



National Agenda



Early years



Special educational  
needs and disabilities



Innovation

## Inspection Report 2015-2016

Greenwood International School

Curriculum: US

Overall rating: Good

Read more about the school



www.khda.gov.ae

“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 Muhaisnah
Type of school	Private
Opening year of school	2006
Website	www.greenwood.sch.ae
Telephone	04-2888000
Address	Al Muhaisnah 1. PO Box 79595 Dubai U.A.E
Principal	Rashida M. Badri
Language of instruction	English
Inspection dates	8 - 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	1080
Number of children in pre-kindergarten	0
Number of Emirati students	822
Number of students with SEND	37
Largest nationality group of students	Emirati

### Teachers / Support staff



Number of teachers	68
Largest nationality group of teachers	Pakistani
Number of teaching assistants	18
Teacher-student ratio	1:17
Number of guidance counsellors	1
Teacher turnover	19%

### Curriculum



Educational permit / Licence	US
Main curriculum	US Michigan
External tests and examinations	IOWA, MAP, SAT I, TOEFL
Accreditation	None
National Agenda benchmark tests	IOWA

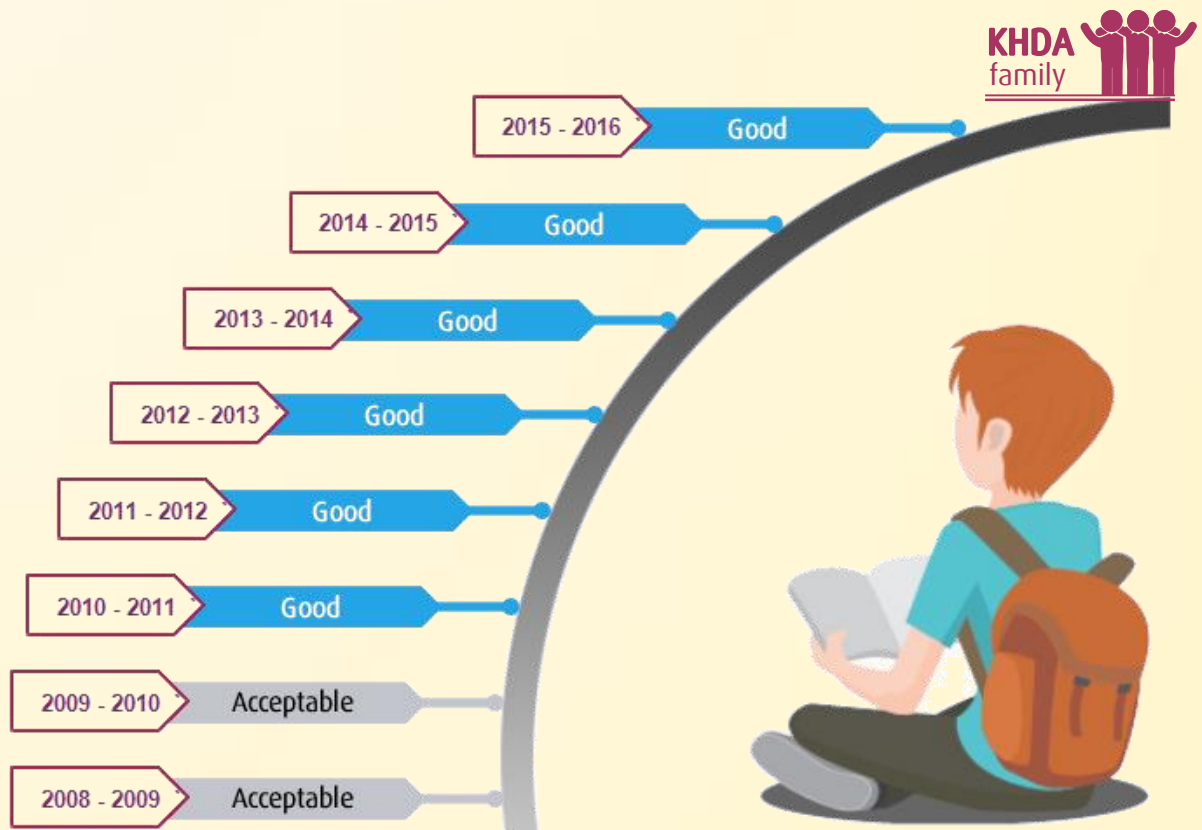


## Summary for parents and the community

**Greenwood International School** was inspected by DSIB from 8-21 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 judgments 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, **Greenwood International School** provided a **good** quality education for its students.

