



National Agenda



Early years



Special educational
needs and disabilities



Innovation

Inspection Report 2015-2016

Horizons English School

Curriculum: UK

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 Wasl
Type of school	Private
Opening year of school	2007
Website	www.horizonschooldubai.com
Telephone	04-3422891
Address	Dubai - Al Wasl, Jumeirah, PO BOX 6749
Principal	David Baldwin
Language of instruction	English
Inspection dates	16 to 18 November 2015

Students



Gender of students	Boys and girls
Age range	3-11
Grades or year groups	Kindergarten 1 to Year 6
Number of students on roll	738
Number of children in pre-kindergarten	127
Number of Emirati students	8
Number of students with SEND	50
Largest nationality group of students	UK

Teachers / Support staff



Number of teachers	51
Largest nationality group of teachers	British
Number of teaching assistants	22
Teacher-student ratio	1:14
Number of guidance counsellors	2
Teacher turnover	37%

Curriculum



Educational permit / Licence	UK
Main curriculum	UK
External tests and examinations	SATS, CAT4, IBT, GL Assessments, Progress Baseline, Aspects
Accreditation	British Schools Overseas (BSO)
National Agenda benchmark tests	GL Assessments, IBT

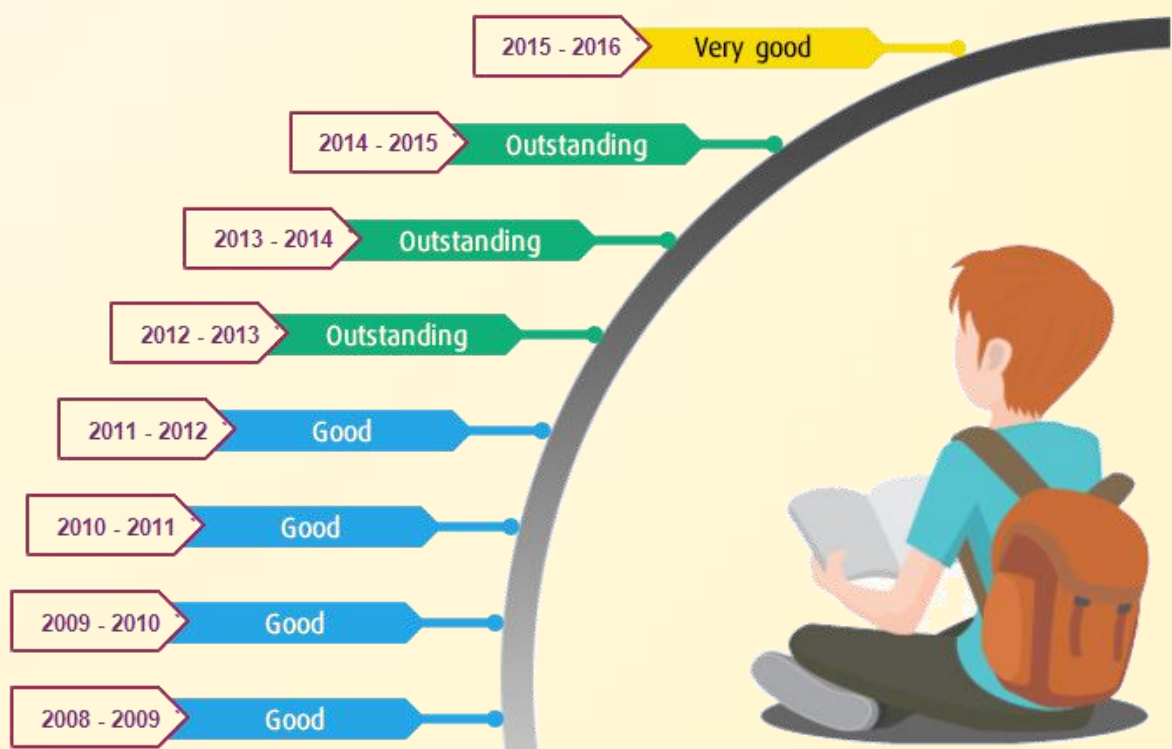


Summary for parents and the community

Horizon English School was inspected by DSIB from 16 to 18 of November 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, **Horizon English School** provided a **very good** quality of education for its students.

