




North American
International School

 Curriculum: US

Overall Rating:

Acceptable



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

Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al-Maktoum



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School information



General information

Location	Al Mizhar
Type of school	Private
Opening year of school	2007
Website	www.naischool.ae
Telephone	0097142884844
Address	P.O.Box 20315 Mizhar, Dubai, UAE
Principal	Mrs. Sonia Mahajan
Language of instruction	English
Inspection dates	20 to 23 March 2017

Teachers / Support staff

Number of teachers	63
Largest nationality group of teachers	Indian
Number of teaching assistants	18
Teacher-student ratio	1:10
Number of guidance counselors	2
Teacher turnover	14%

Students

Gender of students	Boys and girls
Age range	3-18
Grades or year groups	KG1-Grade 12
Number of students on roll	606
Number of children in pre-kindergarten	None
Number of Emirati students	195
Number of students with SEND	83
Largest nationality group of students	Emirati

Curriculum

Educational permit / Licence	US
Main curriculum	US / MOE
External tests and examinations	SAT
Accreditation	NEASC (candidate)
National Agenda benchmark tests	MAP



The DSIB inspection process



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

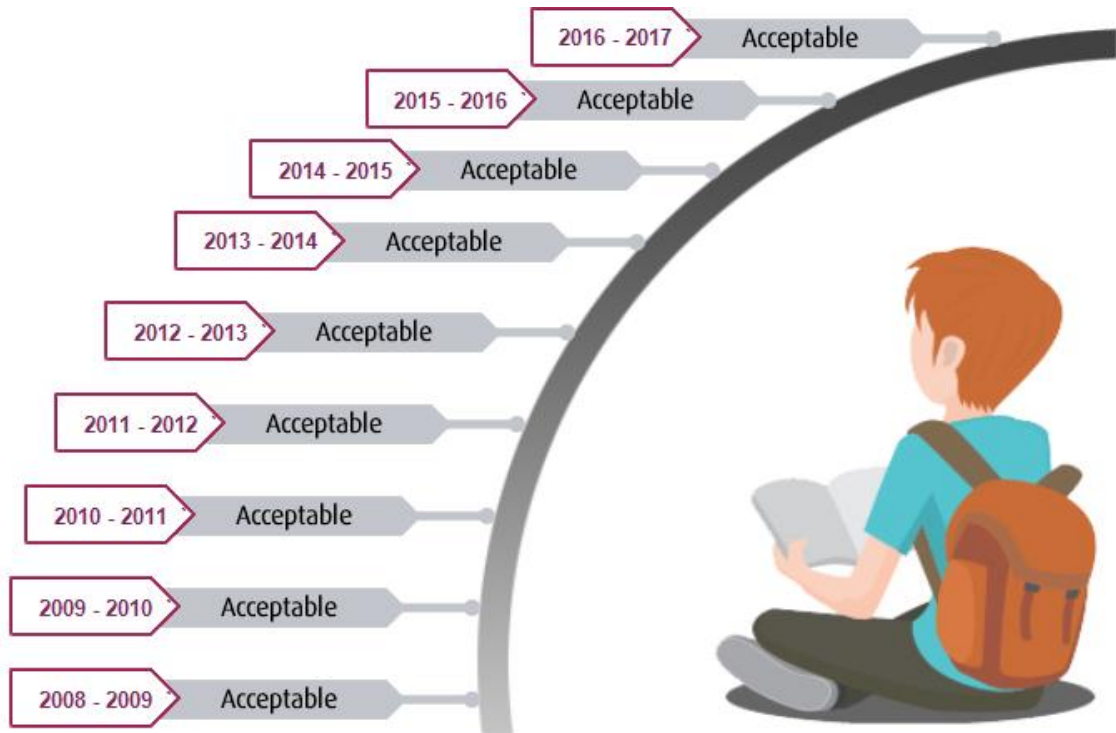
Inspection judgements are drawn from evidence gathered by the inspection team, including observation of students' learning in lessons, review of their work, discussions with students, meetings with the staff, parents and governors, and review of surveys completed by parents, teachers and students.

Judgements are made on a six-point scale

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

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

Inspection journey for North American International School



- The school, which opened in 2007, is located in Al Mizhar. The roll has increased from 501 students in 2014 to 606 in 2017. The principal has been in post since 2008.
- The last two inspections have acknowledged strengths in: progress and attainment in science across the school; the commitment of senior staff to implement the school's vision and mission, including aligning the curriculum fully to US standards; the improvements in Kindergarten (KG), and the increased number of judgements rated as good.
- Recommendations over the previous three years have focussed on the need to: improve the quality of teaching; develop students' learning skills, including critical thinking, independent learning and inquiry; align internal assessments with external standards and use the results to improve the curriculum and teaching; enhance the identification of and support for students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND); and increase the rigor of school self-evaluation activities.

