



The Sheffield Private
School

🇬🇧 Curriculum: UK

Overall Rating:

Good



"We are keen to prepare the new generation that is ready to be creative and innovative to help us achieve our ambitions for even greater prosperity"

Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al-Maktoum



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School information



General information

Location	Al Qusais
Type of school	Private
Opening year of school	2004
Website	www.sheffield-school.com
Telephone	0097142678444
Address	Al Nahda2, Near Zulekha Hospital, Dubai- P.O.BOX:92665
Principal	Matthew Edwards
Language of instruction	English
Inspection dates	7 to 10 November 2016

Teachers / Support staff

Number of teachers	110
Largest nationality group of teachers	UK/Ireland
Number of teaching assistants	34
Teacher-student ratio	1:15
Number of guidance counsellors	1
Teacher turnover	27%

Students

Gender of students	Boys and girls
Age range	4-18
Grades or year groups	FS2-Year 13
Number of students on roll	1624
Number of children in pre-kindergarten	0
Number of Emirati students	16
Number of students with SEND	34
Largest nationality group of students	Pakistani

Curriculum

Educational permit / Licence	UK
Main curriculum	UK / MoE
External tests and examinations	A, AS, IGCSE
Accreditation	None
National Agenda benchmark tests	IBT, CAT4



The DSIB inspection process



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

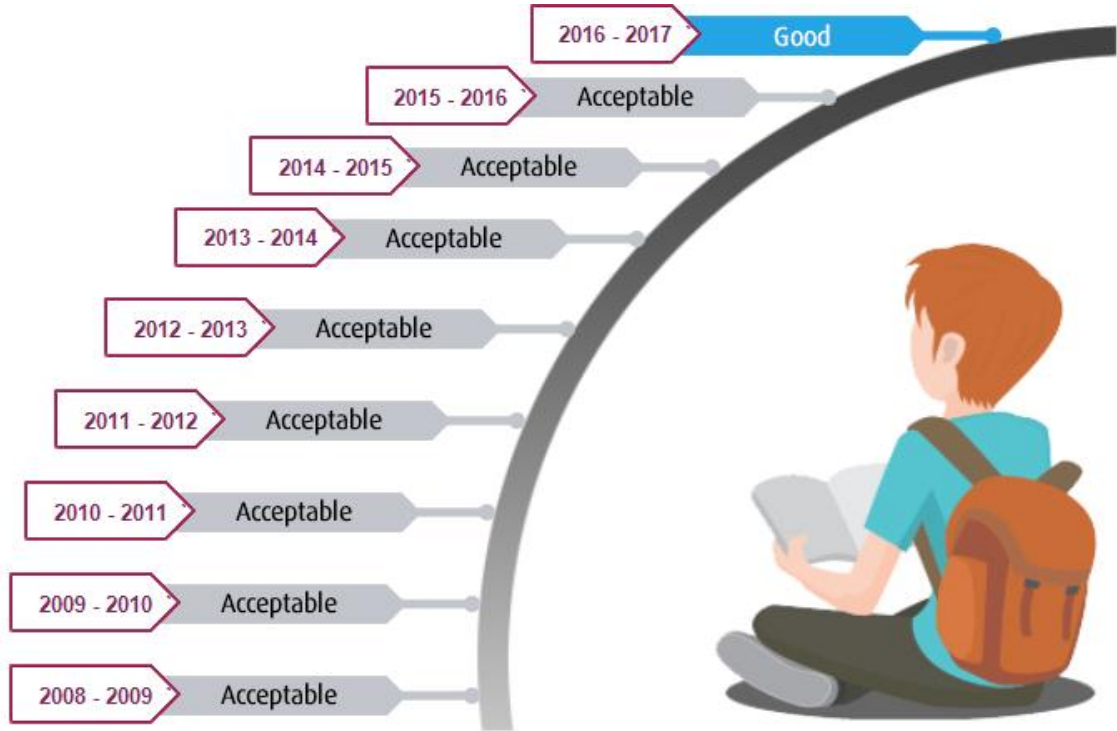
Inspection judgements are drawn from evidence gathered by the inspection team, including observation of students' learning in lessons, review of their work, discussions with students, meetings with the staff, parents and governors, and review of surveys completed by parents, teachers and students.

Judgements are made on a six-point scale

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

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

Inspection journey for The Sheffield Private School



- Sheffield Private School was opened in 2004 and had been judged acceptable for the past eight years. The number of students on roll remains stable. Most students are in the primary phase and post-16 is small. The principal has been in post for two years. Last year's high teacher turnover was partly a reflection of the school's rigorous performance management system.
- The quality of teaching, the development of students' learning skills, the systems for assessment and the planning of the curriculum have all improved over the last three years. This has led to improved standards in English, mathematics and science across all phases. Students' involvement in the community, and the care and support they receive, has also risen. These improvements are a direct result of better leadership, governance and partnership with parents.
- Recommendations from last year were focused on raising the quality of provision and outcomes in the Foundation Stage (FS) as well as improving how well the school knew itself and the effectiveness of its improvement plans. These have both been addressed effectively. Improvements were also required to the provision in Islamic education and Arabic.

