



Pristine Private School

🇬🇧 Curriculum: UK

Overall Rating:

Good



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

Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al-Maktoum



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School information



General information

Location	Al Nahda
Type of school	Private
Opening year of school	1992
Website	www.pristineschool.com
Telephone	00971-4-2674299
Address	Al Nahda - 2 Area, P.O.Box 60830, Dubai, UAE
Principal	Shagufa Kidwai
Language of instruction	English
Inspection dates	16th to the 19th January 2017

Teachers / Support staff

Number of teachers	132
Largest nationality group of teachers	Indian
Number of teaching assistants	22
Teacher-student ratio	1:11
Number of guidance counsellors	3
Teacher turnover	16%

Students

Gender of students	Boys and girls
Age range	3-18
Grades or year groups	FS1-Year 13
Number of students on roll	1492
Number of children in pre-kindergarten	0
Number of Emirati students	4
Number of students with SEND	39
Largest nationality group of students	Pakistani

Curriculum

Educational permit / Licence	UK
Main curriculum	UK / Cambridge
External tests and examinations	IGCSE, AS and A Level, IBT, CAT4
Accreditation	NA
National Agenda benchmark tests	GL, IBT



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.

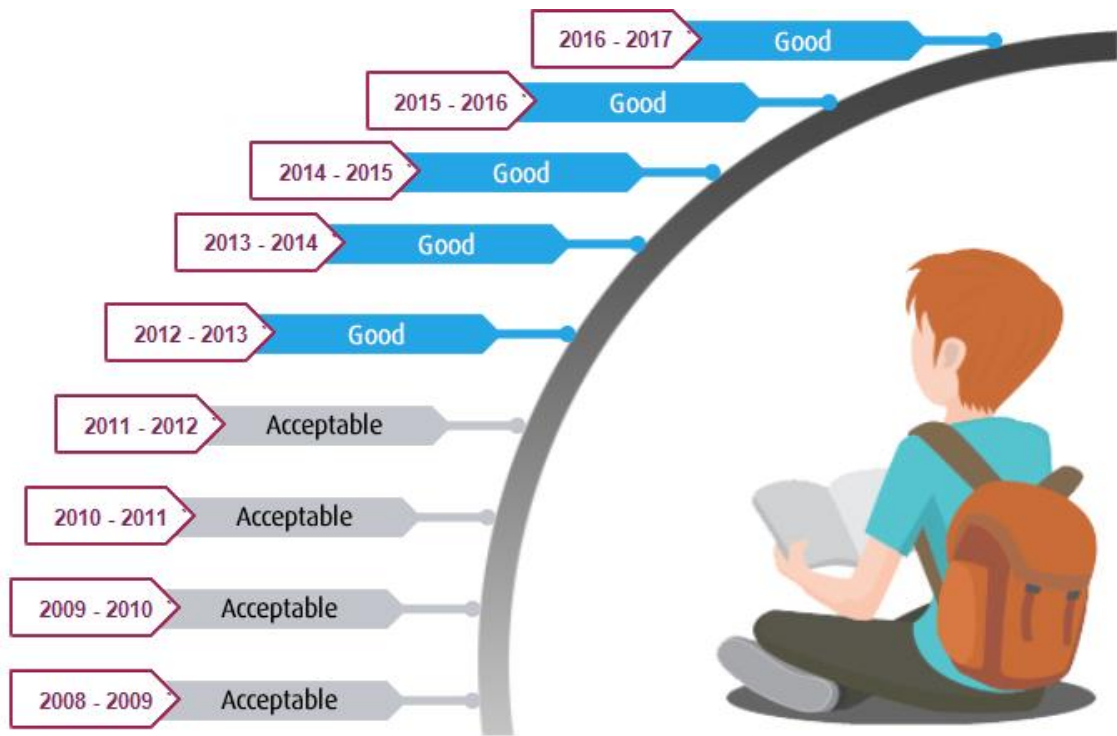
Inspection judgements are drawn from evidence gathered by the inspection team, including observation of students' learning in lessons, review of their work, discussions with students, meetings with the staff, parents and governors, and review of surveys completed by parents, teachers and students.

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 Pristine Private School



- Pristine Private School opened in 1992. It caters for a mostly Pakistani community of students, and offers a UK based curriculum, delivered in English. The principal has been in post for two years. The school roll has been consistent at around 1500 students aged from 3 to 18. Teacher turnover at 16%, this year, is lower than last year.
- A number of key strengths have been highlighted in recent inspection reports. These include the provision at Foundation Stage (FS), students' personal and social development, particularly their attitudes and behaviour and their appreciation of the Islamic values and UAE culture.
- Over the previous three years, the school has had a number of key recommendations for improvement. Similar themes have occurred covering the need to improve attainment and progress in Arabic, teaching, and the provision for students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). The school's processes for evaluating the quality of its own performance have also been identified.

