



National Agenda



Early years



Special educational  
needs and disabilities



Innovation

## Inspection Report 2015-2016

Raffles World Academy

Curriculum: UK/IB

Overall rating: Good

Read more about the school



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



Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum

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## School information

### General information



Location	Umm Suqeim
Type of school	Private
Opening year of school	2008
Website	www.rwadubai.com
Telephone	04-427-1351
Address	PO Box 122900 Umm Suqeim 3
Principal	Julian Williams
Language of instruction	English
Inspection dates	21 to 24 March 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	2011
Number of children in pre-kindergarten	Not applicable
Number of Emirati students	118
Number of students with SEND	119
Largest nationality group of students	Other European

### Teachers / Support staff



Number of teachers	184
Largest nationality group of teachers	39
Number of teaching assistants	37
Teacher-student ratio	1:20
Number of guidance counsellors	2
Teacher turnover	30%

### Curriculum



Educational permit / Licence	UK
Main curriculum	UK / International Baccalaureate (IB)
External tests and examinations	IGCSE / IB Diploma
Accreditation	Council of International School (CIS) International Baccalaureate (IB)
National Agenda benchmark tests	IBT / GL

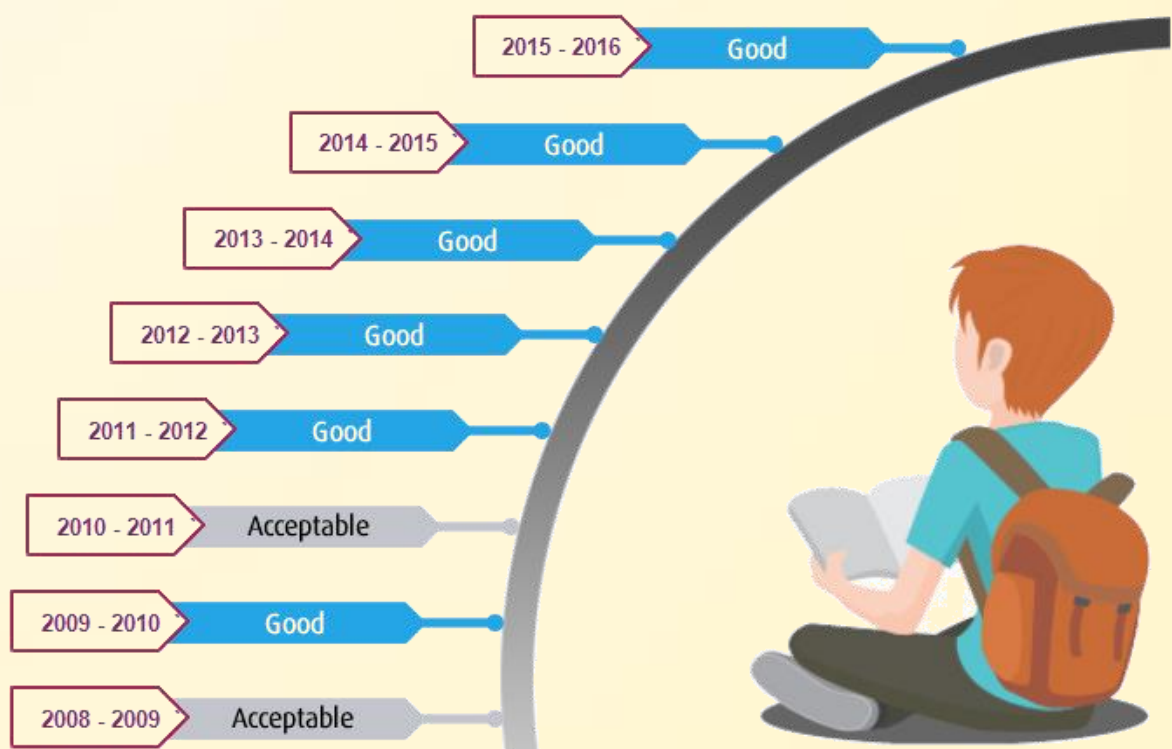


## Summary for parents and the community

**Raffles World Academy** was inspected by the DSIB from 21 to 24 March 2016. The overall quality of education provided by the school was found to be **good**.

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

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





### How well did the school perform overall?

Overall, Raffles World Academy provided a **good** level of education for its students.