- Attainment and progress were mainly very good in English, mathematics and science but in Arabic and Islamic education they were generally acceptable.
- Students were highly engaged and, when given the opportunity, took responsibility for their own learning. In the best lessons and projects, students could demonstrate success in applying their knowledge and skills as independent learners.
- Students were polite and cared about one another. They appreciated the heritage and culture of the UAE and Islamic values. They recycled and helped to protect the environment.
- Teachers knew their students well and, at the end of primary, secured the best outcomes for their students. However, in Arabic and Islamic education, teaching was less engaging.
- Information about students, such as examination data, was available and used increasingly well by teachers to inform students' next steps in learning.
- The curriculum was rich. It was more established in the Foundation Stage as the school was implementing the changes in the UK primary curriculum.
- The school provided a very safe and caring environment and cared well for all its students.
- The principal was visionary and relentlessly strived to raise outcomes in the school.



What did the school do well?

- The principal had an inspirational vision for further improvement and had the confidence of the staff and parents.
- Students' outcomes remained strong, particularly at the end of primary school.
- The curriculum in the Foundation Stage was interesting and exciting and provided excellent opportunities for children to explore and develop their investigation skills.
- Excellent identification procedures ensured that the needs of students with special educational needs and disability (SEND) are addressed early.
- The care and support that all students received were outstanding and students continued to demonstrate excellent personal and social skills.



What does the school need to do next?

- Improve the rates of progress in Arabic as a first language and Islamic education by:
 - meeting the UAE Ministry of Education curriculum expectations
 - raising the levels of challenge in lessons.
- Raise attainment in Arabic as an additional language by matching activities to the expected attainment levels for all students.
- Improve further the quality of the teaching of early writing and number skills in the Foundation Stage and lower primary classes.



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

- Students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) made at least good and often very good progress because their needs were very skillfully identified and activities were usually very well planned to meet their individual needs.
- Meetings and regular reports kept parents well informed about their children's progress. However, although all parents were regularly invited to meetings on their children's progress, not all parents took up this offer.
- Staff had developed many ways to communicate with parents such as through informal and formal meetings, communication books that link school to home, and by e-mail.
- Many parents were highly involved in their children's education. The staff within the Learning Enhancement Team continued to consider different strategies to encourage greater involvement.
- Parents had access to much advice, support and guidance from the specialist staff in the 'Learning Enhancement Team', from teachers and from the external specialists who supported their children.

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 and the progress towards meeting the National Agenda targets was above expectations. In the indicated external benchmark tests, most students attained levels that were at or above the international average established by the benchmark.
- The school had promoted an awareness and understanding of the National Agenda. The National Agenda pervaded the work the school did. Governors, staff, students, parents and other stakeholders were well aware of the scope and the purpose of participating in international testing and the contributing improvements this was making to the school.
- Curriculum working parties had undertaken a comprehensive curriculum audit to ensure that the TIMSS and PISA test requirements for content and skills matched those being planned in Years 3 to 6, but not consistently in other years. This had enhanced subject skills and knowledge because of an improved focus on reading interpretation in English, mental calculations in mathematics and investigative reasoning in science.
- Most teachers were planning tasks that facilitated the development of students' critical thinking, reflection and independent learning skills. Training had identified the important discrete elements of these skills and teachers were using these as prompts in everyday planning for the majority of lessons. The same training had focused on improving questioning strategies and skills in order to elicit the best responses from students in open-ended problem solving.
- The majority of classrooms were resourced and organised to enable students to access information and develop their research skills in line with the National Agenda requirements. Most students worked confidently under their own initiatives to meet the learning objectives, often using or self-selecting additional resources and learning technologies to support their learning.

