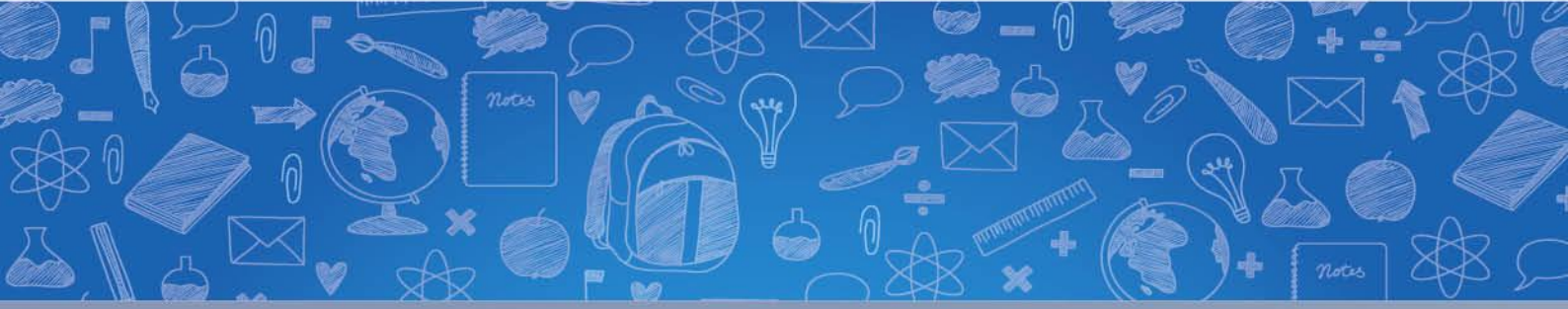


# Inspection Report



## GEMS Winchester School 2014-2015



إكسبو 2020  
دبي، الإمارات العربية المتحدة  
DUBAI, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

[www.khda.gov.ae](http://www.khda.gov.ae)



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## School information



### General information

Location	Oud Metha
Type of school	Private
Opening year of school	2011
Website	www.gemseducation.com
Telephone	04-3374112
Address	P.O.BOX 113272
Principal	Lee Davies
Language of instruction	English
Inspection dates	19 <sup>th</sup> - 22 <sup>nd</sup> January 2015



### Students

Gender of students	Boys and Girls
Age range	3-14
Grades or year groups	FS1-Year 9
Number of students on roll	3425
Number of children in FS1	344
Number of Emirati students	62
Number of students with SEN	54
Largest nationality group of students	Indian



### Teachers / Support staff

Number of teachers	204
Largest nationality group of teachers	Indian
Number of teacher assistants	39
Teacher-student ratio	17:1
Number of guidance counsellors	1
Teacher turnover	24%



### Curriculum

Educational Permit	UK
Main Curriculum / Other	UK
Standardised tests / board exams	CAT4 and INCAS
Accreditation	Cambridge