Summary of inspection findings 2016-2017



North American International School was inspected by DSIB from 20 to 23 March 2017. The overall quality of education provided by the school is **acceptable**. The section below summarises the inspection findings for each of the six performance indicators described in the framework.

- Students' attainment and progress in Islamic education and Arabic languages are almost exclusively acceptable. The progress made by KG children and students at other phases in English, mathematics and science is mainly good. Attainment in science is good, but attainment in English and mathematics is mostly acceptable. Students have well developed learning skills, though less so at the middle phase.
- All key aspects of students' personal and social development are of good quality. Students behave well and have positive attitudes. They have good understanding of Emirati heritage, Islamic values and the impact of these on life in Dubai. However, their understanding of other world cultures is less developed. Students' social responsibility is good across all phases.
- The school's systems for assessing students' attainment and using the results are well designed and generally applied effectively in classrooms. Teachers' skills of planning and implementing differentiated learning tasks and activities to meet the needs of different groups of students, is improving. Teachers' summative reports to students and their parents are helpful, but their written comments to students on their work are not always sufficiently detailed.
- The overall structure of the curriculum is well designed. Adaptations to meet the needs of different groups of students are at an adequate level, with strengths observed in KG.
- Staff effectively implement the school's systems for keeping all students' safe and healthy, well cared-for and supported. Provision for students with SEND has improved and they mostly make good progress.
- Almost all aspects of leadership and management are carried out to a good level. The school's processes for self-evaluation, while at times leading to over-estimates of quality, are carried out well, and improvement plans are mostly effective. Partnerships with parents are positive. Governors now meet more regularly and discuss key aspects such as teaching and attainment.

What the school does best

- Children in KG and students across the school mostly make good progress in English, mathematics and science. Children are enthusiastic learners, and students in other phases, apart from the middle phase, have well-developed learning skills. Attainment in science is good across the school, as is attainment in mathematics at the KG and elementary phases.
- The school is successful in developing students' personal and social skills. Across all phases, students have positive attitudes and behave well. They have a broad understanding of Islamic values and are increasingly able to show social responsibility and innovative ideas. The school's positive ethos is built on positive relationships between and among groups of stakeholders.
- The school's effective arrangements for keeping all students safe and healthy, and supporting them in their academic and personal development.
- Senior staff provide effective leadership in the development of partnership with parents. Parents benefit from many opportunities to be involved in the school's work. Communication is effective, and parents have opportunities to comment on the draft school improvement plan.

Recommendations

- Governors should hold the school to account more effectively, particularly in relation to all aspects of the school's work that are less than good.
- Governors and senior leaders should support staff to implement measures to improve students' progress and attainment by:
 - checking that professional development activities are targeted at the aspects and subjects most in need
 - ensuring that leaders in Islamic education and Arabic languages construct and implement high quality improvement plans, which focus on improving teaching, assessment and improved student learning outcomes.
- Build on recent improvements to the quality of lessons by implementing more consistency in teaching particularly in the middle phase, with the aim of improving students' progress and attainment where necessary.
- Continue with the school's drive to implement a curriculum fully compliant with KHDA requirements for US schools, and ensure that curriculum adaptations meet the needs of all groups of students, particularly those who are lower and higher-attaining.

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 schools' targets:

- Attainment based on the National Agenda Parameter benchmark tests in English, mathematics and science is not secure.
- The school meets the registration requirements for the National Agenda Parameter.
- Staff have analyzed data from Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) tests and have identified strengths and weaknesses. The school has drafted an action plan to address the issues identified and has generated individualized targets for students based on the data. The targets have only been set recently and, partly as a result, the school is yet to monitor students' progress towards meeting these targets.
- The English, mathematics and science departments are adapting their curricula to address gaps and meet the needs of students. English teachers are increasing the use of comprehension reading passages and an emphasis on vocabulary and critical thinking. In mathematics, students have opportunities to carry out problem solving exercises, relating mathematics to science, technology, or engineering (STEM), and utilizing mathematical software.
- Implementing the National Agenda is a priority in the school. Lesson planning has been modified to highlight higher-order thinking, differentiated tasks for different groups, and to stress cross-curricular links. In science, teachers focus on increasing opportunities for inquiry in lessons. The school is aware of the need to help teachers to provide opportunities for critical thinking, including improved questioning techniques.
- Assessment information has been communicated to students. They understand the results of their cognitive ability tests (CAT4) and MAP scores and the targets they are working towards attaining. Students across middle and high school use learning technologies to conduct age-appropriate research, and analyze information.

Overall, the school's improvement towards achieving its National Agenda targets meets expectations.

