



National Agenda



Early years



Special educational
needs and disabilities



Innovation

Inspection Report 2015-2016

Al Ittihad Private School (BR)

Curriculum: US

Overall rating: Good

Read more about the school



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“Don't look
behind to
see who is
following you,
but look forward
to be ahead”



Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum

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School information

General information



Location	Al Safa
Type of school	Private
Opening year of school	1998
Website	www.ipsjumeira.com
Telephone	04-3945111
Address	Jumeira, near Safa Park. PO Box. 37090 Dubai, UAE
Principal	Nehad Saeed Al Shamsi
Language of instruction	English
Inspection dates	18 to 21 January 2016

Students



Gender of students	Boys and girls
Age range	4-18
Grades or year groups	Kindergarten 1 to Grade 12
Number of students on roll	2170
Number of children in pre-kindergarten	0
Number of Emirati students	1935
Number of students with SEND	51
Largest nationality group of students	Emirati

Teachers / Support staff



Number of teachers	148
Largest nationality group of teachers	Egypt
Number of teaching assistants	36
Teacher-student ratio	14/1
Number of guidance counsellors	1
Teacher turnover	11%

Curriculum



Educational permit / Licence	US
Main curriculum	US
External tests and examinations	IBT
Accreditation	NEASC
National Agenda benchmark tests	IBT

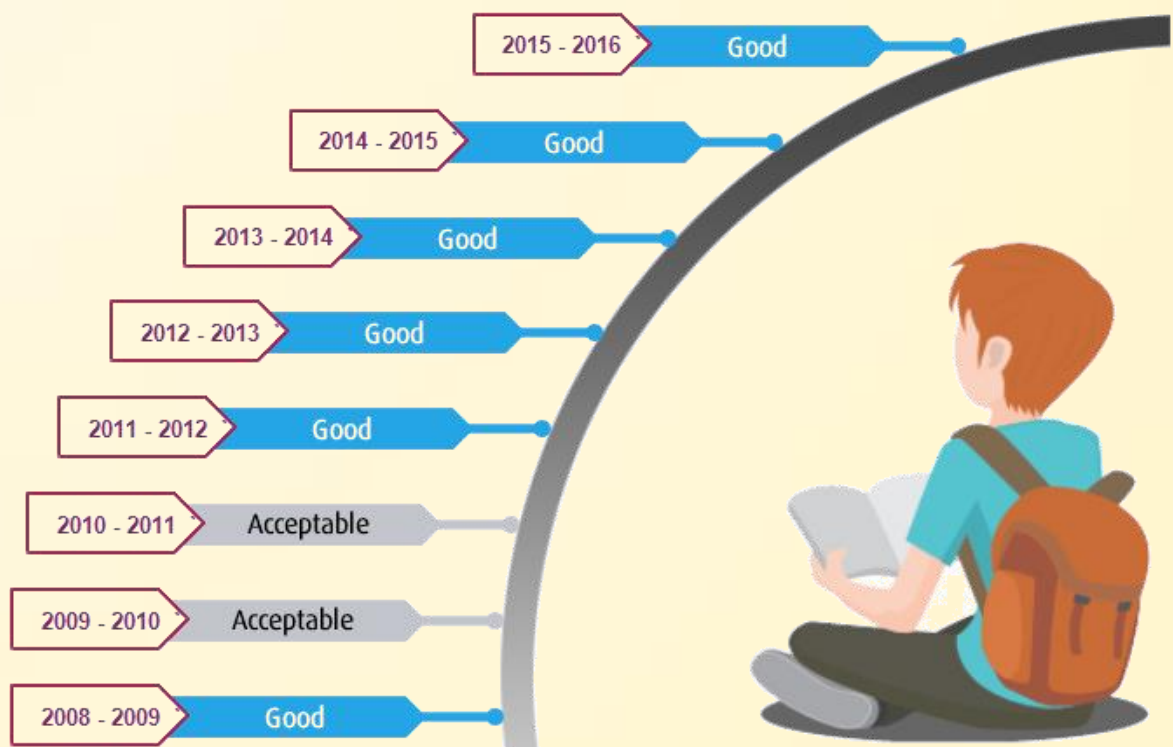


Summary for parents and the community

Al Ittihad Private School (BR) was inspected by DSIB from 18 to 21 January 2016. The overall quality of education provided by the school was found to be **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, Al Ittihad Private School (BR) provided a good quality of education for its students.

- Students' attainment and progress were good in most subjects in the elementary, middle and high school phases. The exception was in Islamic education and Arabic where in the higher phases attainment was lower. Attainment and progress in the Kindergarten (KG) were consistently very good, children made outstanding progress in learning English. Students were keen to learn and increasingly innovative and enterprising in how well they took responsibility for finding things out for themselves.
- All students demonstrated very good attitudes towards learning, behaved very well and formed positive relationships with each other and with their teachers. Their understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures were outstanding across all phases. In the middle and high school phases students took an exceptionally active interest in developing the school community and helping to solve environmental problems.
- In most subjects, teachers demonstrated good subject knowledge and a well-developed understanding of how to vary learning activities to engage and motivate students. This was particularly effective in KG. When teaching was weaker, lessons moved at a slow pace, progress was not fast enough and teachers did not challenge students to produce enough quality work to reach curriculum standards. This was most evident in the middle school phase, especially in Arabic as a first language and Islamic education.
- In most subjects, the curriculum was designed well to provide students with exciting learning opportunities. It encouraged them to link their learning in school to the world outside their classrooms. The curriculum was not consistently well adapted to challenge the most able students or to offer enough choice of study for students in the high school.
- Students benefited from outstanding systems that protected and promoted their safety, health and well-being. Students in the high school received well informed guidance towards their future education and careers.
- Outstanding leadership had been highly successful in promoting a vision and direction, which ensured the success of the school on its journey of improvement. Improved systems of assessment resulted in better accuracy in the school's self-evaluation. Links with parents and the community were very effective. Governors supported the work of the school well.



