



National Agenda



Early years



Special educational
needs and disabilities



Innovation

Inspection Report 2015-2016

Dubai International private School - BR

Curriculum: US

Overall rating: Acceptable

Read more about the school



www.khda.gov.ae

‘Without
challenges,
we won’t feel
the taste of
success and
happiness’



Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum

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School information

General information



Location	Al Quoz
Type of school	Private
Opening year of school	1999
Website	www.dis.sch.ae
Telephone	04-3380370
Address	Al Meydan Street, Al Qouz
Principal	Dr. Akram Zayour
Language of instruction	English
Inspection dates	25 to 28 January 2016

Students



Gender of students	Boys and girls
Age range	4-18
Grades or year groups	Kindergarten 1 to Grade 12
Number of students on roll	2,200
Number of children in pre-kindergarten	0
Number of Emirati students	1,478
Number of students with SEND	49
Largest nationality group of students	Emirati

Teachers / Support staff



Number of teachers	136
Largest nationality group of teachers	Lebanese
Number of teaching assistants	20
Teacher-student ratio	1:16
Number of guidance counsellors	3
Teacher turnover	18%

Curriculum



Educational permit / Licence	US
Main curriculum	US
External tests and examinations	IBT, SAT, IELTS, TOEFL, CEPA
Accreditation	AdvancEd
National Agenda benchmark tests	IBT

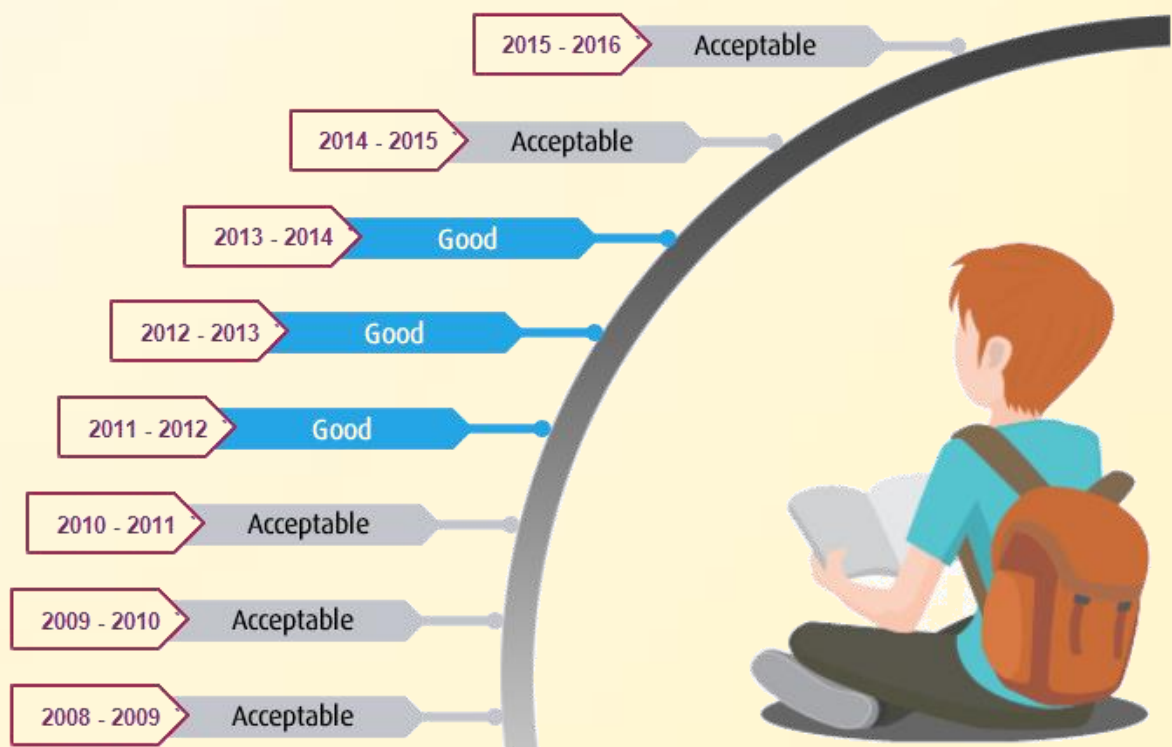


Summary for parents and the community

Dubai International Private School (Branch) was inspected by DSIB from 25 to 28 of January 2016. The overall quality of education provided by the school was found to be **acceptable**.

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, **Dubai International Private School (Branch)** provided an **acceptable** quality of education for its students.