Innovation in Education

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









Promoting a culture of innovation:

- Students have some opportunities to use learning technologies to carry out research, and are developing innovative approaches in a range of activities. For example in information technology (IT) lessons students' program computers, and design in three dimensions. Weekly activities sessions offer students choice to develop their interests and abilities, and classroom tasks often focus on real-world or cross-curricular links to encourage innovative thinking. Senior leaders are aware of the need to develop students as flexible thinkers, and actively seek ways to improve teachers' capabilities to support this.

Overall school performance

Acceptable

1 Students' achievement

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

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Learning skills	Good	Good ↑	Acceptable	Good

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

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

3. Teaching and assessment

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

4. Curriculum

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Curriculum design and implementation	Good	Good	Good	Good
Curriculum adaptation	Good ↑	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	Good	Good	Good	Good
Care and support	Good ↑	Good ↑	Good ↑	Good ↑


6. Leadership and management

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


Main inspection report



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

- A majority of children make better than expected progress from their starting points in English and attain levels above curriculum standards. In lessons, they demonstrate good levels of speaking and understanding. A few can talk confidently and enthusiastically about their work. Most children are developing the ability to read simple words. A few read fluently and understand what they have read. Progress in writing is better than expected, with a majority of children able to write one or two short sentences with invented spelling.
- In mathematics, a majority of children make better than expected progress from their starting points and reach levels that are above curriculum standards. Most children have a secure grasp of the concept of number and can count to 20 using one-to-one correspondence. They can add and subtract single digit numbers, sometimes using objects and pictorial representation. A majority of the children can identify two-dimensional shapes and some can describe their properties in terms of the number of sides.
- A majority of children make better than expected progress in science from their starting points and reach levels that are above the curriculum standards in terms of knowledge, skills and understanding. Most students can identify living things such as plants and animals. They can describe different types of weather. They are developing an understanding of solids, liquids and gasses and a few are beginning to use the skills of observation and prediction. For most children, the scientific skills of inquiry and investigation are only emerging.

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

- In Islamic education, most students demonstrate levels of attainment that are in line with curriculum standards. Most students have appropriate knowledge about Islamic concepts such as the Pillars of Islam and Faith. Students can recall facts of the life of the Prophet (PBUH) and that of his companions. Students' memorization and recitation skills are adequately developed. A majority of students make good progress as measured against the lesson objectives. They show good knowledge of Seerah, and they understand how to apply the Islamic values in their life.
- In Arabic as a first language, most students attain levels that are in line with the Ministry of Education (MoE) curriculum standards. Most students have strong listening skills and can respond appropriately. They can read and adequately understand a variety of textbook topics. They have sufficient knowledge of the basic concepts of grammar such as parts of speech, and how to change a singular number to the plural number. Their free writing is restricted to short, underdeveloped first drafts. Against modest lesson objectives, most students make expected levels of progress.
- In Arabic as an additional language, most students demonstrate knowledge, skills and understanding that are in line with curriculum standards. Most students can read, spell and copy familiar text from their textbooks. Most can learn new vocabulary related to topics they are studying, such as clothes, seasons and family, and they can use these words to write simple sentences. However their independent writing skills are not strong. Overall, most students make acceptable progress from their starting points in lessons and in relation to curriculum standards.
- External and internal assessments in English indicate a weaker picture of attainment compared to the standards observed in lessons and in students' writing. In classrooms, attainment for most students is consistently in line with curriculum standards. Students' speaking and listening skills are the most developed, closely followed by reading and then writing. Lesson observations, evidence from students' journals and the school's internal test results indicate better than expected progress in relation to students' starting points. Progress is quicker in the early grades.
- In mathematics, a majority of students attain above curriculum expectations, although in some grades they do not perform as well as students internationally. They can compose and decompose plane and solid shapes, organize, represent and interpret data and understand concepts of area and attributes of three-dimensional shapes. External benchmarking tests highlight weaknesses in aspects of number and measurement. Students' skills in solving problems and applying their mathematical knowledge to real life situations is developing positively. The majority of students make better than expected progress in lessons from their starting points.

- In science, a majority of students attain at levels above age related curriculum standards and make good progress in lessons. Their knowledge, skills and understanding of science concepts, vocabulary and ideas is strong, and students frequently conduct age-appropriate experiments and record results accurately. Their skills of inquiry and critical thinking are developing, as are those needed for problem solving. They are encouraged to “think like scientists”. Grade 1 students are able to respond to questions about why science is important and make connections between it and real life.

