



National Agenda



Early years



Special educational
needs and disabilities



Innovation

Inspection Report 2015-2016

Dubai College

Curriculum: UK

Overall rating: Outstanding

Read more about the school



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“The race for
excellence has
no finish line”



Sheikh Mohammad Bin Rashid Al Maktoum

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School information

General information



Location	Al Sufouh
Type of school	Private
Opening year of school	1978
Website	www.dubaicollege.org
Telephone	04-3999111
Address	PO Box 837, Dubai Junction Al Sufouh Road and Road 331 Umm Suqeim
Principal	Michael Lambert
Language of instruction	English
Inspection dates	8 to 11 February 2016

Students



Gender of students	Boys and girls
Age range	11-18
Grades or year groups	Year 7 to Year 13
Number of students on roll	870
Number of children in pre-kindergarten	Not applicable
Number of Emirati students	10
Number of students with SEND	34
Largest nationality group of students	UK

Teachers / Support staff



Number of teachers	99
Largest nationality group of teachers	UK
Number of teaching assistants	0
Teacher-student ratio	1:10
Number of guidance counsellors	1
Teacher turnover	8%

Curriculum



Educational permit / Licence	UK
Main curriculum	UK
External tests and examinations	GCSE / A level
Accreditation	British Schools Overseas (BSO)
National Agenda benchmark tests	None currently used

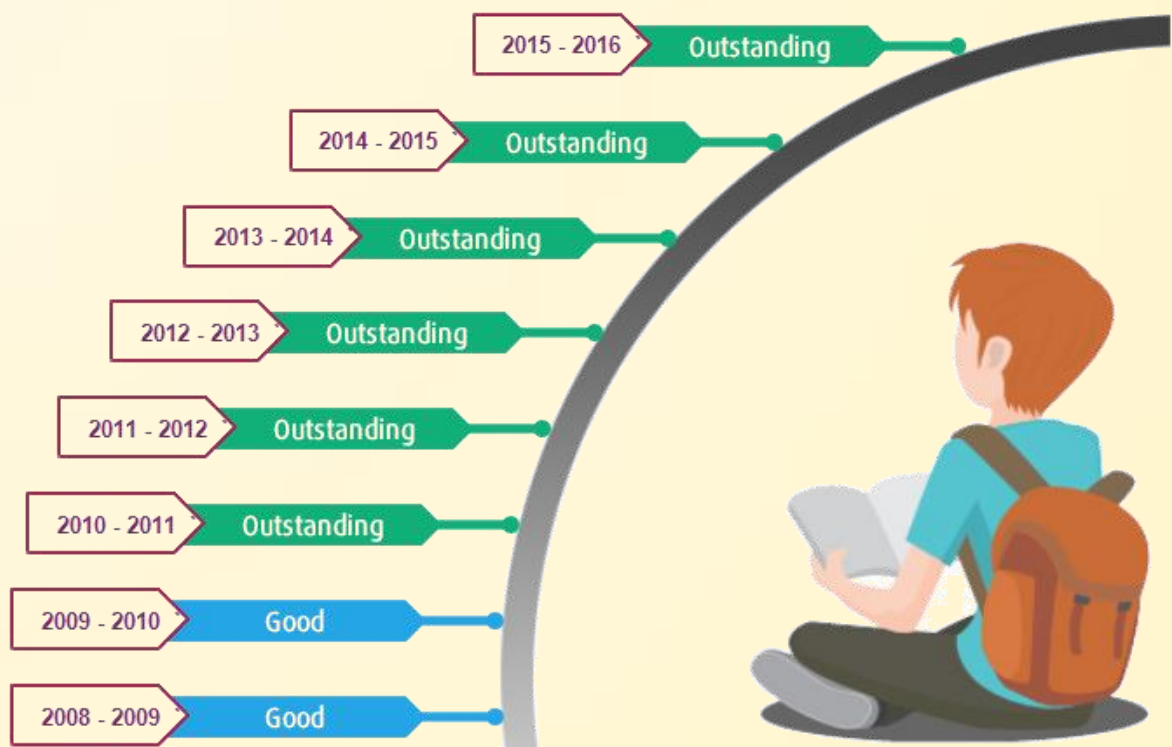


Summary for parents and the community

Dubai College was inspected by DSIB from 8 to 11 February 2016. The overall quality of education provided by the school was found to be **outstanding**.

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

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





How well did the school perform overall?

Overall, **Dubai College** provided an **outstanding** quality of education for its students.

