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School information

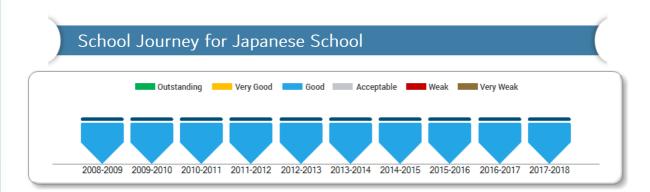
General information			
Location	Al Wasl		
Type of school	Private		
Opening year of school	1980		
Website	www.japanese.sch.ae		
Telephone	04-344-9119		
Address	P.O. Box 7149		
Principal	Akihiko Yamamoto		
Principal - Date appointed	4/2/2017		
Language of instruction	Japanese		
Inspection dates	11 to 13 December 2017		
Teachers /	Support staff		
Number of teachers	22		
Largest nationality group of teachers	Japanese		
Number of teaching assistants	3		
Teacher-student ratio	1:6		
Number of guidance counsellors	0		
Teacher turnover	25%		

Students				
Gender of students	Boys and girls			
Age range	4-15			
Grades or year groups	KG 1 to Grade 9			
Number of students on roll	121			
Number of children in pre-kindergarten	9			
Number of Emirati students	0			
Number of students with SEND	1			

Largest nationality group of students

Japanese

Curriculum				
Educational permit / Licence	Japanese			
Main curriculum	Japanese			
External tests and				
examinations	Japanese MoE			
	Japanese MoE Japan Ministry of Education			





The DSIB inspection process

In order to judge the overall quality of education provided by schools, inspectors consider the six standards of performance that form the basis of the UAE School Inspection Framework (the framework). They look at children's attainment and progress in key subjects, their learning skills and their personal and social development. They judge how effective teaching and the assessment of learning are across the school. Inspectors consider how well the school's curriculum, including activities inside and outside classrooms, meet the educational needs of all students. They judge how well schools protect and support children. In addition, inspectors judge the effectiveness of leadership, which incorporates governance, management, staffing and facilities. Inspection judgements are drawn from evidence gathered by the inspection team, including observation of students' learning in lessons, review of their work, discussions with students, meetings with the staff, parents and governors, and review of surveys completed by parents, teachers and students.

Judgements are made on a six-point scale

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





Summary of inspection findings 2017-2018

Japanese School was inspected by DSIB from 11 to 13 December 2017. The overall quality of education provided by the school is **good**. The section below summarises the inspection findings for each of the six performance indicators described in the framework.

Leadership and management

The leadership of the school remains good. There have been improvements since the last inspection, but the internal evaluations of teaching are too high. The Board of Trustees has positive effects upon the school and the links with parents are very productive. The staffing of the school is highly effective. The resources for teaching and learning are good, but the use of technologies is insufficient to support teaching and learning.

Students' achievement

Students of all ages are learning Japanese very well. They are also making strong progress learning English, mathematics and science. Their progress in learning Arabic is only acceptable. The learning skills of students are consistently good.

Students' personal and social development, and their innovation skills

The students' personal and social development are a strength of the school. They are very respectful and hardworking and they cooperate very well. They show good awareness of the UAE and Islamic culture. They are innovative in their studies only rarely.

Teaching and assessment

All teachers have good knowledge of their subjects and how students learn. Some are more skilled than others in promoting critical thinking. Internal assessments of learning, supported by external tests, are linked to the Japanese curriculum requirements.

Curriculum

This year the school provides Kindergarten (KG) for the first time. The curriculum meets the requirements of the Japan Ministry of Education (MoE), but the time for learning Arabic is not enough to enable students to make good progress.

The protection, care, guidance and support of students

Students are safe at school and on the buses. They are well supervised at all times, but there are a few safety risks at the school. Students are guided and supported, but the provision for those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) is weak.



What the school does best

- Students make very rapid progress in learning Japanese, mathematics and science in the elementary and junior high phases and good progress in learning English.
- The personal and social development of the students is strong.
- The quality of teaching is good and the assessment of learning is almost always good.
- There is good leadership, and outstanding links with parents and the local community.

Key recommendations

- Improve students' progress in learning Arabic and revise the timetable so that the time for learning it complies with the MoE regulations.
- Improve curriculum design so that students of all abilities are provided with appropriately challenging tasks in the key subjects.
- Improve the provision for students' safety by conducting thorough risk assessments and making the necessary changes as soon as possible.
- Improve the policies and procedures for identifying and supporting students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).
- Improve the accuracy of internal quality evaluations so that leaders and teachers can take action based upon a realistic understanding of the school's strengths and what needs to improve.