What did the school do well?

- The outstanding vision and direction promoted by leaders at all levels, which had led to improvements in many areas of the school provision, particularly in KG.
- The very good education provided for children in KG, resulting in at least very good achievement and personal development.
- The school's systems and procedures to ensure the health and safety of staff and students.
- Students' outstanding awareness of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures.



What does the school need to do next?

- Improve attainment in Arabic as a first language and Islamic education, especially in the middle school, and provide further opportunities for students to use higher order thinking skills.
- Raise student achievement to at least very good in all subjects and phases by eradicating weak teaching and continuing to improve the good teaching by:
 - increasing the pace of lessons so that enough time is spent on extending knowledge, deepening understanding and practicing skills, rather than further consolidating what students already know
 - increasing teachers' expectations of the quality needed in students' work to reach curriculum standards
 - checking that the feedback given to students is resulting in improved learning.
- Raise student attainment in the middle school by reviewing and improving transition arrangements.



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

- Overall, student progress was good in most subjects.
- Parents received regular reports and often met with the head of the special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) department.
- The school was inclusive and welcomed students with SEND. It was diligent in planning and ensuring good support and understanding of the needs of these students.
- Parents were very positive about the care and support that their children had received in the school.
- The head of the SEND department was accessible to parents and had offered information meetings and SEND-related training sessions for parents.

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.
- No attainment data from the National Agenda Parameter was available at this stage to make a judgement on the progress towards meeting the National Agenda targets.
- The school strongly promoted awareness of the National Agenda. There were poster displays located around the school that highlighted the components of the National Agenda and brought the issue into the minds of those that saw them. Information about the National Agenda was also posted on the schools' website. Students were very well informed and could discuss the components of the National Agenda as well as outline the assessments and targets for improvement.
- In science, mathematics and English, the curriculum had been reviewed to embrace the TIMSS and PISA examination requirements. The frequency of laboratory experiences had been increased. Application of the scientific method was introduced in early grades. Additionally, assessments had been modified to include not only questions related to acquiring knowledge but also questions about applying that knowledge and reasoning towards effective problem solving. In mathematics, each lesson began with a problem solving experience. English and STEAM teachers had helped to develop the STEM program, which enriched language development to improve National Agenda skills such as reading comprehension and persuasive writing.
- The teaching staff had engaged positively in the school's professional development program to extend their teaching and questioning skills. This professional development had also assisted them in promoting more in-depth thinking skills and helping students to investigate their ideas and to show determination in problem solving. Lesson planning received careful supervision for the inclusion of these teaching strategies. Discovery lessons, experimentation and research experiences appeared frequently within lessons.
- ICT resources were available throughout the school. Beginning in Grade 4, all students had and used individual tablets to conduct research and develop writing. They were a common feature of classroom work and facilitated learning in all laboratory lessons. All classrooms were equipped with smart boards and teachers and students made good use of them to facilitate extended research tasks.

Innovation in education

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

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



Promoting a culture of innovation:

- The school promoted innovation as a national priority through the leadership of its innovation committee which provided students with opportunities to develop creatively. Innovation ideas in classes were encouraged through a learning environment of risk taking. Teachers of STEM and STEAM facilitated projects gave free range to students' creative ideas. Student innovation opportunities were plentiful. The innovation committee acknowledged the need to streamline ideas into the school action plan to embed a culture of innovation throughout the learning and teaching programs. Students in Grades 4 to 12 were given the opportunity to purchase tablets for use in the classroom and at home. The school was beginning to develop virtual learning environments for online coursework.

Overall school performance

Good

1. Students' achievement

		KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Islamic education 	Attainment	Not applicable	Good	Acceptable ↓	Good
	Progress	Not applicable	Good	Good	Good
Arabic as a first language 	Attainment	Not applicable	Good	Acceptable ↓	Good
	Progress	Not applicable	Good	Good	Good
Arabic as an additional language 	Attainment	Not applicable	Good	Good	Acceptable
	Progress	Not applicable	Good	Good	Acceptable
English 	Attainment	Very good ↑	Good	Good	Good
	Progress	Outstanding	Good	Good	Good
Mathematics 	Attainment	Very good ↑	Good	Good	Good
	Progress	Very good ↑	Good	Good	Good
Science 	Attainment	Very good ↑	Good ↑	Good	Good
	Progress	Very good ↑	Good ↑	Good	Good

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Learning skills	Very good ↑	Good	Good	Good

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

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

3. Teaching and assessment

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Teaching for effective learning	Very good ↑	Good	Good	Good
Assessment	Very good ↑	Good ↑	Good ↑	Good ↑