- Students' attainment and progress were outstanding In English, mathematics and science. They excelled in both class work and examinations. In Islamic education and in Arabic, both as a first and additional language, attainment was lower, although students' progress had improved since the last inspection. Most students demonstrated excellent learning skills and set themselves challenging goals.
- Students had an excellent work ethic and exemplary behaviour. Relationships both with one another and with teachers were mutually respectful and supportive. Students showed a thorough understanding of Emirati culture and heritage and a thoughtful insight into wider world cultures. They took advantage of the many opportunities to contribute to the life of the school community.
- Teaching in most subjects and classes was carefully attuned to meeting students' needs. Teachers were often facilitators of students' learning rather than providers of information. This approach enabled students to take increasing responsibility for their learning, whilst guided by skilful and knowledgeable staff. A small proportion of lessons was not of the same high standard, and needed more imaginative teaching to promote effective learning.
- Students enjoyed a rich, challenging and balanced curriculum, which enabled them to pursue academic, sporting, philanthropic and creative activities. The wide range of extra-curricular options available, together with the specific enrichment elements of the curriculum, provided an excellent overall programme.
- Students were safe on the school site. Their health and well-being were given a very high priority. Arrangements for those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) were comprehensive. The school needed to communicate its inclusivity more effectively to all academically able potential students, regardless of challenge or disability.
- Under the newly-appointed headteacher, leadership was very successful in setting a clear and determined course of development for the school. School self-evaluation was mostly accurate, although overly optimistic in Islamic education and Arabic. Leadership was widely distributed. Many staff were able to make important contributions to the school's growth. Governors were very supportive of the school's continuous improvement. There were very positive relationships between school, parents and the community.



What did the school do well?

- The outstanding levels of students' academic and personal achievement.
- The high quality curriculum choices available and the excellent range of enrichment activity provided.
- The aspirational, self-motivated approach of most students within a calm, purposeful learning environment.
- Teaching, which had high expectations and developed strong learning skills for students.
- Skilful and widely distributed leadership, with a clear, determined vision for the future of the school.



What does the school need to do next?

- Emphasise more clearly the inclusive nature of the school's admissions policy to the wider community.
- Build upon the effective foundations set for the development of Islamic education and Arabic as a first language to improve students' progress.



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

- Overall, students with SEND made very good academic progress and were very well prepared for the next stage of their education. Through marking, feedback and self-assessment, students understood how to improve their work. They were actively involved in the review of their individual education plans and had a voice in developing strategies to support their learning.
- The school kept parents of students with SEND well informed about their children's academic achievements through frequent reports and parent consultations.
- Parents appreciated the opportunities to contact staff and found the information on, for example, curriculum options and preparation of examinations very helpful.
- Parents thought highly of the information in their children's individual education plans, and valued the guidance on how they could help their child at home. They had few opportunities to attend support groups or workshops on topics relating to SEND.
- Recent training by the SEND coordinator had enabled teachers to provide valuable support for students with SEND in lessons. Teachers sensitively supported students who were having personal difficulties.

National Agenda Parameter



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

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

Main points:

- The school did not yet fully meet the registration requirements of the National Agenda Parameter. No attainment data from the National Agenda Parameter was available at this stage to make a judgement on progress towards meeting the National Agenda targets.
- The school had promoted awareness and understanding of the National Agenda and its targets among a majority of its stakeholders. Teachers and governors had received explicit training on the National Agenda with an annual briefing and update on progress and methods for achieving the targets. Students' and parents' understanding of the National Agenda was more implicit, as teachers embedded PISA and TIMSS training into the curriculum. Students were able to talk about the UAE's desire to be one of the foremost nations in the world. Some had participated in TIMSS and PISA assessments, and understood the importance of benchmarking to improve any system.
- The curriculum was aligned to TIMSS and PISA requirements, with planning for continuity and progression in subjects relevant to the National Agenda. The mathematics department had run an information day once per term during which students were presented with a booklet of PISA and TIMSS style questions so that students might improve their understanding of mathematical terminology. In addition, Key Stages 3 and 4 course texts had a focus on problem-solving and reasoning. The science department had introduced extra lessons to cover aspects of the PISA categories of knowledge of science that were not covered in Key Stage 3 courses. Students had been given PISA and TIMSS type questions in the form of homework and mock examinations to prepare them for the tests. Within Key Stage 3 English literature and English language lessons, students had been tested on skills of analysis and evaluation, which had served as appropriate preparation for the reading, mathematics and science sections of the tests.
- A strong feature of teaching was the emphasis on students' ability to examine information and to question its validity using reasoned thinking involving critique, analysis, evaluation, judgement and improvement strategies. In English, a range of texts and source material either provided by teachers or located by students was used, thus developing their research skills, reading comprehension, and ability to analyse, synthesise and collate information in order to formulate conclusions. Science through experimentation was a dominant method of teaching in biology, chemistry and physics. In mathematics, teaching was successful in developing critical thinking when students had more control over their learning. Those activities based on real-life scenarios, engaging students in learning through doing, were the most effective.