Overall School Performance

Good

1. Students' Achievement

		KG	Elementary	Junior High
Islamic education	Attainment	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable
	Progress	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable
Arabic as a first language	Attainment	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable
	Progress	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable
Arabic as an additional language	Attainment	Not applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable
	Progress	Not applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Japanese	Attainment	Very good	Outstanding	Outstanding
	Progress	Very good	Outstanding	Outstanding
English	Attainment	Not applicable	Good	Good
	Progress	Not applicable	Good	Good
Mathematics	Attainment	Acceptable	Very good	Very good
	Progress	Acceptable	Very good	Very good
Science	Attainment	Acceptable	Very good 🕇	Very good
	Progress	Acceptable	Very good 🕇	Very good
		KG	Elementary	Junior High
Learning skills		Good	Good	Good



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

	KG	Elementary	Junior High
Personal development	Very good	Very good	Very good
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Good	Good	Good
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Good	Very good	Very good
3. Teaching and assessme	nt		
	KG	Elementary	Junior High
Teaching for effective learning	Good	Good	Good
Assessment	Acceptable	Good	Good
4. Curriculum			
	KG	Elementary	Junior High
Curriculum design and implementation	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable
Curriculum adaptation	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

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

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

6. Leadership and management

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



National Priorities

National Agenda Parameter

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



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

National Agenda targets through the use of external benchmarking assessments.

The following section focuses on the impact of the National Agenda Parameter in meeting the school's targets:

Not Applicable.



Moral Education

- The curriculum for moral education is not well-defined and does not have an underlying structure of topics to develop critical thinking.
- The teaching of moral education emphasises respect and behaviour rather than enabling students to discuss and debate about situations which are difficult to resolve.
- Students' opinions are rarely considered to extend their thinking on contentious issues.
- Assessments of learning include observations of students' attitudes and their written work, which usually concerns descriptions of events in the school.

The school's implementation of the UAE moral education programme is under developed.

Social Studies

- The curriculum includes social studies, taught mainly in Japanese. The integration of UAE culture has been improved, but is still not consistent across all grades.
- The lack of challenge in social studies lessons means that many students do not extend their thinking.
- Students work independently and collaboratively to present news on current events in Japan and the UAE.
- Assessments of learning include formal testing in the higher grades. In the lower grades, teachers check students' written work and their attitudes toward this subject.

The school's implementation of the UAE social studies programme is under developed.



Innovation in Education

- In only a few lessons, such as mathematics, students are encouraged to think innovatively and collaborate with each other to solve word problems and explain their thinking to others.
- Students' participation in projects that develop the skills of innovation is limited. There are limited opportunities for student-initiated projects.
- Teachers are occasionally innovative in their ideas to encourage students' creativity. Only a minority of teachers use ICT to adapt the curriculum to the needs of students with a range of abilities.
- Opportunities for enterprise, innovation, creativity and social contribution within and beyond the school are limited.
- The leaders do not demonstrate a clear and accurate understanding of how to innovate. The school's vision does not include a culture of innovation.

The school's promotion of a culture of innovation is under developed.



Main inspection report

1. Students' achievements

		KG	Elementary	Junior High
Islamic education	Attainment	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable
	Progress	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable

- Not applicable
- Not applicable

		KG	Elementary	Junior High
Arabic as an additional language	Attainment	Not applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable
	Progress	Not applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable

- Most students in both phases demonstrate sufficient levels of attainment and make progress from their starting points. They understand their teachers' instructions and respond adequately. They make steady progress in writing and reading, and their abilities to speak Arabic are improving.
- Younger students show good progress in speaking, using words from their surroundings to create short phrases. Older students gain vocabulary and recognize past and present verb tenses. Beginner level students can easily name items related to their daily lives, activities and studies.
- Students' recent work shows adequate progress, especially in writing. They move gradually from recognising Arabic letters to gaining words and then to creating short phrases. Sometimes they use translation and Japanese letters in their Arabic writing, which leads to pronunciation difficulties.

For development

• Improve students' speaking skills by providing opportunities for them to hold more conversations in groups.