4. Curriculum

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Curriculum design and implementation	Outstanding	Good	Good	Good
Curriculum adaptation	Very good ↑	Good	Good ↑	Good ↑

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

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

6. Leadership and management

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



Main inspection report

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

Judgements are made on a six-point scale



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

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

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

1. Students' achievement

KG

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

- In English, most children made outstanding progress in lessons and over time. Attainment for the large majority children was above the school's curriculum standard. Most children could recall previously learned letters and blends and use them correctly in simple sentences or in given topics. Children were able to apply appropriate letter sounds in their lessons and, for most, their speech was well developed. School data confirmed that almost all groups of children made outstanding progress from their various starting points. They could express themselves with clarity and confidence and read and write simple words.
- Children demonstrated very good numeracy skills and were able to apply them to solve new learning presented in lessons. The large majority of children attained above curriculum expectations. Group work on sequencing objects was well done and children repeated the same in their journals unassisted. In lessons, the children made very good progress demonstrated, for example, in their abilities to calculate simple addition and subtraction of number. School data confirmed the very good progress seen in lessons, and that over time, all groups of children did equally well.
- Children's attainment in science was well above the school's California State early years curriculum. The school's data indicated that all groups of children made very good progress in lessons and over time. Children used previous learning to help them to identify the parts of plants and substances that needed help to make them grow. They applied this understanding to performing a variety of tasks as reinforcement of the new learning. The majority could name parts of the flower correctly and examined live plants closely with their magnifying glasses. They answered teachers' review questions accurately.

Elementary

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

- In Islamic education, the majority of students' attainment was above the expectations of the Ministry of Education curriculum standards. Students had a good understanding of Sunnah and Hadeeth. Most students could recite prescribed short Surah's correctly. They demonstrated a clear understanding of the Islamic morals and etiquette. They could explain key aspects early in the Prophet Mohammed's life (PBUH). The majority of students made good progress in their knowledge, understanding and skills in relation to the learning objectives in the lessons. Recitation and memorization of the Holy Qur'an and applying Tajweed rules were improving well. Lower grades made better progress than those in higher elementary grades, particularly in linking Islamic education to real life situations.
- In Arabic as a first language, in lessons and over time, the majority of students' work above the expectations of the Ministry of Education curriculum. Students were able to read familiar scripts aloud with a few errors and understood from silent reading the meaning of what they had read. They were able to summarize the meaning of what they read, demonstrating good comprehension skills. Arabic acquisition skills and speaking in correct standard Arabic varied between students within the year groups. The schools internal assessments indicated that, in relation to their starting points, the majority of students, within the different ability groups, made good progress in listening, speaking, and reading skills. Writing skills were weaker with errors in grammar, sentence structure and spelling particularly when applied in unfamiliar contexts.
- In Arabic as an additional language, the majority of students' work was above the curriculum standards. Boys and girls of all abilities made good progress in gaining knowledge, skills and understanding, as measured against the learning objectives in lessons. School data confirmed students' good attainment and progress over time. Students had very good listening skills and could understand what they heard. The majority of students were able to hold short conversations and made good progress in developing their vocabulary and learning new expressions. They could read aloud short familiar texts with few mistakes and could identify the main points. Their writing skills were developing at a slower rate especially by the end of the phase. Students' work demonstrated frequent spelling and syntax errors.
- Internal assessment results and Measures of academic progress (MAP) test data indicated that the majority of students were making or exceeding expected progress in English. In lessons, students progressed well in their understanding, skills and knowledge, in reading, writing, speaking and listening especially through skill building stations. As a result, the majority attained above curriculum standards. Older students in the phase read with confidence and could explain their understanding of text using correct pronunciation and grammar. They had a good understanding of how to use a range of vocabulary when writing for different purposes. Spelling, presentation and sentence structure were weaker elements of attainment. School data confirmed that, from their starting points, most groups of students progressed equally well. However the gap between the attainment of boys and girls still remained.

- In mathematics, the majority of students made good progress in lessons and attained standards that were above curriculum standards. International benchmarking tests were less positive than the quality of students' current work indicated. All groups of students, including those students with SEND, showed good progress in developing mathematical skills and understanding. Attainment in lessons and over time was good and students showed increasing skill in solving mathematical problems often working very effectively independently and in small groups. They were able to work confidently using a range of operations involving numbers. Students understood fractions, concepts of perimeter and area.
- Attainment and progress in science were good in each year of the phase when measured against curriculum standards. Students enjoyed studying the structure and function of plants. They could group animals based upon their structural similarities and identified adaptations that secured an animal's survival. They could describe relationships between predator and prey, and construct simple food chains. Benchmarking assessment tests indicated good progress in lessons and over time. Students demonstrated good practical investigation skills and used scientific methods to test their hypotheses. Progress of students with SEND was good. Attainment over the past three years exceeded curriculum expectations.