Summary of inspection findings 2016-2017



Pristine Private School was inspected by DSIB from 16th to 19th January 2017. The overall quality of education provided by the school is **good**. The section below summarises the inspection findings for each of the six performance indicators described in the framework.

- Across subjects, aspects of students' attainment and progress have improved, including Islamic education, and Arabic as a first and as an additional language. Learning skills are now very good in FS and post-16. Across the school, students are still developing deeper critical thinking abilities.
- Students' personal development, understanding of Islamic culture and values, and social responsibility remain outstanding. Students have exemplary behaviour and are courteous and respectful to adults and each other.
- In post-16, teaching is now very good, as it is in FS. The school's priority has been to improve teaching and this has resulted in greater consistency. However, improved teaching approaches still have to be consolidated in primary and secondary phases, where teaching remains good overall. Assessment processes are very good in FS and good across other phases.
- The curriculum offers a well-balanced range of learning opportunities and choice of subjects, especially in FS where experiences are very stimulating and exciting. The school has improved curriculum adaptation to meet the needs of all students, more effectively, including those who are gifted and talented and those with SEND. The development of links to real-life and other curricular areas are sometimes missed in lessons.
- Students are well supported to lead healthy lifestyles. They are cared for very well, and senior students are given very helpful advice to make choices about their future careers. Newly developed educational plans are helpful in identifying the areas where students with SEND can be better supported. Provision for students with SEND is now good.
- The leadership structure has changed and improved in response to recommendations from the last inspection. This structure now provides for effective organisation of senior management responsibilities. Partnership with parents has strengthened and parents feel valued as part of the school community. Governors have a clear view of the school's quality of provision and support it effectively to address priorities and provide appropriate resources.

What the school does best

- High quality provision in FS, resulting in children's very good achievement.
- Progress of students across phases in English and science, and in post-16 in mathematics.
- Students' exemplary behaviour and attitudes to their work, their understanding of Islamic values and Emirati culture, and awareness of personal and social responsibilities.
- The school's attention to developing students' healthy lifestyles.

Recommendations

- Improve attainment and progress in Arabic as a first and as an additional language by:
 - raising teachers' level of challenge for students, and
 - providing more opportunities for students to speak Arabic.
- Ensure consistency in the quality of learning and teaching, in the primary and secondary phases.
- Improve the use of assessment to inform planning and meet students' needs more effectively, particularly in primary and secondary.
- Refine individual educational plans (IEPS) so that teachers can use them more effectively for those students with SEND.

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 their targets:

- Attainment based on the National Agenda Parameter benchmarks is above expectations in English, above expectations in mathematics and above expectations in science.
- The school meets the registration requirements for the National Agenda Parameter.
- The school analyses data in depth, giving consideration to how well students have performed against the set curriculum, and reflecting on the need for any change. Teachers and students are fully informed of the findings from the analysis of the data. Students are aware of their strengths and weaknesses and therefore better equipped to contribute to the development of their individual targets.
- The school uses the results from the TIMSS and PISA tests to review and align the curriculum, making any adjustments where gaps are identified. In addition, the alignment links closely to the internal assessment process. is secure plus, secure, emerging or beginning. The alignment ensures that the curriculum covers the appropriate knowledge and skills all students require.
- Teaching strategies help equip students to perform well in external tests. The use of open-ended questioning is an increasing feature of lessons. Planned activities place greater responsibility on the student to find solutions to problems. Lesson plans generally link activities to other curriculum areas and real-life situations, but plans are not always effectively implemented.
- Students have a good understanding of the National Agenda. Students know their exam results and why the National Agenda is in place. They recognise the purpose of changes and their responsibility to improve their learning skills. In science, they carry out independent investigations. However, the level of research and the use students make of the full range of resources is developing.

Overall, the school's progress towards meeting the National Agenda is as expected.

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:

- School initiatives to develop enterprise and entrepreneurial projects have improved. Curriculum design has developed positively to give more opportunities for students to develop the skills of innovation. Extra-curricular opportunities are provided but are not always extensive enough for secondary and post-16 students to fully enrich their learning experiences. The use of technology to enhance learning is inconsistently used across classes. School leadership and parent partnership support entrepreneurial opportunities for post-16 students such as internship programmes.

