DUBAI Knowledge المعرفة

Oxford School

Curriculum: **UK**

Overall Rating:

Acceptable

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

Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al-Maktoum

Contents

School information

General information

Location	Al Muhaisnah
Type of school	Private
Opening year of school	1988
Website	www.oxford.sch.ae
Telephone	00971-4-2543666
Address	DUBAI - MUHAISNA 4 P.O BOX 50091
Principal	Aisha Ansari
Language of instruction	English
Inspection dates	20 to 23 March 2017

Students

Gender of students	Boys and girls
Age range	4-18
Grades or year groups	FS2-Year 13
Number of students on roll	1873
Number of children in pre-kindergarten	0
Number of Emirati students	56
Number of students with SEND	46
Largest nationality group of students	Pakistani

Teachers / Support staff

Number of teachers	139
Largest nationality group of teachers	Indian
Number of teaching assistants	19
Teacher-student ratio	1:14
Number of guidance counsellors	2
Teacher turnover	16%

Curriculum

Educational permit / Licence	UK
Main curriculum	UK / MOE
External tests and examinations	Cambridge/Edexcel IGCSE/GCE AS, A level
Accreditation	None
National Agenda benchmark tests	IBT, CAT4

The DSIB inspection process

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

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

Judgements are made on a six-point scale

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

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

Inspection journey for Oxford School
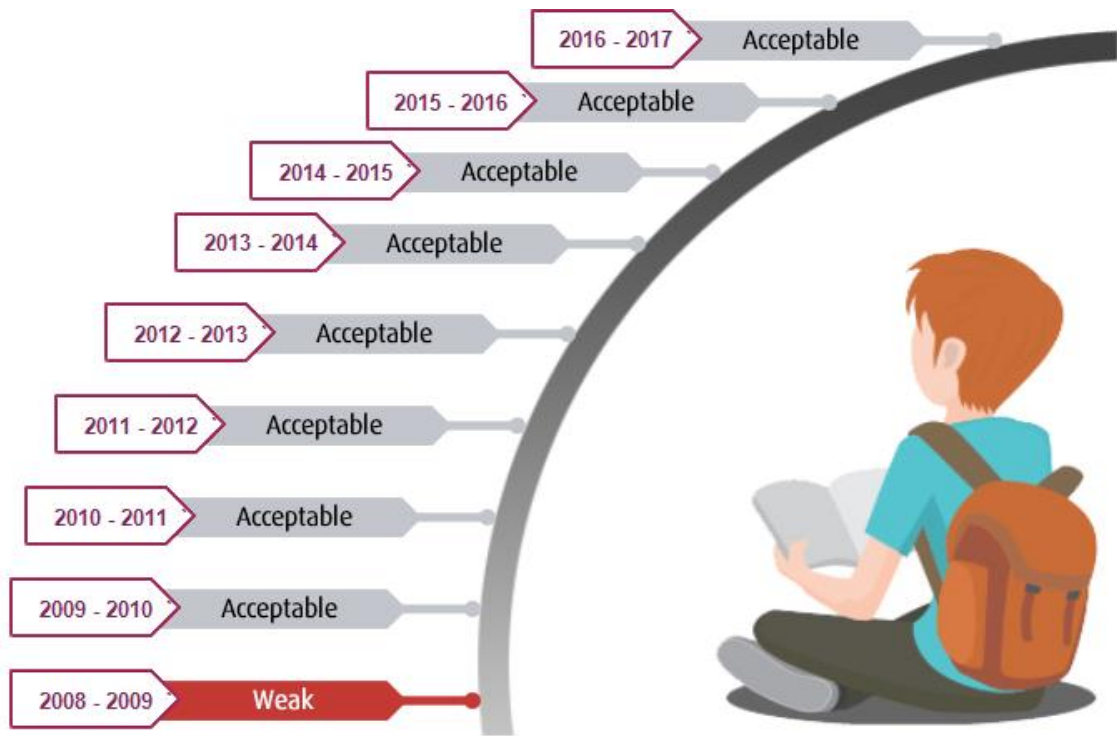
- The school was opened in 1988. At the time of the inspection, the school had 1873 students, aged from four to 18 years; a decrease of 55 students from the previous year. The principal has been in post since 2015. Teacher turnover is 16 per cent, compared to 33 per cent in the previous year.

- The three previous inspections have acknowledged strengths in students' personal and social development, their knowledge and understanding of Islamic values and its significance to life in Dubai, and the quality of partnerships with parents. More recently, inspections have also acknowledged improvements in the Foundation Stage (FS), in English and in the post-16 phase.

