b> 	161	
<b>Students</b> 	873	

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

- Parents' views were overwhelmingly positive. There were high levels of satisfaction with the extent to which the school kept their children safe. Parents were happy with the level of supervision on the buses and with the way the school ensured cyber-safety.
- Almost all parents agreed that their children were developing good learning skills and making good progress in Islamic education, English, mathematics and science. Most felt this was also the case in Arabic as an additional language.
- Parents were very pleased with the way the school was led and with the information they received about how their children were doing.
- Almost all agreed that the school successfully promoted and understanding of Islam and Islamic values.
- Almost all teachers were positive about every aspect of the school, including the extent to which students enjoyed school and behaved well.
- Most students were satisfied with the overall quality of education. A minority did not agree that behaviour was good or that they were treated fairly. A similar proportion expressed concerns about the value of homework. A large minority did not agree that the school listened and acted on their concerns. Students written comments reflected these views.

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)