- Students' research skills were well developed. They had received specific guidance and links as part of their individual subject studies, as well as generic information and technology (IT) training. In science, students used internet-based resources. In mathematics, students were encouraged to access websites for support and challenge. The librarian organised annual training to enable students to research effectively.

Innovation in education

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

Innovation is driven by a commitment to excellence and continuous improvement. It is based on curiosity, the willingness to take risks, to experiment and to test assumptions as well as questioning and challenging the status quo. Being innovative is about looking beyond what we currently do well, identifying the great ideas of tomorrow and putting them into practice.







Promoting a culture of innovation:

- The school encouraged students to be innovative and enterprising. Critical thinking and problem solving were regular features of learning. Leaders were very aware of the importance of innovative thinking for the students' future.

Overall school performance

Outstanding

1. Students' achievement

		Secondary	Post-16
Islamic education 	Attainment	Good ↑	Acceptable
	Progress	Good	Good ↑
Arabic as a first language 	Attainment	Weak	Not applicable
	Progress	Acceptable ↑	Not applicable
Arabic as an additional language 	Attainment	Good	Not applicable
	Progress	Good	Not applicable
English 	Attainment	Outstanding	Outstanding
	Progress	Outstanding	Outstanding
Mathematics 	Attainment	Outstanding	Outstanding
	Progress	Outstanding	Outstanding
Science 	Attainment	Outstanding	Outstanding
	Progress	Outstanding	Outstanding

	Secondary	Post-16
Learning skills	Outstanding	Outstanding


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

	Secondary	Post-16
Personal development	Outstanding	Outstanding
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Outstanding	Outstanding
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Outstanding	Outstanding

3. Teaching and assessment

	Secondary	Post-16
Teaching for effective learning	Outstanding	Outstanding
Assessment	Outstanding	Outstanding



4. Curriculum

	Secondary	Post-16
Curriculum design and implementation	Outstanding 	Outstanding
Curriculum adaptation	Outstanding	Outstanding

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

	Secondary	Post-16
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Care and support	Outstanding	Outstanding

6. Leadership and management

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



Main inspection report

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

Judgements are made on a six-point scale



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

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

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

1. Students' achievement

Secondary

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

- In Islamic education, the majority of students attained above national curriculum expectations. They had a good understanding of key concepts of life and death, and the day of judgement. The majority could infer meanings of the prescribed Hadiths and their contextual references. Most students made good progress in making effective links between Fiqh laws on how to deal with misinformation about Islam. They made effective progress in consolidating their understanding and critical thinking skills through reference to the Holy Qur'an and Hadith, for example, when they debated aspects of modern scientific findings and practices such as cloning and genetic engineering. Students in the upper years of the phase made the best progress.
- In Arabic as a first language, at the point of entry to the school, attainment for the majority of the small number of Arab students was very low. A large majority of students worked at levels that were several years below the Ministry of Education (MoE) curriculum standards. However, recent improvements in the provision for the subject, including tailoring plans to address the specific needs of students, had resulted in steady progress in basic skills for most, particularly in reading, writing and listening. Beyond the MoE standards, no external assessments were available for this subject.
- In Arabic as an additional language, in the absence of external measures, attainment and progress were generally good. The majority of students demonstrated good listening and speaking skills. They could respond to simple questions about familiar topics such as describing people and places, or talking about hotels and leisure. They could formulate simple sentences to describe feelings and preferences, using a good range of vocabulary. Although the majority had developed adequate reading fluency and comprehension of appropriate texts, these gains were not sufficiently reflected in writing. Students still wrote at levels which were too basic and did not reflect the full range of vocabulary acquired throughout the years.
- Almost all students attained highly in all aspects of English. This was confirmed by national examinations and international comparisons. From high starting points the different groups of students, including those with SEND, progressed rapidly. In discussions, they listened carefully and spoke with increasing confidence using an extensive range of vocabulary. Reading comprehension was advanced. Students could extract information from a range of demanding texts and a variety of source material. Writing for a range of audiences and purposes was of high quality. Progress was excellent in lessons and over time.
- Attainment and progress in mathematics were excellent. In 2015, 100% all students attained grade B or above in GCSE. Over the past three years, almost all had had results of grade B and above with the proportions achieving grade A* increasing. Students showed strong skills in algebra, being able to express generalisations algebraically and to model situations. They could solve a variety of problems involving equations, formulae, and functions. Almost all students made better than expected progress over time and in lessons, with little difference in progress rates among girls and boys and other groups.

