



National Agenda



Early years



Special educational needs and disabilities



Innovation

Inspection Report 2015-2016

The School of Research Science

Curriculum: UK

Overall rating: Very good

[Read more about the school](#)



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



Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum

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School information

General information 	Location	Al Warqa
	Type of school	Private
	Opening year of school	1998
	Website	www.srsdubai.ae
	Telephone	04-6011011
	Address	PO Box 27463, Alwarqa 4
	Principal	Ms. Nan Billingham
	Language of instruction	English, Arabic
	Inspection dates	23 to 26 November 2015
Students 	Gender of students	Boys and girls
	Age range	3-18
	Grades or year groups	Kindergarten1 to Year 13
	Number of students on roll	3,257
	Number of children in pre-kindergarten	331
	Number of Emirati students	2,223
	Number of students with SEND	237
	Largest nationality group of students	Emirati
Teachers / Support staff 	Number of teachers	260
	Largest nationality group of teachers	United Kingdom
	Number of teaching assistants	47
	Teacher-student ratio	1:13
	Number of guidance counsellors	3
	Teacher turnover	23%
Curriculum 	Educational permit / Licence	UK
	Main curriculum	National Curriculum for England / MoE
	External tests and examinations	Edexcel
	Accreditation	British Schools Overseas (BSO)
	National Agenda benchmark tests	IBT

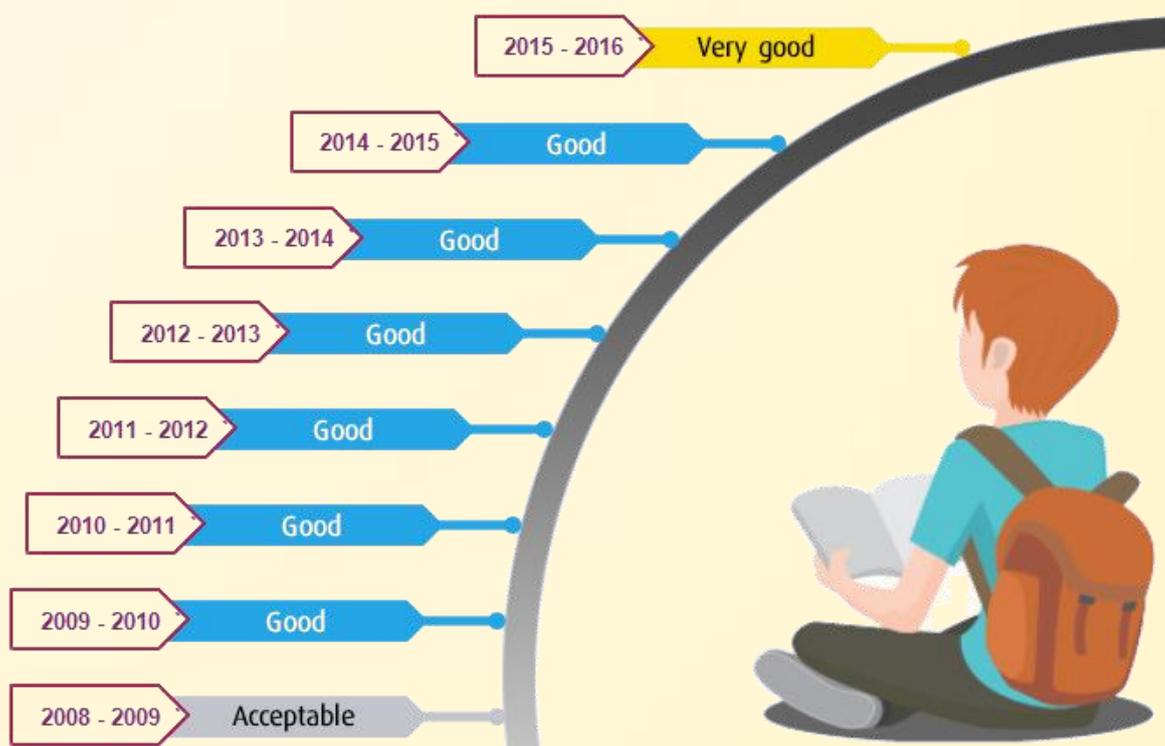


Summary for parents and the community

The **School of Research Science** was inspected by DSIB from 23 to 26 November 2015. The overall quality of education provided by the school was found to be **very good**.

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

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





How well did the school perform overall?

Overall, **The School of Research Science** provided a **very good** quality of education for its students.

- Children made outstanding progress in English, mathematics and science at the Foundation Stage. Primary students' attainment and progress were outstanding in Islamic education and Arabic; secondary students' attainment and progress were outstanding in Islamic education, mathematics, and science. In post-16, attainment and progress were outstanding in science. Students' learning skills were very good.
- Personal and social development were outstanding in most areas. Students had a very good attitude towards their school work and a well-developed awareness of their social responsibilities.
- Assessment was outstanding in each phase. Teaching was generally very good. It was outstanding in the primary phase.
- The curriculum design was outstanding in each phase, and its adaptation was outstanding in the early years Foundation Stage and in the primary phase.
- The quality of care and support, and health and safety, including arrangements for child protection, were outstanding.
- The quality of leadership and management throughout the school was outstanding.