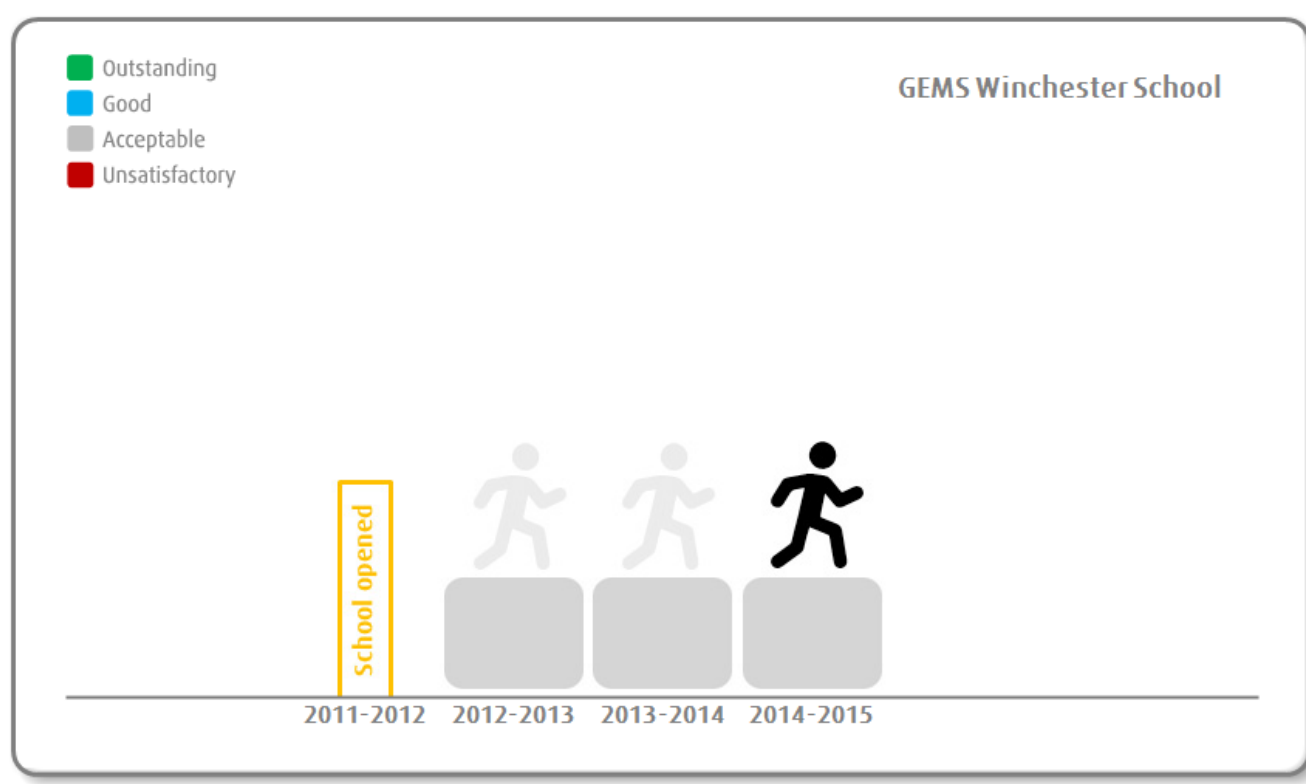




Dear Parents,

GEMS Winchester School was inspected by DSIB from 19<sup>th</sup> - 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2015, and the overall quality of education provided by the school was found to be **Acceptable**

In order to judge the overall quality of education provided by the school, inspectors considered six key aspects of the school's performance and standards. Inspectors looked at children's attainment and progress in five key subjects, their learning skills as well as their personal and social development. They judged how effective teaching was across the school. Inspectors considered how well the school's curriculum, including activities inside and outside the classroom, 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 a range of evidence gathered by the inspection team, including observing children learning in lessons, looking at their work, talking with children, meetings with staff, parents and governors, and reviewing the parents' and teachers' surveys.

The key strengths and areas for improvement to be made by the school leaders, governors and owners are:

### Strengths

- Students demonstrated good behaviour and attitudes to learning in the Foundation Stage and secondary phase.
- Students' understanding of Islamic Values and their awareness of Emirati and world cultures was good in the secondary phase.
- The curriculum and the system used by teachers in the Foundation Stage to check how well children were progressing were good.
- The school provided good support for students' personal and social development in the secondary phase.

### Areas for improvement

- Ensure that the Governing Board takes action to stabilise staffing, in order to:
  - support the school in the drive to improve the quality of teaching
  - minimise the impact of change on students' attainment and progress.
- Improve the teaching of Arabic to ensure that lessons challenge students to do as well as they can.
- Ensure students have opportunities to find things out for themselves, think carefully and share their ideas as part of their day-to-day learning experiences, particularly in the lower primary grades.

We warmly encourage you to read the full school inspection report.

The school is required to submit to DSIB an action plan identifying the steps they will take to address the areas for improvement. We have advised your school leaders to share this with you.

We trust that the information provided will help you understand, and encourages you to support, your child's school.

Yours sincerely,

Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau  
Knowledge and Human Development Authority

## A closer look at GEMS Winchester School



### How well does the school perform overall?

Overall, Gems Winchester School provided an **'Acceptable'** quality of education for its students.