- Children in the Kindergarten (KG) made good progress in all key subjects as did students in the high school phase. In the other phases of the school, students made consistent good progress in Islamic education and English while progress in other subjects varied. Students in the high school had very good learning skills exemplified in their enthusiasm and responsible attitudes when focused on tasks. Whereas students in other phases demonstrated good learning skills.
- Students consistently demonstrated good personal development and those in the high school demonstrated outstanding personal responsibility. Students' understanding of Islamic values and their awareness of Emirati and world cultures were very good in all phases of the school although their awareness of other cultures was a developing feature. High school students demonstrated outstanding social responsibility and innovation skills while in other phases these were good.
- Teaching was of good quality in all phases of the school except for elementary where it was still inconsistent but acceptable overall. Assessment had improved. It was good in all phases. The school's processes and procedures for assessment were a particular strength.
- Curriculum design was of good quality while curriculum adaptation remained acceptable in all phases of the school. The school regularly reviewed and modified curricular content to prepare students for international assessment but modifications in lessons were not always effective in meeting the needs of all students.
- The provision for students' health and safety was outstanding. The overall quality of care and support provided by the school was good. The provision for students with special educational needs and disabilities had improved.
- Leadership was good while self-evaluation and improvement planning remained acceptable. The school's links with parents and the community were consistently good but governance declined to weak because of an absence of formal mechanisms by which the board reviewed the work of the school. The steady growth in student enrolment had impacted on the quality of the school's premises and facilities, which were now just adequate for the increased number of students.



### What did the school do well?

- The school's strong family ethos embodied Emirati culture and traditions while being inclusive and open to diversity.
- High school students made at least good progress in all key subjects and very good progress in personal development.
- Senior and middle leaders were effective in promoting Emirati values and the UAE National Agenda and in creating an inclusive environment.





### What does the school need to do next?

- Establish formal mechanisms through which the governing board is fully involved in the work of the school so that it can be held accountable, and in turn hold school leaders at all levels accountable, for the performance of the school.
- Revise the school's self-evaluation processes to improve the practices in monitoring teaching and interpreting data for self-assessment.
- Make better use of the systems and data available to modify the curriculum to meet the needs of all students and ensure that such curriculum modifications translate into teaching practices that cater for different abilities and interests.
- Design an effective extra-curricular program and integrate it into the whole school curriculum to enhance students' opportunities for social contribution and enterprise, especially in the elementary and middle phases.



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

- Students made good progress across most subjects and in most phases. The pace of learning was particularly fast when teachers were well qualified and experienced to support and meet the students' personal and academic needs.
- The school provided a range of different reporting formats including a termly update and an end of year summative report. However, comments were not formative and did not always provide sufficient guidance as to how the students could improve.
- The school and the external provider had developed a good range of communication systems to maintain excellent links with parents. All staff members involved with students with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) provided parents with regular daily updates.
- Parents were fully involved with the development of their children's individual education plans (IEP) and the school welcomed contributions from parents to improve the provision for their children.
- Parents received regular invitations for meetings with teachers as well as high quality training workshops led by the SEND team and external specialist speakers.

### 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 judgment on the progress towards meeting the National Agenda targets.
- The school and all its stakeholders showed willingness and commitment to promote and succeed within the National Agenda parameters. There was an urgent need to update results and targets linked to external benchmarks and to develop a culture where students were rigorously challenged to meet the targets.
- Departments were aware of the importance of the TIMSS and PISA tests within the National Agenda Parameter but had not established benchmarks towards higher standards in 2018 and 2021.
- There was a need for a whole-school planning for more open-ended questioning and independent inquiry as part of the teaching policy. Professional development did not adequately share the good practices that already existed with other teachers throughout the school.
- Many lessons were resourced to allow students to develop their research skills. However, this was not an expectation in the teaching policy and the practice was inconsistent across the school. There was a need to develop the use of hand-held technology within the classrooms.

## 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:







- Senior and middle leaders demonstrated an understanding of innovation and the importance of the National Innovation Agenda. They could describe several examples of how the curriculum promoted innovation through projects and activities linked with real life, particularly in science. Nevertheless, they had yet to formulate a strategic plan for promoting a culture of innovation across the school. Professional development and training requirements for staff, as well as the resourcing needs, had not been identified to support this. The curriculum offered students a range of opportunities to participate in enterprise and innovation related activities. KG children learned about the importance of happiness to promote a creative mindset.