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:

- School leaders had an understanding of the importance of innovation as a key focus in the school's development and had identified strategies to best promote a culture of innovation. The school leadership had begun to build capacity for innovation as a key part of the school's development and had identified professional learning opportunities as a priority. School systems and the learning environment enabled innovation stimulation through encouragement of teachers' 'risk-taking' and students' creativity, with displays of students' learning throughout the school. Innovation skills had been integrated through the arts as a prominent thread in the curriculum design.

Overall school performance

Very good ↓

1. Students' achievement

		Foundation Stage	Primary
Islamic education 	Attainment	Not applicable	Acceptable
	Progress	Not applicable	Acceptable
Arabic as a first language 	Attainment	Not applicable	Acceptable
	Progress	Not applicable	Acceptable
Arabic as an additional language 	Attainment	Not applicable	Acceptable
	Progress	Not applicable	Good
English 	Attainment	Good ↓	Very good ↑
	Progress	Very good ↓	Very good ↑
Mathematics 	Attainment	Good ↓	Very good ↓
	Progress	Very good ↓	Very good ↑
Science 	Attainment	Very good ↓	Very good ↑
	Progress	Very good ↓	Very good ↑

	Foundation Stage	Primary
Learning skills	Very good ↓	Very good ↓




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

	Foundation Stage	Primary
Personal development	Outstanding	Outstanding
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Outstanding	Outstanding
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Outstanding	Outstanding

3. Teaching and assessment

	Foundation Stage	Primary
Teaching for effective learning	Very good 	Very good 
Assessment	Very good 	Very good 



4. Curriculum

	Foundation Stage	Primary
Curriculum design and implementation	Outstanding	Very good 
Curriculum adaptation	Very good 	Very good 

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

	Foundation Stage	Primary
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Care and support	Outstanding	Outstanding

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	Very good 
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

Foundation Stage

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 ↓	Very good ↓
Mathematics	Good ↓	Very good ↓
Science	Very good ↓	Very good ↓

- Attainment in English against curriculum standards in the early years was good. In lessons and in the school's own tracking data, almost all groups of children made very good progress from starting points which were below those typical for their age. The development of speaking and listening skills was particularly strong. Children enjoyed an increasing range of books. They listened carefully to stories, demonstrating a good understanding in response to questions or through role play. Attainment and progress in writing were weaker. The most able children were beginning to use their phonic knowledge to spell simple words. Letter formation was good. However, the attainment and progress in writing for most groups of children was not at this level.
- Attainment in mathematics was good and above the early years curriculum standard. School data indicated that children attained above curriculum standards in shape, space and measure and this was also evident in lessons. For example, children were able to explain that 2D shapes were flat and could identify the difference between a circle and sphere. All groups of children made very good progress in lessons and over time. The majority did better than this. In lessons seen during the inspection, number work was often restricted to counting from one to ten despite children demonstrating ability beyond this level. This prevented attainment from rising further in those sessions.
- The attainment of the large majority of children in science was above the early years' curriculum standards. The school's data indicated that children made very good progress from below age-related starting points. In lessons, all groups of children made very good progress and could talk confidently about the things they had observed. They hypothesised confidently on what changes would happen when carrying out investigations and were curious to find out why things worked. The scientific knowledge and skills demonstrated by children in lessons were above those typically seen for children of this age, for example, when investigating the absorption properties of a range of materials.