- Students' attainment and progress were good in English, mathematics and science in all four phases, with the exception of English which was very good in the Diploma Programme (DP). In Islamic education, attainment and progress were good in Secondary and the DP. In Arabic as an additional and a first language, students' attainment was acceptable in the PYP and good in the Secondary years. Students' learning skills were good across the school.
- Students were very keen to participate in different activities and committees. They were able to demonstrate very mature attitudes and behaviour. As a result, the personal development of students was outstanding in PYP, Secondary and DP phases.
- Teachers knew their students well and generally planned accordingly. However, not all lessons were differentiated to meet the needs of different groups of students. Good assessment systems were being established to make best use of international assessment information.
- The curriculum was broad, balanced and coherent. It had been adapted to incorporate opportunities for enterprise and social contribution.
- Students enjoyed an exceptionally safe and secure learning environment which was inclusive of students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). Progress made by students with SEND was generally good, but not consistently so across the school.
- Partnerships, particularly with parents, had strengthened the school community to add value to the students' learning and achievements. The school's performance was usually evaluated well but the resulting actions were not always made in relation to students' attainment and progress.



### What did the school do well?

- Students' attainment and progress in English were very good in the Diploma Programme.
- Students were developing very well into young citizens who were articulate advocates of the school, with an exemplary sense of social responsibility.
- The curriculum had been designed to support exploratory and investigative learning.
- As a result of exemplary procedures for health, safety and safeguarding, students enjoyed a very safe and secure environment for learning.
- Students, middle and senior leaders were making positive changes across the school. Strong partnerships were being formed with different sectors of the community to improve learning outcomes for students.





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

- Governors and leaders must fully establish the new system of assessment to:
  - benchmark the performances of different groups of students against both international and UK National Curriculum standards
  - use the results to inform students' next steps in learning
  - inform parents and students of how to consistently support better progress and develop independent learning skills
  - provide oral and written assessments of learning which detail the specific knowledge and skills requiring improvement
  - align tasks and higher order questioning by teachers to the needs of different groups of students
  - enable middle leaders to identify teaching and learning priorities across the subject teams.



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

- Students made good progress overall in relation to their personal targets and starting points. Progress was better when students worked in small groups with specialist staff members, or when supported in class by a second teacher.
- Parents were very closely involved in their children's learning, and most were very pleased with the school's provision. They were regularly informed of their children's progress through informal and formal reporting methods.
- The procedures for the identification of students with SEND were rigorous and effective. As a result, the information shared with parents was accurate and enabled them to provide good levels of support for their children's learning and personal development.
- Feedback was sought from parents about the progress made by their children. This information was used to identify the improvements required for both the overall and individual provision for students with SEND.
- The guidance and support provided by the school were appreciated by the parents of students with SEND. These were considered pertinent and helpful towards better understanding the needs of their children.

### 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.
- Progress towards meeting the National Agenda targets was secure.
- Awareness of the National Agenda was a strong feature amongst all stakeholders. Governors understood its aims and fully supported the progress the school was making towards meeting targets. The heads of departments knew their TIMSS and PISA testing targets and their implications for teaching and learning in their department. The students had clear understanding of the expectations of the National Agenda.
- The school had begun to make modifications to the curriculum based on the analysis of data. They understood that the key focus should be the development of skills in addition to the acquisition of knowledge. This focus was a developing feature in lessons.
- Although critical thinking, reflection and independent learning skills were promoted throughout the school they were not present in all lessons. Where they were, learning outcomes were very strong. In other lessons there was less open ended questioning to make students think deeply.
- There were examples of learning technologies being used for the purpose of research within lessons, but its use was not widespread. In the PYP phase a more practical approach to teaching enabled the effective use of resources to support learning.

## 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:

- Leaders had articulated a clear vision for innovation and had developed a strategy to support it. Their partnership with parents was well established and specific focus groups had been set up to promote a culture of innovation. Student leadership groups were involved in developing partnerships with different stakeholder groups. As a result of these partnerships, areas of the curriculum were adapted which enabled students to develop their innovation skills. Technology was being used to enable students to think and learn differently, but its effects were inconsistent.



Overall school performance

Good

1. Students' achievement

		KG	PYP	Secondary	DP
<b>Islamic education</b> 	<b>Attainment</b>	Not applicable	Acceptable	Good	Good
	<b>Progress</b>	Not applicable	Acceptable ↓	Good ↑	Good ↑
<b>Arabic as a first language</b> 	<b>Attainment</b>	Not applicable	Acceptable	Good	Good
	<b>Progress</b>	Not applicable	Good ↑	Good	Good
<b>Arabic as an additional language</b> 	<b>Attainment</b>	Not applicable	Acceptable	Good ↑	Not applicable
	<b>Progress</b>	Not applicable	Good ↑	Good	Not applicable
<b>English</b> 	<b>Attainment</b>	Good	Good	Good	Very good ↑
	<b>Progress</b>	Good	Good	Good	Very good ↑
<b>Mathematics</b> 	<b>Attainment</b>	Good	Good	Good	Good
	<b>Progress</b>	Good	Good	Good	Good
<b>Science</b> 	<b>Attainment</b>	Good	Good	Good	Good
	<b>Progress</b>	Good	Good	Good	Good