- The attainment and progress of children in the kindergarten (KG) and students in the high school were good in all subjects. However, the attainment and progress of students in the elementary and middle phases were variable across subjects because the quality of teaching was inconsistent. Students' attainment and progress in Islamic Education and in Arabic were mainly good.
- Students demonstrated a good understanding of the UAE culture and Islamic values across the school, with the exception of the KG where it was outstanding. Students elsewhere in the school demonstrated only acceptable personal and social development. These judgments had declined from the previous year as a result of weaknesses observed in the quality of teaching and weaknesses in the supervision of students around the school, and in some lessons.
- The quality of teaching, while good in the KG and high school, was acceptable in the rest of the school because there were inconsistencies within subjects. This was the result of weaknesses in the monitoring, training and development of teachers, as well as teachers' use of assessment information to support students' learning, particularly amongst new teachers.
- The curriculum was broad and balanced and enriched with many extra-curricular opportunities. However, the lack of a qualified US curriculum leader meant the curriculum was not strategically coordinated, managed, mapped or reviewed to ensure rigorous coverage to give all students a quality curriculum experience. The curriculum had not been adequately adapted to meet the needs of different groups of students, particularly gifted, talented, higher achieving students and those with SEND.
- The KG continued to provide children with an outstanding environment in which they were cared for, nurtured and supported, and kept safe. Elsewhere across the school, health and safety standards as well as the care and support provided to students were only acceptable because of variable supervision and inconsistencies noted in the systems for recording, tracking and monitoring of behavior incidents. The provision for and promotion of safe and healthy lifestyles was acceptable.
- The principal had a clear vision for the school, but this was not understood by all leaders across the school. Self-evaluation was weak because school leaders did not have an accurate picture of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Governance was weak because members had not taken appropriate actions to ensure the school had addressed the recommendations made in the previous inspection report or held leaders accountable for the performance and standards in the school.



What did the school do well?

- The school welcomed and valued students from all backgrounds and abilities.
- Children made a good start in the KG, where outstanding care and high quality leadership and teaching resulted in good attainment and progress and outstanding personal and social development.
- In the high school, students made good progress in their learning and attained good results in all key subject areas.
- The school promoted well the UAE culture and Islamic values, through subjects and across the school.



What does the school need to do next?

- Raise students' attainment and accelerate progress in all subjects, specifically in relation to their starting points by:
 - routinely providing high quality and challenging learning activities that meets the needs of all students
 - providing high quality written and oral feedback to students, so they know what they need to do to improve their learning and the quality of their work
 - giving students greater ownership and direction in leading their own learning as well as that of others
 - providing students with access to a full range of digital learning technologies to support them in their research, inquiry and investigations.
- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is at least consistently good by:
 - ensuring teachers model and secure the highest expectations of what students can achieve
 - providing teachers with accurate internal assessment information to ensure they set aspirational targets and plan and implement lessons which meet the learning needs of all groups of students
 - ensuring teachers use high quality questioning techniques that make students think critically and independent
 - ensuring teachers accurately and routinely assess, track and monitor their students' and groups of students academic and personal development.
- Ensure leaders, at all levels, including governors:
 - evaluate accurately the work of the school
 - develop strategic plans that focus on student outcomes
 - develop a secure oversight of their subject areas, undertake thorough analysis of all available performance data and are held fully accountable for their responsibilities.
 - appoint appropriately-qualified and experienced curriculum leader to help teachers implement and modify the US curriculum.



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

- The provision for students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) was acceptable overall. The school provided an inclusive setting where students with a wide range of students with SEND were accepted, nurtured and well cared for.
- Students made acceptable progress in lessons and in their personal and social development, although this was much better in the KG, where children made good academic progress and outstanding progress in their personal, social and emotional development as a result of the good curriculum.
- The school reported to parents on their children's progress and achievements through meetings held four times a year. However, parents noted that more frequent contact, higher quality communications to review their children's ongoing progress, and better coordinated support in class would greatly benefit their children.
- Leaders had demonstrated an increased level of commitment to the improvement of provision for students with SEND. For example, they had recruited specialist staff and external expertise.
- Coordinators responsible for SEND were very active in supporting students in almost all aspects of their school day.

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 did not fully meet the registration requirements of the National Agenda Parameter. Progress towards meeting the National Agenda targets was not secure.
- The principal, governors and staff were committed to the National Agenda. The principal had held meetings with parents and students to explain its importance. Older students were well aware of the scope and purpose of their participation in international tests. The school itself felt that it had not promoted the importance of the tests effectively to previous groups of students who had taken the tests.
- The heads of English, mathematics and science departments were increasingly aligning their respective curriculum to the TIMSS and PISA requirements. For example, the timing of topics in earth and space science had been brought forward to ensure that students had studied these topics before they sat the tests. The school had purchased additional resources to help students develop better reading and problem-solving skills.
- Teachers were beginning to focus on developing students' critical thinking skills by, for example, asking open-ended questions and posing problems with more than one possible answer. Those in the high school were more successful in this than teachers in other phases. While some good examples were seen, overall, this aspect was in need of significant improvement.
- Students in the elementary and middle phases had few opportunities to research topics by seeking information in books or on the internet. Those in the high school had more opportunities, but this aspect needed to be improved too because of the lack of access to digital learning technologies to support their independent research, inquiry and investigations during lessons.

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 set a very clear agenda for promoting an innovation culture in the school. He had led and delivered professional learning and development for all teachers, and had started to engage key staff in action research enquiry around innovation in education leadership, learning and teaching. A clear culture of innovation was developing across the school. The infrastructure around the school had not been reviewed for how it could or should promote a culture of innovation. The curriculum had been reviewed and audited in areas where innovation learning opportunities were profiled. It was enhanced by the number of extra-curricular learning experiences for students to engage in innovation learning outside of school, which led in some cases to them linking innovation with enterprise and entrepreneurship.