Summary of inspection findings 2016-2017



The **Sheffield Private School** was inspected by DSIB from 7 to 10 November 2016 . The overall quality of education provided by the school is **good**. The section below summarises the inspection findings for each of the six performance indicators described in the framework.

- Attainment and progress in English, mathematics and science, in all phases, is at least good, except for science attainment in post-16 which is acceptable. Children have made improved progress in all core subject in FS and students make better progress in Arabic as an additional language. The development of children's learning skills, in FS, has improved since the previous inspection.
- Students' personal development, their understanding of Islam, their knowledge of Emirati and other world cultures, their involvement in the community as well as their awareness of environmental issues all remain good.
- The quality of teaching and the accuracy of assessment have markedly improved. Those elements remain good in all phases. Strong assessment systems are being supplemented by international benchmark assessments, allowing comparisons to be made between results in this school and with students from other countries.
- The curriculum is very positively influenced by the UAE context and by national priorities. The design and adaptation of the curriculum in FS is better than in the previous inspection.
- The protection and safeguarding of students is at the highest levels. Support for the academic, personal and social development of students is strong across the school.
- Leadership at all levels is good. The governing body has the expertise and the in-depth knowledge of the school to support its progress well.

What the school does best

- Good standards of support and care, including the service learning programme, are leading to the development of good attitudes in all students.
- Improved teaching and the development of effective learning skills, linking a well-developed curriculum and accurate assessment systems, are resulting in the continuation of good progress in English, mathematics and science in the primary, secondary and post-16 phases.
- Very strong links with Emirati culture and UAE society, including the effective integration of the UAE social studies curriculum, are well developed.
- The level of protection and safeguarding for all students is outstanding.
- Strong leadership, accurate self-evaluation and targeted action planning, is leading to many improvements, most notably to the provision and outcomes of FS.

Recommendations

- Improve progress and attainment in Arabic as a first language and Islamic education by supplementing the curriculum and assessment procedures with good quality of teaching and well trained teaching assistants.
- Improve progress and attainment in Arabic as an additional language through:
 - a more accurate evaluation of students' starting points
 - the effective modification of the curriculum to meet the needs of all students, especially those who are in the early stages of language acquisition
 - ensuring that teaching strategies and lesson planning meet individual needs.
- Improve the performance of boys in all subjects through:
 - identification of any particular areas of underachievement
 - timely implementation of strategies to address the underachievement
 - ensuring that the curriculum is designed and modified so that it engages boys' interests
 - careful deployment of staff and resources
 - high quality training of staff so that they are able to use strategies to engage boys more effectively in their learning
 - rigorous monitoring, by leaders, of the impact of any new initiatives.

National Agenda Parameter



In 2014, H.H. Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister of UAE, and Ruler of Dubai, launched the UAE National Agenda 2021, with education being a prime focus. The National Agenda includes two major objectives developed with the intention of placing the UAE among the most successful countries that provide world-class education. By 2021, it is expected that the UAE will feature in the top twenty countries in the 'Programme for International Student Assessment' (PISA) test and in the top fifteen countries in the 'Trends in Mathematics and Science Studies' (TIMSS) test.

In response to this, each participating school was issued a report on their students' performance in these international assessments and, in addition, they were provided with clear targets for improving their performance. In 2015, KHDA launched the National Agenda Parameter, which is a method for measuring and monitoring schools' progress towards achieving their individual National Agenda targets through the use of external benchmarking assessments.

The following section focuses on the impact of the National Agenda Parameter in meeting their targets:

- Attainment as measured by the National Agenda Parameter tests in English, mathematics and science is below expectations.
- The school meets the registration requirements for the National Agenda Parameter.
- School leaders ensure that external data is analysed rigorously. The data is used to identify strengths and weaknesses in students' learning. Teachers plan lessons using this information. This is not consistent for all students or in all subjects across the school.
- The curriculum is adjusted to include additional content relevant to the National Agenda Parameter. There have been effective changes to the English curriculum. For example, more dedicated reading time and additional creative writing sessions have been introduced.
- Teachers are beginning to use strategies to develop students' critical thinking and make learning more meaningful. These aspects of student learning are part of most lessons. Most teachers need additional training to be able to develop critical thinking effectively and appropriately for the age of the students in their charge.
- The school works with students to ensure the National Agenda Parameter individual reports have an impact on their learning. Students are developing the necessary skills to manage their own learning and become independent learners. They routinely use books and worksheets to develop research skills. However, the use of information and communication technology (ICT) to develop research, analyse and evaluate data for a specific purpose is not a common feature in classroom learning.

Overall, the school's improvements towards achieving its National Agenda targets meet expectations.

Innovation in Education

The UAE Vision 2021 sets the aspiration for the UAE to be among the most innovative nations in the world. The National Innovation Strategy sets the context for 'innovation' and 'innovative leadership' and provides a basis for evaluating schools in order to deliver a world-class education for all children in the UAE.