		KG	Elementary	Junior High
Japanese	Attainment	Very good	Outstanding	Outstanding
	Progress	Very good	Outstanding	Outstanding

- In the KG children develop vocabulary through singing songs and reading story books. They articulate phrases and words very well and are able to communicate feelings clearly. When writing and reading, all children are able to recognise all Japanese characters and read short, simple sentences.
- The older students' listening and speaking skills are strong. They express their opinions clearly and listen to their teachers attentively. Students can exchange ideas and give presentations. They can analyse, critique and role play.
- The students' writing and reading comprehension skills are excellent. Students have been making very strong progress in developing their proficiency in Japanese over time.

- Enable students to use learning technologies when learning Japanese.
- Develop critical thinking skills in Japanese lessons.

		KG	Elementary	Junior High
English	Attainment	Not applicable	Good	Good
	Progress	Not applicable	Good	Good

- In the elementary grades, students' speaking and listening skills are mostly strong. In the junior high, students have a good grasp of key grammar concepts and vocabulary.
- Across all grades, most students are able to communicate effectively with their peers. However, students with native English speaking competencies are not challenged appropriately and thus make little real progress.
- As a result of interactive tasks in the English conversation classes students make better progress.

For development

• Provide a greater level of challenge to enable all groups of students, and particularly those with native English speaking competencies, to make more rapid progress.



		KG	Elementary	Junior High
Mathematics	Attainment	Acceptable	Very good	Very good
	Progress	Acceptable	Very good	Very good

- The results of standardised tests indicate that the majority of elementary and junior high students attain well above the curriculum expectations. Most develop very good understanding of mathematical concepts. They work independently to solve problems.
- Most students have a very good grasp of number, decimals, fractions and how to convert between them. A majority of older students understand basic trigonometry and how to work out the volume of a sphere. Only a minority can relate their learning to real life.
- Most students make very good progress because they regularly revisit calculations to improve their methods of working. In the Kindergarten, children are learning to count and use mathematical vocabulary appropriately. Their ability to apply understanding in practical ways is less well developed.

• Enable all groups of students to link their mathematical learning to real life contexts.

		KG	Elementary	Junior High
Science	Attainment	Acceptable	Very good 🕈	Very good
	Progress	Acceptable	Very good 🕈	Very good

- In the Kindergarten, children acquire knowledge of science primarily through exploration of the natural world. However, skills such as making and testing predictions are not developing. The older students' achievements in lessons are very strong. These are reflected by the outcomes of internal and external tests and in their notebooks.
- Students' knowledge and understanding across all science disciplines are equally strong in the elementary and junior high phases, as is their development of the skills required for scientific experimentation. Students' skills in the use of learning technologies to support scientific enquiry are developing too slowly across all three phases.
- Due to good lesson planning and teachers' questioning skills, students in the upper elementary and junior high grades are beginning to demonstrate higher order thinking and the skills of application and scientific analysis.

- Enable KG children to predict, design and present the findings of their own investigations.
- Improve students' use of learning technologies to support scientific enquiry, research and scientific modelling.

	DCCCR		
	KG	Elementary	Junior High
Learning Skills	Good	Good	Good

- Students are eager to learn and they enjoy their lessons. They collaborate well and can assess their work and make improvements. Students are confident and keen to demonstrate what they know, such as presenting their research about the UAE.
- Students make meaningful connections in their learning, particularly in Arabic when links are made with UAE social studies. In science, students use mathematical skills to support their investigations. The KG children show very effective learning skills in the outdoor areas when they explore and investigate independently.
- Students complete research and find things out for themselves, using books for information. Although older students use technology occasionally to support their learning, this is not consistently done in all grades.

• Develop the use of technology, when appropriate, to support students' learning.

2. Students' personal and social development, and their innovation skills					
	KG	Elementary	Junior High		
Personal development	Very good	Very good	Very good		

- Students at all grade levels have positive and responsible attitudes. They work well together when cleaning the school and during break times. Generally, students take care of each other and organise themselves very well.
- Students are sensitive to the needs of others and relationships with adults are respectful and considerate. However, a very small number of students in the elementary grades are unaware of the expectations for behaviour.
- Students understand the value of healthy eating and exercise. They eat nourishing food and exercise daily. They keep the school premises clean.

	DCCCR	1	
	KG	Elementary	Junior High
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Good	Good	Good

- Students have secure knowledge, at age appropriate levels, about Islamic acts of worship such as fasting in Ramadan, and they appreciate the values of Islam, especially when helping others.
- In the junior high phase students can speak about the importance of the UAE's National Day. In elementary grades, students can give examples of local heritage, such as diving for pearls. The KG children can name several landmarks of Dubai.
- Students enjoy the multi-cultural environment in the UAE. They show deep appreciation of their own and other world cultures, such as the project 'what does the world eat for breakfast?' They are keen to show their understanding of other world cultures in art and in music performances.