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	Good
	Progress	Not applicable	Good	Acceptable	Good
Arabic as an additional language 	Attainment	Not applicable	Good	Good	Good
	Progress	Not applicable	Good ↑	Good ↑	Good
English 	Attainment	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good
	Progress	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good
Mathematics 	Attainment	Good	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable	Good
	Progress	Good	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable	Good
Science 	Attainment	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good
	Progress	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Learning skills	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good

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

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

3. Teaching and assessment

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

4. Curriculum

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Curriculum design and implementation	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Curriculum adaptation	Good	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	Outstanding	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable ↓
Care and support	Outstanding	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable ↓

6. Leadership and management

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



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	Good	Good
Mathematics	Good	Good
Science	Good	Good

- In English, the majority of children demonstrated good levels of knowledge and understanding in language development and emergent literacy as compared to the California State Curriculum Standards for KG. They were able to communicate effectively with their teachers and peers. They could write their names and spell words creatively when writing for meaning and purpose. They showed good book knowledge and were able to sequence and retell stories. The majority were reading simple words and sentences and the more able could decode words to read short books.
- In mathematics, the majority of the children demonstrated a good understanding of mathematical concepts and skills when compared to curriculum expectations. The children made good progress in relation to their assessed starting points and as measured against learning objectives. Their numeracy skills, including counting, sorting, measuring and patterning were progressing well. Mathematic operations were above expected attainment levels. Children could represent addition and subtraction problems using drawings as well as mental images.
- In science, the majority of children made good progress in their understanding of the world. They were aware of the changes in weather and the importance of healthy living. They also understood their relationship with the environment and were involved in several recycling projects. They were sometimes given opportunities for making predictions and then eagerly presented creative ideas and answers to problems posed. For example, they wondered where cheese came from and suggested that sometimes the cow made it.

Elementary		
Subjects	Attainment	Progress
Islamic education	Good	Good
Arabic as a first language	Good	Good
Arabic as an additional language	Good	Good ↑
English	Acceptable	Acceptable
Mathematics	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable ↓
Science	Acceptable	Acceptable

- In Islamic education, the majority of students were attaining above curriculum standards. In lessons and their recent work, students demonstrated knowledge, understanding and skill levels which were above the curriculum standards. They knew the Five Pillars of Islam and the Six Pillars of Iman. Grade 1 students sorted the pillars in order of the Hadeeth and made connections to their personal lives. In relation to their starting point, most students showed well-developed skills in Qur'an recitation and their application of some rules of Tajweed.
- In Arabic as a first language, most students demonstrated good listening and speaking skills, as well as effective reading skills. Their writing skills were emerging and progressing steadily, especially in the lower elementary grades. Most students knew a wide range of vocabulary and could write legibly with good script shaping. At the upper end of the phase, students were writing extended and coherent paragraphs with expected mechanical errors. Students made better progress over time compared to their progress in lessons. There was no significant difference between boys' and girls' achievement.
- In Arabic as an additional language, the majority of students attained levels that were above curriculum expectations. Listening and speaking skills were strongest, with the majority of students using standard Arabic fluently and accurately when communicating with their peers. Students' understanding of written text was well-developed but their writing skills were under-developed. In relation to their starting points, the majority of students made better than expected progress. Grade 4 students could discuss different jobs using complex sentences. However, the progress of students with additional language needs was not secure in all skills.
- In English, internal end-of-year data and last years' test results indicated acceptable attainment. Girls' attainment was slightly better than boys'. External tests results showed similar patterns. Most students achieved slightly above expectations in lessons and in their workbooks, especially when assessed against learning outcomes. Their reading and comprehension skills, as well as their subject knowledge were still developing.
- Most students made acceptable progress from their starting points, and in relation to learning objectives, in their knowledge and understanding about mathematical techniques. Students' progress in problem-solving was slower. By Grade 5, students had an acceptable level of attainment in calculations, for example in multiplying decimals. Over the previous three years, the proportion of students attaining levels in line with, or above, international standards had been variable, and low in the most recent round of tests.
- Most students demonstrated knowledge and skills in line with the science curriculum. Students experienced some hands on activities in classes. However, generally the pace was too fast and some students struggled to keep up. The focus in lessons seemed to be on delivering the content rather than promoting students' understanding of topics. As a consequence, most students made only expected progress when measured against lesson objectives.