Overall school performance

Good

1. Students' achievement

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

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
<b>Learning skills</b>	Good	Good ↑	Good	Very good ↑

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

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

## 3. Teaching and assessment

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

## 4. Curriculum

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

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

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

## 6. Leadership and management

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



## Main inspection report

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

### Judgments are made on a six-point scale



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

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

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

## 1. Students' achievement

### KG

Subjects	Attainment	Progress
Islamic education	Not applicable	Not applicable
Arabic as a first language	Not applicable	Not applicable
Arabic as an additional language	Not applicable	Not applicable
English	Good	Good
Mathematics	Good	Good
Science	Good	Good

- In English, the majority of children showed good language skills. They made good progress in their literacy and communication skills. Their knowledge of phonics had promoted the start of reading skills as well as correct spelling in their writing. Children had a good knowledge of books and could sequence and retell a story. Overall, they showed a good mastery of a range of literacy skills that were used in the classroom to develop and show understanding in all content areas.
- In mathematics, the majority of children demonstrated an understanding of mathematical concepts and skills that were above the US Common Core State Standards. Children made good progress in relation to their assessed starting points and as measured against appropriate learning objectives. They counted beyond 20 and could add one digit numbers. A majority of children used the language of "more" and "less" in their daily activities. Children could match numbers and objects using one-to-one correspondence and many were able to sequence simple patterns and use numbers, and count by 10's to a 100. They were able to identify shapes and colors of objects.
- In science, the majority of children were provided with a wide range of experiences in their science lessons and were beginning to understand more of their world. They enthusiastically participated in practical activities and used an increasing range of skills when conducting investigations. For example, they were able to sequence the life of a plant and carried out a planting activity in each classroom. In a few lessons, learning was restricted because a limited time was devoted for the children to develop inquiry and investigative skills using prediction, experimentation, asking questions and developing their critical thinking skills.

### Elementary

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

- In Islamic education, the majority of elementary students attained above the curriculum expectations. They demonstrated good knowledge of key principles of Islam such as the Five Pillars of Islam, the oneness of Allah and the message of Prophet Mohammed (PBUH). The majority of students had well-developed recitation skills, and could make appropriate reference to the Prophet's Hadeeth and Sunnah to promote and nurture their own values of fraternity, care and solidarity. Although, students' progress in lessons was often good, in some lessons in lower elementary, students did not always engage in meaningful activities that matched their levels of understanding.
- In Arabic as a first language, most students had secure reading skills. They could respond to text and provide acceptable explanations of what they had read. However, their conversational skills were just in line with curriculum expectations. Students made adequate progress in developing their reading and listening skills. Their speaking and writing skills were progressing at a slower pace. There was no significant difference in progress between boys and girls in this phase.
- In Arabic as an additional language, the majority of students had well developed listening skills. They could respond to classroom questions and to basic text read aloud to them. Students' oral communication skills were secure. They could answer questions orally and in writing. A majority of students had well developed reading skills. Boys and girls were progressing at a similarly good level especially in the lower elementary grades.
- Internal end of year English exams showed most students attained language skills in line with curriculum expectations related to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for English Language Arts. Knowledge, skills and understanding were securely developing for most students. In lessons and in their most recent work, the majority of students were making good progress in reading comprehension skills, in using acquired vocabulary words and in sentence structure. Most students were also making progress with the development of oral reading skills. However inferential skills as well as critical thinking were less well developed with girls making slightly better progress than boys.
- The mathematical knowledge, skills and understanding of most students in the elementary phase met the grade level standard for the CCSS for mathematics. Students demonstrated understanding of number, quantity and basic arithmetic. They wrote and understood the meaning of simple numerical expressions, and worked appropriately with place value and fractions. Students recognized and used cubic measures in understanding solid shapes. Valid internal and external assessments indicated acceptable students' progress over time and so was demonstrated in most lessons.



- In science, attainment and progress were acceptable. The older students in the phase were more knowledgeable in their understanding of the investigation processes. In a few lessons, a majority of students made better progress. For example, in a particular lesson, they interrogated graphs and made good progress in understanding the differences between independent and dependent variables. The younger students were adept at working in practical groups but they were not always sufficiently challenged to work to their potential. In less effective lessons, students were not always challenged to extend their knowledge and understanding to achieve higher curricular standards. Over time, progress was generally in line with expectations.