Primary

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

- In Islamic education, the school used internal assessments to measure students' attainment and progress. This showed that most students make expected progress. Most students were able to recite short surah from the Holy Qur'an. A few were able to use Tajweed rules but with some errors. They could explain the importance of prayers and understood why they should obey their parents. They were able to discuss other aspects of their learning but in a limited way, resulting in only acceptable progress in lessons.
- In Arabic as a first language, the school was using the MoE curriculum to set standards. The school measured students' attainment and progress through internal assessments. However, the level of challenge was below the expected standards set by the MoE. The listening skills of most students were stronger than their speaking skills and this was more evident in the upper years. They were able to read aloud but with errors. Writing was limited to short sentences. In lessons, most students made acceptable progress in developing their vocabulary and grammatical understanding.
- In Arabic as an additional language, the standards set for students did not meet the required MoE expectations. The school used internal assessments to measure students' attainment but the expectations in those assessments was low. Most students could follow and respond to their teachers' instructions. They could repeat familiar words but with errors and could read familiar words using alphabet decoding. However, their pronunciation was poor. Students' writing skills were still developing. They were able to write short phrases but with some errors. The majority of students in the lower primary and those students new to learning Arabic made better progress than those in the upper primary.
- In English, the majority of students attained levels above national and international curriculum standards. Writing was not well developed at Key Stage 1 where students struggled to form letters and write short sentences. However, as children progressed through the stages, their writing improved. Students in Years 5 and 6 wrote extensively for a range of purposes, using appropriate and challenging grammar. Almost all students read fluently with expression. They understood and applied different genres in analysing and writing text. Most applied critical thinking skills well through discussion and peer review. Year 5 students created imaginative scenarios when reviewing the story of Jane Eyre and discussing her experiences and predicting what might happen in the future. Students' listening and speaking skills were particularly well developed across the years. By Year 6, they used tablet computers to help them create and review their writing. Those with SEND made more variable progress.
- In mathematics, students made very good progress and attained levels that were above the expected curriculum standards. There was better progress in the upper primary stage. For example, students independently developed their thinking to establish a rule for measuring the angles of a polygon. They assembled data in graphical format and interpreted and interrogated it in various ways. Most groups of students made the progress of which they were capable because teachers challenged them to reach their potential. However, some younger students were not being stretched sufficiently to achieve the more advanced numeracy skills. Over time, attainment has consistently been significantly above international expectations.

- Students made very good progress in both national and international assessments in all aspects of the science curriculum. They performed well above the curriculum standards in practical investigative skills, knowledge and understanding. In the higher years, girls performed slightly better than boys. Assessment data indicated that, over the last three years, students had performed consistently at a level above national and international standards. There was little difference between the attainment and progress of students in life sciences, physical sciences and Earth sciences. There was a clear progression in process skills and investigative work from Year 1 to Year 6. By Year 6 students had developed good problem solving skills. They were proficient in carrying out practical work and were developing the ability to work independently on research tasks.

	Foundation Stage	Primary
Learning skills	Very good ↓	Very good ↓

- Students were motivated and enjoyed their learning. Clear target setting and effective marking of their books ensured that most of the students were clear about their progress and what they needed to do to improve. Most students could work independently although, in a minority of lessons, their focus did not always remain on the intended learning.
- Students worked well together to achieve their learning objectives. Group work was purposeful. Students shared resources and supported each other in a range of activities and in investigative work. Most students were able to discuss their learning with a range of audiences. A minority of the younger students in the primary section were more passive in their learning.
- Most students made meaningful connections between the different areas of learning and were able to transfer their learning between subjects. For example, in Foundation Stage, they used their well-developed fine motor skills to thread beads which they then counted. In most lessons the students' abilities to apply their knowledge to real life situations was strong. In one lesson for example, they linked their knowledge of food chains to the conservation problems caused by abandoned plastic bags on UAE beaches.
- Innovative thinking and enterprise skills were developing. During Innovation Week, the older students were challenged to devise new business ideas. Students used technology to carry out research and develop independent thinking skills. Problem-solving was a common element of many lessons. In science, for example, students were asked to construct a model to show blood flow around the body.

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

	Foundation Stage	Primary
Personal development	Outstanding	Outstanding

- Students were very positive, confident and had responsible attitudes. They were enthusiastic learners and welcomed critical feedback using it to improve their learning. They responded very well to other students and to adults. They had built up excellent relationships with their teachers. They enjoyed their time in school and had high self-esteem.
- Most students demonstrated excellent self-discipline both inside and outside their classrooms. They cooperated well when working in groups. Behaviour was exemplary. The students were strongly influenced by the school's behaviour policy which placed an emphasis on high expectations, high self-esteem and self-discipline. Students resolved any differences amicably and there were no examples of bullying observed.
- Relationships in school were excellent. The students supported each other well. They were very empathetic to the needs of others and enjoyed supporting their learning. They cooperated well in lessons when working in groups. They shared resources and encouraged others in the group. They were respectful to their teachers, support staff and each other, and were extremely courteous to visitors.
- The students followed safe and healthy lifestyles. The school nurses provided them with wide-ranging information on topics such as healthy eating, dental hygiene, personal hygiene and emotional health. A Health and Safety Week also promoted these issues. The students made healthy eating choices and realised the importance of taking regular exercise and participating in sports.
- Across both phases of the school, attendance was outstanding and students were punctual to lessons. Almost all were fully aware of the need for good attendance, recognising the link between their attendance and their achievement.