Middle

Subjects	Attainment	Progress
Islamic education	Good	Good
Arabic as a first language	Acceptable	Acceptable
Arabic as an additional language	Good	Good ↑
English	Acceptable	Acceptable
Mathematics	Acceptable	Acceptable
Science	Acceptable	Acceptable

- In Islamic education, the majority of students were attaining above curriculum expectations in their knowledge, understanding and skills levels across many aspects. The majority of students recited chapters from the Qur'an with confidence and applied relevant rules of Tajweed with accuracy. They knew Seerah of the Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) and the life of his companions, and basic fundamentals of Iman. Grade 7 students memorized and recited Surah 'Al Ahzab' with clarity. They demonstrated a good understanding of the Surah and talked about leadership of the Prophet (PBUH).
- In Arabic as a first language, students could analyze elements of literary texts, and a few could respond to critical questions regarding the text. Their conversational skills and extended and creative writing skills were underdeveloped at the lower end of this phase. Most students made acceptable progress in their lessons and over time. Girls progressed slightly better than boys.
- In Arabic as an additional language, the majority of the students attained above curriculum expectations. Students' speaking, listening and reading skills were well-developed. They demonstrated the ability to hold a conversation in Arabic for a considerable time with a few expected errors. Their writing skills were not yet fully developed. Students made good progress in most language skills. For example, in Grade 8 students demonstrated fluency and confidence while they were practicing the dialogue about Abas Ibn Farnas's flying experience. However, the more advanced and new language learners did not make similar progress.
- In English, students' attainment and progress were acceptable as observed in lessons, as seen in their work and as recorded over time. The majority of students read reasonably fluently and were able to decipher words they were familiar with. Some could deduce with accuracy the meaning of unknown words from the context. Students often demonstrated basic competency in English comprehension. Their speaking and writing skills were underdeveloped. Most students' workbooks generally demonstrated limited vocabulary with spelling and punctuation errors. Teachers' feedback to students on how they should improve the quality of their work was limited.
- Most students made acceptable progress in relation to appropriate mathematics curriculum targets. Progress in problem-solving was slower. In Grade 6 and Grade 7, students had an acceptable level of attainment in converting mixed numbers to improper fractions and in ratios respectively. Students in Grade 8 had developed an acceptable understanding of techniques in algebra such as factorization. Over the previous three years, the proportion of students attaining levels in line with or above international standards had been variable, and in the most recent round of tests, low in Grades 6 and 7. As in other phases, girls made slightly better progress than boys.
- Students' attainment in science was in line with curriculum standards. Most students were able to successfully engage in lessons and could complete assigned activities. However, little opportunity was provided to develop their critical thinking or problem solving skills during practical activities. Experimental activities revolved around scientific theory and application of formulas. Students' progress in lessons was slow because they were not challenged. They could answer questions and then proceed to apply a formula, but their inquiry and research skills were underdeveloped. As a result, most students made acceptable progress in lessons.

High		
Subjects	Attainment	Progress
Islamic education	Good	Good
Arabic as a first language	Good	Good
Arabic as an additional language	Good	Good
English	Good	Good
Mathematics	Good	Good
Science	Good	Good

- In Islamic education, the majority of students demonstrated secure knowledge, understanding and skills which were above curriculum expectations. For example, the majority demonstrated strong recitation skills, and could apply the rules of Fiqh and the Aqeedah. In relation to their starting point, students showed noticeable progress in memorizing and reciting the Qur'an. Grade 12 students, in their research project, demonstrated the rules of imitation and innovation in Islam and its implication to contemporary Muslim society. Groups of students' made variable progress, in particular non-Arabic speaking students.
- In Arabic as a first language, attainment and progress were good. The majority of students could analyze literary texts, present views around them and critique their elements. Most students, in both the boys and girls sections, had good conversational skills. Their listening skills were effective. They could summarize main ideas and synthesize points from a recorded text. Their extended and creative writing had progressed well. Most students progressed well over time, with girls progressing better in lessons than boys because of better instructional methods.
- In Arabic as an additional language, the majority of students attained above curriculum expectations in most language skills. Speaking and listening skills were the strongest. Students had started to develop their writing skills. In relation to their starting points and in lessons, the majority of students made better than expected progress, in particular in reading with understanding. For example, students in Grade 9 could retell the story of Sinbad and produced a different ending to the story as a result of using their imagination. However, students new to the Arabic language made inadequate progress because of the lack of targeted support and resources available to help them accelerate in their learning.
- In English, students could define basic concepts and terms as aligned to lesson learning outcomes. Students could regularly assess each other's work and make recommendations when needed. Most students could draw on text with increasing skill to support opinions about writing samples. Students were able to make cross curricular links to human psychology and science during their presentation of Shakespeare's sonnets, when referencing their emotions and feelings. Progress in writing of essays and extended writing assignments was particularly good.
- In mathematics, as a result of better challenge from teachers, the majority of students made better than expected progress. Students developed good problem-solving and inquiry skills as they moved through the phase. Students in Grades 9 and 10 could solve radical and quadratic equations by algebra and graphing respectively. Those in Grades 11 and 12 were good at solving real-life problems using algebra and calculus. Over the previous three years, the proportion of students in Grades 9 and 10 attaining levels in line with or above international standards had been variable.
- In science, the majority of students demonstrated knowledge, understanding and skills above curriculum standards. Students were able to apply the scientific method for class projects and research, such as determining atomic radius. Additionally, students in physics were able to construct and test a variety of complex electric circuits, clearly developing problem-solving and critical-thinking skills. In these cases, student progress was better than expected in lessons.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Learning skills	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good