- Recommendations over the same period focused on the need for improvement in: teaching, especially to meet the learning needs of all students; assessment; and attainment and progress in Arabic and Islamic education. In addition, the 2015-16 inspection findings indicated that the school needed to monitor more closely the quality of learning and teaching, improve the way the learning needs of students are met, improve the learning environment and reduce overcrowding in some classes.

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

- Children in FS make good progress. In the primary phase, students make good progress and achieve high standards in Islamic education and Arabic as an additional language. However, attainment and progress are only acceptable in English and mathematics in primary. In the secondary and post-16 phases, students achieve high standards in most subjects except Arabic as a first language.

- Students' personal and social development, their understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures, are good or better in almost all respects throughout the school.

- The quality of teaching is good in FS. Teaching and assessment are good in both secondary and post-16 phases; they are acceptable in the primary phase.

- The curriculum is good throughout the school. It has been adapted well to meet students' learning needs in the post-16 phase.

- Health and safety has improved throughout the school and it is now good across the school. The provision for students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) has improved and it is now of an acceptable standard. Students are well cared for especially in the FS. Senior students receive good curricular advice and vocational guidance.

- Governance and leadership are good. Self-evaluation is acceptable as it is not yet fully embedded across the school. Partnerships and communication with parents are good. Overall, the management and provision of staffing, resources and accommodation remains acceptable.

> What the school does best

- The impact of the principal and other leaders on improving the school by empowering staff and making them accountable.
- The improved teaching and assessment in the secondary and post 16-phases which has increased students' progress and attainment
- Students' awareness of Emirati culture and their understanding and application of Islamic values to their own lives.

Recommendations

- Improve the quality and consistency of teaching and the use of assessment in the primary phase.
- Further improve the training of teachers to enable them to help students with SEND make better progress in lessons.
- Further reduce class sizes to decrease overcrowding in some primary classes.

National Agenda Parameter

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

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

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

- Attainment based upon National Agenda Parameter benchmarks meets expectations in science but it is not secure in English, or mathematics.

- The school meets the registration requirements for the National Agenda Parameter.

- Teachers have been trained well and analyse data rigorously to identify areas of strengths and weaknesses in students' performance. Teachers use the data to plan intervention strategies and the impact is monitored well by senior leaders. Students and parents agree individual targets, based on assessment information, and the school monitors students' progress towards these targets.

- The school uses analyses of National Agenda Parameter results effectively and identifies areas of the curriculum where content and methodology require changing to enhance students' performance. Relevant content and skills are added to the curriculum where necessary. Planning for change is thorough and includes effective on-going monitoring.

- The school has focused well on skill development. In science, students are developing skills of scientific investigation; in English, they are improving skills of reading and comprehension; and in mathematics they are working on problem solving. However, the development of critical thinking does not yet take place consistently across the school.

- Students know their National Agenda Parameter test results and are involved in setting targets based upon these. In primary, books are used for research and in other phases, tablet computers are used effectively. Although students in primary have limited opportunities for extended investigations, this is a strong feature with older students who develop independent learning skills through researching and presenting on a wide range of topics.

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

Innovation in Education

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

Promoting a culture of innovation:

Senior leaders have introduced additional training for teachers to develop their skills and foster innovation. Teachers are now asking more open questions to enhance students' critical thinking skills. The Innovation Committee has promoted improvements throughout the school and helped to develop the extra-curricular programme by incorporating clubs with design, innovation and entrepreneurial elements. The enquiry based approach in science, and the frequent use of tablet computers, especially in secondary and post 16 phases, have developed students' research skills and use of technology. Senior students have initiated several major projects, such as Market Day and Teaching Day, which have developed their leadership and entrepreneurial skills, and benefitted the local community through charitable fund raising.

Overall school performance

Acceptable

1 Students' achievement

		Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Islamic education	Attainment	Not applicable	Good ⬆	Acceptable	Good
	Progress	Not applicable	Good	Good ⬆	Good
Arabic as a first language	Attainment	Not applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
	Progress	Not applicable	Good ⬆	Acceptable	Acceptable
Arabic as an additional language	Attainment	Not applicable	Good ⬆	Acceptable	Not applicable
	Progress	Not applicable	Good	Good ⬆	Not applicable
English	Attainment	Acceptable ⬇	Acceptable	Good	Good
	Progress	Good	Acceptable	Good	Good
Mathematics	Attainment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good ⬆	Good
	Progress	Good	Acceptable	Good ⬆	Good
Science	Attainment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good ⬆	Good ⬆
	Progress	Good	Good ⬆	Good ⬆	Good