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


- In Islamic education, most students demonstrate levels of knowledge, skills and understanding that are in line with curriculum standards. They can talk about the congregational and traveller prayers and the six rights of Muslims. Most students know the biography of the Prophet Mohammed (PBUH), and have secure knowledge about the early years of Islam, showing knowledge of key battles. Most students make expected levels of progress in understanding Islamic values. Their ability to link knowledge to real life is under developed.
- In Arabic as a first language, most students attain levels that are in line with MoE curriculum standards. Students’ creative writing is restricted to short sentences, which often contain spelling and grammatical mistakes. They have strong listening skills, but do not consistently use standard Arabic when speaking. Against modest lesson objectives, most students make progress in line with curriculum standards. Students make stronger progress in developing their reading comprehension ability than they do in their writing skills. Overall, girls make better progress than boys.
- In Arabic as an additional language, most students demonstrate knowledge, skills and understanding that are in line with curriculum standards. Most students acquire new vocabulary related to professions, hobbies, and gifts. They can read and understand familiar texts with few errors. They understand their teachers’ instructions and can respond to them orally, using simple phrases. However, their conversation skills are inconsistent and their independent writing is limited to a few sentences. In lessons and in their recent work, most students make expected progress when measured from their starting points in learning
- Students’ attainment in English in lessons and in their journals is broadly in line with curriculum standards. Students continue to develop their abilities to communicate orally and begin to evaluate a range of texts to gain an understanding of an author's purpose. Progress as shown in lessons and in students' books is in line with expectations. External data is less positive, although the school’s own internal test results suggest a more encouraging picture. Girls are achieving at a better level than boys.

- In mathematics, most students attain levels that are in line with curriculum standards. MAP test results for some grades indicate attainment below international standards. However, progress in lessons and in their recent work is better than expected when measured against curriculum standards. The lessons in which the students make the best progress are those in which they are challenged to extend and apply their mathematical thinking. Students can write, interpret and use algebraic expressions and solve equations. The introduction of questions related to science, technology and engineering supports students' problem solving.
- A majority of students attain at a level above curriculum standards in science and make better than expected progress as measured by internal tests and in lessons. Their work is of a good standard. Students are improving their skills of critical thinking and problem solving. As a result they are comfortable with increasingly complex ideas and concepts in science. By the end of this phase, the majority of students are well prepared for work in the high school phase. Their understanding of a range of curricular appropriate concepts and ideas as well as their development of the necessary skills, is strong.

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

- In Islamic education, most students attain levels that are in line with MoE curriculum expectations. Consequently they have a basic knowledge of Islamic concepts. They can identify and talk about rules for fasting and etiquettes of zakat and sadaqah. Students are knowledgeable of the main aspects of the life of Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) such as the farewell hajj. In lessons and in their most recent work, the majority of students are making expected progress in reciting what they have learned of the Holy Qur'an. Their ability to link what they learn to their own lives is limited.
- In Arabic as a first language, most students attain levels that are in line with MoE curriculum standards. Most students in Grade 12 can read and provide reasonable analysis of a short story in terms of language use, main ideas and writer's perspective. When responding to questions about a text, students tend to use colloquial expressions and often give short answers. Their writing, especially of boys, is restricted; the outcomes are short and underdeveloped paragraphs. Against modest lesson objectives, most students make expected levels of progress.
- In Arabic as an additional language, the attainment of most students is in line with curriculum expectations taking into account their years of study. Most students can read familiar texts. They can comprehend the key words and the main idea, but not all of the detail. Their writing skills are limited to short sentences and copying text. They have acceptable listening skills, but responses to oral questions are often short and they lack confidence. In lessons and in their recent work, most students make expected levels of progress. In general, girls achieve better than boys.

- Most students attain in line with age appropriate curriculum standards in English. This is confirmed by their performance in lessons and the writing in their journals. The school's tests and external assessments do not always reflect this. By Grade 12, students can discuss concepts in depth, and writing is more extensive and well-structured. Progress in lessons, especially in the upper grades, is better than expected in relation to the curriculum standards. This progress is reflected in the school's internal assessments at all grades.
- In mathematics, most students attain in line with curriculum standards. However, the standards achieved in external SAT examinations, by Grade 12 students are not as strong.. External tests indicate that trigonometry is an area that needs further development. Progress in lessons and in students' work is better than expected. While in class, most students are able to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the concept of functions. Their ability to construct viable arguments and think critically is not fully developed.
- A majority of science students attain levels above age-related curriculum standards. Students also make better than expected progress in relation to their individual starting points and the curriculum standards. Students can comprehend and manage increasingly sophisticated work as they move from Grade 9 to Grade 12. Their skills of inquiry are well developed, as are those needed to perform scientific calculations. They conduct research on a regular basis using learning technologies such as laptops and tablets, but this research is not particularly rigorous and it does not require a high level of critical thinking.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Learning skills	Good	Good 	Acceptable	Good

- Students generally demonstrate positive attitudes to learning, and when given the opportunity, they can take responsibility for their own learning. In Arabic as an additional language, girls show more interest and take more responsibility than boys.
- Students are confident and clear communicators. In the better lessons, they collaborate effectively to discuss and share ideas and complete tasks. In the less effective lessons, students' co-operation is limited at times by the lack of challenging tasks. In general, learning skills are developed less effectively at the middle phase.
- Students in many lessons take account of real life applications and recognise cross-curricular links. For example, mathematics lessons often involve students in problem-solving, related to science or technology topics.
- Students' use of learning technologies, though limited overall, is developing. Middle and high school students use tablet computers to do basic research. Students' critical thinking and problem-solving skills are not fully developed in most subjects. However, in KG, teachers are introducing children to age-appropriate critical thinking and are using learning technologies to discover things for themselves.