	Foundation Stage	Primary
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Outstanding	Outstanding

- Students had an excellent awareness of Islamic values and had a high level of understanding about how they influenced contemporary UAE society. They could speak in some detail about mosques, the different prayers and their times, and how they should dress in public. They knew how to greet people politely in Arabic.
- Students fully respected and appreciated the heritage and culture of the UAE. They had an excellent knowledge of traditional industries such as pearl diving and fishing. The wealth of information and artefacts displayed around the school served to reinforce their knowledge. They also understood the commercial importance of oil to the UAE economy. They had an excellent knowledge of the many attractions in Dubai.
- Students had developed an excellent understanding and appreciation of their own culture and they also had a strong awareness of other world cultures. Their awareness of the diversity in Dubai was outstanding in relation to their age.

	Foundation Stage	Primary
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Outstanding	Outstanding

- Students contributed actively to the life of the school. For example, they participated in assemblies and carried out a variety of fund-raising activities. They cared about their community and showed compassion to those members of society who were less fortunate than themselves.
- Students were very hard working and resourceful. They appreciated what they had to do to be successful at school and showed a determination to do well. The students' opinions were valued by the school. They had made a number of recommendations for improvement which had been implemented. These included sales of baked foods, opening the library after school hours and the addition of basketball and netball courts.
- Students were very aware of environmental issues facing the world. They understood how both the world and the UAE were changing. They could talk about the threat of global warming, its causes and effects. They understood the importance of sustainability and the significance of the conservation of the world's flora and fauna. They appreciated the importance of having a 'green school'.

3. Teaching and assessment

	Foundation Stage	Primary
Teaching for effective learning	Very good ↑	Very good ↑

- Most teachers in the primary stages used their subject knowledge skilfully to develop students' learning, particularly in English, mathematics and ICT. When teachers combined their subject knowledge with their understanding of how students learn, most students made at least good progress. In Arabic, across the school teachers demonstrated adequate subject knowledge and used appropriate teaching strategies for the different year groups. They used a range of different resources to support their lessons.
- Lesson planning included learning objectives. While almost all teachers planned well, there were instances when the learning objectives were too general or not clear. They did not focus specifically on what students of different abilities were to learn, nor on which skills they needed to develop. A lack of differentiation and efficient time management in a few lessons meant that teachers did not always meet the needs of all students. As a result, learning in Key Stage 1 classes was not always sufficiently well focused.
- Teacher-student interactions were almost always supportive and featured a wide range of questioning techniques. Questioning in the upper primary department encouraged students to engage in meaningful discussions. However, the questioning in the earlier stages was too often focused on checking understanding and the recall of facts. In the best lessons, teachers enabled students to talk together to share their thinking. In English this was particularly effective in developing students' critical thinking skills.
- In the middle and upper primary classes, there was a strong emphasis on using a range of teaching approaches to meet students' different abilities and their varied learning styles. This was not developed sufficiently well at Key Stage 1.
- In most lessons teachers focused on developing students' thinking skills, problem-solving and independent learning skills. This was particularly evident in English and mathematics classes. It was underdeveloped in Islamic education, Arabic and at Key Stage 1.

- In Arabic as a first language, teaching was acceptable overall. Teachers had appropriate subject knowledge. The teaching strategies used were suitable for the most part while questioning was insufficiently probing to extend students' knowledge. Teachers rarely developed students' critical thinking and research skills.
- In Arabic as an additional language, teaching across the school was acceptable. Teachers had secure subject knowledge and actively engaged the large majority of students. However, teachers did not always successfully address the different linguistic needs of students. Occasionally, teachers' expectations of students were rather low and the work provided to students did not always help them develop their skills.