What did the school do well?

- The outstanding quality of Islamic education in the primary and secondary phases
- The school's strong Islamic ethos
- The very good provision for students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)
- The rigour of self-evaluation and improvement planning.
- The impact of the governors and the senior leadership team on improving the school during a period of rapid growth
- The outstanding facilities and the safe, healthy learning environment



What does the school need to do next?

- Improve students' learning skills and challenge higher attaining students more by:
 - ensuring that teachers ask open-ended questions frequently in ways that promote students' reflective and critical thinking
 - providing better opportunities for students to explore topics and carry out investigations independently
 - making technology available for students to find things out for themselves.



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

- Students with SEND made good or better progress in Islamic education, Arabic, English, mathematics and science.
- The school worked closely with parents of students with SEND to let them know how their children were progressing. Frequent meetings took place between parents, class teachers and specialist staff throughout the year. Parents were kept up-to-date through e-mail messages and telephone calls. An internet-based program was very successful in exchanging information about the school's daily events and students' progress.
- Many parents were involved with the school in designing ways to help their children to learn effectively. Some of these programmes were implemented at home. The school was seeking ways to involve parents more effectively in this area.
- The school welcomed parents' inquiries about how best to help their children. The very dedicated SEND coordinators and class teachers offered advice and help to families. The school organised specialist workshops for all parents on a range of special education issues.

National Agenda Parameter



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

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

Main points:

- The school did not fully meet the registration requirements of the National Agenda Parameter. Attainment data was not sufficient to make a full judgement on progress towards meeting National Agenda targets.
- The school had successfully promoted an understanding of the National Agenda and the National Agenda targets among stakeholders. Not enough detail had been explained to parents about the school's progress towards meeting its targets. Staff also needed to impress upon students the importance of doing well in the external tests in English, mathematics and science, which the school was planning to implement.
- Staff with leadership roles in English, mathematics and science had reviewed the curriculum to ensure that courses included appropriate content, and that the timing of topics was in line with the requirements of TIMSS and PISA external tests. Senior staff had agreed to purchase a range of resources to support changes in the curriculum.
- Strategies to develop critical thinking and enquiry were best developed in science lessons. Teachers were increasingly trying to develop these, but further work was needed. The areas requiring particular attention were the asking of open-ended questions to promote reflection and analysis, the promotion of independent learning, including enquiry and investigation, and the use of technology by students to explore topics.
- Students had opportunities to research and investigate topics in science. In English lessons, they could use texts efficiently to extract information. The use of technology by students to explore topics and find things out for themselves was limited.

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 collaboratively promoted innovation although they were yet to develop a strategic plan. Most leaders worked with external partners, teachers and students in this promotion. School personnel demonstrated appropriate capacity to further ensure that students' innovation and entrepreneurial skills were well developed. Students participated in an 'innovations day' where they presented their ideas to students, parents and community members. The school's specialist facilities were purposefully designed to provide an environment for incubating innovation and extending learning beyond the classroom. Activities promoting innovation were mainly concentrated in specific phases and subjects and had not permeated to all aspects of curriculum design and delivery.

Overall school performance

Very good ↑

1. Students' achievement

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

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Learning skills	Very good ↑	Very good ↓	Very good ↑	Very good ↓

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

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

3. Teaching and assessment

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Teaching for effective learning	Very good ↑	Outstanding	Very good ↑	Very good ↓
Assessment	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding

4. Curriculum

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Curriculum design and implementation	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Curriculum adaptation	Outstanding ↑	Outstanding	Very good ↑	Very 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	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding

6. Leadership and management

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



Main inspection report

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

Judgements are made on a six-point scale



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

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

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

1. Students' achievement

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	Acceptable	Outstanding
Mathematics	Good ↑	Outstanding ↑
Science	Good	Outstanding