Overall school performance

Good

1 Students' achievement

		Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Islamic education 	Attainment	Not applicable	Good	Good ↑	Good ↑
	Progress	Not applicable	Good	Good	Good
Arabic as a first language 	Attainment	Not applicable	Good ↑	Acceptable	Acceptable
	Progress	Not applicable	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable
Arabic as an additional language 	Attainment	Not applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Not applicable
	Progress	Not applicable	Good ↑	Good	Not applicable
English 	Attainment	Very good ↑	Good	Very good	Good
	Progress	Very good	Very good ↑	Very good	Very good ↑
Mathematics 	Attainment	Very good ↑	Good	Good	Good
	Progress	Very good	Good	Good	Very good
Science 	Attainment	Very good ↑	Good	Very good	Good
	Progress	Very good	Very good	Very good	Very good ↑
		Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Learning skills		Very good	Good	Good	Very good ↑

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

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

3. Teaching and assessment

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Teaching for effective learning	Very good	Good	Good	Very good ↑
Assessment	Very good ↑	Good	Good	Good

4. Curriculum

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Curriculum design and implementation	Outstanding	Good	Good	Good
Curriculum adaptation	Very good ↑	Good	Good	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	Outstanding ↑	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Care and support	Very good ↑	Good	Good	Very good ↑


6. Leadership and management

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

Main inspection report



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	Very good ↑	Very good
Mathematics	Very good ↑	Very good
Science	Very good ↑	Very good

- Children are developing very good levels of receptive and expressive language. By FS2, the large majority of children's attainment is above age-related expectations as seen in their speaking, listening, reading and writing. They write about their activities and can use correct sentence structure and simple punctuation, spelling common words accurately. Across FS, children increase their literacy skills very well through play-based activities. These opportunities also help them to engage in meaningful interaction with their peers and develop their communication skills. Children are making very good progress in all areas of literacy.
- Children demonstrate a very good understanding of mathematical skills. They can count, read and write numbers up to 20 in FS2. They order numbers correctly. They carry out simple operations such as adding and subtracting two single-digit numbers, with the support of mathematical resources. Some solve simple problems, including sharing objects into two equal groups. Children explore the characteristics of everyday shapes and use mathematical language to describe them. Overall, a large majority of children make above expected progress and attain above curriculum expectations for their age.
- Children's understanding of scientific concepts, knowledge and skills is developing very well. They show a natural curiosity about different objects and phenomena in their environment. Critical thinking and problem solving are evident in the way that they explore concepts during structured play periods. Children's work samples, learning journals and progress trackers show that children are making very good progress in their scientific skills in relation to their starting points and the learning objectives in lessons.

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


- Students reach good levels of attainment in Islamic education. In lessons and work samples, the majority demonstrate levels of understanding of the subject that are above MoE curriculum standards. They show good understanding of the Five Pillars of Islam such as prayer and Hajj. They recall facts about the Prophet's (PBUH) life and can derive understanding from them such as lessons of Hijra. Their understanding of Islamic values and manners is strongest. Their progress in lessons and work samples is good. Trends of attainment are consistently high over time.
- In Arabic as a first language, the majority of students in primary have levels of attainment, and make progress, above the school curriculum standards in all skills. They are able to use extended sentences in speaking and they deliver presentations confidently about what they are learning from their reading of texts. The majority are developing the level of their independent writing well.
- Most students learning Arabic as an additional language attain expected levels against the school curriculum standards. Their listening skills are well developed. They pay careful attention to the teacher and understand well. They are still developing confidence in speaking and writing. The majority of students make better than expected progress during classes when measured against lesson objectives and curriculum expectations. Data shows a consistent level of acceptable attainment over time.
- The majority of primary students' attainment in English is above the expected national and international levels. Students write legibly with accurate spelling. They continue to develop their literacy skills, strengthened by a read-at-home programme. Almost all students listen carefully in lessons and can articulate responses with confidence. By the end of the primary, most students can write for a variety of purposes. The skills of inference and deduction are still evolving. Positive opportunities for students to speak and listen enable them to make very good progress over time and in lessons.
- The majority of students' attainment in mathematics, against curriculum standards, exceeds curriculum expectations. In international benchmark tests, students perform above the level expected. They can apply their learning well and show a fluency in mathematical operations. Year 1 students are proficient in determining fractions of a whole. Year 6 students are competent when determining shapes from given measurements and angles. Given their starting points, students make good progress, including those with particular needs. In lessons, progress is swift and all groups of students develop knowledge and understanding faster than expected.

- Measured against curriculum, national and international standards, the attainment of the majority of primary students in science exceeds expectations. Attainment in lessons is good. Students' understanding of the subject is often very good, but for a few students their investigation skills and ability to interpret findings of experiments varies and their progress in this aspect is inconsistent. Written work confirms this but also shows that in other aspects of the subject many students make very good progress. For example, in their knowledge, understanding and explanations of the classification of living things.