- Students' attainment and progress were mostly acceptable in all phases of the school, including their progress in Arabic as first language in the primary phase. Students' ability to work together, research and find things out for themselves was supporting better progress, especially in the secondary phase. Attainment in Arabic remained unsatisfactory throughout the school.
- Most students were well behaved, particularly in the secondary phase. In lower primary classes, a few students, mainly boys, misbehaved when they were not being closely supervised by an adult. Students' understanding of how Islamic values play a role in modern Dubai was strongest in the secondary phase. The majority of students shared their ideas and opinions through the student council and had responsible roles in the school.
- Teaching for effective learning was acceptable across the school. The learning environment was generally positive. Teachers' use of strategies to meet students' different needs and to promote critical thinking and reflection were very limited. Systems for checking students' attainment and progress were acceptable. However, assessment information was not used well enough by teachers when planning lessons.
- The curriculum met UK curriculum requirements, but not all teachers delivered this in a way that motivated students to learn and to make sufficient progress. This was most notable in the primary phase and in Arabic. Teachers planned changes to the curriculum to meet the needs of all students, however these plans were not consistently delivered in practice. This inconsistency limited progress for some students.
- There were efficient systems in place to ensure that good health and safety was maintained across the school. Students felt safe and well cared for. The well-being of all students was considered to be very important by the school and staff-student relationships were respectful.
- The Principal set a clear vision for school development that was shared by staff. The expertise of leaders to monitor and evaluate the work of the school was developing, but they had not been successful in ensuring consistently acceptable teaching. The Governing Board had not helped the school to overcome weaknesses in the stability of staffing. The quality of school management processes was acceptable. Students had access to good resources and teachers received quality, focused training.

## How well does the school provide for students with special educational needs?



- Students with special education needs made acceptable progress, particularly in their social, emotional and personal development. Support provided for students' academic progress in lessons was too often unsatisfactory and this slowed their rate of progress
- Teachers did not take enough account of students' different needs when planning and delivering lessons. Teachers were not always skilful at changing their expectations of what students were capable of learning or adjusting tasks so that students could make good progress from their individual starting points.
- Support for students provided through the Achievement Centre (Special Education Needs Department) and the Innovation Hub were good. Collaboration between the counsellor in the Innovation Hub and the Achievement Centre staff was effective. They provided a holistic approach to the academic, social, personal and emotional development of the students in a creative and practical way, for example, through the use of digital technology.




## 1. How good are the students' attainment, progress and learning skills?

		Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
 Islamic Education	Attainment	Not Applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable
	Progress	Not Applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable
 Arabic as a First Language	Attainment	Not Applicable	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory
	Progress	Not Applicable	Acceptable ↑	Unsatisfactory
 Arabic as an Additional Language	Attainment	Not Applicable	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory
	Progress	Not Applicable	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory
 English	Attainment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
	Progress	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
 Mathematics	Attainment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
	Progress	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
 Science	Attainment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable ↑
	Progress	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable ↑
		Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Learning skills		Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

↑ Improved from last inspection

↓ Declined from last inspection

## 2. How good is the students' personal and social development?

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Personal responsibility	Good	Acceptable	Good 
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good
Community and environmental responsibility	Good	Good	Good


## 3. How good are teaching and assessment?

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Teaching for effective learning	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Assessment	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable

## 4. How well does the curriculum meet the educational needs of all students?

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Curriculum quality	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable
Curriculum design to meet the individual needs of students	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

## 5. How well does the school protect and support students?

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Health and safety	Good	Good	Good
Quality of support	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good 

## 6. How good are the leadership and management of the school?

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



# School **Inspection** Report

## Overall school judgement

**Acceptable**

## Key strengths


- Students' behaviour and attitudes to learning in the Foundation Stage and secondary phase of the school, particularly of girls, was good.
- Students' understanding of Islamic values, and their awareness of Emirati and world cultures in the secondary phase were good.
- Curriculum quality and assessment of children's learning in the Foundation Stage were good.
- The school had good procedures to ensure that students and staff were well cared for and kept safe.
- Good support was provided for students' personal and social development in the secondary phase.


## Changes since the last inspection

- Progress in Arabic as a first language in the primary phase had improved and was acceptable.
- Attainment and progress in science in the secondary phase had improved and were acceptable.
- The behaviour of students in the secondary phase had improved and was good.
- The quality of support for students in the secondary phase had improved to good.