- In English, attainment was in line with curriculum and international expectations by the end of the Foundation Stage. As additional language speakers, children showed outstanding progress from their starting points. They made at least very good or better progress in lessons. By the end of Foundation Stage 2, children could speak with growing confidence, read and understand simple sentences and use their word knowledge to begin to write. They used the many opportunities available to develop their spoken English in ways which brought rapid progress. They knew many phonic sounds and were beginning to blend these into words as a basis for reading and writing. They enjoyed and listened carefully to stories and could recall the main events. Different groups made similarly outstanding progress including those with SEND
- In mathematics the majority of children attained levels above curriculum expectations by the end of Foundation Stage. They showed excellent progress from their starting points when they had entered school. Children made good or better progress in lessons. By the end of the phase, most could count reliably with numbers up to 20 and place them in order. They knew one more and one less than a given number, and were beginning to add and subtract two small numbers together with confidence. They could compare objects by size, height and weight and recognise simple patterns and shapes. At this early stage in the year, most children currently in Foundation Stage 2 could place objects in order and make patterns with shapes in their play.
- In science, the majority of children attained above curriculum expectations by the end of Foundation Stage. They made good or better progress in lessons, and outstanding progress from their starting points on entry to school. Children who had reached the end of Foundation Stage could investigate materials and understand the differences between living things, and why change happened. Children in 1 used their developing English to describe the main parts of a plant and to show they understood that a plant needed sunlight and water to grow. Children in Foundation Stage 2 thought critically when they investigated which materials were sufficiently waterproof to provide a raincoat for the class teddy bear's trip to London.

Primary

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

- In Islamic education, most students had outstanding knowledge, understanding and skills. In lessons and in their recent work, most demonstrated levels that were above curriculum standards. Most had an excellent knowledge of the Pillars of Faith and the Holy Qur'an. They memorised verses of the Holy Qur'an and applied recitation rules correctly. They made links to prior learning and between subject areas with high levels of competence. Most students were competent in applying their skills in everyday contexts. Most groups of students, including those with SEND, made much better than expected progress.
- In Arabic as a first language, most students demonstrated attainment levels above the expectations of the MoE standards. Over the past three years, students' attainment had been consistently outstanding. Their use of classical Arabic was exemplary. They used appropriate words when answering comprehension questions. They read well and expressed clearly their ideas in writing. Most students made at least very good progress against the lesson objectives particularly in reading and comprehension. Progress over time was outstanding across most language skills. Very good support enabled all groups of students to progress very well in extending their Arabic language skills.
- In Arabic as an additional language, the attainment level of most students was well above expectations. Given the lack of external benchmarked measures, students had well-developed Arabic. Their listening skills were outstanding, and they had the ability to respond using well-structured sentences. They read basic texts with minimal errors in pronunciation. They had a rich vocabulary and could apply correct grammar when writing short paragraphs. Over the past three years, students' attainment levels and progress had been excellent. From their starting points, they were making rapid progress in all skills. Most groups of students made very good progress or better against appropriate lesson objectives, particularly in speaking and reading. Boys and girls made similar progress.
- In English, progress was outstanding. A majority of students attained above national and international curriculum standards. Writing was well developed at Key Stage 1 where students formed letters well and wrote short sentences. Students in upper Key Stage 2, Years 5 and 6, wrote extensively for a range of purposes, using appropriate and challenging grammar. Almost all students read fluently with expression. They understood and applied different genres when analysing and writing text. In Year 6 lessons students demonstrated their critical thinking skills when they took part in discussions and in peer review. Students' listening and speaking skills were particularly well developed across the years. Those with SEND made more variable but generally good progress.

- The majority of students in mathematics attained levels that were above the English National Curriculum standards. A large majority made better than expected progress over time. Students in Key Stage 1 could perform subtractions and multiplications. Those in Year 3 and Year 4 were good at working out the perimeter and area of shapes respectively. Year 5 and Year 6 students could calculate time intervals and work with fractions. Higher-attaining students had very well developed understanding of decimals, fractions and percentages. The proportions of students reaching or exceeding expected levels of attainment had shown improvement over the last few years.
- In science students were increasingly able to apply their knowledge and understanding of the sciences to explain every-day ideas. Most could demonstrate a commendable understanding of plant and animal structures, life cycles and ecosystems. By the end of Key Stage 2, students had a secure understanding of the properties of matter, electricity, energy, and gravitational forces and motion. However, their knowledge of the solar system and of the earth's physical characteristics were less well developed. Students exhibited increasing skills of scientific inquiry. Most could compare, contrast, predict and make simple inferences. Year 6 students could predict the effect of additional bulbs in a simple electrical circuit and test their predictions. The progress of all students through Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 was enhanced by the development of their scientific vocabulary.

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

- In Islamic education, most students attained levels that were above curriculum standards. In lessons and in students' recent work, most demonstrated excellent levels of knowledge, skills and understanding. Most students, in Year 7 and across Key Stage 3 to Year 9, had an outstanding knowledge of the life of the Prophet (PBUH) and important battles. Students in Year 11 discussed the importance of marriage from an Islamic point of view. They collected data on aspects of marriage by interviewing local people, analysing the data and presenting their findings in class. In relation to their starting points, most students made significant gains in the different areas of the subject. They applied their skills effectively in everyday contexts. Most groups of students, including those with SEND, made better than expected progress.
- In Arabic as a first language, the majority of students displayed attainment levels above the expectations of the MoE standards. The majority showed good speaking skills. They confidently reflected on their understanding of texts. Their writing skills were inconsistent. While a majority of girls wrote good creative paragraphs, boys' writing was slightly weaker. Students' progress over time was increasing rapidly. A large majority of students had developed their reading comprehension very well, they could analyse the writing styles of authors accurately. Effective supporting programmes enabled students with SEND to make very good progress.