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

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Personal development	Good	Good	Good	Good

- Students have positive and responsible attitudes, especially in the high school phase. They are respectful of their school's environment and demonstrate a sense of pride in their school. Across all phases, students are courteous and respectful to each other at all times. In lessons, most understand the procedures, are self-reliant and respond well to critical feedback.
- Positive behavior prevails throughout the school. Students work together to resolve differences. Happiness monitors and the school's core values program, help to give students the tools to maintain positive behavior, thus creating a safer school. The school supports this with assemblies showcasing children performing short skits about anti-bullying.
- Student-staff relationships are friendly. Students are sensitive to the needs and differences of others, resulting in respectful and considered relationships. They offer help and support to each other when needed.
- Students participate in a brief morning exercise program as part of assemblies before lessons begin. Children in the KG and students in elementary make healthy food choices. Older students bring healthy food from home. The average attendance for the school is very good. Punctuality is good overall. Students fully understand the importance of prompt attendance and its impact on learning outcomes.

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

- Students have a strong appreciation of Islamic values. They understand the relevance of these values and their impact on everyday life in the UAE. They understand and appreciate the values of modesty, honesty, respect for women, and tolerance. They talk about these values in mature, age-appropriate ways.
- Students demonstrate a great respect for Emirati heritage and culture. They speak in detail about famous buildings in the UAE. They confidently share their understanding about cultural activities and celebrations such as the National Day, the Flag Day, Eid Al-Adha and Eid Al Fitr. Students have a good knowledge of Emirati traditions, food and popular activities.
- Students demonstrate a good understanding and awareness of their own cultures and show an appreciation of some other cultures from around the world. They show respect to their peers who are from other nationalities, or have different languages and religions.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Good	Good	Good	Good

- Students understand their roles as members of the school community and participate in many extra-curricular activities, such as sports. During school assemblies, students participate in performances to raise awareness on a range of issues. For example they share strategies about combating bullying. They contribute to worthy causes by raising money for Dubai Cares and other charities.
- Students show positive work ethics, and take responsibility to improve their achievement and progress by working hard and seeking help from family members and teachers. During a business fair, they raised money for charity by selling their own home made products. Students in the high school value opportunities for inquiry in their projects and enjoy being creative.
- Students care for their school and participate in activities to improve the environment through recycling projects, green spaces, and the planting of trees. Students attend and present at the 'Green Hope' conference hosted by the student council. They understand the impact of humans on the environment and suggest possible strategies to reduce pollution, such as car-pooling and recycling.

3. Teaching and assessment

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

- Almost all teachers have a good knowledge of their subjects. Most know how students learn, though this knowledge is applied less securely by teachers of Arabic and Islamic education, particularly in the middle school phases. In KG, children's opportunities to investigate, inquire and make choices are timetabled rather than being integrated flexibly in lessons.
- Lesson planning is consistent across phases and subjects and is often supported by input from the curriculum leaders. Teaching plans are most clearly linked to curriculum standards in English, mathematics and science. Learning objectives are often described as tasks, rather than providing details of the skills or understanding which the lesson is intended to develop. This lack of clarity about objectives often limits students' progress.
- In KG, teacher-student interactions promote thoughtful discussions involving the use of questioning, dialogue and a time for reflection. In other phases and subjects, the quality of questioning is variable. It is stronger in the elementary and high school phases, particularly in English, where it is open, and encourages debate and discussion. In Arabic, too often, questioning is narrow and does not promote the use of Arabic language by students.
- Teachers in KG make good use of their assistants to help them to meet the needs of different children. In other phases, teachers' planning reflects different expectations for those who need support or challenge. In many lessons, challenging tasks are not consistently evident. This is particularly the case in many Arabic lessons.

- Providing opportunities for critical thinking is a developing feature in many lessons. It is a stronger feature in English in the high school than in other subjects or phases. Problem solving is a characteristic of mathematics and science teaching. Overall though, many teachers do not systematically develop students' learning skills, such as collaboration and taking responsibility for their own learning. This limits students' abilities to engage in discussion or to become independent learners.