	KG	PYP	Secondary	DP
<b>Learning skills</b>	Good	Good	Good	Good

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

	KG	PYP	Secondary	DP
Personal development	Very good ↑	Outstanding ↑	Outstanding	Outstanding
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Very good ↑	Very good ↑	Very good ↑	Outstanding
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding

## 3. Teaching and assessment

	KG	PYP	Secondary	DP
Teaching for effective learning	Good	Good	Good	Good
Assessment	Good	Good	Good	Good

## 4. Curriculum

	KG	PYP	Secondary	DP
Curriculum design and implementation	Very good ↑	Very good ↑	Very good ↓	Very good ↓
Curriculum adaptation	Good	Good	Good	Good

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

	KG	PYP	Secondary	DP
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Care and support	Very good ↑	Very good ↑	Very good ↑	Very good ↑

## 6. Leadership and management

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



## Main inspection report

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

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



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

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

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

## 1. Students' achievement

### 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

- Most KG children arrived at the school with limited or no English language skills. As they advanced, the majority of children made good progress in speaking and listening and became confident speakers with well developed vocabularies. Children began writing by drawing and dictating their ideas to teachers. As their ability to recognize letters and their phonetic awareness grew, they began to write more independently. Most children could recognize letters of the alphabet, identify initial sounds and were beginning to read simple high frequency words accurately. Overall, children made good progress and attained well in all aspects of English when measured against their starting points.
- The majority of children developed a good understanding of the concept of numbers. They could count, recognise and order numbers correctly to at least 20. Some children could confidently count backwards from ten, and others had learned to skip count by twos and fives. By KG2, children had started to develop an understanding of place value in terms of tens and ones. They could accurately use comparative language such as lighter or heavier. Children could recognize and name two dimensional shapes and some were beginning to compare them to three dimensional shapes and objects. Overall, children were learning at a good rate in mathematics.
- When measured against their starting points, the majority of children made good progress in science. They were able to experiment with different materials to determine whether items float or sink. Class activities enabled them to make observations about animals, their habitats and life cycles. In KG2 they expanded on the topic of life cycles to apply it to humans. Children in KG2 had started to develop an understanding about where food comes from. They learned about plants and their component parts, what is necessary for plants to live and how some plants could provide food. Overall, their levels of scientific vocabulary and skills were good.

## PYP

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

- In Islamic education most students worked at levels that were in line with the curriculum standards. Students were able to memorise a number of short Surahs from the Holy Qur'an. Their recitation skills and application of Tajweed rules were appropriate to their ages. Students showed secure understanding and appreciation of Islamic morals and values, such as honesty and honouring parents. Most students made the expected progress in relation to appropriate learning objectives in lessons and their recent work. Data showed that boys made better progress than girls from their starting points. However, the most able students were not sufficiently challenged.
- Most students of Arabic as a first language attained levels in line with the curriculum standards as shown by internal examinations. In lessons, their attainment levels reflected those achieved on tests. Students' writing skills had improved, but were still in line with the curriculum expectations. Although their attainment levels were acceptable, the majority of students made good progress. Learning was stronger when teachers provided opportunities for students to work together, listen carefully to each other and identify the correct rules of grammar. This was particularly evident in the lower grades. There was little difference in the attainment and progress by different groups of students.
- In Arabic as an additional language, most students worked at levels in line with the curriculum standards. Their listening skills were stronger, resulting in students being able to understand their teacher's instructions without any translation. Many students could participate in short conversations and made good progress in developing their vocabularies and learning new expressions. They could write about a range of familiar topics, although their work demonstrated frequent spelling and syntax errors. All assessments were internal and there was no external assessment of their attainment. In lessons and recent work, the majority of students made better than expected progress against the learning objectives, but their attainment overall was acceptable. There was no discernible difference in achievement between the different groups of students.
- In English, the majority of students attained well and made good progress when measured against the curriculum standards. The results of International Benchmark Tests (IBT) were in line with international expectations. In many lessons, students' attainment and progress were good, but the high level of learning did not always translate into high results on tests. Students' progress from their individual starting points was good.
- The majority of students attained well and made good progress in mathematics. The school used IBT tests as well as their own internal systems to measure attainment. In Grade 3, the mean results were significantly above the mean of all other schools taking the IBTs, whereas in other grades they were in line. In lessons, students' attainment and progress were good. When progress was better, students really enjoyed the hands-on, practical approaches, were challenged to think for themselves and become more involved by leading their own learning.