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Learning skills	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good ⬆	Good

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

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Personal development	Good	Good	Good	Good
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Good	Good	Very good ⬆	Very good ⬆
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Good	Good	Good	Very good

3. Teaching and assessment

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Teaching for effective learning	Good ⬆	Acceptable	Good ⬆	Good
Assessment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good ⬆	Good ⬆

4. Curriculum

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Curriculum design and implementation	Good	Good	Good	Good
Curriculum adaptation	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good

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

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding	Good ⬆	Good ⬆	Good ⬆	Good ⬆
Care and support	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good

6. Leadership and management

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

1. Students' achievement

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 ⬇	Good
Mathematics	Acceptable	Good
Science	Acceptable	Good

- In English, children are making good progress from their starting points as second language learners and attaining levels that are in line with Early Years Foundation Curriculum (EYFS) standards. Many children are developing effective phonic skills. The majority display the expected writing skills, and are able to write their own names and consonant-vowel-consonant words. However, only a minority are writing sentences. Children are developing into confident speakers and can listen in a range of situations with growing attentiveness.

- Most children in mathematics, have made good progress from their starting points on entry into FS although they are attaining the expected levels in relation to the EYFS curriculum. Most children are confidently manipulating and writing numbers to 15. They can talk about 2D and 3D shapes and are exploring measurement using non-standard units. In class work, they are able to use graphs and venn diagrams to present information and make comparisons. Through exploration of patterns most can continue and create their own simple patterns.

- In science children are attaining expected curriculum levels although they make good progress with skills and knowledge, from when they enter the school. The newly established outdoor learning area, where children have access to sand, water, role play, construction and writing equipment in an unstructured way, is creating greater opportunities to explore using the senses and to problem solve, observe, predict, make decisions and record their findings for themselves.

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

- The school's assessment data on students' performance in Islamic education show high attainment. In lessons, a majority can demonstrate an understanding of the subject that is above Ministry of Education (MoE) curriculum expectations. Students have a good understanding of the Pillars of Islam and a good knowledge of the Prophet's (PBUH) life and his companions. They memorise short Surahs of the Holy Qur'an and understand their meaning. Recitation skills are not completely secure although student understanding of Islamic values such as, kindness and respect is better.

- In Arabic as a first language, internal and external assessment data show good levels of attainment. However, in lessons and recent work, most students attain levels of understanding and display language skills that are in line with (MoE) curriculum standards. For example, students can read and understand written and spoken passages about familiar topics. They can speak in short sentences and write short paragraphs using a range of vocabulary applying basic rules of grammar. Good progress is made in lessons and within students' written work.

- The majority of students studying Arabic as an additional language achieve levels of attainment that are above (MoE) curriculum standards. For example, at the end of this phase students are able to write short essays with more than one paragraph and understand opinions in written and spoken passages. In lessons, the majority of students make better than expected progress against their starting points with trends of attainment over time being consistently strong.

- In English, most students' attainment and progress in lessons is in line with curriculum expectations. Their overall achievement, when judged against national and international standards presents a more mixed picture. Students are good listeners and can present confidently and clearly both in class and assemblies. The majority are developing fluent reading skills and their writing skills are progressing equally well. Students know the benefit of drafting and editing both fiction and non-fiction texts.

- Attainment in mathematics is acceptable. The quality of students' work in lessons and in books show that most attain in line with expectations for their age. Younger students can use mathematics vocabulary correctly. In Year 2 students are able to identify properties of basic geometrical shapes such as, squares, rectangles and circles. The collection and interpretation of data is a strength. Students display information in graphs or tables with accuracy. In line with expectations, Year 6, students can correctly tabulate data from activities relating to categorisation. Progress in lessons and over time however, is still acceptable.

- In science, students attain standards that are in line with curriculum expectations. Benchmark and external tests as well as work in books indicate that most students are achieving expected standards of knowledge and understanding. Internal assessments, particularly for younger classes, tend to overstate levels of attainment and, as a result, results have fluctuated slightly around the same level for three years. For a majority of students, progress is above expectations particularly with the development of investigative skills.

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

- In Islamic education, most students attain levels of understanding that are in line with (MoE) curriculum standards. They have age appropriate understanding of the meaning of the Holy Qur'an and Hadeeth and can refer to them for guidance. Their Holy Qur'an recitation skills are weaker. Students show an adequate understanding of Islamic concepts such as those related to Hadeeth sciences. Their understanding of the range of Islamic values and manners is stronger. Boys make better progress in lessons, although the school's data show higher attainment and progress for the girls, overall.