- In Arabic as an additional language, the attainment level of a large majority of students was above that normally seen. Students understood spoken Arabic and could engage in short conversations using meaningful sentences. Reading skills were very good. Students who had attended this school for a number of years could write short paragraphs of good quality. Over time, most were making outstanding progress across most language skills. In lessons, students had significantly improved their ability to give presentations in Arabic. There was no significant difference between the outstanding progress made by different groups of students.
- In English, attainment against English National Curriculum standards and international benchmarks was good. Secondary students were fluent speakers. Their writing showed a very good grasp of grammar, which they used accurately and precisely in their extended pieces. Their listening, reading and comprehension skills were above expected national and international standards. Senior students enthusiastically took part in reviewing of their peers' monologues in which speakers were required to convey the feelings of characters from texts which they had studied. Other students were skilled at interpreting the feelings of characters and in suggesting whether or not the characters could solve their problems. Most made very good progress in lessons and examinations. The progress of students with SEND was good.
- Students, including those with SEND, built on the progress they had made in mathematics in the primary phase and had started to acquire a broader range of knowledge and skills at a rapid pace. Overall, most made better than expected progress. Students had a well-developed knowledge of techniques in algebra and trigonometry. They could apply techniques such as the cosine rule and perform calculations to work out answers to problems with one answer. They did not have enough opportunities to tackle open-ended problems and so their skills in this regard were less well developed. A large majority of students performed above expectations in IGCSE examinations, and the proportions gaining awards at or above expectations compared very well to the overall pass rates for England.
- Most students had a better than expected understanding of the concepts of life, physical and earth sciences. They demonstrated a strong understanding of the classification of living things, and communicated the application of their knowledge confidently. Most could describe accurately chemical and physical properties and changes, and could apply their knowledge of light and sound, and forces and motion. GCSE examination results indicated outstanding levels of attainment. Most students demonstrated developing scientific inquiry skills. They could combine and interpret information from various types of diagrams, graphs and tables. Progress in lessons and over time was very good for all groups of students. The inclusion of science taught in Arabic had enhanced the learning and progress of a group of Arabic speaking students.

Post-16

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

- In Islamic education, a large majority of students attained levels that were above curriculum standards. In lessons and in their recent work, a large majority of students demonstrated levels of knowledge, skills and understanding that were above curriculum standards. They could discuss personal and social responsibilities from an Islamic point of view. However, the quality of these discussions was not raised to the level it could, because students did not draw on enough thought from deep analysis. A large majority of students made significant gains in the different areas of the subject, such as Islamic morals and values. Most groups of students, including those with SEND, made better than expected progress.
- In Arabic as a first language, the majority of students demonstrated attainment levels above the expectations of the MoE standards. Students were confident speakers. Their ability to analyse a variety of different text was secure. Their creative writing was developing very well. However, there was inconsistency between the standards achieved by girls and boys. A large majority of students were making very good progress over time, particularly in their understanding of different writing styles. Generally, girls made better progress than boys.
- Attainment and progress in English were good in this phase. In external examinations, the majority of students attain levels that were above national and international standards. In lessons and in their recent work, students demonstrated good levels of knowledge, skills and understanding in their writing and comprehension that were above curriculum standards. They were skilled at interpreting text, understanding the development of characters and applying literacy conventions to their own language work. Most groups made good progress in lessons and over time.
- Over the last two years, the numbers of students studying mathematics in this phase had been low. Current numbers had increased significantly. On the whole, a large majority of students made better than expected progress, although this proportion varied from year to year, partly as a result of the relatively small numbers following the course. In 2015, all students had achieved success in external examinations, a significant increase from the previous year. Students showed skills in applying techniques in algebra, trigonometry and calculus. Critical thinking skills were less well developed.
- Most students' attainment in biology, chemistry and physics exceeded English curriculum expectations. In GCSE chemistry and physics attainment was good. It was outstanding in biology. Most students could use well-developed inquiry abilities, link knowledge appropriately and bring critical insights to their analyses. They could construct explanations based on evidence and present arguments based on their critical analysis. Students had well-developed problem-solving skills. In physics, some were able to use data from secondary sources to draw conclusions and evaluate results. They monitored their own progress and reflected on their solutions. Progress over time and during lessons was better than expected for most students.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Learning skills	Very good ↑	Very good ↓	Very good ↑	Very good ↓