- Students' attainment in science, over time and in lessons, was good. Internal and externally moderated assessments indicated attainment slightly above the curriculum and international standards, and well above them in Grade 3. A majority of students demonstrated slightly better than expected knowledge and understanding of scientific concepts, such why objects float or sink and that sounds are made by vibrations. Progress was generally good by different groups of students, including those with SEND. Progress was less good for the most able students in the PYP, because occasionally they were not adequately challenged and depended too much on guidance from adults.

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

- Students attained at levels that were above the curriculum standards, both in lessons and in internal assessments in Islamic education. Although their knowledge and understanding were good, their recitation skills were underdeveloped. They demonstrated good understanding of the biography (Seerah) of the Prophet (PBUH), and were able to relate Islamic values to real life. They were quick to acquire knowledge about Islamic identity and could identify the important elements of Islamic law and manners. When measured from their starting points, students made good progress, and this trend had been consistent over the previous three years.
- Internal assessments in Arabic as a first language showed that students had attained above the Ministry of Education expectations. Students generally read well, which led to generally good quality independent writing. However, their understanding of basic grammar rules was less consistent. When speaking, students used a wide range of vocabulary but occasionally mixed colloquial pronunciation. In lessons, they learned well and as result made good progress. The different levels of challenge were not always clear, preventing the most able students from advancing further. Test results were not benchmarked against external or international assessments, but the school's information showed that students' attainment and progress had been consistent over the previous three years.

DP

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

- Students' achievements in Islamic education were good. Both in lessons and in internal assessments students learned quickly and attained well. They made good connections between Islamic values and living healthy. They were able to identify Islamic law and manners and apply them appropriately in everyday situations. Their knowledge of the life of the Prophet (PBUH) was thorough. Through deep reflection they fully understood Allah was the one creator of the universe. When measured against their starting points in lessons and at the start of each year, students made good progress. There was no discernible difference between the attainment and progress by different groups of students.
- When measured against curriculum standards, students' achievements in Arabic as a first language were good. They showed good expression in discussions and were able to explain their ideas meaningfully with a few colloquialisms. Students became involved in extra reading, increasing their knowledge of Arabic literature. Their extended writing had improved. As a result, they were able to undertake a variety of independent writing tasks and analyse literature carefully. In lessons, students worked diligently and made good progress in their knowledge and understanding. There was little difference between the achievements of different groups of students.
- Over the past three years, in English, the majority of students' attainment in speaking, listening, reading and writing skills were above national and international standards. Students were able to apply those skills to high-level thinking, analysis and synthesis at the levels necessary for success in university. Through effective use of literature, students extended their vocabulary and ability to interpret texts. Increased opportunities for extended writing led to higher attainment in all aspects of the subject. Overall, results at both standard and higher levels were above national and international standards and had shown improvement over time.
- The majority of students made good attainment and progress in mathematics. On the IB Diploma exams a majority of students attained at Level 5. In lessons, students demonstrated good knowledge and understanding. Year 11 students were able to complete full curve sketching by finding intervals where functions were either increasing or decreasing. Students' progress in lessons was good and students could achieve the stated objectives within the lessons. In regard to the performance of different groups in the school, boys tended to do slightly better than the girls, although the difference was not significant. Over time, the trends in attainment had been broadly consistent.
- Students' knowledge, understanding and application of concepts in physics, chemistry and biology exceeded the curriculum expectations. Their distribution of scores on the IB standard and higher level examinations indicated that their attainment was above international averages. Their science exploration skills had developed well. In Year 11 physics, for example, students were able to hypothesise and design their own experiments to measure sound frequency from a tuning fork. Measurement in all three sciences was sophisticated, as was students' recordings on tablet computers. Students knew their achievement targets and made good progress towards them. Progress over time was due to students' high levels of engagement, strong sense of responsibility and their knowledge of regular mock examination assessments.