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

- In Islamic education a majority of students demonstrate levels of understanding that are above curriculum standards. In lessons and work samples, students show good understanding of the Holy Qur'an, Hadith and Seerah. They can infer rulings and guidance from them. Their Holy Qur'an recitation skills are weaker. They show clear understanding of Islamic concepts such as Zakah and Sadaqa. The majority of students make good progress in the subject. However, girls make better progress than boys and this is confirmed by the school's internal data.
- In Arabic as a first language, most students in secondary reach attainment levels and make progress that is in line with the level expected in the school curriculum. Most students use simple sentences in speaking and they can understand the main ideas of the text they are reading. Their speaking and writing skills are developing more slowly. They have an acceptable understanding of the rules of grammar. Progress, overall, against learning objectives and curriculum expectations is acceptable.
- In Arabic as an additional language, most students are attaining at the expected standard against the school curriculum. Attainment in listening exceeds that in speaking because of the lack of opportunities to practise speaking in class and for a purpose. In reading and writing, students are less skilful and confident. The majority of students make good progress during classes against the lesson objectives, and from their starting points as learners of an additional language. Their progress in skills of understanding in reading is better than those of speaking and writing. Data shows consistent trends of achievement over time.
- In English, student attainment is very good across the grades in secondary. Students read and reflect critically from a variety of challenging texts. They can articulate maturely in debates and discussion and know how to use language for purpose and audience. Students' writing skills reflect an increasingly wide vocabulary with complex sentence structure. By the end of Year 11, students can write and respond to literary analysis and write with grammatical and detailed accuracy. Almost all students make very good progress in most aspects of English skills' development.

- Attainment in mathematics, when assessed against expected curriculum standards, is good. However, students' achievements in benchmark tests and the IGCSE examination are above expectations and the school's average is higher than that of students internationally. Year 11 students are proficient at working with quadratic equations and can justify their findings. Students in Year 8 can give clear explanations of the concept of inverse proportion. Progress in the subject is good in all years, including students with SEND. This is evident in lessons for all groups of students.
- In science, students' attainment is very good compared against curriculum standards and with national and international standards. The number of students achieving higher grades is also very good. In lessons, they demonstrate very high skills when explaining their understanding, and interpreting results and observations from investigations. For example, they can explain the structure and properties of organic chemicals in great detail and accuracy. Students' written work shows they make very good progress and that levels of attainment are very good. Over time, the attainment trend is improving.

 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	Very good ↑
Mathematics	Good	Very good
Science	Good	Very good ↑

- The majority of students attain levels above MoE curriculum expectations in Islamic education. They have a good understanding of Islamic law such as sources of legislation in Islam. They show well-developed understanding of the Holy Qur'an and Hadeeth. They can refer to them for evidence of certain rulings such as those related to hijab for women, and smoking. They have a strong understanding of Islamic concepts such as halal and haram. Their Holy Qur'an recitation skills are secure. Students' progress in lessons and over time is also good. Attainment in the subject shows a consistently good trend over time.
- Most students learning Arabic as a first language demonstrate acceptable attainment and progress overall. They make better attainment and progress in listening and understanding Arabic and can understand the content and actions in a story text. Their ability to speak and give presentations is less well developed. In writing, students can give answers to questions and write short essays about unfamiliar topics.
- In English, the majority of students' attainment is above expected international and national standards. Most students can analyse a variety of literature and form articulate critical responses. Cross-curricular references provide opportunities to gain different perspectives, and relate topics to real-world situations. Students make very good progress in their written work and over time. Writing skills are well-developed and demonstrate very good progression in the understanding of complex structures and nuances in the use of English language.

- In mathematics, post-16 internal assessment results are not strong, particularly in Year 12, compared with results in external examinations. Results for students taking the AS level course are above average compared to students internationally. A-level students are effective in their use of calculus, applying it to real life situations. AS level students are confident in using differentiation and can relate their mathematical knowledge to real-world situations. They progress at a much better than expected rate and this applies to all groups of students, including those with particular needs.
- Post-16 attainment in science is good overall but weak when compared with national and international benchmarks. In Y12 and Y13, standards of work in students' books and in lessons are high. In particular, students' reasoning and explanations are extremely good. They carry out investigations exceptionally well, predicting and hypothesising, and then interpreting their findings with great sophistication. Students make very good progress in lessons. Over time, attainment is improving.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Learning skills	Very good	Good	Good	Very good ↑