- Students had positive attitudes towards learning and many students gained skills from a range of contexts in lessons when they were familiar with the teaching methods. This was particularly the case in the elementary and middle phases. In high school students tended to be more flexible and were able to facilitate some of their own learning and engage in dialogue.
- Most students worked in collaborative groups with varied degrees of engagement in teacher-designed activities. This variability of skills was evident in the elementary and middle phases, while groups were frequently more effective in high school. In the lower grades, individual students' contributions to group activities were less meaningful, but they increased as students matured.
- Elementary and middle phase students connected their learning to real world situations. Application of their learning in unfamiliar circumstances and new contexts proved to be difficult. However, this was not the case in high school where students more frequently made connections of diverse strands of learning.
- In the high school, students were able to find things out and develop predictions from information gathered from various sources. Elementary and middle phase students were less able to construct their own meaning from information and needed support to solve problems. In KG, children had well developed learning skills as a result of the independence they showed in their day to day interactions and explorations, as well as their use and access to a range of digital learning technologies.

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

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Personal development	Outstanding	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable ↓

- Students were at varying degrees of self-reliance throughout the school. In the elementary and middle phases, some students were responsible and attentive in classrooms while others were disruptive and did not respond to the direction given by staff. Children in KG were more respectful, positive and focused on guidance and instruction.
- Whereas the majority of students were respectful of school rules and were courteous in most situations, in some lessons some students became quickly disinterested and disengaged, and in some cases they freely left lessons without a reason.
- The relationships between students and staff were observed to be generally courteous. However, there were several instances observed in which students were not responsive to teachers who were attempting to calm and direct their behavior in classrooms or in the hallways of the school.
- An extensive calendar of activities held throughout the school year, offered topics that guided students toward making wise and enriching life choices. Some activities were designed for one or two age groups, while others involved students throughout the whole school. Every activity had a focus that was enriching in its effort to direct students towards adopting a safe and healthy lifestyle.
- The school's attendance and punctuality were good, but systems to support this were not robust, nor was supervision around the school. Teachers were not observed taking attendance records in classes, and many students arrived late each day to school and to lessons. Student absence and lateness to lessons were noted in almost all classrooms visited during the inspection.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Outstanding	Good	Good	Good

- Students demonstrated a well-developed understanding and appreciation of the values of Islam and how it influenced the multi-cultural society in the UAE and worldwide. Middle school students demonstrated a well-developed understanding of Islam and the role of mosques in contemporary Muslim society. High school students took part in Qur'an recitation competitions.
- Students were proud to be a part of the UAE culture; they described in detail life in UAE in the past and the role of the leadership in shaping the UAE. In KG, children enjoyed contributing to cultural exhibition created by a parent. Students in the Student Council spoke enthusiastically about their contribution to National Day, UAE flag-day and the importance of preserving the Emirati culture.
- Students demonstrated a strong understanding of their own culture. They were mindful of other cultures in Dubai and appreciated being part of multi-cultural society. Students from all phases described with pride their contribution to Culture Day. Elementary students, were keen to talk about their friends, culture, food and clothing.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Outstanding	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable ↓

- Students demonstrated an acceptable sense of community and environmental responsibilities. The student organizing committees took active parts in keeping the school playground clean and safe. The Student Council represented students' views and organized various school activities. Students across all phases contributed to donations to Dubai Care and Breast Cancer and took part in campaigns to clean-up local beaches.
- Students showed a positive work ethic, particularly in the KG. High school students took part in Injaz project to generate creative and business ideas and developed some innovative ideas in science and English lessons. A focus on developing students' creativity and entrepreneurship skills had started to develop but was not yet embedded. Students elsewhere in the school did not show the same level of social responsibility for their environment or towards each other.
- Students took steps in improving their school environment. The environmental committee helped keep the school clean, but not all students contributed to this mission. Students showed awareness of various environment issues locally and globally, but they were not proactive in leading these initiatives. They explained the importance of saving energy but their initiation of such projects and active involvement in the school and locally was limited.

3. Teaching and assessment

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

- In all core subjects, teachers had a secure knowledge of their subjects, and most were able to explain things clearly to their students. In the KG, teachers were able to apply their knowledge of child development to adopt a range of suitable teaching strategies. As a result, children were eager to learn and enjoyed their time in KG. Teachers in the elementary and middle phases did not adopt a suitably wide range of instructional approaches to ensure students made better than acceptable progress. They were limited in their skills and practices.
- The quality of lesson plans, and the effectiveness of how teachers implemented them, varied considerably across the elementary, middle and high phases. Teaching was best in the high school phase. For example, in high school mathematics, students often found out things for themselves and then taught their peers. This was particularly demonstrated in a lesson on a real-life application of exponential functions in the world of business. KG teachers planned hands-on learning through play and discovery.
- The quality of questioning and dialogue used by teachers was too variable. Teachers often asked questions which only required a quick, short response and little reflection on the part of the students. Children in the KG were challenged to think and learn for themselves. Some good practice existed in the high school. For example, this was evident in a discussion in Islamic Education about aspects of Friday prayers and in Arabic about literature.
- Teachers had difficulty in matching tasks, activities, questions and resources to the learning needs of each group. In KG, higher-attaining children were at times given additional, more challenging tasks. Overall, levels of challenge and support were only acceptable in the remaining phases, because of weak planning and instructional methods.
- Although teachers were aware of the need to develop students' higher-order skills such as problem-solving, independent learning, inquiry and research, they were not planning and teaching these skills systematically. However, this aspect was better developed in the high school phase in English, mathematics and science.
- Teachers of Arabic demonstrated secure subject knowledge, and a mixed set of competences in how students learn best. Teachers had basic skills in matching activities to accommodate different groups of students' needs. They created supportive learning environments, and employed modest resources to support students' learning. Many teachers used dialogue and interaction effectively in the KG and high school, and implemented a range of collaborative learning strategies. These were underdeveloped in the remaining phases of the school.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Assessment	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