- Attainment and progress in Arabic as a first language are acceptable. The school's data and International Benchmark Test (IBT) results show good overall attainment, although in lessons and work samples, most students demonstrate an understanding of the subject that is in line with MoE curriculum standards. Students can read, understand written passages and understand spoken language at an appropriate level for their age. They can write an article about familiar topics but speaking skills are weaker. Progress for all groups of students is acceptable.

- Attainment for Arabic as an additional language is acceptable and progress is good. The school data shows good attainment. However, in lessons and recent work most students attain levels that are in line with MoE curriculum standards. For example, most students can write articles and stories of varying length, understand passages and can recognise points of view. They can discuss facts and give opinions. In lessons, a majority of students make better than expected progress against their starting points. Trends of attainment are consistent with girls performing better than boys.

- Overall attainment and progress in English are good as exemplified by the standards achieved in the IGCSE examinations and the rising trend evident in assessment data over the last three years. Students' progress in lessons is good with girls making better progress than boys. Students are confident speakers and readily engage in purposeful and well-argued discussion, but reading and listening comprehension are skills requiring more development. Writing for different purposes and audiences is a strength. A good example being the well-researched and beautifully presented Year 10 magazines.

- Attainment and progress in mathematics is good with students acquiring secure number concepts and strong spatial awareness. The majority of students exceed expectations in making correct inferences from statistical data presented in different formats such as graphs, tables or analytic expressions. Students show good algebraic skills. The majority exceeded expectations in recent IGCSE examinations. Progress in lessons and overtime is good. Students show competence in researching ideas for projects and making comparisons between different concepts. They can effectively apply their knowledge to real-life contexts and discuss implications in an informed way.

- In science, attainment and progress are good. A majority of students make progress above expectations in the development of skills and knowledge as they move up the school. By Year 11 they achieve better than expected levels on benchmark tests in science and in IGCSE examinations in physics, chemistry and biology. Results have improved slightly over the last three years. Students show a good understanding of scientific concepts and can apply them well to unfamiliar situations.

👥 Post-16		
Subjects	Attainment	Progress
Islamic education	Good	Good
Arabic as a first language	Acceptable	Acceptable
Arabic as an additional language	Not applicable	Not applicable
English	Good	Good
Mathematics	Good	Good
Science	Good ⬆	Good

- The majority of students demonstrate an understanding of Islamic concepts that are above MoE curriculum standards. They show a good understanding of the Holy Qur'an, Hadeeth and Seerahs and can extract from them guidance and rulings such as, those related to consuming alcohol in Islam. Although students have a strong understanding of Islamic values which are clearly evident in behaviour and samples of students' work, their Holy Qur'an recitation skills are weaker. Students make better than expected progress in lessons and in the quality of work they produce with trends of attainment over time being consistently high.

- In Arabic as a first language, students attain levels that are in line with MoE curriculum standards unlike the school data which show outstanding attainment. Most students demonstrate an adequate knowledge of the grammatical and literary features of Arabic although their language skills are only acceptable. They can understand written and spoken passages on varying topics and lengths and discuss opinions and make arguments about articles using unfamiliar words. Few however, can read various text and poetry with expression. Students' make the expected progress in lessons and in work samples.

- In English, students' attainment and progress are good. As this is the first year of AS examinations there is no historical external assessment data for comparison, but internal data indicates that students are making good progress, building on their previous IGCSE examinations. Portfolios of written work, with a focus on textual analysis and writing for different purposes, shows that students are developing a good understanding of how language can be used effectively in different contexts. Active learning and problem-solving activities, challenges students to think critically and defend their ideas in discussion and debate.

- Attainment and progress in mathematics are good. Students have a secure knowledge of quadratic functions and the algebraic skills to manipulate inequalities. They can use calculus techniques with confidence to make graphical representations of the relationship between variables and model physical situations well. Year 13 students, show an increasing competence in the application of integration techniques and the ability to recognise the relationship between concepts. Internal data predict good results in AS and A2 level examinations. Students make good progress in class and in their written work.

- In science, a majority of students achieve above expected levels at AS level and a large majority do so at A2 level. This is improved attainment compared to recent years and represents above expected progress from starting points. Results in biology are stronger than in the other sciences. Students relate their learning well to the real world; for example, using an understanding of energy transfer to design a solar heated house.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Learning skills	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good ⬆	Good

- Most students are engaged in their learning and enjoy working independently when given the opportunity to do so. The good quality work in most notebooks shows students taking responsibility for their learning. Although students are encouraged to be engaged with self-assessment, younger students are not clear what steps to take to improve.