- Students, across the school, are eager learners. They demonstrate sustained engagement in their learning. In FS and in post-16 they are highly enthusiastic and motivated learners. They take control of their learning situations and take responsibility for learning. In post-16, students use digital devices to support their enquiry and consolidate their understanding of concepts.
- In general, students are developing a wide repertoire of skills, including collaboration, independence. They are effective communicators and share their knowledge and understanding clearly. Many students are reflective and are capable of analysing the outcomes of their own and others' work. This is less obvious in primary and secondary. In FS, children learn very effectively through play-based activities.
- Students make connections between their current and prior learning and with real-life situations. In FS, this is particularly evident when children make connections during role-play for example, with characters from well-known stories. Many students apply skills, to new learning contexts both within school and in after-school projects, but this is not always consistently done.
- Enquiry-based approaches are evident, particularly in science. Research skills are embedded in FS and post-16, but to a lesser extent in the primary and secondary. Use of technology is evident across the school. Children in FS use programmable toys to learn directional language and to secure their concept of number. In post-16, learners use digital devices to research topics in class and apply their learning in 'real-time' contexts.

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

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

- In almost all classes, students demonstrate a strong sense of personal responsibility and commitment to their learning. Students are enthusiastic, demonstrating very positive attitudes. While students across the school respond well and maturely to constructive feedback.
- Students' behaviour is exemplary. They are articulate when discussing their differences and respectful with each other. They are self-disciplined both inside and outside the classroom. They cooperate well when working in groups from the youngest to the oldest students. Even the youngest students are able to resolve their differences.
- Relationships between students and staff are very respectful. Students support each other well and they take pride in each others' achievements. They can take the initiative in relating to others during classroom activities. Most importantly, they show empathy towards each other when working in collaborative activities.
- Students have a strong commitment to, and are well aware of the importance of, healthy eating and exercise. For example, students have created a kinetic calorie counter to help fight obesity, and the student council members take initiatives to provide healthy activities for the student community.
- Students are punctual arriving to school and attendance rates are very good. Students are aware of how good attendance influences their learning and achievement. Many happy face 'emojis' are noted on classroom whiteboards as an expression of appreciation.

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

- Students across the school have an excellent understanding of the role of Islam in the UAE and how its values are embedded in many walks of life. They talk about tolerance as a main aspect of life in the UAE, where all people are respected, irrespective of their race or culture. They talk about the values of fasting in Ramadan and explain the importance of dressing modestly in a Muslim country.
- Students, across the school, show a great respect to Emirati heritage and culture. In many of the activities and school projects, the UAE is presented as 'home' for students. Most students can talk in detail about public places and cultural activities in the country, and explain how Dubai has changed to become a popular destination for tourists.

- All students are keenly aware of cultural diversity in the UAE. They celebrate their own cultures; and they also show great respect to others. Most students can speak cogently about these cultures, such as their languages, historical sites, food, dress and arts. However, students' understanding of world cultures is more evident in the higher phases in school.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding

- Students of all ages in the school demonstrate very high levels of responsibility, and contribute actively to the life of their school and the wider community. This contribution is evident in numerous activities and projects that are mostly initiated by the students. These include the cleanliness campaigns and charity projects in collaboration with a wide range of organizations across the country.
- Students have an excellent work ethic. They speak confidently and demonstrate very high levels of leadership skills. They appreciate hard work, education, and the need to have targets to be successful in life. Students suggest, and participate actively in, a number of extra-curricular activities that are led by the students themselves, such as the different clubs and local and international competitions.
- Students demonstrate insightful awareness of environmental challenges in the world around them and explain how the UAE government deals with many of these challenges such as recycling and using solar energy. They have also initiated a number of initiatives to improve their school environment and the wider community such as helping in the cleaning of their school and public places in Dubai.

3. Teaching and assessment

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Teaching for effective learning	Very good	Good	Good	Very good ↑

- Teachers have good subject knowledge and a very good understanding of how students learn. This is especially so in FS where they have very good insight into young children's development. Most teachers, across the school use their knowledge effectively to make lessons and activities interesting to which catch students' attention.
- Lessons are planned well and teachers make use of a wide range of resources. Resources are used appropriately to enrich learning, and in many lessons tablets and laptop computers are used for research and to enliven classroom learning. Teachers' use of interactive whiteboards is more limited and often only to show video clips rather than use them to involve students in learning activities.
- Teachers question students effectively most of the time. In the best lessons, they ask challenging questions and initiate discussions in which students have to explain and justify their thinking to each other. This is effective in encouraging them to know the subject matter and explain themselves clearly and accurately. Occasionally, teachers' questioning is not searching enough, and they tell, rather than ask questions. This is especially so in Arabic lessons.