Middle

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

- In lessons, most students attained in line with the Ministry of Education curriculum standards for Islamic education. Most had an acceptable understanding of Sunnah and Hadeeth, such as independence of opinion, thinking, and not being extravagant. Students were able to provide appropriate examples of how to apply what they were learning in class to real life situations. They were making good progress in developing the skills of reciting and memorizing the Holy Qur'an. A few students could do this well but most were working at the expected level. Most students could apply what they learned to worship, prayers and Hajj. Internal school data showed that over time a quarter of students attained below the school's curriculum standard in examinations. Girls made better progress than boys.
- In Arabic as a first language most students' work was in line with the Ministry of Education curriculum standards. The results of internal examinations were broadly in line with the expectations of the curriculum. Over time most students demonstrated, for example, high knowledge of the different features of writing for different purposes. They understood the meaning of words with explicit and implicit meanings. Their speaking skills when reading aloud, comprehension and creative writing skills in standard Arabic were weaker. In lessons, the majority of students within the different ability groups made good progress. Over time they demonstrated acceptable knowledge, skill and understanding. For example, they knew how to find the title from reading a script, they understood the purpose from reading and compared to other types of writings such as a story or a play. Grammar skills and literature, particularly poetry, were less developed.

- In Arabic as an additional language, the majority of students demonstrated attainment above the school's curriculum standards. They were able to follow directions in Arabic and comprehend most of what was heard. The results of internal examinations confirmed that the majority of students made good progress over time. In lessons, students could speak confidently using good pronunciation about their daily lives. They could read familiar texts after listening to them. They could understand the main ideas and some of the details in short written texts made up of familiar language and contexts. Their writing skills were less well developed in comparison to their listening and speaking skills.
- Internal assessment data indicated that for the majority of students, attainment and progress exceeded curricular standards in English. In lessons, students effectively demonstrated their skills in each of the key areas of the language. All groups of students made good progress in lessons and over time, demonstrating a wide vocabulary. They could identify and explain the main elements of a story using context clues. Students had a good understanding of sentence structure. However, punctuation and grammar use in their writing was weaker.
- In lessons, the majority of students made good progress in mathematics, attaining above curriculum standards. Attainment over time was improving, although international benchmarking tests were less positive than the quality of students' work. In lessons, students showed increasing skill in understanding the use of variables in mathematical expressions. They often worked very effectively independently and in small groups. They were able to work confidently in solving linear equations and inequalities with one variable. All groups of students showed good progress in developing mathematical skills and understanding.
- The attainment and progress in science was above curriculum standards. Students enjoyed identifying the properties of metals and non-metals. They explored the transfer of heat by conduction and radiation. They collected, organized and analyzed data. External assessment confirmed that good progress was made in the development of knowledge and understanding. Attainment and progress within lessons was good. Students' developed good practical investigation skills. They were able to devise and test their own hypotheses based upon what they already understood. They used science resources, including technology, to facilitate their learning. Progress of students with SEND was also good. Progress for boys was not as strong as that of girls. Attainment over the past three years had been improving.

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

- The majority of students' attainment in Islamic education was above curriculum standards. Students had a good understanding of Sunnah and Hadeeth, such as the status of the Sunnah in Islamic legislation. They made good progress in lessons and over time and could confidently explain how Islam addressed the problem of poverty and provided a happy life for all people. Students demonstrated in their actions the strong links between what they learned in lessons and how they lived their own lives. They had a good understanding of the contexts of revelation in the prescribed verses of the Holy Qur'an and demonstrated accurately the rules of recitation reverence. The majority of students reached above curriculum standards in examinations. Girls generally made better progress than boys.

- In Arabic as a first language, internal school data over the last three years, indicated that the majority of students' attained levels above the expected curriculum standard. The majority of students, particularly older students, demonstrated strong speaking, listening, reading and writing skills, such as writing book reviews. They could use the evidence collected from real life stories and other media sources to develop strong arguments. In lessons, the majority of students demonstrated strong listening, speaking and reading skills. However, a minority of boys struggled when presenting their arguments in standard Arabic. The majority of students, including the different ability groups, demonstrate good progress in language acquisition. They used these skills to persuade, discuss and advise on critical issues such as the negative impact of drugs. Knowledge of Arabic literature, particularly poetry, and the use of correct grammar, was weaker for a few students in the lower year groups.
- In lessons, when learning Arabic as an additional language, the majority of students were working at levels that were in line with curriculum standards. Most students made acceptable progress as measured against the learning objectives in lessons. Students had good listening skills and could engage in brief conversations in which they requested or provided simple information about themselves and their surroundings. Most students had limited comprehension skills. They could understand main points and some details in short written texts made up of familiar language in familiar contexts. Most students were making slow progress over time in the development of writing skills.
- In English, school data indicated that the majority of students made better than expected progress and gained knowledge, skill and understanding that were above curriculum standards. In lessons, students demonstrated well developed research skills and the ability to connect different areas of their learning to create high level outputs. They were able to transfer these skills effectively for use in other subjects such as history, demonstrating good levels of understanding and skill. Students used well developed language skills to participate actively in class discussion, using discussion notes to inform their reading and extracting textual evidence to support their written claims. All groups of students made similarly good progress in lessons and over time.
- In mathematics, the majority of students made good progress in lessons and attained above curriculum standards. International benchmarking tests were less positive than the quality of students' current work indicated. All groups of students made good progress in developing a range of skills from algebra to calculus as confirmed by school data. In lessons, students demonstrated the knowledge, skill and understanding needed to perform operations on vectors and matrices. They constructed and compared linear, quadratic, and exponential models. Their solid foundation enabled them to understand college level calculus in Grade 12.
- In science, students' attainment was above curriculum standards. Students enjoyed discovering the properties of various groups of elements. They learned about anatomy by dissection and devised practical work to prove Coulomb's Law. Boys did not achieve as well as girls. MAP testing showed good progress in the development of knowledge and understanding. Students' practical investigation skills were well developed. Students were able to devise investigations and test their own hypotheses based upon what they already understood. Progress of students with SEND was also good. Attainment over the past three years had been maintained above national and in line with international standards.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Learning skills	Very good ↑	Good	Good	Good