- Students interact and collaborate well in groups, discussing their work articulately and with a good command of the relevant vocabulary for the subject being studied. They are eager to answer questions and will usually justify their answers with reasons. They question and critique others with sensitivity, while communicating their own learning clearly.

- Students in all phases make clear connections between areas of learning. For example, when comparing house prices using percentages, discussing the type of forces which are encountered on the way to school and the comparative advantages and disadvantages of rechargeable batteries in the senior phase of the school.

- Students are often given opportunities to research independently and to think critically. Year 7 students use ICT to research types of rock and the cycle of formation and decay. Year 12 students' skills in research and presentation are at a very high standard in science with the planning of investigations a common feature in primary science.

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

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Personal development	Good	Good	Good	Good

- All students have positive and responsible attitudes, especially the older students, who understand the importance of being good role models. They respond well to their teachers' and peers' feedback and enjoy taking ownership of their learning when given the opportunity.

- Students' behaviour is good around the school and generally in class. They demonstrate courtesy and concern for others. This is particularly evident for the older students as shown by their numerous voluntary activities in school and the community. Poor behaviour is rare, and students themselves say that bullying is not an issue.

- Relationships in the school are excellent. Students support one another and are sensitive to the needs of others. They are respectful towards their teachers and support staff. They are extremely courteous and helpful to visitors. The mutual regard between teachers and students supports the positive learning environment in the school.

- Students are aware of the need to adopt a healthy lifestyle. They make healthy food choices and can describe the benefits of eating well and taking plenty of exercise. Many participate in sporting activities in school and outside.

- School attendance this year averages 94 per cent although it was much lower in the inspection week; students were frequently observed arriving late to class.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Good	Good	Very good ⬆	Very good ⬆

- Students across the school demonstrate a deep appreciation of Islamic values. They clearly understand how these values influence many aspects of life in the UAE. They talk about tolerance and giving in the UAE and explain how all people are respected and treated equally. Students are knowledgeably about the values they learn from Hajj and from fasting in the month of Ramadan, such as patience and humility.

- Across the school students, in all phases, are respectful of Emirati heritage and culture. Their appreciation is evident in their active participation in a number of school activities and celebrations, such as National Day and Martyr Day. Students talk cogently about the country and how it has changed rapidly to become a favourite destination for people from all over the world.

- There is strong understanding of cultural diversity in the school. Students are proud of their own cultures and demonstrate a clear appreciation of the cultures of others. In most parts of the school students talk in detail about world cultures focusing on history, art and food. This understanding is not as clearly evident at the lower phases of the school.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Good	Good	Good	Very good

- Students are proactive members of the school community. They take pride in initiating and participating in many activities for the benefit of others and the school, such as the appreciation day for support staff. Further examples of this admirable work include the breast cancer awareness campaign and the drive to collect food for the residents of a labour camp to mark World Food Day.

- Students are not afraid of a challenge, as their willingness to volunteer to work as teachers in the classroom on International Teachers' Day demonstrates. They have also shown their interest in education in their contribution to EXPO 2020, a project designed to open students' minds to future opportunities. Similarly, their Walk for Education 2017 was successful in raising awareness about the many children to whom the right to an education is denied.

- Students have good environmental awareness. They are able to discuss issues knowledgably such as global warming and the greenhouse effect as well as government tree planting and desert greening initiatives. Their own Sustainability Club takes care of metal and paper recycling in school

3. Teaching and assessment

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Teaching for effective learning	Good ⬆	Acceptable	Good ⬆	Good

- The majority of teachers show secure subject knowledge. In primary, some teachers are less confident in knowing how children learn, especially with mathematical concepts which impacts on opportunities for investigation in the classroom. However, most teachers understand that students have different learning styles and consequently provide a range of approaches.

- Lesson planning often includes a range of learning activities to ensure that students develop skills of collaboration and independence. In some subjects, primary classroom learning environments are more stimulating than in secondary. Lessons are generally well-resourced which aids student concentration and motivation, and promoting a firm focus on learning. However, not all teachers are skilled in managing more challenging student behaviour.

- Interactions between teachers and students are generally positive and productive with mutual respect and shared purpose. Teachers are developing questioning skills both to assess learning and provide opportunities for creative and critical thinking. In upper secondary science, teachers are skilled at promoting independent research. However, in some Arabic lessons, teachers do not create enough opportunities for group discussion.

- Teachers plan most lessons well and include strategies to meet the needs of different groups of students. However, in practice the methods adopted do not always meet all students' learning needs. In some classes, students with SEND are being encouraged to become more independent.