## Recommendations

- Ensure that the Governing Board takes action to stabilise staffing, in order to
  - support the school in the drive to improve the quality of teaching
  - minimise the impact of staff turnover on students' attainment and progress.
- Continue to prioritise training and support for teachers of Arabic to improve their effectiveness in providing students with a range of activities that lead to good progress.
- Improve the independent learning skills of students in the lower primary classes and further develop their ability to demonstrate self-control and behave well.
- Improve assessment, particularly in primary and secondary phases by:
  - improving the quality of teachers' questioning in lessons to check and deepen students' understanding
  - improving the marking of students' work to better inform them of their next steps in learning
  - using data, to plan and deliver lessons that support and challenge students of all abilities to make good progress.

 Improved from last inspection


 Declined from last inspection



## 1. How good are the students' attainment, progress and learning skills?



Foundation Stage		
Subjects	Attainment	Progress
Islamic Education	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Arabic as a First Language	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Arabic as an Additional Language	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
English	Acceptable	Acceptable
Mathematics	Acceptable	Acceptable
Science	Acceptable	Acceptable

- Most children achieved the expected standards in English commensurate with their number of years of study. They quickly acquired the speaking skills needed to be able to communicate with adults and each other. By the end of the Foundation Stage, they were beginning to write simple words because they knew their letter sounds. However, they did not always make as much progress as they could because most teachers did not utilise all opportunities to develop their language skills.
- In mathematics, almost all children achieved age-related expectations. They quickly learned to count and by the end of the Foundation Stage, they could accurately add together two single-digit numbers. They knew the name of basic shapes and were beginning to understand the concept of weight. They did not always make as much progress as they could because sometimes they followed a process without understanding it.
- Most children had an appropriate understanding of their world. They could talk about the similarities of animals, using simple, age-appropriate criteria. The children were naturally curious but sometimes they were not given enough opportunities to play, experiment and explore for themselves. As a result their progress slowed.

Primary		
Subjects	Attainment	Progress
Islamic Education	Acceptable	Acceptable
Arabic as a First Language	Unsatisfactory	Acceptable 
Arabic as an Additional Language	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory
English	Acceptable	Acceptable
Mathematics	Acceptable	Acceptable
Science	Acceptable	Acceptable

- In Islamic education, most students demonstrated age-appropriate knowledge and understanding of Islamic concepts and teaching such as the importance of 'Sadaqah' in Islam and to whom charity should be given. Progress overall was acceptable. However, their skills in the recitation of the Holy Qur'an remained limited.
- In Arabic as a first language, most of the students were making acceptable progress in their listening and comprehension skills. Most students could speak a few short phrases and words and were able to copy text and simulation patterns. However, attainment remained unsatisfactory due to students' low starting points.

- In Arabic as an additional language only a few students were gaining the skills needed to understand and listen, or to speak short phrases and words. All of the students were able to copy letters, but only a few students were making progress in reading or understanding the vocabulary used by the teacher.
- In English, most students built well on the speaking and listening skills developed in the Foundation Stage. Attainment was at an acceptable level especially when taking into account that most students were second language learners. By the end of the primary phase most students had made acceptable progress in the development of literacy skills with particular strengths in writing. However, limited opportunities to read more widely limited their use of imagination and creativity.
- In mathematics, most students' attainment was in line with curriculum standards. Most students made acceptable progress in dealing with numbers, 2D and 3D shapes, finding the perimeter of compound shapes, and in calculating ratios and proportions.
- In Science, most students' knowledge of scientific concepts was in line with curriculum expectations. They made acceptable progress in the development of their investigative skills and scientific vocabulary. However, the development of deeper understanding was limited because students were not given sufficient opportunities to think about, and reflect on, their learning. For example, they could not always understand why they were conducting investigations.