- In science, Key Stage 3 diagnostic tests indicated attainment well above curriculum standards. This was reflected in lessons where progress was swift. Year 7 students, building an electromagnet, all had a good grasp of scientific method and understood the connection between current and magnetic attraction. They noted the significance of hard metals, soft metals and constant magnetism. Others, studying neutralisation, successfully applied theory to the real world, determining which readily available antacid tablet was the most effective neutralising agent. By Key Stage 4, many students in biology, physics and chemistry attained A* or A grades at GCSE. In the laboratory, Year 10 students demonstrated their prior learning and skills by instinctively analysing, evaluating and adapting their methods during experiments to measure heat energy released during a displacement reaction.

Post-16

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

- In Islamic education, attainment was acceptable for most students when measured against national curriculum standards. They had secure knowledge of the comparisons between 'Sharia' and civil law. They could make appropriate links to the Holy Qur'an and Hadith while developing an understanding of the concepts of crime and punishment, and how Islam viewed them. Over time, a majority of the students made good progress in consolidating and applying the core principles of Fiqh to current life issues and to their Muslim identity. In lessons, a majority made better than expected progress when given opportunities to debate, research and think critically.
- Attainment in English was excellent and students' progress rapid. Results in external examination confirmed consistently high attainment through excellent progress made in lessons and over time. Almost all students could express their ideas orally with precision, using carefully selected and sophisticated vocabulary. They read with discernment and astuteness. Their precise writing demonstrated an exceptional understanding of themes within plays and texts, which they expressed succinctly in well-structured and skilfully argued essays. There was little difference in the progress of different groups, for example between boys and girls.
- In mathematics, A-level results were outstanding, with most students attaining grade B and above in 2015. Over the past three years, the attainment of almost all students had been well above national standards. In lessons and in their recent work, almost all students demonstrated levels of knowledge, skills and understanding that were well above curriculum expectations. They could reason with data from several sources, or with unfamiliar representations, to solve multi-step problems. Some understood mathematical modelling as applied in probability and statistics. Others could apply both probability and cumulative distribution functions. There was little difference in the progress of boys and girls.

- Students' results in science indicated strong progress. Almost all students in biology and chemistry, and most in physics, attained A* - B grades at A level. During laboratory-based work, attainment and progress were outstanding and sustained over time. Year 12 students skilfully devised experimental methods to extract and measure the tensile strength of plant fibres. They showed good scientific insight as they established their variables and constants. Different groups all demonstrated clear understanding of risk assessment and minimisation in the laboratory. Year 13 students designed experiments to measure the uptake of oxygen in respiration, using larvae and beetles as subjects. They did this well. They critically analysed their discoveries, identified limitations to their method, and suggested adaptations.

	Secondary	Post-16
Learning skills	Outstanding	Outstanding

- Students were motivated and eager participants in their learning. They were often involved in assessing their own work and that of their fellow students against specific success criteria, and consequently were aware of their progress and strengths in most areas of learning. They asked questions and actively sought clarification when needed.
- Through effective collaboration and by contributing ideas and listening to others, students demonstrated high levels of skills as independent thinkers and learners.
- Students effectively applied skills, knowledge and understanding acquired in one area of learning to new learning contexts. They consistently made meaningful connections between prior and new learning and across different subjects, thereby deepening their understanding of the world.
- Using a variety of different sources, students proficiently researched and found things out for themselves. They were both innovative and creative. In science, students increasingly designed experiments. Across the curriculum, almost all demonstrated the ability to hypothesise, draw inferences and solve problems. They were able to formulate accurate and appropriate conclusions and present their learning with confidence.

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

	Secondary	Post-16
Personal development	Outstanding	Outstanding

- Students had a very strong sense of personal responsibility and showed independence of mind. They were proactive and resilient. They thrived on giving and receiving critical feedback, demonstrated ably in Islamic education classes and in Year 8 computer science, whilst developing their own websites and taking feedback from classmates.
- Students' very positive attitudes resulted in excellent behaviour and respect. Around the campus at break times students played, sat and talked, and showed high levels of self-discipline. Groups of boys and girls of mixed ages required only minimal adult supervision. Year 8 students demonstrated sustained listening skills far in excess of their years during an English lesson, when discussing *The Tempest*.