	KG	PYP	Secondary	DP
<b>Learning skills</b>	Good	Good	Good	Good

- Invariably, students were eager to learn and assumed a sense of responsibility towards their work. In lessons they were well engaged. For example, children in KG2 worked well with their 'talk-partners' in their daily reading and writing sessions. Students' independent skills were well developed in the DP due to the exploratory learning approaches adopted.
- When students had choices, for example in KG and PYP mathematics, they made sensible decisions and usually shared resources and ideas very well. In practical subjects, older students worked well together when applying their scientific and investigative skills. Students generally interacted positively, often learning effectively from each other. They had the skills and confidence to explain what they were learning and why.
- Students made connections across their learning which often extended their skills, but did not use these routinely. Grade 4 students selected examples from their own lives to classify the different types of communities to which people belong. When prompted, older students were able to see immediate relevance; for example, in Grade 9 when investigating the behaviour of waves across the electromagnetic spectrum.
- Innovative strategies incorporating learning technology for research and measurement were developing, especially in DP lessons. Students' critical thinking and problem solving skills were developing across the phases, evident through their logical communication and language application. Although developing from the KG through all the phases, these skills were not used consistently and independently by students in most lessons.

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

	KG	PYP	Secondary	DP
<b>Personal development</b>	Very good ↑	Outstanding ↑	Outstanding	Outstanding

- As they progressed through school, students were able to demonstrate exceptionally mature and responsible attitudes. They demonstrated a strong sense of responsibility to work together and create a whole school identity. Their ability to respond to critical feedback and show self reliance was particularly evident when participating in the various committees they were members of.
- Self-discipline was frequently exhibited by students. They were very polite and mindful of the needs and feelings of others. They responded well when provided with opportunities to collaborate in lessons. The anti-bullying committee (ABC), elected and represented by students, dealt very well with any incidences of bullying or conflict.
- The range of committees and opportunities to enable students to work together was impressive. Great respect was shown towards the staff and each other by students. As a result of these high levels of respect and courtesy, there was a shared ambition by all to maximize learning opportunities and create a stimulating environment to support it.
- Commitment to adopting healthy lifestyles from students in all phases was clear. They understood the value of physical education and following a sensible diet. They were fully involved in providing guidance and support to each other and promoting opportunities to focus on well-being and developing as well rounded individuals.

- An enthusiasm for learning was demonstrated by the very good attendance rates and punctuality across the school. As result, lessons started punctually and little time was wasted when learning.

	KG	PYP	Secondary	DP
<b>Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures</b>	Very good ↑	Very good ↑	Very good ↑	Outstanding

- Students' understanding and appreciation of Islamic values and their awareness of Emirati and world cultures was very good in the KG, PYP and Secondary phases. In the DP it was outstanding because students had even better awareness, responsibility and deeper involvement in related projects and activities. They were able to model these values in a variety of ways.
- Emirati heritage and culture were well known and understood by the students. They were featured in school displays, activities, projects and trips, such as students from Grades 6 to 8 visiting Bastakiya. The school celebrated National Day, Flag Day and Martyrs Day.
- The 88 nationalities represented in the school respected each other and celebrated well together. Students had secure understanding and appreciation of their own cultures, especially in higher grades. Almost all students had sufficient knowledge of world cultures. Deeper knowledge of other civilizations, folklores, arts, traditions and popular historical monuments was being developed.

	KG	PYP	Secondary	DP
<b>Social responsibility and innovation skills</b>	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding

- Students were very proactive and showed great responsibility towards their school and the wider community. They actively participated, planned and represented the school in a variety of different activities. They took responsibility and worked harmoniously to arrange volunteering campaigns such as a bake sale, food drive by Year 10, and a 'blue box' appeal.
- An excellent work ethic made a clear contribution to the personal growth of students. They readily initiated and managed their own projects. In addition, the school had different, effective committees such as the 'E-Team' and 'ABC' that raised awareness of bullying and anti-social behaviours. Students also developed and participated in different campaigns that contributed to the wider community.
- Across all phases, students were highly aware of environmental issues. This awareness was raised through curriculum integration and student council initiatives. Different environmental awareness campaigns within the school included the recycled fashion show and a beach clean-up campaign. Students had also won different environmental competitions, such as the local 'Go Green' competition.