Promoting a culture of innovation:

- Many students are developing the skills, such as critical thinking, problem solving and collaboration that are necessary to becoming innovative. The service learning programme, which includes the Junior Apprentice challenge is a good example of the systematising of opportunities for collaboration. The curriculum is being modified to encourage innovation, for example the Key Stage 4 pathways and the trialling of gender-specific groupings. Leaders have encouraged the creation of a student innovation committee, which has written the action plan to promote innovation. A 'Marhaba Day' offers workshops to parents to help them understand changes to the Arabic curriculum. In its attempt to retain teachers for longer, the school has developed a Newly Qualified Teacher accreditation which is linked to an authority in the UK.

Overall school performance

Good ↑

1 Students' achievement

		Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Islamic education 	Attainment	Not applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
	Progress	Not applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Arabic as a first language 	Attainment	Not applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Not applicable
	Progress	Not applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Not applicable
Arabic as an additional language 	Attainment	Not applicable	Weak	Weak	Not applicable
	Progress	Not applicable	Acceptable ↑	Acceptable ↑	Not applicable
English 	Attainment	Good ↑	Good	Good	Good
	Progress	Good ↑	Good	Good	Good
Mathematics 	Attainment	Good ↑	Good	Good	Good ↑
	Progress	Good ↑	Good	Good	Good
Science 	Attainment	Good ↑	Very good ↑	Good	Acceptable ↑
	Progress	Good ↑	Good	Good	Good ↑

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Learning skills	Good ↑	Good	Good	Good

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

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Personal development	Good	Good	Good	Good
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Good	Good	Good	Good
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Good	Good	Good	Good

3. Teaching and assessment

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Teaching for effective learning	Good ↑	Good	Good	Good
Assessment	Good ↑	Good	Good	Good

4. Curriculum

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Curriculum design and implementation	Good ↑	Good	Good	Good
Curriculum adaptation	Good ↑	Good	Good	Good

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

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Care and support	Good	Good	Good	Good


6. Leadership and management

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

Main inspection report



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 ↑	Good ↑
Mathematics	Good ↑	Good ↑
Science	Good ↑	Good ↑

- In English, almost all children in FS have good listening and communication skills. They have knowledge of single sounds and the names of letters. Some children are able to blend sounds together to make words and are beginning to use and apply their phonic knowledge to help them when they are reading. They listen to, and understand, simple instructions and can reply in short phrases. Almost all children show the emergent writing skills expected for their age. The higher ability children are able to write simple narrative sentences and read back their own writing.
- Almost all children are confidently identifying, manipulating and writing numbers to 20. A majority of children demonstrate better than expected progress related to expectations for their age. Children have opportunities to practise skills, such as estimating and measuring in real life contexts; for example, exploring plant growth, through role play at the shop and the farm stall. The majority can easily apply their learning to aspects of the integrated curriculum. For example, in one exciting activity, they could identify types of animal hooves, count these and inform the farmer that his escaped animals are all found.
- Evidence in planning and lessons shows that children make good progress and develop good scientific skills and knowledge through the integrated curriculum. Children can talk about objects and plants they have observed and they explore and investigate different materials. The children demonstrate natural curiosity when participating in activities, gaining an understanding of different scientific concepts through the application of their learning to the real world. For example, they learn about changes in matter by stirring and shaking cream until it turns to butter. Most children are becoming independent thinkers as a result of access to a variety of imaginative and investigative activities.

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

- In Islamic education, most students demonstrate age-appropriate knowledge and understanding of Islamic concepts and teachings such as the importance of ablution, Wudoo, and the steps to apply in daily prayers. Students' progress overall is acceptable although it is not consistent between the year groups. Linking what they have learnt to their daily lives and improving their recitation of the Holy Qur'an are not as well developed.
- In Arabic as a first language, the school's internal assessment information indicates most students' attainment and progress are in line with curriculum standards. Most students are developing age-appropriate listening, speaking and reading skills. However, they are not confident and fluent speakers. The development of language skills over time for most students is improving, particularly in the lower primary phase.
- In Arabic as an additional language, students understand a narrow range of familiar words and short phrases that they hear. They can answer simple questions with one word answers or very short phrases. They find it difficult to engage in simple familiar dialogues. They do not demonstrate secure letter/sound recognition skills and struggle to understand literal meanings. Their writing skills are limited to letter shapes, copying words, labelling items and filling in words. Progress, from very low starting points is slower in lower primary but is acceptable overall.
- In English, students make good progress from their baseline assessment as a result of immersion in the language. Speaking quickly becomes the strongest skill. Students make good progress in their reading and writing skills as a result of supportive strategies in paired reading. They also make good progress in the higher order reading skills of prediction and inference. Their writing develops form and structure well. Most students achieve skill levels that equip them to access the secondary curriculum. Boys make less rapid progress than girls across the primary phase in all literacy skills.
- Attainment and progress in mathematics, as measured against curriculum standards and external benchmarked assessments, are good. Students are proficient in measuring, recording and presenting data. Ability in mental maths calculation is better than curriculum expectations. Knowledge, understanding and skills are developing well and applications to the real world are evident in better lessons. For example, students use their knowledge of percentages to calculate the cost of discounted airline seats. Girls perform at higher levels than boys.
- In science, students' attainment and progress, as measured against the school's curriculum and international standards, indicate that a large majority are above age-related expectations. Students show confidence and competence in a range of appropriate practical work, including planning and carrying out science investigations, in groups or individually. They use their scientific knowledge and understanding, in most situations, to give accurate explanations. They are able to solve challenging problems and report their findings clearly using precise scientific language. Students enjoy science and apply themselves well, making good progress throughout the phase.