- Students enjoyed excellent relationships with teachers. They said that they felt safe, valued and supported, and this, in turn, led to effective relationships amongst students. They showed genuine concern, empathy, and tolerance of others. Students were only too willing to help those younger than themselves or those with mobility difficulties or other disabilities.
- Students had a strong commitment to following a safe and healthy lifestyle. They showed responsibility by making healthy eating choices and taking regular exercise. They selected healthy options in the canteen at lunch breaks. Substantial numbers of students participated in extra-curricular sports activities. The excellent post-16 programme, 'Home Alone', supported students by offering modules in cookery, nutrition, and the dangers of alcohol and drugs.
- Levels of attendance were extremely high. Students were punctual in arriving at school and for lessons throughout the school day. They were aware of the need for good attendance, recognising the link between it and high achievement.

	Secondary	Post-16
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Outstanding	Outstanding

- Students in both phases demonstrated an outstanding appreciation of Islam, its values and how it affected the lives of people in the UAE. They all knew the importance of mosques as places of free worship to Allah. They understood that women had to dress modestly, and that in Ramadan people must refrain from eating in public out of respect for those fasting.
- Students highly appreciated the UAE's past as part of its current modernity. They recognised the UAE as a multicultural destination with both modern and traditional experiences, and as a fast growing hub for the world.
- Students were proud of their own cultures and origins. Having travelled and experienced different cultures such as that of the UAE, many felt as if they were global citizens. Everyone was accepted and encouraged to be themselves. Students highly appreciated the fact that the school offered them ample opportunities to share and celebrate their different cultures.

	Secondary	Post-16
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Outstanding	Outstanding

- Students took pride in being active members of their school community. They initiated social action both at national and international levels. They effectively used enrichment days to plan charity and voluntary work to improve their school life or to support human causes worldwide.
- Throughout, students demonstrated an excellent work ethic. They had a strong understanding of what they needed to do in order to be successful citizens in the future. Their voice was heard and respected. Many took on leadership roles that largely influenced decision-making at school, such as surveying subject choice, suggesting alternatives for healthier lifestyles, and improving parts of the school premises.

- Students were fully aware of the challenging concerns about climate change and the need to promote an eco-friendly environment. They consistently participated in and initiated conservation schemes such as awareness-raising sessions, cleaning campaigns and self-discipline when using energy and water.

3. Teaching and assessment


	Secondary	Post-16
Teaching for effective learning	Outstanding	Outstanding

- Almost all teachers had excellent subject knowledge and a clear understanding of how students learn. Consequently, they taught accurately and confidently. They introduced and developed new concepts in a meaningful context, expertly answering students' questions as well as posing their own.
- Almost all lessons were skilfully planned to ensure that time, activities and resources were used to optimum effect. Increasingly, learning technologies were being used to promote outstanding learning. Teachers created a safe and positive learning environment in which students were willing to take risks with their learning, and felt that their contributions were valued and respected.
- Relationships between teachers and students were excellent and ensured that students engaged fully in their learning. Teachers knew their students well. They asked differentiated and probing questions to promote insightful responses and critical thinking. Teachers engaged students in dialogue and perceptive discussions and helped them to consolidate their thinking, thus contributing positively to their high learning outcomes.
- Teachers had high expectations for students. They used a variety of strategies to meet the needs of individuals successfully. They made effective use of assessment in planning, and provided both challenging work and excellent support. All of this positively contributed to students' rapid progress.
- Teachers skilfully developed students' critical thinking, problem-solving, innovation and independent learning skills in most lessons. For example, in mathematics, Year 8 students produced accurate two-dimensional plans and elevations of three-dimensional shapes. In Year 11, students used their understanding of circle theorems to solve complex problems and in Year 13 biology students investigated the respiration rates of organisms to identify the limitations of their own research methods.
- In Arabic as a first language, teaching had improved significantly. Teachers' subject knowledge was secure. Their lesson planning addressed the specific needs of students who were working below the levels expected for their age groups. Lessons included a range of activities which targeted the development of key language skills. Teachers frequently made appropriate use of oral questioning and IT to support learning.
- In Arabic as an additional language, most teachers effectively managed time and used a range of teacher-developed resources including audio-visual texts and pictures to engage students. Teachers encouraged critical thinking, problem solving and research skills through facilitating access to the internet and to dictionaries. However, developing independent learning skills was less systematic in most lessons.