- Teachers are developing students' critical thinking and problem-solving skills across the school. In many classes they ask challenging questions and expect students to explain and justify their answers. Innovative practices are beginning to be effective in several areas across the school; they are less secure in the primary phase.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Assessment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good ⬆	Good ⬆

- Assessment processes are coherent and linked to the National Curriculum for England from the FS through to post-16. Arabic and Islamic education assessment arrangements are aligned with MoE requirements.

- The school uses appropriate international benchmarking tests across most year groups. However, teachers have not yet fully aligned internal standards in lower primary classes with the outcomes of benchmark tests. Cognitive ability test (CAT4) data is used very effectively to support target setting. Teachers in the primary and FS, analyse data to monitor students' progress accurately. However, in lower primary, teachers do not always assess attainment accurately and this lack of validity leads to insufficient challenge for students. Elsewhere, teachers rigorously analyse and use data effectively to track and monitor individual progress towards targets. Students at risk of falling behind are supported through a programme of targeted action.

- Across the school, teachers use data successfully to identify students' learning strengths, using this information to plan lessons to meet the needs of students. However, provision of challenge for the most able and support for weaker students is still inconsistent.

- Most teachers know their students well and support them, giving beneficial verbal and written feedback, enabling them to know what they need to do to improve. Self-review by students and setting goals for improvement is common practice, although the next steps that students identify are too general. In some subjects, clear rubrics are used to support assessment helping students understand how to improve further.

4. Curriculum

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Curriculum design and implementation	Good	Good	Good	Good

- The curriculum has a clear rationale and often promotes enjoyment and interest, particularly in the investigative approach to subjects such as science. In FS the curriculum is being developed to provide more child initiated learning both in the classrooms and in the outdoor area.

- The curriculum is well designed to ensure students build on their previous learning, and continually develop their skills as they progress throughout the school. Close attention is paid to ensuring that students are well prepared for the next stage of their education in both their academic and personal development. Older students are given valuable preparation for life beyond school.

- There are an appropriate choice of subjects for older students so that they can follow their interests and ambitions. They are able to choose from a range academic pathways at IGCSE, as well as a vocational course in travel and tourism. A suitable range of AS and A level courses for students supplement provision at the post 16 phase.

- Cross-curricular links are developing and enabling students to make connections in their learning. Each month a subject area leads the planning of activities so that students can deepen their understanding of the connections between, for example, science and Arabic. In FS, cross-curricular links are effectively integrated into the curriculum through thematic approaches.

- The school has robust systems to monitor the effectiveness of the curriculum through a range of evaluations, including an annual review as well as weekly discussions in subject departments. Staff make good use of internal and external assessment information to identify gaps in learning and make changes. An example of this is the developing transition units and planning more opportunities for problem-solving in mathematics.

- The social studies programme is aligned with the UAE curriculum and there is an appropriate balance of knowledge and skills. The school recognises the need to increase the teaching time allocation to ensure full coverage. Social studies is taught by specialist humanities teachers who display good subject knowledge and plan activities which are relevant to students' lives. Students enjoy learning about aspects of the UAE and are confident in discussing their opinions. Teachers include regular informal and formal assessment to check students' understanding as well as reviewing and adapting the curriculum.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Curriculum adaptation	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good

- The school makes adequate curriculum modifications to meet the needs of most students, for example, teachers create separate and differentiated lesson plans to support the needs of boys and girls. While the gifted and talented students are identified by external assessment, the programme provided for them lacks the intensity to meet their needs fully.

- The curriculum is designed to motivate most students by offering a wide range of opportunities within a broad and general curriculum. Additional opportunities for enterprise, innovation, creativity and social contribution are provided by the school through a system of extra-curricular clubs, which are open to students from all phases.

- The school provides a number of experiences integrated throughout the curriculum which enables students to develop an understanding of UAE values, culture and society. In addition to National Day and Flag Day, the school held Ethnic Day which saw students dressing in appropriate costumes to represent their home country highlighting the diverse nature of Dubai and the UAE.

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

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding	Good ⬆	Good ⬆	Good ⬆	Good ⬆

- The school's child protection and safeguarding procedures are comprehensive and effective. Focused training supports the school's active approach to the importance it gives to its child protection policy and procedures. Cyber safety awareness is effectively addressed within the IT department, at assemblies and within the life skills programme.

- The school's security arrangements have improved and are now firmly embedded. The procedures for dispersal and transportation arrangements are effective. Safety equipment on board bus transportation is regularly monitored and risk assessments routinely implemented for trips outside school. The cleanliness and quality of hygiene is appropriate and is an identified responsibility for the maintenance and medical staff.