- Students were enthusiastic in their learning. They increasingly took responsibility for their own learning. In Arabic, enthusiasm for learning was stronger at the primary stage than at later stages. Children in the Foundation Stage were particularly well engaged in activities they chose for themselves. Generally, students showed perseverance across activities. They made good attempts to act upon helpful feedback from teachers.
- Students were able to interact well. They collaborated effectively when given the opportunity. Collaboration was evident, for example, in an English lesson in primary involving role-play. Students could explain their learning, although some lacked confidence in doing so. Children in Foundation Stage did not have sufficient spoken English skills to articulate their learning fully.
- Because of the very strong cross-curricular approach in Foundation Stage, children naturally made connections in their learning. They were well aware that their building of towers, decorating of crowns and making of passports were related to the City of London. In other stages, interconnections were a strong feature too. Students in Islamic education could relate their knowledge and understanding of the Islam to their everyday lives.
- In English, students could use books to conduct research and find things out for themselves. Overall, however, enquiry and research skills were not fully developed. The use of technology by students to enhance their learning was not a key feature of lessons, although it featured well in Islamic education. Critical thinking was not a strong aspect of students' learning skills.

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

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Personal development	Outstanding	Outstanding	Very good ↑	Outstanding

- Students across all four phases of the school demonstrated outstanding attitudes. They responded extremely positively to feedback from their teachers and worked hard to achieve the high standards set for them in class and around the school.
- Behaviour in lessons was very positive, particularly when learning activities engaged students' attention. Students worked well in pairs and groups. A key element within many classes was a peer review system, with students feeding back to each other on their work. Relationships between students and with their teachers and visiting adults were of the highest standard.
- Students respected their teachers and one another. They were active and supportive of one another, and were sensitive to others' needs.
- Almost all students adopted a healthy life-style, opting for healthy snacks. Many participated in swimming and in a wide range of other sporting activities.
- Students' enjoyment of school life was demonstrated in their very good attendance and punctuality.

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

- Students in all phases had an excellent understanding and appreciation of Islamic values and the impact of these values on everyday life in the UAE. They put into practice what they learned. Students showed empathy towards the school community and its environment. They willingly undertook voluntary and charity work.
- Emirati heritage and culture were very well appreciated and understood by students. Students knew local traditions and heritage. They discussed the development of the UAE by referring to the vision of the rulers. The school organised well-planned opportunities for the celebration of cultural heritage, the UAE National Day, and Flag Day.
- Students fully appreciated and celebrated their own culture. They had experience and knowledge of cultural diversity. They had visited different countries such as Turkey, Spain and Japan to look at other cultures. Other opportunities to learn about different cultures were embedded in the school curriculum. More planned activities in school about cultural diversity would reinforce students' appreciation and understanding.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Very good ↑	Outstanding	Very good ↑	Outstanding ↑

- Students across all phases contributed to the development of a school ethos of compassion. Students were active in the Emirates Model United Nations. Senior students supported Year 1 reading groups and younger students' physical activities. Year 6 students cleaned a local mosque, supported the needy and helped the elderly, as part of the development of their Islamic values. The school supported its chosen charity, Dubai Cares.
- Students had a sound work ethic. In Years 6, 9 and 12 students enthusiastically participated in work experience. Enterprise, a recently offered subject in Key Stage 3, and GCSE in Key Stage 4 at Years 10 and 11 were catalysts for business-related activities. In the senior school at post-16, the Formula One competition encouraged innovation. Throughout, students raised money for charity.
- Students were well aware of environmental issues. From Foundation Stage, they took part in recycling and energy saving initiatives. Older students, particularly through the Eco Club, engaged in a number of environmental initiatives such as the water conservation project 'Creations from waste', and 'power saving initiatives'. In Islamic education, students considered the environment in the context of Islam.

3. Teaching and assessment

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Teaching for effective learning	Very good 	Outstanding	Very good 	Very good 

- Teachers' subject knowledge was very sound. It was particularly expert in Islamic education, where modelling and explanation were strong features of lessons. Most teachers understood how students learned and applied their subject knowledge well in explaining learning objectives. In science, teachers' focus on practical activities embedded students' understanding of scientific concepts. Foundation Stage teachers had an excellent understanding of the importance of active learning to young children.
- Teachers planned purposeful, and frequently imaginative lessons, which engaged most students. They provided an interesting and often inspirational environment to motivate learning. Resources were appropriate and skilfully used in most lessons. However, teachers only provided occasional use of information technology (IT) to students to support, enhance and extend learning.
- Teachers' interactions with students were very positive in most lessons, ensuring that students were keen to learn. Questioning was usually comprehensive and purposeful. In many English classes, excellent interactions between teachers and students facilitated dialogue. In the majority of science lessons, questioning promoted deep thought and meaningful discussion which increased the development of skills of prediction, clarification and analysis.
- Teachers generally used effective strategies to meet the needs of most learners. Planning for differentiation to meet the needs of all learners was strong, but the consistent implementation of differentiation was still a developing feature. In a minority of lessons, teachers did not always provide sufficient challenge for the more able students or adequate support for the least able.
- Most children in the Foundation Stage showed strong levels of independence. Teachers' interventions in these activities were not consistently effective in extending children's thinking skills and investigations. Teaching to develop students' critical thinking skills, problem solving, innovation and independent learning was developing. Thinking skills were better developed in science, where students were facilitated to enquire, solve problems and seek evidence.
- In Arabic as a first language, almost all teachers had sound knowledge of their subject. Their modeling of standard Arabic had a positive impact on students' speaking skills. Time and resources were well used and most lessons were highly interactive. Although most students were catered for appropriately, the more able students were not always sufficiently challenged.
- In Arabic as an additional language, almost all teachers used questioning as a strategy to extend students' speaking skills. They were skillful at linking previous knowledge to new learning. On a few occasions, the highly able students were disadvantaged as they were not sufficiently challenged.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Assessment	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding

- Internal assessment was closely aligned to the curriculum. In the Foundation Stage, children’s learning was observed and their development assessed and tracked using the curriculum for the early years Foundation Stage guidelines. In the primary phase, assessment information was aligned to the new National Curriculum for England. In the upper phases, reliable data was used to track students’ performance and to influence curriculum and lesson planning.
- The use of external benchmark tests to inform the curriculum and validate standards was secure in the upper phases of the school. Students’ levels of attainment in comparison to international standards in the primary and lower secondary phases remained unclear. Students’ progress was measured effectively using appropriate international benchmark testing. The school had used its TIMSS and PISA data to guide curricular modifications.
- Assessment data was analysed assiduously. A new tracking system ensured that teachers and heads of department promptly responded to early signs of deviations in expected attainment. A school wide system of colour coding helped teachers and leaders to identify and follow students’ progress. Teachers held regular student progress meetings, and subject leaders maintained an overview of their cohort.
- Curriculum and lesson planning were designed to meet the needs of individual students. Both were informed by teachers’ analyses of students’ assessment information. Teachers’ questioning and regular marking provided a deep understanding of students’ needs, particularly in the lower phases. Groups of students had time to reflect on their progress and to self-assess against individual targets. The results enhanced teachers’ knowledge of each individual’s learning progress.
- Teachers gave oral and written feedback to students. Most students had clear views of the learning objectives of a lesson or unit of work. The best lesson planning allowed for students to work at their own level with appropriate levels of challenge. Students, were often involved in self-assessment. Peer assessment occasionally occurred. There were some inconsistencies between subjects about the quality of feedback provided to help students to target improvements.

4. Curriculum

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Curriculum design and implementation	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding

- The curriculum had a clear rationale aligned to the school’s Emirate and national visions. It was relevant, comprehensive, and promoted innovation and challenge. It was highly effective in developing a balance of knowledge, skills and understanding. It fulfilled all the requirements of the National Curriculum for England and the UAE national statutory requirements.

- Students enjoyed a rich learning environment with many innovative approaches. Students' experiences were enhanced by the successful approaches to teaching in Arabic and English. Cross-phase and cross-curricular planning enhanced the learning experiences of many students. A design and technology project offered a good example.
- The International Primary Curriculum delivered a series of interesting and innovative topics. Children had opportunities to research and to reflect on their learning and to relate it to real-life situations, with a specific focus on Emirati culture. Students further up the school benefited from taking part in the Formula One and Sports Leader awards.
- Cross-curricular links were well planned and evident in all phases of the school. In the secondary and post-16 phases, subjects were intertwined and students took advantage of their IT and enterprise studies to further their learning. Students appreciated the links between their media studies, business, and travel and tourism courses.
- Curricular review was firmly embedded. Middle and senior leaders worked well to ensure that the curriculum was structured to provide students with the highest quality learning experiences. Working closely with both parents and students, the school had put in place a range of subject options at the upper end of the school which addressed the academic and personal development needs of students.
- The school taught social studies as part of its Arabic curriculum. It established links with a range of other curricular areas, including science, mathematics and Islamic education. The UAE social studies curriculum was mapped across the school to ensure that it was sufficiently broad and balanced.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Curriculum adaptation	Outstanding ↑	Outstanding	Very good ↑	Very good ↑

- The school had taken steps to modify the curriculum to meet the needs of almost all students. In particular, the curriculum was well adapted for students with SEND. Teachers made good use of general guidelines and directives in constructing the individual education plans for them. In some instances the development of life skills had been included for students with SEND.
- Children in the Foundation Stage were provided with daily choices in their learning activities, so promoting an ethos of self-reliance and responsibility. In the later phases, however, there was a need to look further at aspects of the curriculum to make them more relevant for boys. Otherwise, a variety of extra-curricular activities both within and outside the school significantly enhanced students' academic and personal development.
- The curriculum in the Foundation Stage had links to Emirati culture and UAE society. In the other phases, coherent learning experiences were embedded in the curriculum. Science, art and design technology promoted and encouraged innovation through events such as the Science Fair, where students had the opportunity to design projects which tested their innovative and technological skills.
- The school offered Arabic to all children in Foundation Stage. Five sessions of Arabic were taught weekly to Arab and non-Arab students. The programme followed the MoE Arabic syllabus for early childhood, and was modified to suit the thematic approach used in Foundation Stage.