- In most lessons, teachers match work to meet students' learning needs effectively and provide support and materials to extend or consolidate learning. The school has provided considerable support and training to ensure this approach is consistent. However, occasionally, the work provided does not match that in lesson plans and some students do not learn as much as they should.
- Teaching to promote critical thinking, investigation and problem solving skills is a developing area. Many teachers have incorporated these skills and they are effective in promoting students' successful learning. Not all teachers have managed to introduce it to their day-to-day teaching. Where critical thinking is well established, students readily take responsibility for their own learning, and become confident, independent learners. This is most evident in FS and post 16.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Assessment	Very good ↑	Good	Good	Good

- Assessment processes in the school are comprehensive and coherent. They are stronger in FS, than in other phases. The school process of internal assessment is linked closely to the curriculum. This process is producing valid and reliable data across the school. The information gained provides a good measure of how well students are progressing.
- The commitment to external benchmark tests is helping the school to compare students' performance with that of students internationally. Students in Arabic, English, mathematics and science are benchmarked using recognised international tests. Secondary students' subjects are examined through IGCSE and GCSE examinations. Then analysis of outcomes from all tests and examinations provides valid international comparison.
- Across the school, assessment data is analysed in depth. In FS, for example, children's progress is closely monitored. In all phases, data analysis allows for individual students to be closely tracked. Data is used effectively by most teachers, and senior leaders are able to monitor and compare group and class performance. This is not fully consolidated across the school, especially in primary and secondary.
- Teachers generally make effective use of the assessment data available to them. It is well used, for example in Islamic education to inform teachers' planning and make curriculum adjustments. In the FS, teachers have made beneficial adjustments to the mathematics curriculum. The data is understood and used by the majority of staff to meet the needs of all groups of students.
- Teachers have a comprehensive knowledge of student performance, recognising strengths and weaknesses. Most teachers provide written feedback, which gives students guidance on what they need to improve in order move forward. In some instances the comments, although positive, are too general to give sufficient direction to the student and students do not always evaluate their own work and that of their peers.

4. Curriculum

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

- In FS, the curriculum is aligned to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). FS staff provide a rich and stimulating learning environment for young children. Primary, secondary and post 16 phases follow the National Curriculum for England. It is broad and balanced, with creative and physical subjects offered to all. The Arabic and Islamic education curricula meet Ministry of Education requirements.
- The children's experiences in FS prepare them well for Year 1 where the curriculum is planned progressively. However, in primary and secondary phases the curriculum does not always build on students' prior learning effectively or include sufficient challenge.
- Students have positive choices throughout the school. Children in FS make free choices during activity sessions. Students in secondary and post-16 can select additional subject options, in addition to the core subjects. Exciting extra-curricular clubs, such as film making, are offered at specific times and help students to use skills and develop their talents.
- Cross-curricular links are developed in all phases. FS children build language skills in role-play and they record investigations. In other phases, students use IT skills in research or link concepts in social studies topics. They extend their knowledge of other cultures through connections with overseas students.
- The school carries out regular curriculum reviews across all areas. The UAE National Agenda priorities are well considered, for example entrepreneurship and introducing opportunities for critical thinking. The resulting revisions from reviews are not always fully embedded to impact sufficiently on students' learning.
- The school is developing the provision of Arabic as an additional language in FS. Children learn through appropriate play activities and storytelling sessions. The programme provides a positive introduction to the language, for children.
- The social studies curriculum is taught in English, and is effectively planned to offer interesting learning activities for all groups of students. It is closely aligned to the Ministry of Education programme and provides cross curricular links across all subjects. Students have many opportunities to learn about the culture and development of the UAE and relate it to their own lives. Assessment strategies check concepts and skills as well as knowledge.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Curriculum adaptation	Very good ↑	Good	Good	Good

- The curriculum is adapted well to provide opportunities for most students to pursue academic, athletic, and creative arts activities. The FS curriculum is strongly aligned to the needs of the children. Across the school, curricular modification promotes engagement for students of all abilities. Differentiation is a feature in almost all lessons plans, although the provision of targeted activities is not always consistently applied.
- Curriculum adaptation offers students opportunities to take part in creativity, entrepreneurship and social contribution. Students across the school participate in competitions and exhibitions. Older students engage in volunteering to support others on local and global levels. The introduction of computer science at IGCSE level prepares students for future pathways in industry. Extra-curricular activities are less extensive for students in secondary and post-16.
- UAE culture, values and society are features of curriculum adaptation promoted through the UAE social studies programme and as cross-curricular links in other subjects and phases. Enrichment programmes in the curriculum develop students' understanding, knowledge and appreciation for the UAE and Emirati culture. Student participation in Emirati traditional celebrations extends their learning opportunities further.