	Foundation Stage	Primary
Assessment	Very good ↓	Very good ↓

- Internal assessment procedures were very good in primary and Foundation Stage. In both phases, assessment of students' attainment and progress was focused clearly and fully in line with the new English National Curriculum requirements.
- The school made good use of benchmarking tests alongside its own assessments. These had helped teachers to moderate their own assessments throughout the stages, culminating with Year 6 moderation. Although external baseline tests for Foundation Stage identified children's abilities in most aspects of the curriculum, they had not fully identified gaps in children's early literacy.
- Assessment procedures had helped staff to track the performance of most students over time and had provided them with accurate measurements of students' achievements. The school successfully analysed the performance of all groups of students.
- Information from assessments was influencing teaching and the curriculum in most subjects. However, it was at a very early stage of development in Islamic education and Arabic. Most teachers analysed data and used the information skilfully to plan their lessons. Individual targets were agreed with students to enable them to reach their full potential.
- Teachers had a very good knowledge of their students' strengths and development needs. They were skilled at using this knowledge to make lessons interesting and ensure students could achieve well. Teachers encouraged students to assess their own and others' progress through peer evaluation and positive feedback. However, in Islamic education and Arabic, assessment practices were underdeveloped.

4. Curriculum

	Foundation Stage	Primary
Curriculum design and implementation	Outstanding	Very good ↓

- The curriculum had a clear rationale which was to prepare students for the complexities of tomorrow. It was fully aligned to the revised National Curriculum for England. The curriculum was broad and balanced and very well enhanced with opportunities for students to study UAE social studies. In Arabic and Islamic education, the curriculum fulfilled the time requirements of the Ministry of Education but did not match age-related expectations.

- The curriculum was very effectively planned in most subjects to build progressively on students' knowledge, understanding and skills, preparing them very well for the next stage of education. However, progression in early writing skills and number work to prepare children for Year 1, and older students for the complexities of the curriculum in Key Stage 2 was less well developed.
- In the Foundation Stage, the excellent range of curricular choices enabled children to explore, investigate and use their imagination to become skilful learners. In the primary phase curriculum, adjustments in term two provided older students with opportunities to select projects where they could follow their interests and develop knowledge and skills linked to their aspirations for the future
- The school planned cross-curricular links very carefully in order to provide students with daily opportunities to apply their skills and deepen their knowledge in a range of subjects. For example, in a social studies lesson, older students were able to apply their scientific knowledge to create a method to turn sea water into drinking water. In the Foundation Stage the development of language and personal skills were woven skilfully into all lessons.
- The school regularly reviewed and developed the curriculum. It took measures to ensure students covered the content needed to reach National Agenda targets. As a result, in mathematics, investigative processes have become an important driver to improve the reasoning skills in problem-solving. In English, the department had introduced recording devices and I-Pads to allow students to formulate and review their thoughts before they began their writing.
- The school curriculum for social studies was aligned to the Ministry of Education curriculum. This was delivered through discrete lessons as well as through links with other subjects and independent projects. For example, in Year 6 students researched the history of the UAE including economic development.

	Foundation Stage	Primary
Curriculum adaptation	Very good ↓	Very good ↓

- The school had very successfully used the results of monitoring and the analysis of benchmarking tests to modify the curriculum to meet the needs of most groups of students. In the Foundation Stage, independent activities were not always fully adjusted for the children's different ability levels. A greater emphasis had been placed on opportunities for writing. However, it was too early to see the full impact of this measure on standards.
- The curriculum was imaginative and offered a range of opportunities to motivate students. Most curricular areas provided opportunities for enterprise, innovation, creativity and social contribution. For example, in an ecology lesson in science, the work related to specific habitats found in the UAE. A wide variety of extra-curricular activities and community links enhanced students' academic and personal development.
- Imaginative and inspiring learning experiences linked the school's stated curriculum and UAE values and culture in almost all subjects. Throughout the school, students were encouraged to find things out for themselves about the history, geography and everyday life in the UAE. Older students completed projects based around Dubai public services and children in the Foundation Stage considered geographical features and animals native to the UAE.
- The school provided Arabic classes for all the children in the Foundation Stage. The subject was offered through four discrete 45-minute lessons per week for all of the 25 Arab native children and 125 non-Arab students.