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 ↑

- The school provided a very well-supervised and safe environment for all students. A comprehensive child protection policy was in place and followed. The school made very good efforts to investigate any issues of bullying issues in a caring and comprehensive way and was successful in negating them.
- The school was kept very clean at all times. Students were very well supervised at all breaks. School transport was highly organised and effectively run. Fire drills were carried out regularly and lock-down procedures were in place. The school nurses and doctors provided students with very good care.
- The building was less than two years old and had been built to a very high standard, with all facilities of an outstanding quality. All areas were very well maintained and regularly checked by the maintenance team.
- The school was accessible to all students. There were lifts in each wing, which were available to those who had limited mobility. The fountains and garden areas were a very special feature of the school. The lay out of the play and seating areas outside and inside were of a very high standard.
- The promotion of healthy living was well supported within the school through a range of activities, many closely connected with the curriculum. The school offered a wide variety of sporting options which promoted personal fitness.

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

- Relationships were very positive between staff and students. The school had a supportive and caring atmosphere. Comprehensive procedures were in place to promote good behaviour, and were successfully applied throughout the school.
- Excellent procedures were in place to promote good attendance and to ensure that students came to school on time. Absences were quickly followed up with parents. The school also promoted punctuality and good attendance through class and whole-school awards.
- The school had established very good procedures to identify students with SEND. Teachers used a wide range of procedures including screening at admission, the compilation of records of observations, and the use of appropriate tests. Procedures for the identification of students who were gifted and talented was also being developed.

- A wide range of support was in place for students with SEND. Differentiation procedures used by class teachers were often supported by learning mentors and by team-teaching strategies. Individual education plans clearly 'benchmarked' learning and set out appropriate targets for further learning and development. The dedicated special education team supported teachers and students well through advice, support in class, and with one-to-one student support.
- Students had access to the counsellor and her supportive team. This team had created an atmosphere of trust. Team members were committed to ensuring that harmonious relationships existed throughout the school. Students were introduced to careers guidance at an early age. They received suitable help and advice on subject choices for examinations and on the appropriate path to university 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

- Governors and senior leaders facilitated the development of an inclusive ethos. The responsibilities for SEND were carefully and sympathetically developed by the deputy head and her dedicated team of very well-qualified special educational needs coordinators. Very good reviews of the present provision and of current strategies and interventions had enabled the school to develop the implementation of an effective, innovative and aspirational strategy for SEND.
- A wide range of suitable assessment strategies was used successfully to identify students with SEND. The initial identification took place at registration, or through teacher observations and through the involvement of the coordinators. The school had developed a graded system of intervention where very appropriate and tailored assistance was put in place for all students who had been identified.
- Staff worked closely with parents of students with SEND to keep them well informed. They used a wide range of communication methods successfully. Parents were provided with opportunities to meet either the class teacher or the school's SEND coordinators. Formal reporting was carried out at regular intervals. The school was also active in seeking the views of parents when developing strategies for improvement.
- Students with SEND, and especially those who had greater learning challenges, were well supported across all areas of the curriculum and in their personal, social and emotional development. The school had successfully developed a graded system of curriculum modification which included differentiation, the development of clear individual education plans and detailed adjustments. There was limited use of IT to support students' learning.
- The progress of students with SEND was measured regularly and diligently in most classes. Teachers used the effective monitoring system incorporated within the students' individual education programmes. This monitoring was not applied across all classes and learning environments. Almost all students with SEND made good or better progress in Islamic education, Arabic, English, mathematics and science.

6. Leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership

Outstanding

- The governors, principal and other senior leaders had an ambitious vision for the school. They set out to create a high performing school with an English curriculum and a strong Islamic ethos. They communicated this vision well to the whole school community.
- The principal and other senior managers were determined to provide high-quality learning experiences in order to maximise attainment. They had a good knowledge of best educational practice. Leaders at all levels were very effective in creating an inclusive ethos in which students developed a wide range of knowledge and skills.
- Senior leaders had positive relationships with teachers and other staff. They communicated very efficiently with all stakeholders. Leadership was distributed very effectively across the school. The year heads worked well with their teams and with the assistant head teachers. The management structure was very effective. All staff knew what they were expected to do. Morale throughout the school was very positive.
- The school had good capacity to improve and innovate. Teachers were very successful in adopting new teaching approaches. Year leaders felt empowered to introduce initiatives within their year group and had an excellent record of doing so. School leaders and teachers had maintained very high academic standards, despite the large increases in the school roll and the major changes in teaching staff.
- Senior and middle leaders closely monitored students' progress and attainment. They had also updated the curriculum to bring English, mathematics and science courses in line with the National Curriculum for England. Improvements had also been made in Islamic education, Arabic, and the provision for Foundation Stage and SEND.