	Secondary	Post-16
Assessment	Outstanding	Outstanding

- A new assessment process had been introduced. It provided easier access to data and integrated assessment with teaching, learning and the curriculum. Pastoral leaders could monitor the development of the whole student. Subject leaders were better informed and held more accountable for students' progress. Computerised reporting, shared with parents, highlighted areas for development and guidance towards improvement in a post report action plan.
- Attainment was benchmarked against international standards by comparing GCSE and A-level results with similarly selective schools in the UK and the Far East. Diagnostic tests were well used to set personal targets at Key Stage 3. External benchmarking was generally not a feature of this stage, nor in the Arabic department. Historical small-scale TIMSS and PISA data had been used to benchmark Key Stage 3 students.
- Students' progress was robustly monitored from baseline testing on entry to the school, using predictive tests at each transition stage. Subject leaders evaluated progress through an online post report analysis to identify groups and individuals at risk of missing targets. Intervention was then applied through the action plan. Students were fully involved in this academic journey through their planner.
- Teachers regularly used assessment information in English and mathematics, and tracked progress against success criteria. They offered structured feedback and guidance on next steps in learning. In science classes, this approach lacked consistency. Teaching was readily adapted to address perceived weaknesses, and in some subjects was based on tracking progress.
- Teachers knew their students' strengths and weaknesses very well. In English and mathematics, this knowledge was based on rigorous tracking and integrated self and peer review. It was more anecdotal in Islamic education, Arabic and science. Formal self and peer assessment were regular elements of English and mathematics, and some science and Arabic lessons.

4. Curriculum

	Secondary	Post-16
Curriculum design and implementation	Outstanding 	Outstanding

- Carefully planned links between subjects were very effective and helped students to make meaningful connections in their learning. For example, students used their mathematical knowledge of probability in geography, and when working with data during work experience.
- The curriculum had a very clear rationale. It provided excellent opportunities for the development of skills in the four foundations of the school: sporting, creative, philanthropic and academic endeavour. Careful attention was paid to ensuring that the values of both Dubai and UK underpinned its programmes. It was broad and balanced and met all statutory requirements.
- The curriculum was very well planned to ensure smooth transition as students moved through the school. Students were very well equipped with the life skills which they needed for higher education. Work experience gave them excellent opportunities to put their skills to the test in real- life situations.

- The school offered an excellent range of subjects at both secondary and post-16 levels, ranging from classical civilisation to business studies. The school was nearly always successful in enabling all students to take up their chosen curricular options, permitting them to follow their interests and aspirations.
- The school conducted regular reviews of the curriculum. It took into account the views of its stakeholders, inspection reports and best practice of other UK curriculum schools. The school had introduced computer science throughout Key Stage 3 to replace IT, and had firm plans to bring Islamic education into the mainstream timetable at the start of the next academic year.
- The school integrated topics and concepts related to UAE history and geography within its main curriculum for the subjects of history and geography. This was taught in two sessions per week for the two subjects, with a total of 110 minutes. In addition, UAE-related knowledge was integrated into many curricular and extra-curricular work, for example in drama, design and technology, art, mathematics and music.

	Secondary	Post-16
Curriculum adaptation	Outstanding	Outstanding

- The curriculum was planned very effectively to meet the needs of all, particularly those students with SEND, and the varying and diverse needs of the many students who were gifted and talented. The extended project qualification enabled older students to deepen their knowledge of their chosen subject through a largely self-directed and self-motivated dissertation.
- The rich curriculum successfully promoted enterprise, innovation, creativity and social contribution. Through it, students developed confidence. Students took responsibility for initiating and organising many extra-curricular events such as fund-raising concerts, induction days and environmental clubs. They made significant contributions to local and international communities. During the termly enrichment days, students gained valuable life skills such as dealing with stress and cooking healthy meals.
- The school was highly successfully in promoting Emirati culture and UAE society through interesting activities such as National Day celebrations. Students studied historical texts, traditional dancing and local animals. Recognition of events such as Ramadan and Iftar supported Muslim families and helped students to develop their understanding of Islam.

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

	Secondary	Post-16
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding	Outstanding	Outstanding

- Procedures for safeguarding were robust with clear policies on child protection, anti-bullying and behaviour management. Students were well supported in understanding the safe use of the internet; parents' awareness was also raised. Positive relationships minimised the risk of bullying. Students reported that they felt safe and well supported by staff.