	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Assessment	Good	Good	Good	Good

- There are consistent assessment processes across phases and subjects. Grading is standardized accurately. In the KG and elementary phases, internal assessment is less formal, while students in the middle and high school phases have termly summative tests. The rigor of these tests has been improved. Student performance, clearly linked to curriculum standards for English, mathematics and science, is recorded on a common tracker.
- External assessments are administered regularly to determine attainment and progress of all students, including those in KG, in most subjects. External test results do not accurately reflect the levels of student performance in most lessons.
- The school has consistent systems for analyzing internal test data at individual student, class, grade and phase levels. The levels of challenge in Islamic education and Arabic tests are low. The school is beginning to use external data to group students and identify their strengths and weaknesses. The effective use of assessment to set targets, monitor and track the progress of students with SEND, is much improved this year.
- The analysis of assessment information is effectively used to make curriculum changes. In English lessons, reading comprehension and vocabulary enrichment are given a high priority. Teachers in all subjects make use of rubrics to assess understanding. This is a strength of English, mathematics and science lessons, particularly in the high school phase. Increasingly, critical thinking and problem solving questions are being included in internal assessments.
- Most teachers have a good knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of their students. A range of self and peer assessment is used, but not consistently across the school. Students receive individual targets from one-to-one progress meetings with teachers. There are some good examples of focused, written feedback, particularly in mathematics and English, but this is not yet a consistent feature across all subjects or phases.

4. Curriculum

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

- The school curriculum is based on the North Carolina State Standards which incorporate Common Core Standards for English, mathematics and science. The MoE guidelines are followed for Arabic, Islamic education and UAE Social Studies. In KG1, New York State Standards are used to support children with English as an additional language. These curricula are broad and balanced and compliant with all requirements.
- Planning and progression are effectively managed, and students at all levels are well prepared for the next grade or the next stage of their education. The curriculum is aligned vertically which encourages smooth progression, and there is a logical scope and sequence which ensures that the academic needs of most students are met.
- At the high school phase, several elective classes are available. These include art, music, economics, French, travel and tourism. There is not a wide range of choice at each grade. However, during a weekly activity period there is a wider selection which includes both fee and non-fee courses and opportunities to study a broad range of topics including robotics.
- There are well planned cross-curricular links between subjects, particularly between Islamic education, Arabic, and UAE social studies, and between English, mathematics and science subjects. Links with UAE social studies extend to almost all subjects and grades, including those in the KG phase. These linkages give students opportunities to make connections between subjects, which in turn enhances their learning.
- The curriculum at all levels and in all subjects is reviewed formally once a year, and informally on an ongoing basis. Teachers meet frequently during the year, and possible adjustments are identified, based upon available data, so that the academic and personal developmental needs of the greatest number of students are met.
- UAE social studies is taught from Grade 1 to Grade 12 on a regular basis as an independent class. Lessons are based on the MOE curriculum but are also aligned and integrated with the social studies standards of North Carolina. Teachers are knowledgeable and enrich the curriculum with books, magazines, videos, projects, school-site activities and field trips. Formative and summative assessments are used to ensure that students make the desired progress and attain to a good standard.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Curriculum adaptation	Good 	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

- Analysis of PISA and TIMSS results has led to some curriculum modification. In response to English language needs, all teachers promote English skills in their lessons. Differentiated strategies are described in most lesson plans, but their implementation is inconsistent and the needs of some students are not fully met. Good differentiated tasks and activities are provided in KG and lower grades in the elementary phase.
- The curriculum promotes student enterprise and leadership through activities such as the business fair and the student council. A range of activities, including projects and curriculum-based field trips, nurture innovation skills. Electives such as art, music, and drama, calligraphy and judo clubs enhance the curriculum and support students' personal, creative and social development.
- Arabic, Islamic education and social studies classes develop students' understanding and appreciation of UAE culture and heritage. Many aspects of UAE life feature in school assemblies. Cross-curricular links in some lessons foster an understanding of Emirati and Arabic history and traditions. Field trips, classroom-based projects and national celebrations help students develop an appreciation of the local culture.

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

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

- The school has established effective policies and procedures for the safeguarding of students, including child protection. Parents and staff members are aware of the policies. Non-teaching staff are included in the training.
- The school provides a very clean, safe and hygienic environment for students and staff. Staff undertake risk analyses of activities before students engage in them, and supervision is very effective in the school grounds and on school buses. Safety checks and training on first aid and aspects such as the proper use of fire extinguishers are thorough.
- Accurate and secure records of incidents and actions affecting students' health or well-being are logged and kept secure. The buildings and equipment, are regularly assessed and are well maintained. The school keeps accurate records of all incidents and actions.
- The premises and facilities provide a safe and inclusive physical environment which meets the needs of all students, especially those in KG. The KG area provides an interior play space called the Fantasia Room This room invites creativity and purposeful play as children dress up and role play.