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

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

- The school has a rigorous child protection policy and procedures which are clearly defined and shared with staff, students and parents. Staff are security checked before being appointed. All staff undergo regular training on the care and safeguarding of students.
- Children and students are supervised during breaks and are escorted safely to and from buses which have attendants on them who ensure efficient recording of attendance. Medical staff keep meticulous records of medicines in the school clinic and any medication or treatment given to students.
- The school keeps systematic records of school maintenance and is prompt in addressing any repairs or replacement items needed.
- The school premises and facilities are suitable for most students' learning, but some areas in the school are not accessible for those who may have mobility needs. School staff make very positive efforts to ensure safety in all areas, including classrooms, playgrounds and when students are collected after school by parents.

- Healthy living is well promoted in the school. This is clearly seen in the hygienic practices promoted by the school, and displayed clearly in corridors and classrooms. Students are encouraged to drink water and are praised for having healthy food for lunch.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Care and support	Very good ↑	Good	Good	Very good ↑

- Students understand the school's behaviour policy and know how to manage their feelings appropriately. They respond well to the high expectations of their teachers and parents. This results in an orderly, safe school environment, positive relationships and mutual respect between all members of the school community, particularly in FS and Post-16.
- The school maintains accurate records of attendance and punctuality. Parents are quickly notified in following up any unauthorised absences. The efficient system for managing these aspects promotes very good attendance and punctuality throughout the school.
- The school has an inclusive admissions policy and welcomes and nurtures students with SEND. When needs are identified, detailed IEPs are developed and shared with parents and class teachers. The school identifies gifted and talented students appropriately, and advanced learning plans are put in place for each. Identified students participate in extra projects to challenge and develop their skills further.
- Specialist teaching staff provide high quality support to students with SEND, especially during individual sessions in the personalised learning centre. In class, most teachers give effective help to all individuals. IEPs are not easily manageable for teachers to use in lessons and adapt to needs. Nevertheless, teacher understanding and support enables students to make progress.
- Staff design programmes throughout the school to support and monitor students' academic work, personal development, and well-being. Students know who to contact if they have a concern. FS teachers skilfully help children to develop positive relationships through purposeful play and track their academic achievements. Older students receive effective guidance on subject options and make informed choices about careers and higher education.

Inclusion

Provision and outcomes for students with SEND

Good ↑

- School leaders are committed to inclusion and welcome students with SEND. They successfully organise the daily management of these students and ensure staff supporting them receive relevant professional development. They monitor students and regularly review resources to improve the provision. The SEND team have a comprehensive remit, including responsibility for individual student's personal development, academic support, and careers guidance for senior students.

- Children in FS are assessed on entry and any concerns expressed by parents or teachers are quickly followed up. Parents are helped when it is appropriate to contact external agencies. Students who join the school in other year groups are also screened. These procedures result in students' needs being accurately identified early and support plans created.
- Parents are kept fully informed about the progress of their children through regular reporting and discussions with specialist support staff. IEPs are shared with them so they can support their children at home. Parents are very appreciative of the school's partnership with them.
- All students with SEND have detailed IEPs and teachers know their students well. These plans do not always help teachers to modify the curriculum to meet students' needs as they do not use students' barriers to learning as the measurable targets and for next steps.
- In the personalised learning centre, students make very good progress against their starting points as work is focused on their needs. The regular use of shadow teachers or specific equipment also helps students with SEND to achieve at least in line with their peers. They are prepared for the next stage of their education and older students gain recognised qualifications towards college or work.

6. Leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership

Good

- The principal and senior leaders work closely together to provide positive direction to the school. They have a clear and ambitious vision which is reflected in their individual responsibilities. Leaders at all levels show their commitment to UAE priorities and goals.
- Leadership roles are delegated across all phases and subjects and this supports the shared responsibility for improving outcomes. Middle leaders include a range of coordinators for each phase who help monitor and support. The distributed roles do not always support senior management to ensure consistency across phases.
- Relationships between leaders, students and parents are very positive in taking the school's vision forward. As a result, the school community has a strong identity and ethos. New initiatives are welcomed and well supported.
- The principal and senior leaders implement well thought out plans for improvement. They are careful to ensure priorities balance students' achievements and their social and personal development. National priorities, feature strongly in plans.
- The senior leadership team is successful in implementing changes. The new management structure is supporting the oversight of the positive impact of improvements for students' all-round achievement. Leaders make sure the school is compliant with regulatory requirements.