- The site was secure with a robust system for visitor management. Facilities were leased to outside organisations, but only after school hours. Well-managed indoor and outdoor spaces ensured a clean, safe and hygienic environment. Recently erected sunshades enhanced the safety and comfort of the pool area. A calm atmosphere prevailed during breaks as a result of the mature attitude of students, but with appropriate staff supervision.
- Swift responses from the bursar's department ensured regular maintenance of buildings and equipment. Necessary safety checks were undertaken. Risk assessments were completed well for educational visits in the UAE and overseas. Evacuation drills were regular and recorded, with remedial actions when necessary.
- The premises and facilities met the needs of all students. They included provision for drama, music and the performing arts. More ramps had been installed to ensure full access to the ground floor. Additional laboratories had been built. The nurse, the school mentor and the SEND coordinator had more appropriate premises in which to meet students' medical and emotional needs.
- The school promoted safe and healthy living through the curriculum, through personal and social education and through enhancement days. These latter included visiting speakers, who addressed a range of teenage issues, including healthy relationships. The substantial extra-curricular programme promoted many physical activities. The canteen menu encouraged a balanced diet.

	Secondary	Post-16
Care and support	Outstanding	Outstanding

- The school operated as a harmonious community with an ethos of mutual respect. Relationships between students and staff were particularly strong. Students developed confidence and self-reliance. Effective behaviour management systems were in place and sanctions were needed very rarely.
- Highly effective procedures promoted and maintained outstanding levels of attendance. The school swiftly pursued any unexplained absences, and ensured that families understood the importance of arriving at school on time.
- The school made effective use of a range of assessment tools and professional expertise to identify the needs of students with SEND, and put into place useful strategies and interventions. These students received valuable support.
- The school had developed a new policy for students who were gifted and talented, enabling it to identify them at an early stage and to provide highly effective support to ensure that they reached their full potential.
- Teachers sensitively supported students who were having personal difficulties. The school had effective systems to track students' personal development, and there were plans to make regular checks on emotional well-being. Older students valued the high-quality guidance which they received on future career pathways, and the useful survival tips for leaving home for the first time.

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

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

Good

- School leaders showed their commitment to students with SEND by appointing a qualified special needs coordinator who had set out a clear vision for improvement. New procedures and effective support for teachers had had a positive and consistent impact. Although the school admitted a small number of high achieving students with particular needs, leaders and governors had not communicated the inclusive ethos to prospective students with SEND, who might benefit from the high quality provision.
- The school effectively used a range of assessment tools and professional expertise to identify students' needs, and ensured that effective strategies and interventions were in place. Teachers understood the needs of students with SEND. They made good use of the individual education plans to challenge and support these students in their learning.
- The school kept parents well informed about their children's academic achievements through frequent reports and parent consultations. Parents appreciated the information in the individual education plans, especially the guidance on how they could help their children at home. They had limited opportunities to access support groups or workshops on SEND topics.
- The curriculum was effectively adapted to meet the needs of students with SEND. In the case of medical issues, students were fully involved in planning any changes. Teachers provided effective modifications in lessons to support and challenge students with SEND. As a result, they quickly developed independence and resilience, which had a positive impact on their learning.
- Students with SEND made very good academic progress and were well prepared for the next stage of their education. Through marking, feedback and self-assessment, students understood how to improve. They were involved in the review and update of their individual education plans. They had a voice in developing strategies to support their learning. Processes to record attainment were in place, but systems for tracking students' progress were rudimentary.

6. Leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership

Outstanding

- Leaders had been very successful in developing a school which ensured students' success and enjoyment in almost every area. Recent improvements in Islamic education and Arabic provision were still works in progress. New leadership appointments in these curriculum areas was establishing a strong foundation for further improvement.
- Leaders had drawn extensively from the collective experience of teachers, parents and students to build an effective long-term strategy for the continuing improvement of the school. The school's five year development plan was comprehensive. It focused upon fine-tuning already strong aspects such as supporting students' transition to further education. The vision was well communicated and contributed to a common sense of purpose and determination to excel.

- Leadership responsibilities were widely shared. Staff committees, such as the strategic planning group and the teaching and learning group made valuable contributions to school development. Staff were appreciative of the new principal's policy of offering opportunities to develop leadership skills.
- Relationships and communications were professional and harmonious. Teachers and students were well aware of the contributions, which they were expected to make to school development.
- Senior leaders demonstrated exacting standards and a strong capacity to ensure continuing improvement. They had a high level of professional competence, and showed commitment to developing all aspects of the school. For example, they were developing an 'Alumni App.' to support future school leavers.