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

- In Islamic education, most students' understanding of Islamic knowledge, concepts and its history is age appropriate. Most students understand that Allah's creations are the signs of his greatness. However, few can justify fact with logical and critical understanding as stated in the Holy Qur'an. Most students make acceptable progress against their lesson objectives and over time. A few students are involved in advanced and high level thinking topics.
- In Arabic as a first language, internal assessment information shows the standards attained by students in their listening and speaking skills are in line with expectations. The majority of students are limited in their ability to read extended text independently and with understanding. Their writing skills are developing and some are beginning to write basic sentences to an acceptable level although their writing includes some spelling and grammatical errors. Students' progress is acceptable.
- In Arabic as an additional language, students' listening skills are limited to understanding texts relevant to their lives. A minority of students can find information from texts around familiar contexts. Speaking skills are limited to short answers. A few students can write short paragraphs on a range of familiar topics, independently. Overall, they attain levels lower than expected. In lessons, most students make expected progress in relation to their starting points. However, there is some unevenness in progress between year groups.
- Attainment of secondary students in IGCSE English is an improving trend. In 2015-16, a majority achieved levels above curriculum standards. Attainment for most students, in IGCSE English Literature, was high and progress was good. Students debate confidently and are very well prepared for higher education and employment. These opportunities build the skills for the spoken language element of the course and link to the teaching of reading and writing skills. Boys make better progress when they learn through the use of technology.
- In mathematics, attainment and progress against curriculum standards are better than that shown in external benchmark assessments. Girls' progress is better than boys' and the needs of all groups are best met when suitable challenge extends learning opportunities. Most students' skills in data handling, probability and measurement are developing well. For example, in better lessons, students are able to apply complex topics to risk calculation using probability theory.
- In science, the majority of students have knowledge, understanding and skills above curriculum standards. Most students are making better than expected progress. Students have developed good investigative skills, are able to express their ideas and justify their findings with sound reasoning. They are able to explain the value of science and show an appreciation of its impact on society and themselves. In lessons, students make better than expected progress against curriculum standards but in external benchmarked tests, students attain below age expected levels.

Post-16		
Subjects	Attainment	Progress
Islamic education	Acceptable	Acceptable
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	Acceptable ↑	Good ↑

- In Islamic education, the understanding of key Islamic principles and concepts for the majority of the students is secure. However, students' recitation skills are limited, as is their ability to discuss Islamic concepts in depth. Students' progress is acceptable, as measured against lesson objectives. The majority of students can link what they learn to their daily lives.
- There is an upward trend of improvement in post-16 mathematics results, over time. There is a clear focus on preparation for external examinations as a route to improving attainment and progress. Knowledge and understanding are well developed among highly-motivated students. Students are able to relate their learning to the world in meaningful and practical ways. For example, students' experience of a roller coaster led to good understanding of how to calculate the minimum and maximum points on curves. This type of approach is resulting in better than expected progress in lessons.
- In science, students possess secure knowledge and understanding of scientific concepts and attain levels that are in line with curriculum standards. Their progress in science is accelerating because their practical investigative skills are developing well. For example, they are beginning to devise their own investigations to answer scientific questions. Most students make better than expected progress in relation to their individual starting points in lessons and over time.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Learning skills	Good ↑	Good	Good	Good

- Students are keen learners and have positive attitudes to their studies. All students, when given the opportunity, can take responsibility for their own learning. Students, particularly in the secondary phase in English, know their strengths and weaknesses and how they can improve. In FS, they develop their skills through active, independent learning. Students studying Arabic, particularly in primary, are passive learners and rely on the teacher for knowledge and skills.
- The communication skills of the majority of students are well developed, across most phases. Almost all students interact well with their teachers and peers. Where teachers use open-ended questions, interactions are more effective. When given the opportunity, students collaborate productively and appreciate each other's contributions. In a Year 3 science lesson, students collaborated to make glue, adding the correct ingredients to ensure the right consistency, before testing it.