School self-evaluation and improvement planning

Outstanding

- The school had rigorous systematic procedures to evaluate its quality. They included checking teachers' plans, observation of lessons, scrutiny of students' work, analyses of students' progress and attainment data, and seeking the views of students and other stakeholders. Governors also rigorously audited the school three times each year. Senior leaders knew the school's strengths and its priorities for improvement.
- The principal and other senior leaders systematically sampled the quality of learning and teaching by observing lessons. They applied appropriate quality standards rigorously. Teachers and managers closely monitored students' progress. The school also used external examinations to benchmark attainment and progress and had plans to extend this practice.
- Senior leaders were very effective in taking action to bring about improvements. For example, teachers had very successfully placed a greater emphasis on improving literacy across the school. This was helping students to have a better grasp of the technical language of each subject, which in turn helped them to develop a deeper understanding.

- The school had improved since the last inspection. Governors, leaders and teachers had addressed the recommendations well. More opportunities had been created throughout the school for students to exercise responsibility and develop their leadership skills. Leaders and staff had brought about significant improvements in the provision for students with SEND. The governors had a strategic plan to reduce class sizes throughout the school.

Partnerships with parents and the community

Outstanding

- The school was very effective at involving parents in their children's education. Teachers listened to, and took account of, parents' views. They organised many successful events and workshops to explain teaching techniques. Parents supported the school very well and this helped to further their children's learning.
- A wide range of ways were used to communicate with parents This kept parents very well informed about their children's education and school events.
- Parents received regular reports on their children's progress. The reports contained detailed information on students' academic performance and on their next learning targets. In both primary and secondary, they contained a section for students to record their own reflections on learning. The reports provided information on students' personal and social development.
- The school had productive links with schools in the United Kingdom and Dubai, thus providing opportunities for teachers to share good practice. Students and staff also had links with a school in Kenya. Students had very good opportunities to play competitive sports with a number of other schools. They benefited from links with a local mosque and a range of organisations in Dubai.

Governance

Outstanding

- The governing board included parent representatives. The board took account of parents' views through surveys and meetings. Members responded to complaints and suggestions. As a result of comments from parents, the board had organised workshops to explain to parents the new approaches to assessment, in ways which facilitated parental access. Board members had a detailed knowledge of the school and of the UAE national priorities.
- The board held the principal to account for the performance of the school on a systematic and regular basis. The principal reported in detail on the academic performance and achievements of students. In collaboration with school leaders, Board members audited the performance of the school three times each year by evaluating the quality of lessons, students' work and performance data.
- The board exerted a very strong influence on the school. Its audits included recommendations for departments to implement. Governors pursued the progress made with these recommendations in subsequent visits. The Board provided the necessary support to enable the school to be staffed and resourced to a very high standard.

Management, staffing, facilities and resources	Outstanding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school was very well organised and operated very efficiently on a day-to-day basis. Due attention was paid to detail in the context of the aims of the school. • The school was staffed with well qualified, skilful class and subject teachers. It benefitted from rigorous selection procedures for staff and from effective induction, continuous professional development and performance management sessions. Staff reviews helped to identify areas for individual and collective professional development. As a result of expansion and turnover, a significant proportion of teachers was new to the school this session. • The premises provided an outstanding learning environment with specialist facilities for art, design and technology, IT, science, swimming and other sports. In each area of the school, the corridors and other public spaces had stimulating displays, well chosen to celebrate students' work and achievements. • All classrooms were very well resourced. Each was equipped with large interactive plasma computer screens. There was a good supply of books in the libraries, and a plentiful supply of learning materials to support and extend learning at all stages. 	

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	135
	2014-2015	198
Teachers 	186	
Students 	285	

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

- Parents and teachers who responded to the survey were very positive about almost all aspects of the school.
- Almost all parents who responded to the survey were satisfied with the quality of education provided. Most thought that the school offered a good range of subjects and extra-curricular activities, and appropriate resources to support learning.
- Almost all parents who responded to the survey considered that their children made good progress in Islamic education, English and mathematics and most in Arabic and science. They indicated that assessment, including marking, helped their children to improve.
- Most parents who responded to the survey said that their children developed a good range of learning skills and that the school prepared students well for their next stage of life and learning.
- Although most parents who responded to the survey thought that their children were safe in school, almost half were unaware of the school's cyber-safety programme.
- Most parents and teachers who responded to the survey considered that the school was well led.
- Most parents who responded to the survey felt that they were kept well informed of their children's progress. They also felt that the school listened to parents and acted on their views.
- A significant number of parents who responded to the survey commented on the primary class sizes.

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