- Students demonstrated a positive attitude towards learning. In groups and as individuals, students responsibly completed assigned tasks. They were focused during lessons and responded well to teachers' instructions and questions. The majority of students were active, participatory learners. They were aware of what they had learned and acted purposefully to improve by seeking the help of their teachers and peers.
- When set appropriate group tasks, the majority of students were able to work collaboratively and productively, although some student contributions were limited. The majority could discuss and explain their learning to others and, in the better lessons, they were also able to reflect upon it. In some lessons, where the level of challenge was low and the tasks were not appropriate, students became passive offering little contribution.
- A majority of students understood that there were connections between their learning and the wider world. When given the opportunity, students applied mathematical knowledge to the world around them. They also understood the importance of language in exploring scientific concepts and linked their learning to the world beyond school.
- In the best lessons, including many science lessons and almost all lessons observed in KG, critical thinking and problem solving skills were strong features of learning. Technology was used effectively. While many students across the school had tablets, the opportunity to integrate technology successfully into learning activities was often limited. The majority of students were able to carry out basic research with the teachers' direction. However, too often, this information was then transmitted without interpretation.

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

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

- Students demonstrated positive attitudes to their school and learning. They were proactive and able to give and receive critical feedback. Children in KG showed very positive attitudes and responsibility, for example, in their performance during the KG assembly in the presence of their parents. Boys in the main school, on a few occasions, did not demonstrate orderly exit at the end of the school day.
- Students were self-disciplined, courteous and responded well to each other and adults, including visitors. The large majority of students, particularly in the girls' section, demonstrated the ability to resolve conflicts in mature ways. In KG, the children exhibited exemplary behavior during lessons and break times and responded very well to instructions from adults. Students reported that bullying was very rare. Students' very positive behavior contributed to a very orderly environment.
- Students were sensitive to others and, when needed, actively supported their peers who had SEND. They enjoyed friendly, respectful and considerate relations with the staff. In KG, for example, the children waited patiently for each other to answer questions in front of the class regarding the correct position of an Arabic letter in a three letter word. They respectfully followed the instructions of their teachers and allowed time for each other to complete the task.

- Students exhibited strong commitment to healthy lifestyles and made wise choices such as their participation in the school's sporting activities. In KG, the children had excellent understanding of the difference between healthy and unhealthy food and explained why unhealthy food was banned in KG.
- Attendance was above 96% and students arrived in good time for school in the morning and for their lessons, including during the changeover of lessons.


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

- Students in all phases had an excellent understanding of Islamic values and its impact on everyday life in Dubai. The spirit and values of Islam were ingrained into the school ethos. Students applied what they learned and showed care and sympathy for others around them. They understood Islam as a religion of tolerance and happiness and understood the impact of these values on how Muslims' lived their lives.
- Students knew, understood and were proud of the Emirati heritage and culture. Many examples demonstrating students' knowledge were evident around the school. National events, such as Flag Day, Martyrs Day and National Day, were enthusiastically celebrated. Students had a very well developed knowledge of the National Agenda for 2020 and were keen to be active participants in helping the school and Dubai to meet its targets.
- Students had a strong understanding and appreciation of world cultures, often gained from their wide traveling experiences. Students in each grade had adopted different countries from around the world to research and represent through art and other subjects in preparation for International Day. Knowledge of famous civilizations, folklores, arts, traditions, and popular historical monuments was still developing.





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

- Almost all students as they grew older, demonstrated very active citizenship and played a major part in school activities and in the wider community. They took responsibility and worked harmoniously to arrange different volunteering campaigns such as build a school campaign. Moreover, they used creative ideas to raise funds for charity, for example the Tarahamu campaign by KG performing a play and donating blankets made by the students.
- Students demonstrated an excellent work ethic. In middle and high school phases, students took the lead in managing their own projects. They were innovative and creative in their ideas, for example, Dukan Al Amana, a shop without a salesperson. This initiative helped students acquire life skills that had a noteworthy impact on their social life such as honesty.
- Students demonstrated a genuine care of their school environment. They took responsibility for keeping all areas clean and safe. They participated in different recycling activities such as planting in pots made of recycled tires and creating library corners around the school from recycled wood. Almost all students exhibited awareness of environmental sustainability and current issues from around the world. They participated in a range of environmental projects such as taking care of their organic garden and reducing electricity consumption campaign.