- The promotion of safe and healthy living by the school is systematically incorporated into most aspects of school life. The promotion of healthy eating in the KG and elementary phases has resulted in good food choices in children's lunches. Middle and high school students do not have this same level of healthy food choices.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Care and support	Good ↑	Good ↑	Good ↑	Good ↑

- The school successfully fosters staff-student relationships which feature mutual respect. The school helps students develop an understanding and tolerance for those of different cultures. As a result, there are few incidents of misbehavior or bullying, which facilitates positive learning environments in classrooms. A well-written code of behavior emphasises the school's constructive approach, which links good behavior with academic achievement and Islamic values.
- Policies and practices to promote good attendance and punctuality are well established. An effective monitoring and recording system monitors absent and tardy students, and ensures that appropriate action is taken. The school endeavors to work collaboratively with students and parents to make sure that students are in school and in class on time every day.
- Effective procedures are in place to identify students with SEND. Professional reports, parent interviews, structured classroom observations, baseline and diagnostic assessments are all used to ensure early and accurate identification. Students who are academically gifted and talented are identified through their achievement but also through cognitive testing, standardized checklists, structured classroom observations and referrals from teachers and parents.
- The range of provision for students with SEND includes accommodations in class support and individualized tuition. In addition there is provision for early intervention classes for children in KG after school and extra English and math classes for elementary students. Support for the gifted and talented students is developing with some teachers providing extended activities in or out of class.
- Teachers and counselors work together to monitor student welfare. Home room time and assemblies are used to develop students' awareness and understanding of a range of concerns such as hygiene, cyber-bullying and growing up. A newly recruited career guidance counselor supports high school students understanding of career and future education options and in fulfilling the graduation requirements of community service and work experience.

Inclusion

Provision and outcomes for students with SEND

Good 

- Governors and senior leaders are very positive about accepting students with a range of diverse special educational needs and disabilities. The school is fully inclusive in policy and practice, although this characteristic is not reflected in the admissions policy. The provision is organized and led by a team of qualified professionals who are responsible for the monitoring and recording of student learning outcomes, and for strategic planning.
- An effective process identifies the special educational needs of students using a range of indicators. Structured classroom observations, baseline and diagnostic tests are used to supplement information from professional reports. KG staff are instrumental in ensuring the early identification of needs. The process does not differentiate sufficiently between learning and language difficulties particularly for those students who experience English language difficulties.
- Parents receive information daily about their children's progress. Monthly written reports contain information on academic progress, personal and social development, and the achievement of individual education plan (IEP) targets. Parents are very engaged with their children's education program. Parents receive helpful guidance to support their children and are offered training.
- Students attending support classes follow a modified curriculum matched to their learning needs. The planned learning activities and curriculum content in lessons is modified by the teacher and learning support assistant. All teachers are caring and supportive of students. Teachers receive advice on how to differentiate their lessons to meet the needs of different groups of students. Success in doing this is not consistent across all subjects and phases.
- An effective process monitors students' progress and informs IEP planning. Teachers' knowledge of students' needs and abilities, and targeted support in and out of classrooms, ensure progress in personal, social and emotional development. Standardized assessment and work samples show progress in academic areas and in basic skills like reading. Overall, most students with SEND make progress in line with expectations, taking into account their individual targets.

6. Leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership

Good

- The principal, aided effectively by other leaders, promote the school's vision and values well, and sets a clear direction for improvement. The vision and mission statements and the school's values inform target setting in the school improvement plan. There is a strong commitment to the UAE National Agenda and inclusion.

- Senior leaders attend a wide range of external courses to keep up-to-date with best educational practices. Along with others, they lead effective internal professional development activities. Some heads of subject show good or better leadership qualities, but others have not been supported effectively to raise their leadership ability beyond an acceptable level.
- Relationships between senior leaders and staff and among staff are professional and effective. The principal delegates responsibility to a range of groups, in which teachers work well together. Regular meetings promote involvement, help to keep staff up-to-date with developments, and are a vehicle for exercising accountability. Some middle leaders are not fully held to account or supported to develop their skills sufficiently.
- The principal and other senior leaders demonstrate a sound capacity to improve the quality of the school's work and the learning outcomes for students. They are committed to developing innovation throughout the school and are steadily implementing new ideas. They have been successful in improving some processes and outcomes at the elementary phase to a good level.
- Working together, school leaders have sustained an acceptable level of school performance, with various aspects at a good level, and have surmounted some barriers to improvement. Other barriers in relation to students' attainment and progress in Islamic education and Arabic languages have not been overcome. All statutory and regulatory requirements have been met.