School self-evaluation and improvement planning

Good

- The processes for self-evaluation involve all teachers, are well-understood and effectively managed. As a result, the school knows itself well and identifies appropriate and important aspects for development.
- Clear procedures help all staff take part successfully in monitoring, peer and self-evaluation. Senior managers observe learning and teaching and share feedback with teachers. The focus on teaching approaches and styles of learning has been successful in securing improvements in aspects of teaching. The impact on improving critical thinking skills and challenge is not as consistent or well developed.
- The school has a well-structured improvement plan which identifies key priorities. These have clear expectations and objectives and who will be responsible for taking them forward. Success criteria are defined but the evaluations of how well they have been met are not clearly stated.
- The school has made sustained and significant progress in tackling recommendations for improvement in almost all areas identified in the last report. The principal evaluates the improvements in clear detail in her termly reports to parents and governors.

Partnerships with parents and the community

Very good ↑

- Parents are very supportive of the school and feel involved, valued and part of a close community. They contribute regularly by helping in school and organising charitable events and enterprise activities like the recent well-attended 'Carnival Day'. They are kept informed about school developments and have a strong voice in decision making through the parent council.
- Parents receive information from the school in a wide range of ways. These include regular newsletters, circulars and through the SMS system. Parents appreciate the daily updates on the school website which keeps them well-informed of changes and current events. They are very helpfully included in training such as explaining new assessment procedures, and support to students with SEND.
- Teachers' reports are very informative on students' progress and achievements. They offer detailed comments across all aspects of the curriculum with appropriate information on standards they have reached. Next steps in development are not a regular feature. Formal meetings with teachers provide appreciated opportunities to discuss their children's work more fully.
- The school has close and supportive links with other schools and the local community. Charity work by students is a regular commitment locally and internationally. Internships for senior students in local businesses are proving to be a positive development and are supported effectively by parents.

Governance

Good ↑

- The governing board now involves parents more fully and actively in the school. Responsibilities are shared with the parent council to develop events. Regular communication and meetings ensure good interaction between the board and parents, and provide the opportunity to give feedback and suggestions for improvement.
- Governors have a clear oversight of the quality of provision and make regular visits to the school and departments. Formal meetings are held with senior management to discuss students' achievements and school performance. The principal also submits termly reports to update the board. Informal meetings, visits and discussions provide additional helpful feedback.
- The governing board, along with senior leaders, take a significant part in addressing priorities and ensuring improved outcomes for students. For example, they have had a positive influence in the restructuring of the senior management responsibilities. The results of the changes are evaluated through teacher and student surveys and show strong impact on the continuity of teaching and learning across the school.

Management, staffing, facilities and resources




Good

- The school operates smoothly on a day-to-day basis. The timetable is delivered efficiently and students and teachers arrive at lessons punctually. The school liaises effectively with parents, especially in extracurricular activities and events. Parents understand school routines and cooperate fully. Dispersal time at the end of the day, however, is overly extended for those students being collected by parents.
- The school has sufficient qualified and experienced staff to ensure the curriculum is fully covered. It also has appropriately experienced and well qualified support staff for those students with SEND. The programme of staff development and training for leaders, teachers and support staff is comprehensive. It is informed by school and individual needs, and provides skills and expertise to meet the demands of modern education.
- The premises are suitable for the curriculum. Some rooms are small for the size of groups that use them, but teachers manage this efficiently. The premises and facilities are very good in FS. The school site and accommodation is well managed and clean. There is no lift access to the upper floors of the school for students with mobility needs.
- There are mainly good resources for all ages and subjects, providing a wide range of materials that promote effective learning. These are well managed, maintained in good condition, and safely stored. Resources for ICT have improved, but these are not always used or accessed fully by classes.

The views of parents, teachers and senior students

The views of parents, teachers and senior students

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

Responses to the surveys		
Responses received	Number	
 Parents*	2016-2017	399
	2015-2016	286
 Teachers	106	
 Students	119	

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

- Overall, parents who responded to the questionnaire are very satisfied with most aspects of the school and their children's education. Almost all feel their children enjoy school, are well cared for and kept very safe, including being given guidance on internet safety and social media.
- They think their children have gained a good understanding of the importance of Islamic values in Dubai and the UAE culture.
- Almost all consider the school is well led and that they are well informed about their children's progress.
- A few parents do not feel there are enough extra-curricular activities for their children to choose.
- Teachers are very positive about all aspects of the school, including leadership, parental meetings and how well students are cared for and supported.
- Students who responded are mostly very positive about their education but a minority do not feel they are always involved enough in class decisions or activities to develop their own leadership skills.

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