	KG	Elementary	Junior High
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Good	Very good	Very good

- Students across all grade levels care for their school. They show a strong work ethic and are highly responsible. In the Kindergarten, children sometimes take the initiative to make independent decisions.
- Students are part of a well-established community. They care for their school and willingly participate in activities that have positive effects, such as the daily cleaning.
- Partnerships with both Japanese and local schools offer valuable opportunities for students to take part in meaningful learning experiences and become active citizens. Opportunities for innovation and entrepreneurship remain limited.

• Encourage students to frequently initiate and lead projects that benefit the community and develop innovation and entrepreneurial skills.



	KG	Elementary	Junior High
Teaching for effective learning	Good	Good	Good

- All teachers have good knowledge of their subjects and how students learn. They use time well and enable students to be successful learners. Resources are adequate for teaching the key subjects. Teachers' dialogues with students helps them improve.
- Teachers of mathematics and science often use questions effectively to promote reflection and meaningful discussions. These help students to understand topics thoroughly. This is less evident in other subjects.
- Teachers know their students well and many plan lessons accordingly. However, plans may not take account of the needs of different groups of students. When tasks are undemanding, students complete the work but do not achieve as well as they can.

	KG	Elementary	Junior High
Assessment	Acceptable	Good	Good

- Internal assessments, supported by external tests, are linked to the Japanese curriculum. Students' achievements are compared with those following the same curriculum in other Japanese international schools. The KG children's starting points in language and mathematics are not accurately assessed, and so their progress cannot be clearly measured.
- Teachers have a good knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of their students and provide quality assessments to support their next steps in learning. However, assessment information is not consistently used to make the necessary modifications to the curriculum or adjust teaching strategies to meet the needs of individual students.
- Although assessment information is routinely shared among teachers so that they can evaluate their own performances, it is not used as effectively to track students' progress systematically.

- Make more effective use of assessment information to adapt the curriculum and teaching strategies to better meet the needs of individual students.
- Establish the starting points of children in the Kindergarten to enable more reliable tracking of their progress in learning Japanese and mathematics.



4. Curriculum			
	KG	Elementary	Junior High
Curriculum design and implementation	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable

- The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum following the Japanese MoE guidelines, while accommodating the expectations of the host country. Although there is now increased time for learning Arabic, it is not enough to comply with the regulations or to enable students to learn the language effectively.
- The curriculum meets the needs of the large majority of students who will be returning to Japan and reflects their parents' wishes to build identity as Japanese citizens. Although there is adequate progression in most key subjects, the focus is mainly on knowledge acquisition and learning activities are usually based upon the textbooks.
- Curriculum enrichment includes visits to other schools in Dubai that offer different international curricula, three themed days per year and visits to government institutions. These significantly broaden the experiences and awareness of students.

	KG	Elementary	Junior High
Curriculum adaptation	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

- The inclusion of English, Arabic and Islamic education broadens students' multicultural perspectives and develops their competence to participate in a globalised society in the future. It promotes the development of literacy skills in Japanese through daily reading time.
- The curriculum promotes self-management skills as well as collaborative attitudes through activities such as daily cleaning, homeroom exercises and Student Council activities. Extracurricular activities provide opportunities for students to follow their interests, especially in sport, art and music.
- Although the curriculum is effective in meeting the needs of most learners, teachers make few adjustments to match their students' abilities. It does not effectively meet the needs of students who are gifted and talented or the lower attaining students. Students learn about the UAE's culture in integrated studies lessons.

- Revise the timetable so that the time for learning Arabic complies with the MoE requirements.
- Improve curriculum design so that students of all abilities are provided with appropriately challenging tasks in the key subjects.



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

-	KG	Elementary	Junior High
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection /	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
safeguarding	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

- There is an adequate safeguarding policy but procedures for responding to child protection concerns are not documented. Emergency drills take place during the year and a fire drill that took place during the inspection was well managed. Although there are regular, logged checks for repair and maintenance, the school lacks a strategic approach to risk-management.
- Buildings and equipment are adequately maintained but children have access to some open areas that are unsafe or harbour hazardous debris or materials. Only adult supervision protects children from potential harm in these unsafe areas.
- The school has an effective clinic managed by a suitably qualified nurse. Students are well supervised on school buses. The school promotes healthy lifestyle choices, including monitoring the body mass indices of students, and working with families to ensure that sensible choices are made regarding diet and exercise.