### Middle

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

- In Islamic education, the majority of students in the middle school demonstrated better than expected knowledge and understanding of the topics prescribed in the curriculum such as modesty, friendship and life balance. In Grade 6 for example, students made effective connections between Prophet Mohammed's (PBUH) attitudes, Hadeeth and his choice of companions. Students built their arguments about the quality of companionship they needed to be successful, truthful and honest citizens in today's modern life. Students in this phase effectively supported their learning with good mastery of the Holy Qur'an when reciting. Progress in lessons and over time was good for the majority of students.
- In Arabic as a first language, most students developed listening and oral communication skills that were in line with the expectations. They could present main ideas from texts and answer direct comprehension questions. Most students could analyze text and connect literature to their own lives. Students' writing samples included descriptive and reflective writing whereby they applied grammatical rules they studied where appropriate. Most students progressed adequately in their reading and listening skills, while their progress in writing and conversational skills were relatively slower. Girls progressed better than boys in this phase.
- In Arabic as an additional language, most students demonstrated adequate command of listening and speaking skills. They could respond to simple questions about familiar contexts such as identifying colors, seasons and jobs. They could formulate simple sentences to describe seasons and express their feelings and preferences for foods and drinks. Although the majority had appropriate reading fluency and comprehension of text of varying difficulty, these gains were not sufficiently reflected in writing. Students wrote at simple sentence levels in spite of the rich range of vocabulary acquired throughout the years. Over time progress was generally acceptable and girls made faster progress than boys.

- Students' attainment and progress in English were good. Students' oral communication skills were well developed where they spoke confidently about a range of topics, whether linked to their studies or beyond. Oral reading skills were secure and students enjoyed reading a variety of genres. Less well developed were the skills of inference and critical reading skills for a minority of students, particularly the boys. A number of writing strategies at the classroom level to extend writing opportunities had resulted in good progress in writing skills, but creative writing was still an area of relative weakness. Overall, students' progress was good in lessons and over time for different groups of students, including boys and girls.
- Most students met their grade level standards in mathematics. Students' skills and knowledge gradually increased each year, so that by the end of the phase nearly all students demonstrated expected understanding of number and were beginning algebraic thinking. Students developed their understanding of rational numbers, worked with square and cubic numbers and practiced scientific notation for both large and small quantities. Students demonstrated a sufficient progression of skills and understanding over time, measured through both internal and external assessments. They were highly motivated to engage in occasionally challenging activities with active learning, and in these situations students exceeded the grade level standard.
- In science, attainment was good as measured against the curriculum standards. Students were engaged in a broad range of practical activities, all of which enriched the quality of their learning. They showed good understanding when, for example, they explained the pitch and loudness of sounds when they changed the frequency and amplitude of sound waves. Other students had a good understanding of the unique qualities of various eco-systems. Overall, the majority of students made good progress over time.

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

- In Islamic education, the majority of high school students demonstrated good knowledge and understanding of the meanings and implications of verses from the Holy Qur'an. They made effective links between most areas of the curriculum drawing on Prophet Mohammed's (PBHU) Sunnah and Hadeeth with clarity and depth. Recitation skills were generally good, and they reflected better than expected standards with good application of the rules of recitations by the majority of students. Although students made good progress overall, they did not engage in sufficient opportunities to apply advanced and phase-appropriate methods to their research projects.

- In Arabic as a first language, students' writing styles had developed significantly. In their reading skills, students demonstrated the ability to analyze poetry and prose texts and interpret metaphorical language. Students were able to justify their views about literature with evidence in their reading analysis. The majority of students made good progress in improving their reading and writing skills, while their conversational skills were still developing, particularly in the boys' section.
- In English, the attainment level of the majority of students was good. This was exemplified in the standards achieved in internal examinations as measured against CCSS for English Language Arts. Progress was very good in lessons and seen in students' most recent work such as their writing journals. Emphasis on writing was evident in most high school lessons as strategies to ensure the development of students' writing skills were implemented. Overall, the progress of the large majority was very good, with both girls and boys making similar progress.
- In mathematics, the majority of students in the high school attained levels of knowledge, skills and understanding that were above curriculum expectations. By the end of the high school phase, students were able to complete mathematics tasks successfully. They evaluated functions, identified arithmetic and geometric sequences, used logarithms to solve exponential equations, found the value of geometric series of arbitrary length, and inverted functions analytically and graphically. This progression in skills was assessed through valid internal assessments and through external assessments. Students were enthusiastic learners of mathematics and demonstrated their abilities to exceed the standard through activities involving higher order thinking or reasoning.
- In science, the majority of students had good attainment when compared to curriculum standards and, in areas such as physics, were making significantly better progress. The majority of students were reflective and motivated. They regularly researched outside their classrooms to improve their understanding. In a physics lesson, students made very good progress in calculating measurements of resistance and charge at different parts of an electrical circuit. In biology they produced good quality and in-depth research studies and critiques on neuron functions in the body. Overall, standards were higher in physics than chemistry and biology. The progress of the majority of students in lessons and over time was good overall.