- Regular and consistent classroom assessments of student learning were administered throughout all phases and were linked to the curriculum standards. These were sometimes used to address student progress and identify areas of strengths and development. KG assessment data was documented and analyzed, which allowed teachers to clearly determine children's achievement and progress.
- There were processes in place to compare internal assessments with external benchmarks. This analysis was not always efficient and reliable. As a result, this led to an inconsistent picture of rigorous assessment information to drive better attainment and progress to meet external standards as well as National Agenda targets.
- Assessment information was compiled and organized in order to gain insights into students' progress as individuals and for ability groups. The resulting information was shared with the teachers. However, the information was not sufficiently analyzed to provide reliable information on students' progress.
- The information from the analysis of data was not used effectively by leaders to modify the curriculum or teaching. However, lower-achieving students were identified and given extra support when needed. Providing more challenge for the higher achieving, gifted or talented students was not consistent in all phases. Most teachers did not adequately use the information to modify lessons to meet the needs of all students.
- Most teachers in the KG, had good knowledge of the strengths and areas of need of individual children and consequently, provided focused support and challenge. In the other phases, whilst some teachers gave adequate oral and written feedback, the checking of understanding and providing detailed feedback was not a regular part of the lessons. Therefore, students were not able to assess their own learning realistically in order to improve.

4. Curriculum

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

- Overall, the curriculum design mainly followed a US focus, and also included aspects from other curricula to enhance the schools' internationalism, such as the UNESCO Standards. However, the implementation of the curriculum was not uniform and not all teachers knew what was expected in their subjects. As a result, teaching and learning goals were not yet aligned to enable good continuity, progression, scope and sequence between learning topics and across grades.
- As students progressed through grade levels, especially as they transitioned between phases, there was limited evidence to indicate whether students had acquired the skills and knowledge for them to be successful in the next grade. Where California State Curriculum standards had been identified in planning, records lacked detail, sometimes missing the alignment of curriculum standards to learning outcomes to aid adequate progression.
- The school had introduced a range of curriculum options, such as economics, information and communication technology, world history, and fine arts. However, student options were limited in making choices in line with their aspirations, interests and ambitions. Consequently, not all students had the option of engaging in rich learning opportunities.

- Teachers in the KG and the high school planned and promoted critical thinking skills and independent learning opportunities. Lessons were not always purposeful across other phases and grades, nor did they promote cross curricular learning to extend students' literacy across other subjects.
- The curriculum was planned annually, and teachers identified course topics to ensure adequate scope and sequence. However, most students had significant gaps in their knowledge and skills, and in their personal and social development. The curriculum was not fully meeting the needs of all groups of students, particularly those with SEND, gifted, talented or higher achieving students.
- Social studies were taught as a discrete subject. There were occasional connections established with other subjects. The planning for social studies was reliant on textbooks in addition to other resources, and the review of the curriculum was an emerging process in the school.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Curriculum adaptation	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

- The school made limited provision in addressing the learning needs of all groups of students. Lesson plans often included different activities. However, teachers lacked a clear understanding on implementing these purposefully across all grades in line with students' different starting points in lessons. Additionally, challenging tasks for gifted and talented students were limited, and the lessons observed during the inspection lacked opportunities for research and critical thinking.
- Extra-curricular options, such as the information and communication technology and fine arts clubs had been introduced to give students opportunities for independent research and to develop critical thinking skills. Workshops such as the 'Innovation Day Camp', and 'Be Entrepreneurial' had been introduced to give students opportunities to think and learn innovatively. However, this was limited to small groups of students and was not inclusive of all.
- Enrichment in lessons was weak. Lessons lacked innovative and coherent learning experiences that reflected the UAE culture and vision, as well as internationalism and learning about other cultures, in systematic ways across the school.
- Arabic was taught for one session on a daily basis to all KG classes. The curriculum was based on an appropriate set of national and regional standards for teaching Arabic to emergent learners. It was well planned with links across other subject areas and taught in units.

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

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding	Outstanding	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable ↓

- The school had adequate systems, processes, policies and procedures in place for safeguarding students, which were known and understood by most staff. The school raised students' awareness of different forms of bullying, and took steps to prevent incidents from occurring. However, there were variations in the quality of supervision across the school, as well as the systems used to record incidents.