- Information relating to medical data, evacuation procedures and health and safety issues is systematically recorded. These procedures are regularly reviewed for their effectiveness. An appropriate notification process is in place so the maintenance issues can be swiftly addressed.

- The school premises provide a sound environment for learning. IT facilities, scientific laboratories and FS play areas provide a range of opportunities for independent learning. The size of classrooms and the number of students in some primary classes, present constraints on investigative learning and group work. The school does not have a lift to access upper floors but appropriate timetable amendments are made for students with mobility impairments.

- Approaches to healthy living is given a high priority. The school provides essential information about diet and the value of exercise through assemblies, the science curriculum and a scheduled input from the medical staff. After school clubs and activities promote opportunities for physical education.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Care and support	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good

- Staff and student relationships in the school are positive. The school has good systems and procedures for managing student behaviour. A successful example has been the anti-bullying squad which involves students helping others under the direction of guidance counsellors. Every student knows at least one adult they trust to assist them if necessary.

- While the school's approach to promoting attendance and punctuality is adequate, it lacks intensity. The school has arrangements to manage in school punctuality through a system of late slips. It also has a system of monitoring student absences with regular phone calls home.

- The school is inclusive and welcomes students with a range of special educational needs and disabilities. Following admission, staff identify students with SEND and draw up detailed plans to support their needs. They work with professionals and parents to obtain formal diagnoses. Gifted and talented students are identified but the school does not have robust systems in place to fully meet their needs.

- The school provides appropriate support for most students with SEND and their progress is assessed frequently and thoroughly. Overall, progress is acceptable and students make the best progress when they work with the special educators. In lessons, support is variable, as a minority of teachers do not place enough emphasis on students' starting points when they plan activities for students with SEND.

- The well-being and personal development of all students are closely monitored in a team approach involving the counsellors, section heads and classroom teachers. They gather information on students which is then used to meet their social, physical, emotional and intellectual needs. Senior students are also provided with effective career guidance.

Inclusion

Provision and outcomes for students with SEND	Acceptable ⬆

- The school's ethos of inclusion is evident in its welcoming environment. The governors show commitment to SEND through their investment in specialist staff and intervention centres. Staff have developed effective systems for students' individual education programmes (IEPs) and for monitoring progress. Although the SEND staff have provided training for both teachers and shadow teachers this has not always resulted in effective support in the lessons.

- Staff make good use of a range of indicators and assessment tools to identify the specific needs of students with SEND. Teachers are becoming more aware of the need to refer students with possible difficulties to specialists. Early identification of children's learning needs on entry or when students join the school leads to timely intervention.

- The school keeps parents very well informed about their children's progress through monthly reviews of their children's IEP targets. This includes both progress in their academic and personal development. The school encourages parents to support their children at home and often provides helpful strategies on areas such as behaviour management. Parents value the opportunity to attend the workshop on positive parenting.

- Planning is usually modified to reflect different learning abilities. However, a minority of lessons are not sufficiently adapted to meet the needs of all students, especially those with more complex learning difficulties. Staff support students effectively in their personal development and help them grow in confidence and resilience. This has a positive impact on their engagement in learning.

- Assessments of students with SEND are frequent and thorough. Specialist SEND staff work closely each month with teachers and parents to review progress against students' IEP targets. Staff make good use of assessment information to check the effectiveness of interventions and that appropriate targets are in place. Overall, progress is acceptable and is better when students work individually with teachers from the learning support team.

6. Leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership	Good ⬆

- The principal has inspired the school community to improve the education of students. The senior leadership team have communicated very well to the whole school community an ambitious vision of providing a high quality education which embraces the UAE's National Priorities, which is promoted and shared very well across the whole school community. The school's inclusive admissions policy, support its mission and vision.

- Senior leaders across the school have a good knowledge of best educational practice. They have been very successful in promoting and implementing good teaching and the use of assessment especially in the secondary and post-16 phases. Leaders have yet to ensure that the quality of teaching matches the very best across the school and that all teachers are able to provide high quality support for students with varying needs, including SEND.

- Relationships between senior leaders and teachers are professional and effective. Communication within the school is good. Leadership is shared very well among the senior team and subject coordinators. Teachers have good leadership opportunities to contribute to the development of the school through its committees and extra-curricular programme.

- With the support of the governing body, leaders have successfully continued to improve the school since the last inspection. The principal and other senior leaders have high aspirations of staff and students and have relentlessly pursued improvement across the school.

- Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined across the school. A stronger culture of accountability is now evident with teachers knowing exactly what is expected of them. Senior and middle leaders hold teachers to account for the way they plan and deliver lessons, as well as for the progress students make.

School self-evaluation and improvement planning	Acceptable

- The school has a well-organised, systematic approach to self-evaluation which enables leaders and staff to know the strengths and development needs of all aspects of school life. However, further time is needed before these effective processes become fully embedded and impact on all areas of the work of the school.

- The quality of teachers' planning, delivery of lessons, and students' progress and attainment are reviewed regularly by subject coordinators and senior leaders. These procedures provide the school with an accurate view of its performance. Leaders make very good use of attainment data to monitor students' progress.

- A well-structured improvement plan, based upon the last inspection report has been compiled by the school which has helped staff to focus on improving the key priorities. As a result of this planning, student outcomes have improved, especially in the secondary and post-16 phases.

- The school has made progress with most of the recommendations of the last inspection report. Significant improvements have been made by both teachers in classes and school leaders in monitoring the quality of lessons. The school has made some progress in reducing overcrowding in classes. The roll has reduced this session and the maximum number of students has decreased in approximately 70 per cent of classes. However, there is still scope to manage class sizes more effectively.

Partnerships with parents and the community	Good

- Parents are encouraged to be actively involved with their children's learning. They support their children well at home with reading and homework exercises. In addition, they support school events and provide feedback to the school through the, 'Oxford Parent Forum'.

- The communication between the school and parents is good. The school uses its virtual learning environment (VLE) very well to keep parents and students informed about upcoming events and their children's programmes of work. Parents can readily contact teachers and discuss any concerns with them.

- The regular reports and meetings between parents and teachers keep parents fully informed on their children's attainment and aspects of their personal development. Primary, secondary and post-16 reports include students' targets but do not give their next steps in learning.

- The school has links with several local institutions such as a home for the elderly. Through charitable work, students have benefitted local and international charities. The school is aware of the scope to develop further its partnerships with businesses and the local community.

Governance	Good ⬆

- The governing body is representative and includes parents. Their views are sought from the parent's forum and through informal contacts. The board has responded very well to their suggestions by for instance, establishing 'booster classes' for their children.

- The board has very effective procedures to hold the principal and school to account. Board members systematically review the performance of each aspect of the school on a regular basis, making effective use of academic performance data, although some differences in the internal and external data are yet to be explored. In addition, the board meets at the end of each term to maintain an overview of the school's overall performance.

- The governing body has provided increased resources to improve provision in a number of areas, including upgrading the IT infrastructure. However, overcrowding still exists in some primary classes and this constrains the methods which these teachers can use.

Management, staffing, facilities and resources	Acceptable

- The day-to-day management of the school is effective. Routines and procedures are appropriately implemented. Students' cooperative attitudes and comprehensive staff supervision ensure a productive learning environment.

- The school is appropriately staffed to meet the needs of the curriculum, although subject expertise is stronger at secondary level. Professional development is extensive and appropriately focused on learning and teaching. However, it has yet to support helping teachers to meet the learning needs of students with SEND.

- Although the premises have some limitations they nevertheless provide an engaging environment to support student achievement. Technological facilities are a strength of the school. A significant financial investment in software programmes is an effective component in promoting student skills. The size of some classrooms in the primary phase is a constraint on teaching and learning.

- The improved range of resources make a positive contribution to enabling student learning. The digital provision and refurbished science laboratories provide a supportive basis for independent and investigative learning. The range of books available to students in the library is limited.

The views of parents, teachers and senior students

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

Responses to the surveys		
Responses received	Number	
Parents*	2016-2017	246
	2015-2016	415
Teachers	144	
Students	359	

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

- The majority of parents who responded to the survey are satisfied with the quality of education and most aspects of the school. Almost all think their children are safe in school and on school buses. They feel that their children have a good understanding of Islamic values, the importance of these to Dubai, and that their children have developed a good understanding of UAE and other cultures. Almost all parents think that the school promotes literacy in English much better than it does Arabic literacy.

- Almost all the teachers who responded to the survey are satisfied with aspects of the work of the school. They think that children are safe and enjoy school and are well behaved.

- The majority of students who responded to the survey say they are happy at school. They are satisfied with the quality of education. Almost all consider that they have a good understanding of Islamic values and how they are relevant to Dubai.

- Most parents, teachers and students consider that the school is well led.

What happens next?

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

• recommendations from DSIB

• areas identified by the school as requiring improvement

• other external reports or sources of information that comment on the work of the school

• priorities arising from the school's unique characteristics.

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

Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau

Knowledge and Human Development Authority

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