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

- Students in most grades enjoyed the practical activities and their frequent engagement in assessing their work via their peer reviews and group presentations, particularly in high school science lessons. In most subjects, students had positive attitudes and lots of enthusiasm and willingness to contribute thoughtfully to discussions. Girls, especially in the higher grades, were more independent in their work, while boys were not equally 'risk-taking', especially in English.
- Students interacted positively with their peers and teachers across subjects and phases. In a laboratory lesson, Grade 7 students took roles to produce slides to be examined under the microscope. In a high school Islamic education lesson, they elaborated on their thoughts effectively when they were asked to summarize their understanding of the 'End of time' as seen in the Holy Qur'an and Hadeeth. In other areas, student collaborations were still developing particularly in mathematics and some Arabic lessons.

- Students in different grade levels were linking their learning to their lives meaningfully. For example, they drew from their own life experiences to illustrate and explain some of the more abstract concepts in Islamic education such as respect, good as opposed to evil deeds and the manners of travel in Islam. In Grade 11, students could relate the phenomena of chemical reactions to every day actions and the manufacturing industry.
- Students' ability to extend their learning and take it further into meaningful and innovative applications was a developing feature in most phases and subjects. Enquiry and critical thinking through questioning and simple research emerged in some lessons. Students used technology to apply their learning in a number of lessons but this was not a dominant feature of students' learning experiences at the school. Across the school critical thinking skills were most developed in sciences, and less developed in other areas.

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

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Personal development	Good	Good	Good	Outstanding

- High school students showed a high level of independence and self-reliance. Elsewhere in the school, these aspects were generally good. Students responded well to criticism from adults and peers, and were eager to work collaboratively. In lessons, they were focused to complete classroom tasks often without direct supervision from teachers.
- Bullying was rare at the school. Most students displayed courteous behavior to adults in and out of lessons, and were respectful of their peers. Students demonstrated behavior that allowed other students to work in front of class with little interruption.
- Students often took the lead in showing tolerance in relating to others. At all grade levels, students expressed that they felt supported by adults and peers. They were proactive in supporting other students in class with a strong sense of responsibility.
- Students in all phases of the school made healthy eating choices. They took the lead in assemblies on issues of obesity, recycling trash, through a 'Trashin (fashion) show', as well as environmental issues. Students chose topics in class to extend learning, on themes such as 'animal rights', where they went into the community to interview experts, such as veterinarians.
- Student attendance had been very good in most cases. On a few occasions, tardiness had been an issue, whether in the morning arriving to school or in arriving to some lessons.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
<b>Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures</b>	Very good ↓	Very good ↓	Very good ↓	Very good ↓

- Students' knowledge and understanding of Islam and its values were generally secure. In KG, children took pride in their Happy Planet program as it linked to the values and life in Dubai. Students in all phases spoke highly of Islam as a religion of peace, fraternity and solidarity.
- Students were very knowledgeable about the UAE, and Dubai in particular. They enjoyed its safe and caring lifestyle and could recall some of the history of Dubai and how it rapidly developed. Elementary phase students were proud of their hospitality, which reflected an Arab tradition. They also celebrated a variety of national and cultural events like the UAE National Day, Hajj and Eid at school and home.
- Students took pride in their own culture. KG children recognized the national flag and knew some key landmarks in the UAE. Elementary students recognized Dubai as a city that celebrated diversity. High school girls were confident that Dubai presented great opportunities for women. However, students in all phases had less secure knowledge and understanding of the multi-cultural dimension of the school, Dubai and the wider world around them.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
<b>Social responsibility and innovation skills</b>	Good ↓	Good	Good	Outstanding

- Students across all grade levels had engaged in meaningful issues, classroom presentations, assembly presentations, and community projects. High school students took leadership roles to contribute to the wider school community, especially helping students academically in lower grades.
- A large number of students could articulate a vision for the school and were well aware of their responsibility to the greater good of the UAE. They were tolerant of others in the school who are culturally different, and made sure their voice was heard and that all had an equal role to play in the school's development.
- Students demonstrated a good environmental awareness. Initiatives such as 'Eco-Club', where students led and planned relevant activities had a positive impact. However, there was a need to construct a school wide environment that allows more opportunities that empower students to be innovative, creative, and to generate new thinking.