3. Teaching and assessment

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Teaching for effective learning	Very good 	Good	Good	Good

- Teachers in all phases had a good knowledge of their subject and the curriculum. They made it easier for their students to understand difficult concepts. They used their knowledge of students' individual strengths and weaknesses to employ effective teaching strategies geared to the different learning styles of students in their classroom. This was particularly effective in KG where a wide range of different activities were used to engage all children.
- Teachers used collaborative planning to prepare for their lessons. Plans contained clear objectives that were linked to curriculum standards. The majority contained motivational learning strategies and differentiated tasks to be used to enhance instruction. Plans were not always fully delivered in lessons when time was not managed well. In KG, plans successfully linked different subjects and teachers varied activities to extend personal development.
- Most teachers were skilled at helping students to understand what they would be learning. Objectives were shared and students understood what they needed to do to be successful. Questioning was used to promote discussion and this contributed well to the development of students' language acquisition and speaking skills.
- The relationships between teachers and their students were respectful, warm, and caring. Gender and SEND status were considered when teachers planned activities. Few teachers were mindful of the most able students present in their lessons and did not successfully moderate their expectations to provide thoughtful challenge. Many lessons required a greater level of rigor and pace for them to be fully effective in extending students' knowledge and understanding.
- The school had identified critical thinking, the development of problem solving, innovation and independent learning as foci of their school development plan. Effective questioning to develop critical thinking and enquiry skills was still developing. Professional development had been delivered and had assisted teachers in improving their questioning skills but this was not being implemented well in all lessons. However, laboratory exercises and mathematics problem solving provided good opportunities for the development of these skills.
- The key strengths in the teaching of Arabic as a first language were related to the teachers' subject knowledge. The majority of teachers were able to apply their knowledge effectively and planned lessons that engaged and motivated learners. Time and resources including video clips and ICT based activities were used effectively to enable the majority of students to become successful learners. Teaching strategies were not always moderated to meet the needs of different ability groups.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Assessment	Very good 	Good 	Good 	Good 

- The school's assessment framework provided clear, valid measures of student attainment and progress. Assessment procedures were embedded in the curriculum and school culture. Assessments were clear, coherent and administered consistently throughout the year to provide students and teachers with reliable data on student attainment. The school's policies and assessments procedures ensured student progress was accurately measured and was aligned vertically and horizontally throughout the curriculum.

- Assessments benchmarked student achievement against appropriate national and internal expectations. Internal assessments had been adjusted to reflect the rigor, pace, and structure of external exams such as PISA, TIMSS, and IBT. These systems were in their early stages of implementation and were only beginning to have a positive effect on teacher planning and student learning.
- Progress data on individuals and groups was detailed and accurate. It was analyzed and used to track student growth over time. MAP and Achieve 3000 data was used to assess student learning and create plans for growth. Programs included tools on the school website for students to use. MAP data from 2014-2015 had informed learning initiatives. Target setting for individual students was being implemented but was not yet fully developed to reflect the rigor of the curriculum standards.
- Senior and middle leaders worked effectively with teachers to analyze data and conduct high level planning to address the trends in the data. The school had used assessment results to measure the achievement gap between female and male students and had started to develop programs to address the needs of both groups. Use of assessment in lessons to ensure all students were suitably challenged was not consistent.
- Teachers demonstrated good working knowledge of their students' strengths and weaknesses. In the best lessons, students assessed their own learning and used their assessments to create goals for improvement. Teacher feedback and support were offered in lessons and written on student work and rubrics. Formative and summative assessments provided some challenge and support, although teachers did not routinely check that students had revised and improved their work based on the feedback.

4. Curriculum

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

- The curriculum had a clear rationale and was aligned well to the school, national and Emirati values and visions. It was successful in motivating students and developing their learning skills and personal development. Interest and enjoyment were promoted well in all phases and was an outstanding feature of the provision in KG. Statutory requirements were fully met.
- The curriculum was well planned to ensure that students developed their knowledge, skills and understanding systematically. In KG there was a suitably strong emphasis on the systematic development of communication and language skills. Continuity and progression from the elementary to the middle phase was less secure. Curriculum implementation through setting was very effective in upper primary and secondary classes. Older students were well prepared for the next stage of their education and the world of work.
- The school had extended the range of options available to older students, for example, the addition of calculus in Grade 12. These and other option choices had not been extended to students in Grades 9 and 10. Students from Grade 5 to Grade 12 benefitted from a range of activities from which to choose. These were provided during one period each week and included activities such as film making and cooking.
- The curriculum effectively facilitated learning across subjects. The curriculum was planned so that students' skills were developed in meaningful and interesting contexts. STEAM classes integrated science, technology, engineering, language arts and math. Topics studied in KG connected children's learning very well.

- The school showed a strong commitment to continuous curriculum development. Rigorous and regular reviews had a positive impact on students' academic achievement and personal development. For example, Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) had been adopted. The school had correctly determined that NGSS aligned more strongly with lessons containing critical thinking, problem solving, and independent research tasks. The reasoning processes demanded by the NGSS were more in line with problem solving behaviors demanded by the National Agenda parameter.
- The social studies curriculum was taught as a separate subject. The Ministry of Education curriculum was used and enhanced with additional material. Students studied aspects such as volunteering and its positive impact on the UAE. Social studies lessons were engaging and students were eager to participate in discussions relevant to their world.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Curriculum adaptation	Very good ↑	Good	Good ↑	Good ↑

- In KG the curriculum was very successfully adapted for the learning needs of young children with regular opportunities to learn through practical activities and play. In other phases, curricular plans were adapted, and in most lessons, support was tailored to the specific needs of the low attaining and students with SEND. There was little evidence of modification in provision to ensure appropriate challenge for the majority of students, especially the gifted and talented.
- Opportunities for innovation were strong features of the curriculum. A program of extra-curricular activities, which made a significant contribution to students' academic and personal achievement, enriched the curriculum. All students from Grade 5 to 12 participated in a variety of weekly run clubs. These were not available to students in Grades 1 to 4. Educational visits, special events, participation in outside competitions and links with the community further enriched students' experiences.
- Coherent learning experiences throughout the curriculum ensured that all students developed an excellent understanding of the UAE's culture and heritage. For example, students in Grade 3 studied the laws of the UAE and those in Grade 6 considered the positive impact of volunteering. Students in Grade 9 learned how to consider the challenges facing their country and offer sensible solutions.
- The school offered Arabic classes for all children in KG. These consisted of 375 minutes for KG 1 children and 435 minutes for children in KG 2 per week.