### 3. Teaching and assessment

	KG	PYP	Secondary	DP
Teaching for effective learning	Good	Good	Good	Good

- Teachers demonstrated good subject knowledge. They generally knew how students learned effectively and planned routinely to use investigative approaches in their teaching strategies. They helped students to find things out for themselves and took responsibility for their learning, but the quality and impact of the teaching was not sufficiently consistent.
- Planning was purposeful. Teachers used a common format that invited a variety of adjustments to suit the different needs of learners, but plans were usually too narrow to meet the wide range of needs. Lesson objectives were linked to the curriculum expectations. Appropriate pacing kept lessons lively. Sometimes lessons did not have high enough demand and complexity to challenge the most able students' thinking.
- Positive interactions between students and teachers meant that questioning could be used to good advantage. While meaningful dialogue was developed, questions were frequently posed from within teachers' continuing commentaries, especially in the secondary phase. Opportunities for students to follow an idea to deepen their thinking were not taken often enough.
- Teachers knew their students well and understood the importance of employing appropriate strategies to meet their different needs. Lesson plans usually reflected this understanding, but often the lesson delivery failed to provide strategies that met the wide span of different needs. Given the range of needs evident from assessment information, support for students was not consistently strong across all classes.
- The importance of developing students' critical thinking and the skills of analysis and synthesis was understood by teachers. Across the phases this was approached with varying degrees of success. Teachers were skilled at encouraging students to work together creatively as teams, for example by using technology for creating presentations of their work in most subjects.
- The teaching of Arabic in most classes enabled good progress to be made by students. Different levels of activities to both challenge and meet the needs of different groups of students were inconsistently provided. When learning was best, questioning was open-ended and enabled deep and reflective thinking.




	KG	PYP	Secondary	DP
Assessment	Good	Good	Good	Good

- The school had responded to the changes in the assessment process for the National Curriculum in England by aligning their system of learning ladders to the standards of the curriculum. This gave the school an indication of the attainment levels and rates of progress by each individual student.
- The school had recognised the need to benchmark students' performances against national and international expectations in order to make comparisons with other schools internationally. The school had used the International Benchmark Tests (IBT), but leaders were reviewing whether a more appropriate test might be a better fit. They had not identified how progress could be measured consistently across all year groups and phases.
- The school used cognitive aptitude tests (CAT4) as a benchmark in order to measure progress. The results were charted against the individual results taken from formative and summative assessments and the linkages they had established through the learning ladders.



- The school had begun to analyse assessment data and there were early indications that the modifications they had made to teaching and the curriculum were beginning to improve students' performances. In the KG, accurate recordings were made of each individual child's development to ensure that the children were progressing in line with expectations.
- Teachers' knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of their students was good. Every teacher had their own files of assessment data on the students in their care. 'Next step' marking was a feature of the assessment process. There were outstanding examples of its use to refer students back to their learning, but this was not a consistent practice amongst all teachers and in all phases.

#### 4. Curriculum

	KG	PYP	Secondary	DP
Curriculum design and implementation	Very good 	Very good 	Very good 	Very good 

- The school had a clear rationale for the curriculum, which had been aligned to its vision. It sought to promote challenge and creativity and was balanced in its support for skill and knowledge development. It fulfilled all statutory requirements.
- The curriculum included strong features, some of which were innovative. Many creative ways were used to strengthen skill development. Progression was planned for, but this did not carry over to the knowledge needed to perform on international tests. Transition points were considered very carefully in curriculum planning. As a result, students were well prepared for the next phases of their education.
- Across the school there was evidence of a wide range of curricular options for students to participate in. For older students, additional subjects were recently added and plans were in place to extend choice as student numbers expanded. The current provision met the needs of students' planning for higher education.
- Opportunities were provided for independent learning, research skills and critical thinking. Students' learning skills were developed through a wide range of strategies. Cross-curricular links were visible in lesson plans, and evident in many lessons.
- The school conducted regular reviews. The accreditation review by the Council of International Schools helped the school align the curriculum vertically and horizontally. Provision for learning sequences, knowledge, skills and personal development met the academic and personal needs of almost all students. It also helped the school develop and improve its planning processes.
- Aspects of the UAE social studies were integrated into the school's curriculum throughout the grades.

	KG	PYP	Secondary	DP
<b>Curriculum adaptation</b>	Good	Good	Good	Good

- Extensive effort in modifying the curriculum to meet the needs of all students was evident. Training was provided for new teachers, embedding as their understanding of curriculum modification developed. The curriculum was modified to meet the needs of all students, but this was not incorporated consistently into practice.
- Much work had developed a curriculum that stimulated students to make progress. A rich, well-rounded education that developed students' character was prevalent. Creativity and social contributions were abundant and there was a wide range of age-appropriate activities. A variety of extra-curricular activities and community links enhanced students' academic and personal development.
- Learning experiences to develop students' understanding of UAE values, culture and society were integrated through the curriculum, but were not consistently documented in the curriculum as cross-cultural opportunities.
- The school offered Arabic in the KG for all children. In KG1, all children took the same Arabic lessons. In KG2, lessons were separated for Arabic speakers and non-Arabic speakers. The curriculum covered basic vocabulary and expressions.