### 3. Teaching and assessment

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

- Teachers in all phases applied their knowledge well, as they created plans and taught lessons. They knew how their students learned and they planned accordingly. However, this was less evident in the elementary phase. Teachers in the middle and high school phases were the most confident in their subject knowledge.
- Most teachers planned purposeful lessons, provided interesting learning environments and used time and resources effectively to enable students to be successful learners, especially in the high school. Some teachers were not as experienced and their abilities to teach lessons with embedded higher level thinking activities was still emerging.
- Teachers' interactions with students were positive at all grade levels and in all subjects. Some teachers asked questions skillfully and promoted discussions which gave students an opportunity to think more deeply about the topic. This was especially true in the middle and high school phases.
- In all phases, in the best lessons, teachers were careful to plan for the needs of students with SEND or those who may have difficulty meeting the lesson's objectives. The more effective teachers developed strategies to provide the most able students with opportunities to exceed the standard. However, this was not consistent across the school.
- Some teachers provided students with appropriate activities which required that they collaborate purposefully, solve problems, be challenged to think critically, learn to set their own learning goals and become independent learners. However, this was not consistent in all subjects and across the phases.
- Teaching in Arabic as a first language demonstrated secure knowledge of the subject. Teachers had varying abilities to deliver and meet the needs of their individual students. Teachers planned lessons adequately to meet the expectations of the Ministry of Education, in which some teachers challenged students further and helped them reflect critically on their learning.
- Teaching in Arabic as an additional language helped students meet the expectations in relation to their years of study. The teaching was facilitated by environments where students could practice their speaking and listening skills sufficiently, using varied resources. This did not sufficiently promote students' writing skills.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Assessment	Good	Good ↑	Good ↑	Good ↑

- The school had a well-organized approach to assessment. The internal assessments were linked to the appropriate standards in all subjects. English, mathematics and science assessments were purposefully designed to measure skills and understanding as outlined in the CCSS or related standards for science. Such assessments provided clear measures of student progress.

- All students sat for external examinations and benchmarks, such as the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP). The school had plans to resume its administration of the IOWA test as well.
- The school's instructional leaders analyzed assessment data and then used this information to advise teachers about students who had not attained the standards for the core academic subjects. This information was also used to modify curricular content to prepare students better for external examination and the next phases in their learning.
- Most teachers appropriately used assessment data to modify teaching strategies including the planning of lessons for all groups of students. Curricular modification in lessons was not of the same strength.
- Due to careful monitoring of students' progress and the assessment system, teachers had a good understanding of each student's progress. They determined which students needed extra support or more challenging work. Students sometimes assessed their own or their peers' learning, particularly in the middle and high school phases.

#### 4. Curriculum

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

- The school had a clear rationale for its chosen curriculum in promoting students' knowledge, skill development and understanding, while maintaining and reinforcing a strong Emirati cultural ethos. The school had in place policies and procedures to ensure that the requirements of the school's authorized curriculum and the national statutory requirements were met.
- The curriculum was well planned vertically which ensured that there were no gaps in students' learning, especially in key subjects. Generally, the curriculum met the needs of most groups of students and prepared them well for the next phase in their learning. The school actively sought feedback from alumni to ensure its present and future graduating seniors were even better prepared for their tertiary education.
- New electives were added to the curriculum for Grades 10, 11 and 12 to complement the mandatory subjects needed as a basis for graduation requirements. The school had modified the schedule to allow senior students to pursue special topics, particularly in the sciences in the high school. However, the range of curricular choices was mainly focused on the sciences and commerce related subjects.
- Some well-planned cross curricular projects were evident throughout the phases, and particularly evident in the high school. The links provided opportunities for students to learn independently and develop skills of research and critical thinking across two or more subjects.
- The school systematically reviewed and revised the curriculum. Changes were driven by internal and external tests, in addition to students' records, teacher input and alumni reflection. Instructional leaders were keen on ensuring curriculum review. The realigning of content enhanced student readiness for international assessment.

- The UAE social studies curriculum was taught as a discrete subject. The curriculum was based on the UAE Ministry of Education standards and the school used the textbook with minor adaptations. The subject was offered twice a week from Grades 5 to 8, and once a week for Grades 1 to 4.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Curriculum adaptation	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

- The school made modification to the curriculum, in terms of content and sequence of topics, to ensure all students were adequately prepared for external examinations and for the next phase in learning. However, curricular modifications at the lesson level did not always successfully translate into teaching practices to cater to different abilities and interests.
- The curriculum was functional and designed to engage students in meaningful academic experiences, especially in key subjects. However, there was a limited range of extra-curricular activities where students could participate in activities that extended their learning and personal and social development. The school had some successful links with the community but mostly students in the high school benefited from these in which they participated in a number of initiatives that promoted their enterprise, innovation and creativity.
- The school was committed to promoting the values of Islam and to living the ethos and traditions of the UAE. This was evident throughout the school in the design of curricular topics and related activities and initiatives.
- Arabic was taught in the KG1 and KG2 levels for seven 30-minute lessons per week. The curriculum was planned to prepare students for the Arabic expectations in the elementary phase. Content was based on an adapted set of recognized standards for teaching Arabic in early years.