	KG	Elementary	Junior High
Care and support	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good

- Teachers' management of their students' behaviour is effective. They have established positive, courteous relationships and a culture of learning and development. Teachers and students show great respect for each other at all times.
- Attendance at school and punctuality are very well promoted so that learning time is maximised.
- The school's procedures for identifying students with special educational needs and disabilities and plans to support them are not consistently implemented. Although students' personal development is monitored, there is no assigned adult with whom students can discuss any concerns.

- Urgently make safe all areas accessed by students and immediately remove any hazardous debris or materials.
- Strengthen and consistently implement procedures used to identify students who may need additional support.
- Remove any barriers to learning for all groups of students in all subjects so that all students achieve as well as they can.
- Review the procedures for reporting students' concerns and provide appropriate information.



Inclusion of students with SEND (Students of determination)

Provision and outcomes for students with SEND

Weak

- School leaders have devised a detailed inclusion policy. However, they are not well
 informed about how to support students with SEND. School leaders have not appointed an
 inclusion champion or governor with responsibility for inclusion. As a result, teachers are
 unaware of the new UAE requirements.
- There are procedures upon entry to identify students with SEND but these are not consistently applied. There is no member of staff accountable for identifying and ensuring the needs of students with SEND are met.
- School leaders encourage parents to work in partnership with them. They receive information regularly about their children's attainment. Parents' contributions support learning skills and positive attitudes towards school.
- Tracking and monitoring tools are not used well enough by teachers. However, they succeed in raising students' self-esteem and fostering positive attitudes towards learning.
- Curriculum modifications are under developed in some subjects but strong in others, such as music. Information from assessments of learning is not used well enough to adapt the curriculum or inform teaching strategies.

- Appoint an inclusion governor and inclusion champion to promote and monitor the provision for students with SEND.
- Implement procedures to identify students' needs and plan appropriate interventions in lessons.
- Establish a cycle of assessing, planning, monitoring and reviewing students' learning.
- Provide training on all aspects of inclusion for all teachers.



6. Leadership and management

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

- The quality of leadership across the school varies, as some leaders are more effective than others. Senior leaders have maintained very high quality outcomes during transition of leadership. Leaders share a common vision and set a direction that results in students receiving good quality Japanese schooling.
- There are improvements since the previous inspection, including safety measures, time provided for learning Arabic and some progress on the provision for the one student with SEND. The school's internal evaluations are accurate regarding the academic and social outcomes for students, but too generous when measuring the quality of provision by adults.
- The school very successfully engages parents in the life of the school. The Parent Teacher Association is active on a daily basis. Communication strategies are very effective at keeping parents informed. Parents are highly appreciative of their children's detailed reports, which are combined with regular and informative parent conferences.
- The Board of Trustees is comprised of Japanese expatriates, including those from the Consulate and the business community but teachers and students are not represented. The principal reports directly to the board on a range of issues. The board has a positive influence upon the school but members lack understanding of the process and results of school inspections.
- The school is well-organised and operates efficiently. The premises and specialist facilities are adequate. The new Kindergarten provides spacious accommodation. Teachers are well-qualified and small class sizes enable students to achieve well. The resources for teaching and learning are generally good but learning technologies are not used sufficiently.

- Improve teamwork across subjects to enhance the continuity of learning by students between phases.
- Improve the accuracy of internal evaluations of provision by adults to inform improvement planning.
- The Board of Trustees should include representatives of teachers and students.



The views of parents, teachers and senior students

Before the inspection, the views of the parents, teachers and senior secondary students were surveyed. Key messages from each group were considered during the inspection and these helped to form inspection judgements.

Students No. of responses = 0	No. of responses = 55	Teachers No. of responses = 19	
	Overall, I am satisfied with the quality of education at my child's school	Overall, I am satisfied with the quality of education at my school	
Not Applicable	98% 2% Strongly Agree/Agree Strongly Disagree/Disagree	100%	

🛱 Students	• There are no senior students at this school.
Parents	 Parents are very positive in their opinions about the school's provision and outcomes. A minority of parents indicate that their children are not developing their Arabic skills well.
Teachers	• Teachers are very positive in their opinions of the school's provision and outcomes.



What happens next?

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

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

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

Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau Knowledge and Human Development Authority

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