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

	KG	PYP	Secondary	DP
<b>Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding</b>	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding

- Child protection and safeguarding policies were clearly written and all adults employed in the school understood and were aware of any necessary actions required. The school had very effective arrangements to protect students from all forms of abuse, including bullying and through the internet and social media. There was an accurate central register of all adults who worked in the school, and thorough security checks upon entry to it.
- The school provided a very safe, hygienic and secure environment. A designated committee carried out regular, rigorous safety checks. The supervision of the students around school, and when moving to school transport, was highly effective. The school met all requirements for health and safety.
- Buildings and equipment were maintained in excellent condition. Records of health and safety were up to date and appropriate risk assessments were in place for a range of different activities. Medical checks were rigorous and detailed records kept of students' health needs in the very well-run school clinic. Comprehensive records were kept of fire drills and emergency evacuations.
- The school premises, equipment and resources provided an excellent physical environment which was well suited to the educational needs of all students, including those with SEND and those in the early years. New building additions had further enhanced the range of facilities available for the curriculum. They ensured that students were very safe whilst participating in a wide range of motivating educational experiences.

- The school provided a range of opportunities to promote a healthy lifestyle. The meals and snacks provided were generally healthy and posters promoting healthy eating were displayed. Careful regard was paid to ensuring correct food storage and safe transport of students. Students had very good opportunities to engage in a variety of physical activities, including swimming lessons.

	KG	PYP	Secondary	DP
Care and support	Very good ↑	Very good ↑	Very good ↑	Very good ↑

- The school operated in an atmosphere of mutual respect between students and the staff. Teachers knew their students well and were very aware of their individual needs. There were effective and clear systems for managing and monitoring behaviour across the school, which were well known to students and the staff.
- Very accurate records were kept of students' attendance and punctuality. Systems for monitoring attendance were rigorous and parents were quickly notified of any concerns about individual students. As a result, levels of attendance were high.
- The school was highly inclusive, with effective systems to identify students with SEND. Individual plans identified clearly the necessary support students required to make progress. The school had identified students who were gifted and talented and had taken effective steps to meet their needs.
- The school's support for students with SEND was planned effectively by teachers and a specialized, well-qualified staff. Modifications to meet individual needs were good overall, but not consistently followed in some lessons.
- Students received good advice and support for their personal well-being from teachers, counsellors, school leaders, nurses and the doctor. The good relationships within the school gave students the confidence to ask for individual support when necessary. Older students received effective advice and guidance for their future careers. In addition, academic guidance was provided in lessons and through regular assessments of individual progress.

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

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

Good

- The special needs coordinator (SENCO) provided good leadership and, along with the SEND team, was suitably qualified and experienced. Specialist SEND staff and teachers regularly reviewed students' progress. The SENCO was well supported by the specialist teachers, but required additional support in classes for the growing number of students with SEND.
- There were effective systems for identifying students with SEND. The identification process closely involved classroom and subject teachers. A variety of assessments were used for the identification of specific needs as well as reports from outside specialists and doctors.
- Regular meetings were held to review students' individual education plans. Parents were fully involved in the process of supporting their children. Most parents greatly appreciated the help and advice they received from the school.

- Lesson plans showed the modifications to meet the specific needs of students with SEND, but these were not always used sufficiently to ensure that individual needs were fully met. Some individual learning targets were not specifically focused enough on the steps required to measure students' progress. When modifications were applied accurately to the next stages of learning, students' progress was good.
- Students made good progress overall in relation to their personal targets and starting points. Progress was effective when students worked in small groups with the specialist staff or when supported in class by a second teacher. The classroom teachers, SEND staff and parents regularly reviewed individual learning plans.

## 6. Leadership and management

### The effectiveness of leadership

Very good ↑

- A clear vision had been set for the school. Leaders were very committed to providing 'premier education for the international community which was fully inclusive.' Leaders at all levels worked hard to match the strategic direction with its strong values. The priorities for the UAE were embraced and integrated into the school's improvement planning.
- Senior leaders, very ably supported by middle leaders, were focused on implementing best practices to secure the highest possible learning outcomes for students. Section heads, deputies and departmental heads were resolute in their determination to match assessment information to lesson plans and the work provided in classrooms. High standards and positive, inclusive attitudes were well modelled.
- Strong relationships and clear communication strategies had resulted in positive morale and a supportive and aspirational environment. Subject and middle leaders were particularly focused on securing the highest attainment in their areas of responsibility. There was a commitment to developing partnerships across the school to support the best student achievement.
- School leaders demonstrated very good capacity to improve the school. Leadership shown by parents and students' groups provided inspiration to the staff to work together for a common purpose. The result united all staff members in the pursuit of successful outcomes for all students.
- Leaders ensured that the school was a safe and secure environment for learning and was fully compliant with all statutory and regulatory requirements. Leaders, including the student leaders, were keen to take responsibility for removing barriers to learning and make connections between the different groups within the school.