- In lessons, students make meaningful connections between different areas of learning and can relate these connections to their understanding of the world. However, this feature is not embedded across all year groups. In English in the secondary phase, they apply their critical thinking skills in innovative ways. For example, students gained valuable insights when they participated in a mock trial to understand readers' attitudes towards a character.
- Most students across the phases demonstrate good enquiry and research skills. Creativity and problem solving are key features of learning in FS, where children are given many opportunities to become independent learners. Their critical thinking skills are developing. Students' use of technology, as part of their studies, features mainly in the research they conduct at home.

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

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Personal development	Good	Good	Good	Good

- Students, of all ages, show a sense of responsibility towards their work and learning. Older students are supportive of each other, whilst younger students respond to guidance from both adults and their peers. All students respond to advice from adults and take pride in improving the standard of their work. Almost all students have opportunities in lessons to evaluate how well they are doing.
- Students manage their own behaviour very well. They take pride in following the school's code of conduct. Those appointed to leadership roles play an important part in reminding their peers of their agreed standards, for example in assemblies. Rewards and praise throughout school life encourages students to make a positive contribution.
- In the primary phase, there is a nurturing atmosphere where younger students develop age-appropriate personal and social skills because of the support their teachers give. Secondary phase students show confidence in their relationships with adults and the friendships they form with their peers. Younger students are often supported in their lessons and given valuable advice by more experienced students.
- The student council influences school provision. It actively reviews the food that is available in the canteen and monitors food brought in from home. Students of all ages are encouraged to join in the wide range of sports and exercise programmes the school offers. They receive positive messages about the importance of being active and eating sensibly.
- Student attendance is good with rewards given to those classes with the highest attendance percentages. These rewards are popular and reinforce the importance of this self-discipline in the students' next steps in education or employment. Students are punctual to their lessons throughout the day. Consequently, there is no loss of learning time.


	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Good	Good	Good	Good

- Students across all phases demonstrate a clear understanding of how Islamic values influence and effect their own, and other people's lives. They have secure knowledge of Islamic practices, such as Haj, and can make reference to the Islamic values of kindness, family values, friendship, and respect. They can discuss a variety of issues with regard to the role of Islamic values in UAE society.
- Most students are knowledgeable of the Emirati heritage, culture and the UAE vision 2021. Through their participation in a range of cultural activities such as the National Day celebration, they are able to compare events from the UAE's past and present. Most students have an appropriate knowledge of important buildings and mosques, such as Dubai's Burj Khalifa, and the Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque in Abu Dhabi.
- Students understand and appreciate their own and other world cultures and can describe the aspects in which their cultures are similar and different. They appreciate the multi-cultural environment of the Emirate and have a well-developed knowledge of, and respect for, the many nationalities in Dubai.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Good	Good	Good	Good

- Older students lead a number of events that raise awareness of those less fortunate than themselves. Younger students respond to projects led by members of the senior school, for example, in response to the earthquake in Nepal. There is a shared understanding that helping others within local hospitals is valued and builds a sense of self-worth within the school community.
- The school builds a strong work ethic in all of its students. This begins in lessons, where there are opportunities to lead others and work collaboratively, for example in PE or with reading. Senior students accept short-term internships to gain experience in the world of work. Enterprise Day provides opportunities to initiate and market their business ideas in order to develop their entrepreneurship.
- The school community is committed to recycling and raising all forms of environmental awareness. Students of all ages contribute by collecting paper and plastic waste. They can suggest ways to reduce global warming by generating ideas to reduce traffic in Dubai. Students regularly work alongside representatives of Emirates Environmental Group to support better waste management schemes.

3. Teaching and assessment

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Teaching for effective learning	Good 	Good	Good	Good

- Most teachers have a good subject knowledge and the large majority of teachers have a well-developed understanding of how students learn. This understanding is weaker in the teaching of Arabic as an additional language and in Arabic as a first language in the primary phase.
- Teachers' planning in most key subjects is good and improving due to teacher collaboration and focussed training. Teachers make explicit reference to key issues including National Agenda, innovation and the development of learning skills in their plans. Lesson objectives are mostly appropriate, differentiated and challenging. Learning environments are interesting with a mix of teacher and student generated projects. Displays are used effectively to support, challenge and celebrate learning.
- Teacher-student interactions are respectful and this supports a positive learning environment. The quality of questioning by teachers has improved, particularly in the secondary phase and FS. In the better lessons, questioning challenges students to think for themselves and share their thoughts and findings with their peers. In Arabic as a first language, teachers' use of questioning does not always promote critical thinking or reflection.
- The large majority of teachers use effective strategies to develop students' learning skills. In FS, children's learning is well supported by teaching assistants. Teachers have accurate expectations in most subjects and set appropriate activities to meet the needs of their students. However, support for students with SEND varies across classes. Teachers set a good pace to lessons and give students time to work independently and in groups.
- Opportunities to promote critical thinking, problem-solving, innovation, and independent learning are developing in the school. However, they remain inconsistent across some subjects and phases. At times, opportunities for critical thinking are planned as discrete activities rather than being integrated within each lesson. As a result, the development of the skill is sometimes hampered by the teachers' poor time management.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Assessment	Good ↑	Good	Good	Good