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

	Foundation Stage	Primary
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding	Outstanding	Outstanding

- A range of rigorous policies and procedures were in place to protect children and keep them safe. The school ensured that staff, parents and children were fully aware of these policies, including those on internet safety and bullying, and that they knew what to do if an issue of child protection arose.
- All school premises and buildings were hygienic and clean, especially the swimming pool with daily checks. Safety checks of all staff members were performed properly and staff and teachers were deployed effectively around the school to supervise students at break times.
- All school contracts were up-to-date for servicing the school building and equipment which were well-maintained.
- In addition to a medical record for each student, the school clinic kept rigorous records of any incidents or accidents, with actions taken.
- All school premises and buildings had easy access for all. An elevator and ramps provided easy access for students and adults with physical needs.
- There was a strong emphasis on the promotion of healthy lifestyles. Students understood the importance of eating healthy food and practising exercises. They made good use of the facilities provided in the school to keep fit.

	Foundation Stage	Primary
Care and support	Outstanding	Outstanding

- Staff and students exhibited a high level of mutual respect. Relationships were excellent. Outstanding behaviour was seen at all levels throughout the school, both in and out of lessons.
- The school had developed highly successful procedures to monitor attendance and punctuality. As a result, attendance was high and punctuality was excellent.
- The school had highly effective systems to identify accurately those students with SEND and those who were gifted and talented. These included talents in sport and music.
- Gifted and talented students received very effective support at an early stage to enable them to progress well. Most students with SEND benefited greatly from the specialist support provided. As a result, they made good progress both academically and in their personal development.
- Extremely well established systems were in place to monitor students' personal development and well-being. The information gathered during this monitoring exercise was used to ensure students received appropriate and timely support. In addition, staff were available at all times to offer support in all year groups.

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

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

Very good ↓

- The Learning Enhancement Team provided very well-organised lessons for students with SEND which enabled them to work at the targets on their individual education plans. Although many lessons were planned well to suit the needs and abilities of the students, a few teachers were less skilled in using assessment information effectively to match activities to the needs of the students. Leaders and managers were beginning to monitor the provision for students with SEND.
- Staff were skilful at using a range of assessments to identify the specific needs of students. Effective procedures ensured the early identification of individual needs. Staff, parents and students were involved in the process and the school involved external specialists when necessary.
- Parents were supportive of the work of the school. They were kept well informed through regular meetings, emails and communication books which linked school and home. However, SEND staff had identified the need to develop measures to improve parental involvement. For example, an increase in training opportunities could enable parents to support their children better.
- The 'Learning Enhancement Team' were very good at devising appropriate activities for students with SEND. Class teachers usually modified the curriculum well to match the ability levels of the students. Additional support from teaching assistants enabled students with SEND to be involved in a range of learning activities such as working in small groups and developing their personal and social skills. Consequently, progress was generally good or better.
- The school had well-established systems to track the progress of individual students with SEND. Staff used this information well in their planning and, as a result, students' progress was usually good or better. However, staff were in the early stages of analysing and evaluating data to determine the progress of whole cohorts and different categories of SEND students.

6. Leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership

Outstanding

- The school leaders had set a challenging vision to dream, aspire and achieve. Their aim was to develop students' individual learning skills and nurture a culture of compassion and community involvement. This was a fully inclusive school. The school's vision also demonstrated a strong commitment to the UAE and Dubai priorities.
- Most leaders had a robust knowledge of the curriculum and were very proactive in implementing new strategies to meet the new National Curriculum for England and assessment requirements. They ensured the learning culture in school was very purposeful and met the needs of all their students.
- Relationships and communications with all stakeholders had improved and, guided by the new principal, leaders ensured the school was building its capacity to improve further. This was particularly evident through the allocation of specific key performance indicators for Arabic at senior leadership levels, raising levels of accountability.