#### 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 child protection policy and procedures which were clearly defined and understood by the staff, the students and their parents. The school had provided regular and appropriate opportunities for students to discuss bullying and appropriate use of social media. Fire and evacuation drills were held regularly and all fire alarms and equipment were monitored regularly.


- All students were well supervised throughout the day, including arrival and pick-up times. Bus safety was a priority. The building was clean and security measures were in place for the protection of all students and staff.
- Supervision of the maintenance of the school environment was excellent. Comprehensive record keeping enabled the school to monitor its success in keeping students safe. Maintenance checks were frequent and an effective system was in place for all staff to report any area of concern. The school's medical staff stored medication securely, dealing efficiently with accidents and illness and contributing to the well-being of students. The science laboratory was in full compliance of all safety requirements.
- The school building and equipment were well maintained. Ramps and an elevator were available for students with difficulties as well as a handicapped restroom facility. The KG teachers made efficient use of additional outdoor areas as part of the learning environment. However, overcrowding in some areas had led to less than ideal learning spaces, especially for music and the special education department.
- Healthy living was systematically promoted and built into many aspects of school life. There were no unhealthy snacks available in the canteen and a presentation at the science fair focused on healthy eating and exercise. Best practices in hygiene were promoted through displays and posters in the appropriate areas of the school.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Care and support	Good	Good	Good	Good

- Students and staff enjoyed very positive relationships. There were good arrangement for managing students' behavior. The school used a range of effective strategies which encouraged and celebrated the exemplary behavior of those students achieving the school's high expectations.
- Procedures for managing students' attendance and punctuality were mostly effective. Events such as well-planned orientation days provided parents and students with a clear communication of the school's expectations of regular attendance.
- The identification of students with additional learning needs was thorough and used external screening assessments to ensure that the planned provision was accurate and well matched to support each individual's progress. A team of well qualified, experienced teachers effectively led the identification process during the referral of existing students and the admission process.
- The SEND committee had ensured the development of a good quality program which provided an appropriate level of support to those students who required it and, as a result, the progress of most of these students was at least good across the whole school.
- The pastoral care of students was ably led by a team of senior staff members and supported by the grade level teachers and section supervisors. Senior students accessed a successful program of advice and guidance to support their successful progression to higher education.

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

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

Good 

- Senior school leaders had demonstrated their firm commitment to creating a fully inclusive school by extending their specialist provision. The students had a direct access to the good support provided by the external special needs provider located on the school campus.
- There was a comprehensive and coherent process in place to identify students who required special educational services either on entry to the school or through a referral system for existing students. The needs of older students was in the process of being improved as an ongoing system of monitoring by the recently appointed head of the special needs department.
- Parents were fully involved with the education of their children, including the development of their children's IEPs. They received regular feedback on their children's progress and were actively encouraged to attend training workshops led by the SEND team and external specialist speakers.
- The SEND team provided appropriate and detailed modifications which were well matched to each SEND student's personal and academic needs. However, teachers in the mainstream classes did not always use these fully to ensure that all students could fully access learning opportunities. This inhibited the students' rates of progress.
- The SEND department had developed an extensive range of tracking and monitoring tools to measure progress against curriculum standards. This ensured that in better lessons, teachers focused on specific areas of curriculum need. However, these were not always directly linked to the IEP targets and therefore progress made against these was not sufficiently clear.

## 6. Leadership and management

### The effectiveness of leadership

Good

- The effectiveness of the leadership of the school was good. Led by the principal, members of the senior and middle leadership teams promoted a vision that upheld the ethos and values of Emirati culture and focused on students' academic outcomes. The school purposefully promoted the priorities of the UAE National Agenda and Dubai. While celebrating its strong links to the Emirati population, the school had created an inclusive environment for students of other nationalities and for those with special educational needs.
- Most leaders demonstrated secure knowledge of the curriculum and of effective teaching and assessment methods but these were not always reflected in classroom practices by some less experienced teachers. Leaders across the school had secured a positive learning environment that encouraged students to achieve and develop, both academically and personally.