Secondary		
Subjects	Attainment	Progress
Islamic Education	Acceptable	Acceptable
Arabic as a First Language	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Arabic as an Additional Language	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory
English	Acceptable	Acceptable
Mathematics	Acceptable	Acceptable
Science	Acceptable 	Acceptable 

- In Islamic Education, most students' attainment was in line with curriculum expectations. They demonstrated an understanding of basic Islamic concepts and principles such as the appreciation of Allah's gifts and forgiveness. Students' progress over time and in lessons was acceptable. Students showed weaknesses in reciting prescribed verses of the Holy Qur'an and in applying the required rules of recitation.
- In Arabic as a first language, only a small number of students could understand the lesson objectives. The majority of students could not express their understanding to others or configure correct phrases. Only a small number of students were able to write freely with an accurate understanding of grammar.
- In Arabic as an additional language only a few of the students had an acceptable understanding of their learning. The majority could not use correct phrases.
- Most students made expected progress against curriculum standards. Attainment in reading and comprehension were acceptable and developing steadily, for example, through character and text analysis of literary texts. Opportunities for sustained creative writing were not well developed.
- In mathematics, most students achieved results in tests that were at expected levels. Cambridge checkpoint results at the end of grade 9 produced acceptable results. Most students showed consistent development in their competency in numbers, algebra, geometry, measure and handling data.

- Most students were developing the ability to plan and conduct investigations, think about fair testing and make sensible conclusions about their findings according to expectations. They had a few opportunities to reflect on their learning in order to determine their next steps. Although students made good progress in their development of investigative skills and scientific vocabulary, most were not developing a deep enough understanding of scientific concepts.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
<b>Learning skills</b>	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most students were keen and enthusiastic learners when motivated by good teaching and well-judged activities. At the secondary phase, most students were independent learners but those at other phases were less active in taking this responsibility, notably in Arabic as an additional language across the phases. Students in the secondary phase were able to evaluate their own performance and that of their peers but this was not a strong feature at other phases.</li> <li>• Children in the Foundation Stage regularly made responsible choices in selecting activities. In the upper primary classes, students were beginning to work more effectively together to discuss their work. Collaboration skills were most developed at the secondary phase.</li> <li>• Increasingly, students were making connections between areas of learning and occasionally related their learning to the real world. This was inconsistent across and within phases and subjects. For example, in science, students studying neutralisation of acids understood the benefits of using toothpaste to safeguard teeth.</li> <li>• Students regularly made use of their own handheld information and technology devices to support their learning, but were not always able to decide if this was the most effective approach for finding relevant and accurate information.</li> </ul>			

## 2. How good is the students' personal and social development?

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
<b>Personal responsibility</b>	Good	Acceptable	Good 
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students across the school demonstrated a positive and mature attitude. From the Foundation Stage onwards, students could follow instructions carefully, for example, when they selected items of equipment to complete a task.</li> <li>• Most students were well behaved, particularly in the secondary phase, where prefects positively promoted good behaviour. However in the lower primary phase, a few students, particularly boys, misbehaved when they were not being closely supervised by an adult.</li> <li>• Relationships between students and teachers were respectful and courteous. Older students were responsive to the needs of others and readily helped their younger counterparts.</li> <li>• Students were aware of the healthy food offered in the school canteen. Assembly times were used to promote healthy living messages, such as staying hydrated. Older students often interviewed medical staff to produce healthy living articles for the school newsletter.</li> <li>• Attendance rates were lower than expected in all phases of the school. However, punctuality to lessons was good, particularly in the case of older students who needed to change classes.</li> </ul>			

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
<b>Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures</b>	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Most students understood the basic values of Islam and appreciated the impact of these values on daily life in Dubai. They were involved in a wide range of charity activities and raised funds for Dubai Care Syrian refugees and many others.</li> <li>Older students had a good understanding of local traditions and the heritage of Dubai society. They compared the life of Dubai before and nowadays and understood how this had developed over time.</li> <li>Students demonstrated an acceptable awareness of world cultures, acquired through a range of activities such as International Day.</li> </ul>			

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
<b>Community and environmental responsibility</b>	Good	Good	Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students made good use of opportunities provided by the school to contribute to the life of the local and wider community. They participated in volunteer activities such as in "Sewa Day", the rice bucket challenge, the school's blood donation initiative and the "Dubai Cares" campaign. Students' opinions influenced the school's development through the selected students' council. Students showed respect and consideration for the needs of others including those with disabilities.</li> <li>Students were aware of how hard they needed to work to achieve their academic and career goals. Most students made helpful contributions to projects or other activities, but a few were often passive participants.</li> <li>Students participated in many opportunities to sustain the environment, such as the beach clean-up campaign, the environmental club and Earth Day. However only a few students took the initiative to initiate projects of their own.</li> </ul>			