- A wide range of assessment strategies is used effectively and efficiently across the school. In FS, information is gathered through mid and end of unit assessments. This is discussed and analysed. Children's learning journals are regularly updated. In the primary and secondary phases, students' progress is tracked regularly throughout the year. Feedback is used to support and extend students.
- External examination results, from a variety of sources, are used to compare students' academic outcomes and to set targets. The information gained from the external testing is analysed to inform teaching and curriculum development. In order to improve the assessment processes further, the school has enrolled all Year 6 students in Arabic benchmark testing.
- A significant quantity of data is produced from both internal, external and benchmark testing. The school analyses the data. The analysis informs teachers' planning, identifies gaps in students' learning and notes overall trends. This accurate analysis has supported students' progress in English, mathematics and science. Establishing an accurate benchmark for students for whom Arabic is an additional language is in its early stages.
- Teachers use assessment information to plan appropriate teaching and learning strategies and to set targets in English, mathematics and science in the primary and secondary phases. The information is also used to support students who have a difficulty with their learning. Well-structured self and peer assessments are integral parts of most lessons. Many students have a good understanding of how well they are doing and how to improve.
- Across the school, teachers have detailed knowledge of their students' strengths and weaknesses. In FS, teachers and assistants complete assessments during lessons, providing formative information about groups and individuals. In other phases, rubrics of expected outcomes are used well to monitor and measure students' progress. Teachers' marking provides good feedback and students often reflect and act upon teachers' comments about the next steps in their learning.

4. Curriculum

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Curriculum design and implementation	Good ↑	Good	Good	Good

- The curriculum has a clear rationale. It makes good use of the local context and is aligned to the UAE vision. It promotes a balance of knowledge acquisition and skills development, and is increasing the emphasis on creative thinking, problem solving, innovation and challenge.
- The curriculum within each phase has a distinct character, yet provides for easy transition and coherence between phases. In most subjects, it successfully builds on secure prior learning and meets the needs of most students. Thinking skills are a feature of all lesson plans, but these are not fully embedded through a purposeful progressive programme across all phases.

- Curricular choices have been extended in all phases. Students' holistic learning is enhanced in FS by a greater focus on 'understanding the world' and the addition of 'music and movement'. In the primary phase, 'art and craft' and more project-based science add to the choices available. For older students, additional options, aligned to further education and career aspirations, are provided by new Key Stage 4 academic pathways and the addition of a Year 13 programme.
- Teachers across all phases, plan purposeful cross-curricular links and also use spontaneous opportunities to help students make connections between areas of learning. In that way, learning in one subject is reinforced and consolidated in another. A good example of this is the school's focus on reading in the primary phase. The FS curriculum provides a fully integrated learning experience for children.
- The curriculum is reviewed regularly in relation to student achievements and National Agenda priorities. As a result, a number of initiatives have been introduced. These include ability groupings in key subjects, trialling gender-specific classes, aligning the Arabic as a first language curriculum more closely with the MoE standards and international A-level examinations.
- The school offers a comprehensive programme of UAE social studies across all phases, based on the UAE curriculum. It is taught in both Arabic and English, in discrete lessons and integrated with other subjects. Numerous special events further enhance learning. Assessment of UAE social studies is aligned with other core subjects, using a range of formative and summative tasks.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Curriculum adaptation	Good 	Good	Good	Good

- Lesson plans show modifications for high, medium and low attainers and most students with SEND have individual education plans (IEPs). However, attainment differences between boys and girls are significant. The identification of gifted and talented students is in its early stages. The modification of Arabic as an additional language, particularly for those in the early stages of language acquisition, is limited.
- There are increasing opportunities for enterprise and social contribution through a range of clubs, extra-curricular activities and community involvement. These include the school-based innovation club and the Service Learning Programme. In addition, there are national and international initiatives such as the UAE Young Enterprise Programme, the Emirates Environmental Group and the Duke of Edinburgh award.
- There are strong links with Emirati culture and UAE society. The comprehensive UAE social studies programme is taught across the phases in both English and Arabic. Many cultural events, such as the Big Hajj, are celebrated by the whole school community. A large number of attractive and informative displays around the school reinforce local knowledge and understanding.