- The school provided a safe, hygienic and secure environment for students and staff, and regular checks were made to ensure the maintenance and quality of provision. However, supervision of students was not consistently effective to ensure all students were supported or cared for well enough at all times during the school day.
- The buildings and equipment were well maintained and records were kept to ensure safety and security of facilities. The system used for recording and reporting incidents relating to students' safety and well-being, were inconsistent and not rigorously tracked, monitored, analysed or reported to supervisors and senior leaders. Consequently, the actions taken by leaders and supervisors were not always communicated effectively to parents.
- The premises and facilities provided students and staff with a safe physical environment in which to learn and teach. They were generally fit for purpose, but at times the lack of convenient access for some students to some areas of the school, restricted their movement around the school.
- The school generally promoted safe and healthy living and students were aware of the importance of this when learning. Some students made unhealthy choices in their food and physical development activities. Students reported that healthy food choices were made available during the inspection but this was not always available at other times of the year.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Care and support	Outstanding	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable ↓

- The behavior management system was not consistently effective. There was no evident code of conduct which guided the development of respectful and positive relationships between students and staff. Consequently, the quality of relationships was variable. Not all supervisory staff were consistently modeling and commanding the highest expectations from students or from the staff.
- Good attendance and punctuality had been reported by the school. However, during the inspection students were often observed arriving late to school and lessons, and in most cases there were a few students absent from classrooms. Some students took it upon themselves to leave lessons freely, and to wander the corridors unchallenged.
- An individual educational plan (IEP), was in place for students with SEND. These plans were drawn up when parents submitted a diagnostic report demonstrating the need for special educational services. A coherent strategy to provide special education services for all qualifying students was not in place. Consequently, not all students identified with SEND, had access to appropriate interventions to meet their individual needs. The school did not formally identify students who were gifted, talented or high achievers and no support was given to these students in lessons.
- Good instructional and emotional support was provided for students with SEND by the SEND team, who also coached teachers to provide appropriate modifications to instruction in the classroom. Children in the KG were provided with significant levels of support for their personal and emotional development throughout the school day.
- The SEND coordinators and instructors were given additional assignments to serve as counselors to all students in the school. This diminished the time available to provide support to students with SEND and their teachers. Graduating seniors were provided with appropriate college guidance and support by the high school Arabic teacher as well as by the school's guidance counselor.

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

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

Acceptable

- The school was inclusive and admitted students with a range of SEND. Senior leaders and governors demonstrated an increased level of commitment to improving provision for students with SEND. This included investing in the recruitment of specialist staff and the sourcing of external expertise. The school had improved the structure of the services they provided to students with SEND.
- The school used a range of indicators to appropriately identify the needs of students with SEND, upon entry and within the school. However, systems to ensure that all students identified with SEND, either by the school or by external agencies, needed further refinement to ensure appropriate interventions and modifications were in place.
- The school did not work closely with parents to ensure the best possible learning opportunities, support, and guidance were given to their children inside and outside of the school, allowing them to make good or better progress.
- Professional development from an outside agency, and coaching of classroom teachers by the specialist staff in the school, had resulted in some improvements to the quality of modifications made to curriculum design and teaching strategies. Although not consistent, modifications and support were more successful in KG and elementary phase classes.
- Students with SEND made acceptable progress across subjects and phases. Specialist support in the school was of a varying quality. However, it was appropriate and added value to the learning and progress of students with SEND. The school needed to adopt a single IEP format for use with all students with SEND.

6. Leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership

Acceptable

- The principal had set a clear vision and direction for an inclusive school, particularly in relation to promoting school improvement through innovation, and in continuing to promote the UAE national priorities. However, other leaders had not fully understood this. Consequently, their effectiveness was limited.
- Most, but not all, leaders had demonstrated a basic knowledge and understanding of the curriculum and what constituted effective teaching and learning. However, section supervisors had not demonstrated sufficient rigor in their leadership and monitoring practices. As a result, students' personal and social development outcomes had declined in the elementary, middle and high schools.
- Relationships and communications were generally professional and cordial. Leaders' roles and responsibilities were clear, but not all leaders had carried out their duties effectively in relation to promoting and modeling high expectations and standards, particularly in the middle and high schools.
- The KG leader and the SEND team demonstrated an appropriate awareness of improvement priorities. Elsewhere in the school, subject leaders were beginning to understand and address what needed to be done to improve the quality of teaching, assessment and the curriculum.

- Leaders had not been successful in addressing the recommendations of the previous inspection report, specifically in relation to the quality of teaching, assessment, and curriculum. As a result, they had not had a significant impact on improving the school's performance and standards over the previous year. The school was compliant with statutory and regulatory regulations.