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

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

- The school had rigorous procedures for the safeguarding of students. Child protection policies were in place and shared with students, staff and families. Arrival and dismissal procedures were outstanding and parents were cooperative and patient. Separate automobile and bus entrances reduced congestion and improved the safety aspects of the school.

- The school's two clinics were appropriately staffed. All procedures for administration of medications, physical examinations and immunizations were highly effective. Frequent communications with parents ensured students received the fastest and most appropriate healthcare. The campus was secure with access only through the main, monitored gate after morning arrival. The school performed frequent safety checks to assure a safe learning environment. The supervision of students was outstanding.
- Building, equipment and grounds were well maintained and in excellent condition. All appropriate maintenance contracts were signed and current. Record keeping was outstanding for maintenance and personnel functions. Records were readily available for inspection and review. New classroom construction was underway and secure from students during the school day.
- The school was a welcoming and supported learning well. Classrooms were appropriate for instruction. Science laboratories and the library were well stocked. The school was moving to meet the physical needs of all students. Ramps had been installed to assist students with mobility issues and the school had sought bids on installing a lift to meet additional needs of students with mobility issues.
- The school's emphasis on healthy lifestyle across all phases was evidenced by good food choices in the cafeterias and the ban on junk food in KG. Signs and posters placed around the school by medical staff, administration and the student council informed the students about positive living habits. The prominence of healthy living was a priority for the school.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Care and support	Very good ↑	Very good ↑	Very good ↑	Very good ↑

- The school had successfully cultivated staff-student relationships, which were marked by mutual trust, care and respect. The effective classroom management skills of teachers, and the students' positive attitudes towards learning, resulted in very good student behavior throughout the school.
- High levels of student attendance and punctuality had been achieved through the school's deployment of an effective reporting and recording system, and careful monitoring. This had a positive impact on improving students' full involvement in school life.
- A rigorous system of practices and procedures were in place to ensure the early identification of students' individual needs. The school promoted collaboration with students, their parents and external professionals to inform the development of appropriate interventions and accommodations to support learning. A system to identify gifted and talented students was being piloted but, at the time of the inspection, was not ensuring that these students were appropriately challenged in lessons.
- Teachers and the head of the SEND department worked well together in a pastoral role to monitor the personal development of students. A range of in and out of class support was provided for students with SEND. This was not always successful in meeting the needs of individual students. Cooperative teaching as an alternative method of in-class support had recently been successfully introduced.
- Teachers monitored student welfare closely. They also provided personal guidance and individual advice to their students to encourage improvements in their performance. Senior students had benefited from a developing careers guidance program. They were well supported in their selection of a future career, in their preparations for international assessments and in applying for further education.

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 ↑

- A well-qualified and competent professional led the provision for those with SEND and guided its continuing development through a detailed policy document and an effective action plan.
- A rigorous system of practices and procedures was in place to ensure the early identification of students' individual needs. The school worked closely with the students, their parents and external professionals to inform the development of appropriate interventions and accommodations. Information regarding specific educational needs was not used effectively to create individualized targets for students that addressed needs beyond academic support.
- Parents were very positive about the care and support that their children had received in the school. There was an effective process in place to develop individual education plans (IEPs). The IEP process was not always inclusive of parents. It did not consistently target appropriate support for the individual needs of each child that arose from their diagnosed condition or barrier to learning.
- The head of the SEND department worked collaboratively with the heads of other departments to ensure the modification of the curriculum for students. In some lessons an inconsistent approach to appropriate curriculum modification resulted in students not being engaged or challenged. In these lessons progress was slow.
- Overall, student progress was good in most subjects. Progress was carefully monitored through academic testing, teacher observations and work samples. Students with SEND took part in all school assessments and, when needed, were provided with modified tests and accommodations to facilitate access. The modified assessments were not always challenging enough for some students with SEND.

6. Leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership

Outstanding

- Leaders ensured that all staff understood and shared the school vision to provide a nurturing learning environment that motivated students to develop skills for the 21st century. They set a clear direction and were successful in inspiring the school community to work effectively towards UAE and Emirate priorities. The school was fully committed to accepting all students irrespective of their individual needs.
- Leaders at all levels were highly experienced with a very well developed understanding of quality teaching and how best this could impact on students' learning. Most middle leaders acted as effective role models and used their knowledge of the curriculum in their subjects to guide and advise teachers in order to bring about improvement in student achievement.
- Relationships between staff were outstanding. Staff members respected each other's views and through very effective communication systems shared a common goal to continue to strive to improve the quality of education provided in the school. The leadership of the school was widely distributed. The knowledge and skills of all staff were highly valued for the contributions they made in driving school improvement.
- At all levels, leaders demonstrated a very strong capacity to innovate, to strive for excellence and to deliver continuous improvement. This could be seen clearly in the increased use of technology, particularly in KG. Leaders were skilled at recognizing barriers to improvement such as any changes in staff expertise and the impact of school organization and were taking steps to address these issues.
- Leaders were fully aware of the part they all played in developing the school. They held each other accountable and regularly provided and accepted critical feedback. They took great pride in students' personal and academic achievements such as those attained in the many competitions entered. Leaders were diligent in meeting statutory requirements especially those relating to the safety of staff and students.