School self-evaluation and improvement planning

Good

- Senior staff involve themselves and others in a wide range of processes for gathering and analyzing information and data on the quality of the school's work. Conclusions from the analyses are used to shape school improvement plans. The strengths and weaknesses of the school are known to senior staff, but some school self-evaluation judgements are overly positive.
- The quality of teaching is monitored well in a systematic and comprehensive way, and judgements are mostly accurate. The system for observing and judging lessons places an appropriate emphasis on the progress and attainment of students. Results of lesson observations are analyzed carefully, and summary conclusions influence the school improvement plan and the staff professional development program.
- The school improvement plan takes full account of recommendations from DSIB inspections and NEASC accreditation visits, and of the school's own strategic goals. It merges these in a systematic way and sets out projects for improvement, with targets, timescales and success criteria noted. The quality of departmental action plans is variable, and the Arabic language plan is weak.
- In implementing the school improvement plan, senior leaders have been successful in reducing the level of weak teaching and ensuring more consistency in the quality of lessons, particularly at the elementary phase. Success in raising attainment and accelerating progress in Islamic education and in Arabic languages is less evident. .

Partnerships with parents and the community

Good

- Parents have a wide range of opportunities to be involved in the life of the school. They can participate in events and can contribute by, for example, giving talks on careers or volunteering to read with younger students. Some parents are involved in the process of improvement planning by participating in 'standards groups'.
- Two-way communication is strong. Using a variety of online and other methods, school staff ensure that parents are kept informed on a daily basis of the work of their children and school events. Senior leaders gather the views of the wider parent body in a range of ways including formal surveys. A few parents are not happy with the school's slow rate of responsiveness to issues or concerns.
- In addition to ongoing reports, parents benefit from termly reports on their children's progress and attainment in all subjects which set out strengths and areas for development. They can also access a further, very detailed report on their individual child which is linked to curriculum standards.
- The school benefits from various partnerships, including those with Emirates Environment Group, DEWA and Dubai Cares. Visitors give helpful talks to students. The school organises visits to places of interest and uses a range of outside resources such as the Dramatics Adventures Club to enhance the curriculum. Links with other schools are under-developed.

Governance

Acceptable

- The board of governors includes wide representation from the world of business and academia, and the chairperson of the school's parent group is a member. The board now meets every two months, and carries out surveys of parents' views, in addition to meeting staff and parents. The views of stakeholders are carefully considered.
- Board members gather information on the school's effectiveness in a range of ways, including direct meetings, and receiving and analyzing reports. Board members conduct independent audit visits to scrutinize a variety of aspects of the school's work. However, these audit and other activities do not target the aspects of the school which are in most need of improvement, for example student attainment and progress in Islamic education and Arabic languages.
- On the whole, the governing board exerts a positive influence on the school. Along with senior leaders, the board has been responsible for maintaining the many good aspects of the school's performance. However, the board has not been successful in targeting those aspects of the school which have remained at an acceptable level for some years.

Management, staffing, facilities and resources




Good

- The day-to-day work of the school proceeds well. Routines and procedures are well thought out, systematic and carefully documented, and are implemented effectively. Wall displays around the school help to create a positive learning environment.
- The school has sufficient teachers to ensure reasonable class sizes and an overall low ratio of students to teachers. Teachers are well qualified in their subjects, although only a minority hold a teaching qualification. The senior leadership team has been augmented with several new appointments. Professional development activities are well planned but are not sufficiently targeted to match the development needs of teachers.
- The premises are conducive to good learning,, offering suitable, well maintained learning spaces indoors and outdoors. Visits to external facilities help to overcome such factors as the lack of a swimming pool.
- Staff have access to a good level of resources to help them in their teaching. Older students are encouraged to bring their own learning technologies such as tablets and laptop computers, as the school does not as yet have a wide supply of these.

The views of parents, teachers and senior students

The views of parents, teachers and senior students

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

Responses to the surveys		
Responses received	Number	
 Parents*	2016-2017	146
	2015-2016	138
 Teachers	63	
 Students	124	

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

- Around 40 per cent of parents responded to the survey, a similar proportion to last year. All teachers and almost all of the older students who were given the questionnaire responded.
- The parents' responses are overwhelmingly positive. On every question, covering curriculum, teaching, assessment, health and safety, care and support, and leadership and management, over 90 per cent agreed or strongly agreed with the positive statement given.
- Teachers' responses are also very positive on every question.
- Students' responses are less positive than the parents or teachers. Only around half of those who responded felt that they had opportunities to decide things such as class rules, to make a difference in the school, or to develop their leadership skills.
- Over half of the students expressed concerns about the range of extra-curricular activities available, and a significant minority (around 40 per cent) do not feel that they have a good choice of interesting courses or activities, or that they learn well and are helped to learn independently because of good teaching.
- Almost half of the students do not feel that school leaders listen to them or act upon their views.

What happens next?

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

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

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

Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau
Knowledge and Human Development Authority

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