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

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding

- Child protection continues to be a very high priority. There is a very strong emphasis on security and safety. The prevention of bullying, including cyber-bullying, is a high priority. It is one of the themes in assemblies and has links with the personal, social and health education curriculum. The school has an annual information programme to keep parents updated on safety issues and how to support students in their personal development.
- There are rigorous procedures to ensure that students experience a safe, hygienic and risk-free environment. These procedures are consistently applied during the school day and on arrival to, and departure from, school. Risk assessments are carried out on a daily basis. These minimise risk to students and staff alike. The school complies fully with regulatory requirements. Evacuation procedures operate very efficiently.
- The school campus is an attractive learning environment. There are ongoing improvements, including new synthetic grass surfaces, a cushioned play surface for FS and enhanced security arrangements. The range and quality of record keeping and storage is exemplary. The medical centre is well-staffed and equipped. Arrangements for secure storage of records and medicines are excellent. Chemicals are stored safely.
- The school is very well-equipped to accommodate the physical and educational needs of all students. Ramp access to the building and the internal elevator is very helpful for students and staff, who may have mobility issues. This allows full access for all students to all areas of the building.
- A comprehensive range of activities encourages safe and healthy lifestyles. Regular monitoring of students' weight and advice on healthy eating contributes well to this. While outdoor play areas are small, there is very good provision of a range of physical activities inside and outside of the school day. Monitoring the contents of lunch boxes and the canteen is ongoing.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Care and support	Good	Good	Good	Good

- There is a high level of mutual respect between staff and students. The management of behaviour, predominantly with a positive rewards-based approach, is effective in ensuring good staff-student relationships. Unacceptable behaviour is dealt with effectively in partnership with students and parents. Sanctions are measured, fair and consistently applied. This approach contributes well to the encouragement of student self-discipline.

- There are clearly set-out procedures for the effective management of student attendance and punctuality. Unexplained absences and lack of punctuality are efficiently followed up on a daily basis. The rewards system for full attendance by individual students and year groups is a successful incentive, encouraging improvements in attendance.
- There are thorough processes being used to identify students with SEND on admission. A comprehensive follow-on process ensures that their needs are included in lesson planning. The system of identifying the needs of high achievers and those who are gifted and talented is developing.
- Students with SEND are integrated into normal class settings. Their personal development is well cared for and supported by teachers, learning assistants and their peers. Individual education plans (IEPs) are created with parents. These are used to monitor, affirm and guide progress. However, their use and application is inconsistent in lessons.
- Provision for guidance and support is developing very well. A whole-school collaborative approach, which includes parents and community involvement, ensures that students across all phases are well supported academically, socially and emotionally. The inclusion of students of all ability in work programme initiatives and career guidance is particularly strong.

Inclusion

Provision and outcomes for students with SEND

Good

- The school has an inclusive and welcoming ethos. The SEND team provides knowledgeable and well-structured leadership. SEND team members are well qualified and experienced. Policies and procedures are systematic and comprehensive, providing clear guidance for teachers.
- The school uses a range of formative and summative assessments to identify students' needs. This includes external testing when appropriate. Effective procedures ensure that assessment and identification are timely, and that interventions meet the needs of most students. They use the KHDA categories for identification, extended with more detailed descriptions to support parents' and teachers' understanding.
- Parents are involved in discussions about their children's needs, including setting goals and creating IEPs. They are well informed about their children's progress. The school creates strong relationships. Parents feel valued as partners in their children's education and are in a better position to support the progress of their children at home.
- Lesson plans show modifications and most SEND students have an IEP. Academic support, aligned to their specific needs, is detailed in the IEPs, although this is not consistently implemented by all class teachers. Several younger students are tutored in mathematics and English by Year 13 students participating in the Service Learning Programme.
- The school carefully tracks the progress of each student with SEND, producing qualitative information from the Special Needs Assessment Profile system, and quantitative data, using levels. Progress in lessons is very variable, depending on the attention paid by the teachers to individual students' learning needs and goals. IEPs are regularly reviewed in relation to progress made and goals are revised as needed.

6. Leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership

Good

- The school mission and vision are the results of discussions by the school community and they are central to all the decision making. Leaders set a clear direction, based on the mission and vision. All leaders are fully committed to the UAE national priorities and to achieving their National Agenda targets.
- All senior leaders have a good understanding of how students learn best. They are well supported by middle leaders and have established appropriate curricula and accurate assessment procedures that support effective learning. Together, they provide the positive environment necessary for the academic and personal development that students will need to meet the challenges of the 21st. century.
- Relationships between all leaders are strong. Individual job descriptions clearly detail key tasks and lines of accountability. Communication between the different levels and areas of responsibility is effective. Discussions between leaders have an appropriate focus on student achievement. Although some middle leadership posts are newly formed, these leaders are starting to make significant contributions to the school's performance.
- Over the last two years, senior leaders have demonstrated that they understand how to improve the performance of the school. In that time, they have been effective in creatively addressing many of the stubborn problems that have been barriers to improvement in the past. They have the capacity to continue to move the school forward.
- Collectively, leaders have the necessary drive, perseverance and skills to address remaining areas for development whilst building effectively on the many areas of existing good practice. Leaders continue to ensure that the school is compliant with statutory regulations.

School self-evaluation and improvement planning

Good ↑

- School self-evaluation draws from a range of evidence bases; national priorities, past inspections, internal audits, parental and student surveys as well as internal and external data analysis. Evaluations of the different areas of school performance are made by leaders, governors, teachers, parents and students collectively. The school community is very clear about the school's strengths and those areas that it needs to improve as a priority.
- Strong systems exist to monitor and develop the quality of teaching in the school. There is an appropriate focus on evaluating the impact of classroom practices on the progress of the students. Regular analysis is made of how well students are progressing with their learning and timely intervention takes place when there is a cause for concern.