### 3. How good are teaching and assessment?

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
<b>Teaching for effective learning</b>	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Most teachers in the upper primary and secondary phases had acceptable subject knowledge. In the Foundation Stage and lower primary classes, subject knowledge and knowledge of how students learned best were variable.</li> <li>Lesson plans were well structured, however, too often they lacked detail to meet the needs of all students. Furthermore, they were not always delivered in the course of lessons.</li> <li>Most teachers had established good relationships with their students. Behaviour management in the secondary phase was consistently positive, however in the lower primary it was of variable quality, thus negatively impacting students' learning.</li> <li>The use of teaching strategies to meet students' varied needs was variable. In all phases, expectations of students were not always appropriate. In particular, higher attaining students were generally not adequately challenged, and often completed the same work as all others.</li> <li>Teachers did not use challenging and targeted questioning to develop students' skills of critical thinking or to deepen their understanding.</li> </ul>			



- Teaching in Arabic as a first language was not better than acceptable due to a lack of modification to meet the learning needs of all students, and the limited promotion of critical thinking, reflection and independent learning.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
<b>Assessment</b>	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment systems provided teachers with an accurate picture of students' strengths and weaknesses. Training for staff was helping to ensure that assessments were more aligned to the schools' curriculum standards.</li> <li>• The school did not benchmark students' outcomes against appropriate international expectations through external assessment. However, preparations were well under way to take part in forthcoming TIMMS tests and to meet National Agenda targets.</li> <li>• Although the school had created a baseline from which teachers could measure students' progress, teachers were still not sufficiently identifying which individuals or groups of students had not progressed at a fast enough rate. Consequently, action had not been taken to address shortfalls in students' expected progress.</li> <li>• In the Foundation Stage, daily records of observations provided teachers with the information needed to provide children with activities which moved learning forward. In the primary and secondary phases, teachers did not consistently use high quality questioning or checking of students' work as a basis for their formative assessment. Consequently, lessons were not consistently adjusted to ensure that students made good progress.</li> <li>• Teachers did not always provide high quality feedback or provide students with time to review and correct their work as a result of the feedback given to them. This limited opportunities for students to make good progress.</li> </ul>			


#### 4. How well does the curriculum meet the educational needs of all students?

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
<b>Curriculum quality</b>	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The requirements of the National Curriculum for England were met with adaptations for the Dubai context. Curriculum content was suitably broad and balanced with age-appropriate activities</li> <li>• Whilst planning for progression was acceptable, continuity in learning between and within phases was not consistent. Most subject teachers in the secondary phase were much more adept at ensuring students experienced progression in their learning.</li> <li>• There was inconsistency in teachers' ability to deliver the curriculum in an interesting and motivating way. In the Foundation Stage, a good range of practical hands-on activities kept children interested and good attention was given to the acquisition of language skills.</li> <li>• Curriculum links to real life, and cross-curricular links were becoming common features of lesson plans. For example, in digital technology, Year 8 students thrived on being set challenging personal targets to produce a brochure to advise others how to avoid potential dangers of using the internet.</li> <li>• The curriculum was subject to annual review in order to give attention to students' academic and personal development needs.</li> <li>• The quality of the curriculum in Arabic as a first language was acceptable. The curriculum was not supported by differentiated classroom activities which could help develop the important learning skills required by students.</li> </ul>			

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
<b>Curriculum design to meet the individual needs of students</b>	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teachers' lesson plans were usually adapted to meet the needs of students with different abilities, including those with special educational needs. These plans, however, were inconsistently delivered. Therefore, for some individuals and groups of students, the quality of provision was not sufficient to support their progress.</li> <li>To date, the school catered for students up to Year 9, which resulted in all students following the same curriculum without any choice of subject being necessary.</li> <li>A good range of extra-curricular activities was available for primary and secondary students to choose from, but only around a tenth of students regularly engaged in these. A significant number of other students participated in teacher-led early morning and lunch-time activities, which included English, mathematics and science clubs for more able students.</li> <li>The school did not include structured learning activities in Arabic for the 616 Arab children on roll.</li> </ul>			