- Relationships across the school were positive and the school's communication channels, both formal and informal, enabled most stakeholders to be involved in its plans and initiatives. Leadership roles were delegated effectively which ensured involvement of more staff members in key activities of the school and helped in promoting the school's leadership capacity.
- Leaders at all levels were aware that further improvements could be made as they developed their understanding of the pedagogical expectations of a US curriculum. Plans were already set to address potential challenges to whole school improvement and most leaders demonstrated sufficient capacity to sustain improvements.
- School leaders had been successful in improving some aspects of the school and in maintaining its overall quality of education. There were self-monitoring processes in place to assess the school's compliance to statutory and regulatory requirements, including requirements for all US curriculum schools.

#### School self-evaluation and improvement planning

Acceptable

- There were systems established at the school to gather data from many sources, including present and alumni students' inputs, for internal review and self-assessment. Most school leaders had a realistic view of the school's strengths and areas for development. However, the school self-evaluation document did not reflect that knowledge and at times there were gaps in interpreting the framework to reach accurate judgments.
- The school had regular and recorded processes for monitoring teaching and learning but these were not of consistent quality across the departments. Although the staff appraisal system used at the school was developmental and used as the basis for training programs, it did not sufficiently focus on students' outcomes in lessons.
- School leaders planned for improvement based on analysis of data, DSIB recommendations, regulatory expectations and the UAE National Agenda priorities. There were established systems in place to ensure adherence to desired objectives within the established timeframe. These had already resulted in some improvements and had contributed to a stable quality of education at the school.
- The school had diligently planned to meet the recommendations from the last inspection report and had been successful in partially meeting almost all of them. For example, data from internal and external benchmarks were used to modify curriculum content but had yet to be fully integrated to modify teaching strategies.

## Partnerships with parents and the community

Good

- Parents were highly complimentary of the school's community ethos and for ensuring the physical and emotional well-being of their children. Although parents were always welcomed at the school and found all school staff and leaders approachable, systematic mechanisms to gather the views of parents were yet to be formalized.
- The school had established several communication channels, such as the use of the school website, mobile applications and regular written circulars, to inform parents about their children's learning and school initiatives. Parents of children with special needs were well informed and involved in the school's educational plans for their children.
- The quality and frequency of reporting to parents about their children's progress in relation to expected standards kept parents well informed of their children's achievements. Standards based progress reports (SBPR) were effective in informing both students and parents of learning expectations. However, these were not used in all subjects.
- The school had established some links with the international and national communities which provided students, especially in the high school, with opportunities for social entrepreneurship and involvement. Such opportunities included a week long internship, participation in Model United Nations and workshops on leadership in the Young Leadership Development Program (YLDP).

## Governance

Weak ↓

- The school's governing board included the owner and three members representing the community, two of whom had a background in education. The board met twice a year and informally welcomed input from all stakeholders at the school.
- The governing board had not yet established formal mechanisms that ensured its members were fully informed about a range of stakeholders' views or about the full scope of the work of the school. This limited the board's efficiency in holding school leaders accountable for the performance of the school and for assessing its own contribution to the overall quality of education at the school.
- The school owner exerted some influence on the school's leadership and was supportive in ensuring all regulatory requirements were met. However, as a governing board, members were not fully utilizing their potential in supporting the school.




**Management, staffing, facilities and resources**

Acceptable ↓

- The school had comprehensive and effective measures in place for the efficient management of its day-to-day operations. Members of the school community were familiar with these procedures which ensured smooth transitions throughout the school day.
- All teaching staff had university degrees and were sufficient to ensure there were no gaps in students' learning experiences. Teachers benefited from regular training that was often appropriately aligned to the school's present priorities. However, only a few staff members were qualified in the pedagogy required for the effective implementation of the philosophy a US curriculum.
- The premises were just adequate for the growing number of students with sufficient number of specialist facilities. However, these specialist facilities were often crowded and did not allow for the extension of students' learning experiences.
- The school was adequately resourced to ensure satisfactory hands-on learning experiences. For example, manipulatives and technology in the KG allowed for focused 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 judgments. A summary of the survey statistics and comments from those who responded to the survey follows:

Responses to the surveys		
Responses received	Number	
<b>Parents*</b> 	2015-2016	37
	2014-2015	107
<b>Teachers</b> 	65	
<b>Students</b> 	116	

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

- Most parents, students and teachers were satisfied with the quality of education provided.
- Most parents were satisfied with their children's progress in key subject and thought skills were developing at a good pace. Most were confident about the quality of teaching, assessment and the curriculum taught at the school.
- Almost all parents and teachers felt that children were safe and the school, and most of them trusted the ways in which the school ensured cyber safety and dealt with bullying and other behavioral issues.
- Almost all teachers thought that the school was well led and had positive views of their line managers.
- Most teachers said they took an active part in school improvement work.

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