- As a result of this accurate evaluation and monitoring, and in line with the school's mission and vision, the school successfully prioritises its actions both in the short and the longer term. Plans clearly detail the actions, the desired impacts, accountability, resources, timescales and measurable success criteria that are often linked to student performance. They are regularly evaluated and adjusted to achieve the desired goals.
- As a result of the effective planning, leaders have rapidly improved learning in FS. They have developed their skills in accurately evaluating their strengths and effectively planned areas to improve school performance. The foundations for improving the progress of students in Arabic as a first language and Islamic education are now in place.

Partnerships with parents and the community

Good

- Parents contribute to the life of the school in a variety of ways. The Parent Teacher Association (PTA) provides opportunities for partnering with students and teachers to raise money for the school and charitable organisations. It also organises workshops through which parents can be better informed about school practices. Parents of children with SEND are pleased to be involved in the creation of their children's IEPs.
- Parents report that they feel well informed about events in the school and their children's progress. Effective electronic communication channels connect the school and the home. The various student learning platforms give good information about how well students are doing and they share targets for future improvement. Concerns raised by parents are dealt with effectively and promptly.
- Reports are one way through which parents receive rich information about the progress of their children. They contain detailed information about what has been studied and how well the students have performed. However, they do not include comments from students or parents. Alongside this strategy, students often bring assessed assignments home and these, along with the reports, enable parents to provide good support for their children.
- Most parents state that the school provides opportunities for their children to become involved in the community. For example, parents of older students are enthusiastic about the links the biology department has with the Emirates Aviation College and the workplace placement scheme. Parents feel that the opportunities to participate or compete with other schools in sporting, cultural or artistic events are not well developed

Governance

Good

- The school's governing body contains representatives from the parent body, the school's leadership, the community as well as the school's owner. Both community members have strong educational experience. The governing body also welcomes visits from representatives of the student body. Further consultations through parental and student surveys ensures that the governing body is well informed.
- Monthly visits are made to the school by members of the governing body. Presentations are received from subject departments and further understanding is gained from learning walks and classroom observations. The principal reports regularly to the governing body. Governors are fully involved in school self-evaluation and action planning. They regularly review progress towards targets. Consequently, governance is in a strong position to hold leaders accountable for the school's performance.
- As a consequence of its knowledge of education and the school's context, the governing body is able to advise and support school improvement. Notable examples of this have been the provision of external consultation to develop practice in FS and in the teaching of Arabic. Further examples include the appointment of additional middle leaders, the provision of extra online reading resources and ninety tablet computers.

Management, staffing, facilities and resources




Good

- The day-to-day management of the school is well organised. Effective timetabling ensures that opportunities for learning are maximised and that space is used well. Policies and procedures are continuously reviewed to enable the school day to continue to run smoothly and safely for all the school community.
- There is an appropriate range and number of school staff and a well-thought out system of performance management. Effective recruitment and induction largely mitigates the effects of teacher turnover. Training is well-targeted and of a good quality. The recent initiative of supporting traditional professional development with collaborative research projects is innovative. Teaching assistants are allocated to all Year 1 and 2 classes in Arabic.
- Premises are adequate and used creatively by teachers. The learning environments are made attractive by bright displays that celebrate, support and challenge learning. Outside areas are shaded but the school field is too small for full size sports matches. Some student furniture is functional rather than attractive. There are sufficient specialist areas for science, ICT, art and sports. All areas are accessible to all students.
- Resources are of a good quality to support teaching and learning and are plentiful in most phases and subjects. All learning spaces have facilities for digital projection and some of these have interactive whiteboards. Although the school has increased the number of computer devices, these are not consistently used to support learning in the classrooms.

The views of parents, teachers and senior students

The views of parents, teachers and senior students

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

Responses to the surveys		
Responses received	Number	
 Parents*	2016-2017	358
	2015-2016	233
 Teachers	59	
 Students	157	

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

- Teachers' views of nearly all aspects of school performance and provision are highly positive. Parents are generally positive but student views varied more widely.
- The vast majority of the parents who responded feel their children enjoy school and that their children are safe. Nearly all teachers agree that the school is safe and secure.
- The vast majority of parents are satisfied with literacy development in English but only a small majority are satisfied with literacy development in Arabic.
- Most parents and nearly all teachers feel students have opportunities to learn about the UAE and other cultures. Less than half of the students agree with this.
- Although nearly all teachers feel that they know students' strengths and weaknesses, less than half of students and parents agree.

What happens next?

The school has been asked to prepare and submit an action plan to DSIB within two months of receiving the inspection report. This should address:

- recommendations from DSIB
- areas identified by the school as requiring improvement
- other external reports or sources of information that comment on the work of the school
- priorities arising from the school's unique characteristics.

The next school inspection will report on changes made by the school.

Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau
Knowledge and Human Development Authority

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