School self-evaluation and improvement planning

Weak ↓

- Processes for self-evaluation were ineffective because the school's view of its strengths and weaknesses was inaccurate and overly positive. As a result, the school did not have a realistic view of how to address the recommendations set by DSIB at the last inspection.
- The quality of the monitoring of teaching and learning by subject leaders in relation to students' achievements was limited and variable. The processes focused on aspects of teaching but did not focus on evaluating the progress students made in lessons. As a result, senior and subject leaders had an over-inflated view of the impact of teaching on students' learning.
- School improvement plans were not sufficiently detailed to ensure that improvement targets could be effectively monitored, tracked or evaluated in relation to students' outcomes. While targets were set for improving aspects of the provision such as curriculum, teaching, assessment and learning, there were no success criteria for meeting the targets in relation to improvements in students' achievements.
- The school had shown limited improvements over time in key areas. As a result, standards had declined in key areas of the school provision and in the personal and social development outcomes achieved by students.

Partnerships with parents and the community

Good

- Parents were made aware of the school's decisions, and were generally involved in this process in support of their children's learning. The majority of parents, in their response to the KHDA survey stated that they were satisfied with the quality of education in the school.
- Communications with parents were generally effective. In the KG, there were systems in place that kept parents consistently aware of their children's progress. The parents were appreciative of the welcoming policy of the school to support their day-to-day communications. However, parents with children with SEND noted that more frequent contact, and higher-quality communications to review their children's ongoing progress, would benefit their children.
- The school progress reports were regular and reflected important information about the students' attainment results. Parents also received helpful information on their children's learning outcomes through verbal reports.
- The school had planned for increased networking with major associations such as Injaz and the Middle East Model United Nations in order to enrich their curriculum experiences.

Governance

Weak ↓

- The governing board did not include representatives of different stakeholders, nor did it seek their views. As a result, the board had insecure knowledge about the quality of education, as well as the standards and performance of the school in relation to students' outcomes.
- Governors had failed to ensure that school leaders addressed the recommendations of the previous inspection report. As a result, standards and performance of the school had remained the same overall and had declined in some key areas of provision. This is because governors had not sufficiently held leaders accountable for the school's performance, particularly the academic and personal development of all groups of students.
- The governing board provided very limited support to guide the school's leadership. Consequently, senior leaders were limited in their capacity to deliver the improvements as recommended in the previous inspection report. With the exception of KG, the board had not ensured the provision of sufficiently-qualified and experienced staff, particularly in relation to the leadership of the US curriculum, teaching and learning, and students' wellbeing. As a result, there were no improvements found in these key areas of the school, and standards in the personal and social development of students had declined.




Management, staffing, facilities and resources

Acceptable ↓

- The school was adequately managed and organized and the school's procedures and routines were generally effective. The management of the KG was particularly effective, orderly and well maintained. However, the management of students' conduct in other parts of the school was not effective.
- The school did not have an appropriately-qualified and experienced teacher to lead the implementation of the US curriculum. The process of identification and development of gifted, talented and higher achieving students was underdeveloped which resulted in these students not making accelerated progress in their learning and development. Professional development, while meaningful and well intentioned, was not having an impact on improving the quality of teaching, learning, assessment or curriculum implementation.
- The school premises were adequate, but learning environments to promote students' higher achievement were relatively underdeveloped in the elementary, middle and high school phases. The premises were not fully accessible to all groups of students. The use of a range of mobile and digital learning technologies to support students' research, investigations and exploration in lessons was limited.
- There were effective learning resources found in the KG to support children's learning and development, as well as teachers in their delivery of good quality learning experiences. Of particular note was the investment made by parents to create a Dubai cultural exhibition, where children and students from across the school could immerse themselves in the culture and history of the UAE. However, resources elsewhere across the school were limited in comparison, and provided for only acceptable learning and teaching experiences.

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	
 Parents*	2015-2016	105
	2014-2015	251
 Teachers	77	
 Students	308	

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

- A small minority of parents, a majority of teachers and most students responded to the survey. The majority of parents were satisfied with the quality of education in their children's school and the progress they made in most core subjects. Most parents believed that their children were developing a good range of learning skills.
- A majority of parents who participated in the survey were concerned about the quality of some teachers' competences and the high rate of teacher turn over every year. A majority of students who participated in the survey raised concerns about the quality of teaching offered by the school.
- Most parents felt that the school provided a safe environment on their premises and on buses; however, a significant number of parents did not know whether the school provided a cyber-safety program to protect their children while browsing on the internet. A large minority of parents disagreed with or did not know whether the schools dealt with bullying incidents effectively. A significant number of teachers believed that students did not behave well and did not enjoy school. A significant number of the students were critical of the behavior of students at the school and of how the school had dealt with them especially with incidents of bullying.
- Most parents agreed that their children were developing self-awareness and awareness of other cultures, and had gained an understanding of Islam.
- A significant number of students believed that the school did not offer a sufficient range of subjects and activities. A large minority of students was not satisfied with the extra-curricular activities that the school had to offer.
- A minority of parents believed that the school did not provide an appropriate range of resources including learning technologies to support their children's learning.
- A majority of parents believed that the school prepared their children for the next stage of learning, while one quarter of them were not satisfied with the quality of career education provided by the school.

If you have a concern or wish to comment on any aspect of this report, you should contact inspection@khda.gov.ae