- Leaders had a very clear understanding of the key strengths and areas for improvement in the school. The principal had rapidly implemented strategies focused on underperforming areas.
- An ethos of collaborative leadership with high levels of accountability had recently been introduced, although it was still being developed.

School self-evaluation and improvement planning

Very good ↓

- Systems to identify the school's strengths and priorities for improvement were rigorous. The school used a wide range of internal and external benchmarks which allowed it to raise its expectations continuously.
- The school improvement plans were comprehensive and self-evaluation was improving. Reviewing systems were regular and allowed the school to monitor the impact of its strategies for improvement. Strategies to improve underperforming subjects such as Arabic and Islamic Education were in place but as yet standards of teaching and outcomes remained only acceptable.
- As the turnover of teachers was high in the primary department, lesson observations were frequent and well-focused. They allowed the school to identify underperforming subjects as well as best practice in order to raise standards. Targets were set and professional development activities were on the increase based on the analysis of the school's performance.
- The school had the capacity to improve and had sustained most of its strengths over time but in Arabic and Islamic education progress was not improving.

Partnerships with parents and the community

Outstanding




- The school knew its community well and leaders were successful in engaging parents as partners in their children's learning. Parents welcomed and appreciated activities such as coffee mornings and opening up the swimming pool to the community for swimming lessons.
- Various communication channels kept the parents informed about their children's learning and development. The school website was informative and, after complaints from parents, the school was expanding the capacity of its switchboard. This was a welcoming school where all parents, including those of students with SEND, felt very well supported.
- Parents were kept well informed about the progress of their children. Reports were comprehensive and frequent. They celebrated students' strengths and identified areas they needed to improve. The principal welcomed parents at the school gate every morning and at regular meetings. An 'open door' policy allowed parents to interact with the school staff.
- Through the 'Friends of Horizons' parental group, the school engaged in supporting national and international communities. Activities included charity work and funding. The owners of the school, for example, had supported the school in applying for the Philanthropic Award which was aligned to Dubai Cares.

Governance	Very good ↓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The governing body included a wide representation of stakeholders such as parents, teachers and other members of the community. Various activities ensured the views of all were sought and acted upon swiftly. Parents particularly praised the new governing board for their openness and reassurance with regards to staff turnover in the primary phase. • Systems aimed to secure high levels of accountability were improving. Governors were aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses. However, in Arabic and Islamic education, standards and outcomes for students had remained lower compared to other subjects. Over time, students' attainment and progress in those subjects had remained stationary. • The governing board had sustained positive outcomes for most students and resources had been deployed effectively. Nevertheless, the Arabic and Islamic education students were still underperforming. 	

Management, staffing, facilities and resources	Outstanding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Day-to-day management of the school was distributed effectively between the principal and his senior management team. This had a positive impact on the school life. • Almost all teachers and staff were qualified to fulfil the school's vision and mission. However, at the time of the inspection, most of the teachers of Arabic and Islamic education had not been assessed and approved by KHDA. • The school provided high quality accommodation and specialised resources for students to enhance their learning. Teachers and students were encouraged to use appropriate resources to create an interesting environment for teaching and learning. • There was an excellent range of facilities such as the science and IT laboratories, library, music and specialist rooms in the Foundation Stage and other parts of the school. These facilities enhanced the curriculum and promoted effective teaching and learning for all the students. 	

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	81
	2014-2015	149
Teachers 	43	
Students 	0	

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

- A few parents and the majority of teachers responded to the survey. The responses from both groups were positive overall.
- Both parents and teachers were satisfied with the quality of education provided in the school.
- A minority of parents invited by inspectors had concerns about the quality of teaching and overall progress in Arabic as an additional language.
- The best outcomes for students, as identified by both parents and teachers, included the overall quality of education, and progress in science, mathematics and English.
- Both groups of respondents believed that students learned in a supportive and safe environment.
- Teachers believed they had access to a good range of resources, including new technologies.

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