School self-evaluation and improvement planning

Very good ↑

- Since the last inspection report the school had widened the use of external tests to provide a more comprehensive view of how well students were achieving. This had led to improved rigor in self-evaluation processes but had not been in place long enough to provide the school with up-to-date comparisons with world averages. Well-structured analysis provided an accurate view of strengths and weaknesses and enabled the school to identify, accurately, what actions to take to drive improvement.
- Systematic, regular and consistent monitoring of teaching and learning provided the school with a clear view of where teaching was having the strongest impact on students' progress. Teachers were encouraged to be self-reflective practitioners through mirror feedback sessions leading to well-considered recommendations for further development. Comparisons made between the monitoring of grades and subjects enabled the school to identify where the most improvement was needed. This information had not yet led to fully successful actions to tackle identified weaknesses, such as relatively lower attainment in the middle school than in other phases.
- The school used the very good understanding of its own strengths and weaknesses to draw up comprehensive and well-focused action plans. Plans effectively centered on school and UAE priorities linked to the national agenda. Success criteria were included and links were made to improving student achievement. These were not expressed in such a way as to be easily measureable.
- School leaders had addressed the recommendations from the previous inspection with vigor. Considerable effort through well targeted actions, including increased resources and expertise in staffing, had resulted in many areas of improvement. For example, the systems of assessment and provision for students with SEND had improved. Improvement of subject choice for older students, was still at an early stage of development.

Partnerships with parents and the community

Very good ↑

- Parents were supportive of the school and felt they were active participants in the life of the school, such as in the Mothers' Council. Parents visited the school regularly during assemblies and other events such as the inter-cultural day.
- Communication with parents was a major strength. The communicator software allowed parents to receive regular relevant information through their smart phones. Parents of students with SEND felt well cared for and valued as partners with the school.
- Parents received three detailed reports about the academic progress of their children each year. In KG the reports also covered their children's personal and social development. The reports, however, did not set out the next steps and each student's learning needs.
- The school raised funds and organized activities for charities and worthy causes throughout the local and wider community. For example, they invited orphans for Iftar to the school during the month of Ramadan. They participated in local, national and international events. This enhanced students' academic, personal and social development. For example, a group of students visited Milan in Italy as part of the Expo 2020 Dubai preparation.

Governance

Good ↑

- The governing board was taking effective action to ensure the views of all stakeholders were represented in their decisions. Many of the board members had long and close ties to the school and this helped to provide an in-depth knowledge of current priorities. The boards' knowledge of TIMSS and PISA targets was less well developed.
- Through visits to the school and regular communication with the Director General, the governing board consistently monitored the work of the school and provided appropriate support and challenge. However, there was no regular calendar or on-going agenda to support the focus of these visits.
- The governing board played an important part in developing the school by providing the resources needed to support the actions for improvement. Teachers confirmed that the resources needed were made available quickly. For example, smart boards in each classroom enabled the use of modern technology to interest and engage students in their learning. In this way the board had a positive influence on overall school performance.




Management, staffing, facilities and resources

Good

- The school was effectively and efficiently managed. Procedures and routines were well thought out and implemented. The executive committee ensured that all matters relating to health and safety of staff and students met statutory requirements and did not hinder the effective day-to-day use of facilities.
- Most staff members were suitably qualified. A number of staff held specific education qualifications matched well to the phase in which they taught. Despite a very good professional development culture, which supported teachers in acquiring new skills, inconsistency in the quality of teaching remained. This was especially the case in departments with a higher turnover of staff such as in Arabic and Islamic education.
- Premises were well maintained and supported most learning activities well. The KG section was very well designed for the teaching and learning of young children. Indoor, shared areas were large and provided additional facilities for children to learn through play. The number of classrooms available in the boys' and girls' sections limited curricular choice. Building design did not provide sufficient accommodation for Grade 6 students to work alongside their middle school peers.
- All subjects had sufficient resources to deliver the planned curriculum effectively. Library and resource areas were of a good quality. The libraries contained a large number of books in English and Arabic. Good improvements had been made to equip the school with modern technology but this was not being used as effectively as it could be to promote teaching and learning.

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	153
	2014-2015	357
Teachers 	115	
Students 	88	

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

- Almost all parents and most students who responded to the survey agreed that the school provided a good quality of education.
- Most parents and students agreed that good progress was made in all subjects; almost all parents agreed that progress was good in Islamic education and English.
- Almost all parents, teachers and students agreed that the school assessment systems helped students to improve their work.
- Parents, teachers and students agreed that the school provided a safe place in which to learn. A quarter of parents and few teachers and students were not aware of the schools cyber-safety arrangements.
- Students said that they were supported to play a part in school leadership through the school council, although a third of students did not agree that the school listened to their views.
- Teachers considered that regular feedback helped them to improve their work.
- Parents, teachers and students agreed that the school was well led.

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