### School self-evaluation and improvement planning

Good

- The school's self-evaluation document was accurate and identified areas for improvement. Data was analysed well, but results from the analyses were not used systematically in all phases of the school. As a result, information about starting points in learning was not consistently applied to meet the needs of all groups of students. Some groups of students were not making the accelerated progress they were capable of.



- Learning walks were regularly conducted by senior leaders. The views of students about their learning were routinely sought and feedback provided to teachers. Plans had been established to ensure that monitoring information was used to inform teacher appraisal and professional development. Section heads were working together to ensure consistency of teaching and learning across the phases.
- Detailed actions and the well-focused goals in the school's improvement plan had a positive effect on improving the personal development and learning outcomes for students. School priorities were being aligned to the UAE's National Agenda. They resulted from the involvement of all stakeholders, including parents and students.
- Significant progress had been made in addressing recommendations from the previous inspection report. Subject and phase leaders were being provided more time to fulfil their leadership responsibilities, resulting in improvements in the curriculum and in classroom provision. Health and safety procedures had been enhanced and were exemplary.

#### Partnerships with parents and the community

Outstanding

- Very impressive partnerships had been established with parents. The 'PARIS' (parents' association) members were involved in improving all aspects of school life. Subject groups linked with the staff and undertook a range of tasks. These included supporting staff appointments in Arabic, promoting literacy, organizing creative writing competitions and contributing effectively to curriculum development.
- A wide variety of methods were used to successfully communicate with parents and the wider community. Sensitivity was demonstrated to ensure that parents were communicated to in their home languages when necessary. 'Edmodo' was used well to provide information about the curriculum and assessments. Concerns were addressed quickly as a result of effective dialogue between the school and parents.
- Parents received regular and detailed information about their children's attainment and progress. Reports identified the next steps in learning. Portfolios were shared to provide examples of attainment and students were frequently involved in the communication process, including class presentations to present outcomes from summative assessments.
- The use of parents' expertise had enabled the school to make an excellent contribution to the local and wider community. The 'Eco group' had enabled very successful projects to make a significant difference to the local environment. This resulted in Dubai Municipality awards for environmental protection.

#### Governance

Very good ↓

- Governance included representation from almost all stakeholders. The advisory board was constantly seeking ways to gain the views of parents and students. Classrooms were visited and events attended to ensure that information was acquired first hand. Surveys and external reviews were considered when setting the school's priorities and contributing to the school's improvement plans.
- Leaders were held to account by the governing board. It worked to address the high rate of teacher turnover. The board was concerned to recruit and retain high quality teachers who would contribute positively to school improvements. It was very effective in challenging the school and providing support for all areas of school life.



- The governing board involved different stakeholders to establish a systematic approach to monitoring the attainment and progress by different groups of students. The board had a positive impact on the overall performance of the school.




#### Management, staffing, facilities and resources

Outstanding

- The daily routines were very effective in ensuring that the school functioned well. Managers were responsive to different needs and appropriate adjustments were made. The timetable had been adjusted in KG2 to take account of recent changes in birth date regulations. Specialist rooms such as laboratories were used effectively.
- All teachers were suitably qualified and deployed to fulfil the vision and mission of the school. Leaders, governors and parents had worked very closely to reduce teacher turnover and prevent disruption to students' learning. Procedures were in place to retain high quality teachers, which included a personalised professional development programme.
- The facilities were excellent and being appropriately expanded to match changing needs. The environment was safe, secure and stimulating and very conducive to high quality learning. Online resources were continually updated to both support work in classrooms and the daily routines of the school.
- High quality resources were everywhere throughout the school. Teachers made creative use of them to maximise learning opportunities. Resources were adapted well to meet the needs of different groups of students, including those with SEND. Teachers were skilfully deployed to ensure maximum benefit was derived from learning technologies.

## The views of the parents, teachers and students

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

Responses to the surveys		
Responses received	Number	
<b>Parents*</b> 	2015-2016	580
	2014-2015	279
<b>Teachers</b> 	173	
<b>Students</b> 	297	

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

- Of those parents who responded to the item about learning Arabic as a first language, a significant number believed that their children did not make enough progress.
- Most parents were satisfied with the progress made by their children in English, mathematics and science.
- Nearly all parents believed that they were well informed about their children's progress at school.
- Senior students were very positive about school life. However, they expressed some dissatisfaction about the range of extra-curricular activities available to them.
- A significant minority of students expressed dissatisfaction with the quality of education available at the school.
- Teachers reported that they felt involved in nearly all aspects of school life including self-evaluation and reviews of the curriculum.

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)