## 5. How well does the school protect and support students?

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
<b>Health and safety</b>	Good	Good	Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All staff and students who were spoken to by inspectors were aware of the school's child protection arrangements. Students knew who they could turn to for advice and they felt that they were well supported. They were well aware of the potential dangers of social media and the internet and knew of some precautions they could take to ensure they were safe.</li> <li>The school complied with mandatory health and safety regulations. School transport supervision was secure and arrangements had been modified since the last inspection to ensure the public road was no longer a safety issue.</li> <li>Emergency systems were in place. Student's medical needs were well catered for and students' records were secure.</li> <li>The school had a comprehensive set of procedures in place to ensure the maintenance and upkeep of equipment. Fire evacuation plans were visible around the school and risk assessments were in place. Ramps had recently been installed for disabled access, however, access was limited for older students with physical disabilities because some specialist teaching rooms were not on the ground floor.</li> <li>The promotion of healthy eating and hygiene was delivered through a rolling programme by the school's doctor. For example, in the Foundation Stage, the school organised a healthy breakfast and start to the day, for which parents were invited. This programme, however, was not always effective in influencing the choices that children made.</li> </ul>			

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Quality of support	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good 
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Relationships between staff and students were good. In most lessons, behaviour was managed effectively but this was not always the case in lower primary classes where the time spent dealing with unacceptable behaviour slowed students' progress.</li> <li>Systems were in place to monitor and promote good attendance and punctuality. Efforts to secure better punctuality had been successful and most students arrived at school and to lessons on time. The school had not been as successful in improving levels of attendance.</li> <li>The school admitted students with a range of special educational needs, including students with Autistic Spectrum Disorders (ASDs), developmental delay, speech and language disorders, physical disabilities and behavioural disorders. Effective systems were in place for the identification of students with special educational needs at the point of entry to the school, and during the academic year.</li> <li>The collaborative partnership created by the leaders of the Achievement Centre with class teachers, parents and external agencies facilitated the on-going development of personal support for students with special educational needs. However, the absence of skilful differentiation of activities in lessons for students with special educational needs, particularly in the primary phase, was having a negative impact on their academic progress.</li> <li>The counsellor in the Innovation Hub provided a holistic approach to the academic, social, personal and emotional development of all students, including those with special educational needs. Through the medium of technology, a system was created by which students' well-being and personal development was enhanced and advice and guidance made available.</li> </ul>			

### How well does the school provide for students with special educational needs?

	Overall
The overall effectiveness of provision for students with special educational needs	Acceptable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The school admitted students with a range of special educational needs. School leaders, special educational needs specialists, and staff in the Innovation Hub, were supportive of students and their needs.</li> <li>Identification of students with special educational needs, including those in the Foundation Stage, was carried out thoroughly.</li> <li>The collaborative partnership created by the leadership of the Achievement Centre with class teachers, parents and external agencies facilitated the on-going development of personal support for students with special educational needs.</li> <li>The absence of skilful differentiation in lessons for students with special educational needs was impacting negatively upon their progress.</li> <li>Parents appreciated the home-school collaboration and they spoke highly of the teachers and their care of students.</li> <li>Progress of students with special educational needs was acceptable overall. Progress in lower primary classes was slowed by teachers' poor handling of some behaviour management issues.</li> </ul>	

## 6. How good are the leadership and management of the school?

	Overall
<b>The effectiveness of leadership</b>	Acceptable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Principal had a clear vision for development of the school, and this was shared by the staff. School leaders were supported by the staff in their endeavours to provide the best education for all students.</li> <li>Senior and middle management staff were effectively working to develop the knowledge, skills and expertise of classroom teachers. This was having a greater impact in the upper primary and secondary classes. In lower primary classes the quality of teaching continued to be very variable, and as a result students made slower progress in all core subjects.</li> <li>Detailed job descriptions were in place. This provided staff with clear expectations of the part they were expected to play in school improvement. Regular meetings between senior staff and within school departments, together with weekly in-house training, contributed to effective systems of communication.</li> <li>Actions taken, particularly through regular training and the sharing of good practice had developed the capacity of leaders and managers to bring about further improvement. Nevertheless, school leaders were realistic about the improvements that were still needed to make sure that teaching was of better quality.</li> <li>Leaders had shown a degree of success in improving some areas of the school's work, not least the attainment and progress in science in the secondary phase, and the accuracy of baseline assessment, but school leaders were aware that there was still much work to be done.</li> </ul>	