School self-evaluation and improvement planning

Very good ↓

- The school's self-evaluation was rigorous, wide ranging and drew upon the views of all staff. Priorities for development were appropriate, realistic and clearly communicated. They were supported by detailed subject and departmental action plans, which were highly relevant to the school's overall aims. Evaluation of attainment in Islamic education and Arabic was over-optimistic and needed to be evaluated more realistically against MoE expectations.
- The school had very effective systems for monitoring the quality of teaching, learning and the students' overall experience. Their personal development was given the same attention as their academic progress.
- Participation in the various working parties and development committees enabled many teachers to contribute effectively to school improvement, while building their own leadership skills and the school's leadership capacity. The initiative of exchanging tutor group responsibility for specific development tasks was proving successful.
- Leaders' planning for improvement had made a significant impact through action. There was a clear culture of continuous improvement in place. Responses to the recommendations of the previous inspection had been mostly successful. SEND provision was improved. Whilst a good start had been made in laying secure foundations for improving students' progress in Islamic education and Arabic, the further raising of their levels of attainment remained a long-term goal.

Partnerships with parents and the community

Outstanding

- Parents were very supportive of the school's work. There was a high degree of trust that the school would serve their children well.
- Parents felt well informed about their child's progress and personal development. They appreciated the range of events through which they could both learn about the opportunities open to their child and also understand what would be expected of them, as parents.
- Purposeful links had been established with other schools, businesses and institutions, to mutual advantage. Shared educational initiatives, and first hand commercial experience enriched the students' curriculum and cemented the school's place in the community.

- A range of opportunities was available for students to develop responsibility within their community, such as the 'Community Action Service Award Scheme', which acknowledged their contributions to charities or service to others, whether by volunteering to support school events, or organising charity fund raising.

Governance

Very good ↑

- The board of governors provided the school with strong support. There was a wide range of relevant expertise at the disposal of the various sub-committees. Governors received parents' views to inform their decisions, through both the school's parental survey and the current parent members of the board.
- Systems and processes for holding the school to account had been improved. A board member liaised with the Islamic education and Arabic departments and reported regularly to the education sub-committee on progress. Governors were thereby enabled to monitor the effectiveness of the school's improvement planning in these departments.
- The board had ensured that the school was well supported in its response to the recommendations of the previous report. New appointments in the Arabic, Islamic education and SEND departments together with more effective oversight of students' performance had promoted significant development.




Management, staffing, facilities and resources

Outstanding

- The day-to-day management of the school was highly efficient. Well-designed routines ran smoothly and contributed to a relaxed yet purposeful atmosphere in all areas of the school.
- Teachers were suitably qualified and experienced to deliver the school's rich curriculum. They were effectively recruited, thoroughly inducted, well supported and efficiently deployed. Administrative and ancillary staff provided excellent support services. Their contribution was rightly recognised as, for example, in the school magazine article celebrating 'The Boys in Blue'.
- The school's accommodation was well maintained and fit for purpose. Classrooms were spacious and specialist accommodation for sports, music, science and drama provided excellent environments for learning. A rolling programme of classroom refurbishment was ensuring that standards of accommodation were maintained.
- Resources for teaching and learning were plentiful and appropriate. They met students' needs very well and there were no significant shortcomings.

The views of the parents, teachers and students

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

Responses to the surveys		
Responses received	Number	
Parents* 	2015-2016	291
	2014-2015	239
Teachers 	63	
Students 	193	

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

- The responses to the surveys by parents, teachers and students demonstrated a very high level of satisfaction with almost all aspects of the school's work.
- A large majority of parents felt that students made good progress in Arabic. Almost all parents thought this in regard to Islamic education, English, mathematics and science.
- A majority of students thought that their progress was good in Islamic education, but only a minority felt this to be the case in Arabic as a first language.
- Almost all parents, students and teachers said that the school was a safe place where students behaved well, were treated fairly and taught effectively by skilled teachers. They were satisfied with the quality of education provided.
- Highlights identified by almost all respondents included excellent learning skills in a strong curriculum, ample opportunities to become environmentally aware and to take responsibility within the community, and an excellent range of facilities and resources.
- Almost all respondents thought that the school was led well and prepared students effectively for their next stage of education and their future lives.
- Only a quarter of parents felt that the home-school contract was useful.

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