	Overall
<b>Self-evaluation and improvement planning</b>	Acceptable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The schools' policy set out clear procedures for self-evaluation and how this should be used in the school's planning for improvement. School leaders did not have a clear picture of students' progress over time. Consequently, they had not been able to identify quickly any group of students who were making unsatisfactory progress.</li> <li>Systems to monitor the quality of teaching were consistently applied and this contributed to school leaders' realistic view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Performance management arrangements were clear and used well to identify training needs. Teachers' evaluation of their own performance within this process had begun but was not analysed to make maximum use of the information to bring about improvement.</li> <li>Action plans were detailed and contained time-constrained targets against which the success of actions were to be measured.</li> <li>Progress had been made in addressing some of the recommendations from the previous inspection, but had not yet resulted in sustained improvement in all core subjects or in addressing the inconsistencies in the quality of teaching.</li> </ul>	

	Overall
<b>Parents and the community</b>	Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parents were very supportive of the school. Events such as the "Parent Engagement Week" and the involvement of parents in classrooms were examples of how links with parents impacted positively on students' learning.</li> </ul>	






- Communication between parents and the school was good. Newsletters were very informative, and provided information on day-to-day events and about what students were being taught. Parents of secondary-age students particularly appreciated the email contact with teachers that provided regular information about achievements and as well as information about the support needed to overcome difficulties in learning.
- Parents received regular written reports about students' attainment. In the primary and secondary phases, these provided information on the next steps that were needed in students' learning. Reports relating to children in the Foundation Stage were less informative.
- The school had developed a wide range of links with other schools and local business that were used effectively to widen students' experiences and helped them to put learning into real life contexts.

	Overall
<b>Governance</b>	Acceptable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Governing Board consisted of representatives of GEM's personnel with no direct representation of parents. Steps had recently been taken to form a parent committee with whom board representatives could meet on a regular basis but this was not yet fully implemented. Despite these shortcomings, the boards' knowledge of the school was broad-based and detailed.</li> <li>• Board members regularly monitored the school's actions through visits to the school. The Principal was effectively held to account for academic outcomes. The board had been proactive in the training provided for staff and had facilitated the sharing of good practice from other schools within the group.</li> <li>• The board had been proactive in helping the school to ensure that statutory requirements were met but had not been successful in ensuring the school had the quality of staffing required to remedy identified weaknesses. A lack of stability in staffing was preventing the school from consolidating improvements.</li> </ul>	

	Overall
<b>Management, staffing, facilities and resources</b>	Acceptable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School routines were generally established and efficient, and school policies were up to date and regularly reviewed. Procedures to ensure the safe dismissal of students had improved since the previous inspection and many school leaders and staff were actively involved in helping ensure that the process ran efficiently. The management of student attendance, however was not having a positive impact on raising attendance figures.</li> <li>• Only a few teachers had appropriate certification or relevant experience, even though many had tertiary qualifications in their subjects or in educational studies. Staff were, however, well deployed and high quality, targeted, professional development was beginning to have a positive impact, especially in the secondary and upper primary classes.</li> <li>• The school premises were generally accessible and offered students adequate opportunities to engage in a range of learning opportunities. The science laboratories provided opportunities for students in the secondary phase to engage in investigative activities, and the primary school library offered an acceptable range of books. Some of the classes, however, especially in the Foundation Stage and in Years 4 to 9, were crowded. The secondary library was under-resourced for research purposes, with limited resources for Arabic and Islamic studies.</li> <li>• Resources in the Foundation Stage and for mathematics and science throughout the school were varied and of good quality. The provision of technology resources was adequate.</li> </ul>	

## What are the views of the Principal, parents, teachers and students?

Before the inspection, the views of the Principal, 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		Percentage
 Parents*	This year	285	10%
	Last year	297	15%
 Teachers	31		15%
 Students	There are no upper secondary - aged students in the school.		

- Most parents were satisfied with the quality of education in the school, however a significant minority felt that their children were not making good progress in Arabic.
- A few parents showed some concerns about the quality of teaching in the Arabic departments and the extent of teacher turnover.

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

## 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

## How to contact us

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)