



National Agenda



Early years



Special educational
needs and disabilities



Innovation

Inspection Report 2015-2016

Arab Unity School

Curriculum: UK

Overall rating: Acceptable

Read more about the school



www.khda.gov.ae

‘Without
challenges,
we won’t feel
the taste of
success and
happiness’



Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum

Contents

School information	2
Summary for parents and the community	4
Main inspection report	10
1. Students' achievement	11
2. Students' personal and social development, and their innovation skills	16
3. Teaching and assessment	17
4. Curriculum	19
5. The protection, care, guidance and support of students	20
Provision for students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)	22
6. Leadership and management	22
The views of the parents, teachers and students	25

School information

General information



Location	Al Mizhar
Type of school	Private
Opening year of school	1974
Website	www.arabunityschool.com
Telephone	04-288-6226
Address	P.O. Box 10563, Rashidiya
Principal	Peter Hodge
Language of instruction	English
Inspection dates	07 to 10 March 2016

Students



Gender of students	Boys and girls
Age range	3-17
Grades or year groups	FS2-Grade 13
Number of students on roll	3255
Number of children in pre-kindergarten	0
Number of Emirati students	86
Number of students with SEND	123
Largest nationality group of students	Pakistani

Teachers / Support staff



Number of teachers	205
Largest nationality group of teachers	Indian
Number of teaching assistants	17
Teacher-student ratio	1:18
Number of guidance counsellors	2
Teacher turnover	27%

Curriculum



Educational permit / Licence	UK
Main curriculum	UK
External tests and examinations	IBT, Check Point, IGCSE, AS/A Levels
Accreditation	None
National Agenda benchmark tests	IBT

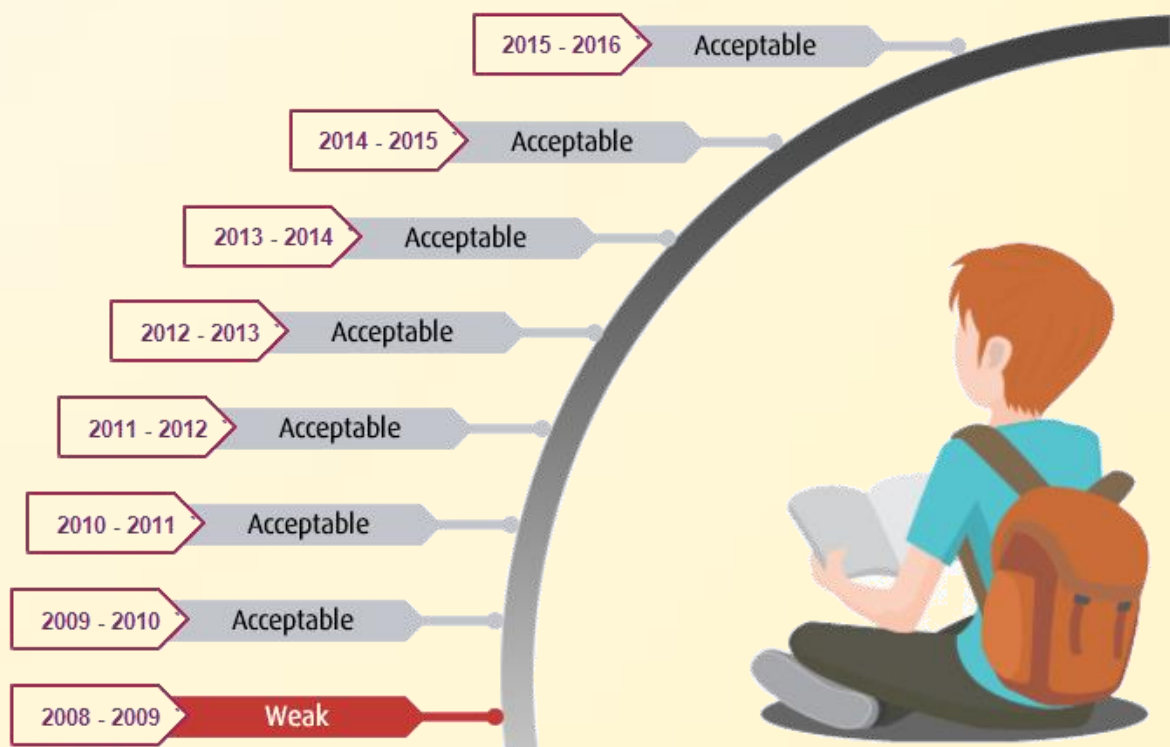


Summary for parents and the community

Arab Unity School was inspected by DSIB from 7 to 10 March, 2016. The overall quality of education provided by the school was found to be **acceptable**.

In order to judge the overall quality of education provided by the school, inspectors considered six key 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, Arab Unity School provided an **acceptable** quality of education for its students.

- The students' attainment and progress in learning the key subjects was mixed, ranging from acceptable to good amongst the different age groups. The learning skills of students were mainly good, but acceptable in the primary phase.
- The personal and social development of students of all ages was good, including their understanding of Islamic values, their awareness of local and world cultures and their abilities to innovate.
- The quality of teaching was mostly good, but less so in the primary years. The assessment of learning was mostly acceptable, and good in the Foundation Stage.
- The curriculum was of broadly acceptable quality and good in the Foundation Stage.
- The provision for the health, safety, care and support of students was good across the school.
- The quality of leadership was acceptable. Many leaders were new to the school and they demonstrated the capacity to make the recommended improvements. Governors had supported the school in meeting its statutory and regulatory obligations, especially those regarding the provision of lessons for learning Arabic. They had also improved teaching resources. Further staffing appointments were planned to enhance the leadership of assessment and curriculum planning.



What did the school do well?

- Students made good progress in learning a majority of the key subjects overall and their learning skills were of a good standard.
- The students' personal and social development was good across the school.
- The quality of teaching was good in the majority of lessons.
- The assessment of learning and the curriculum were good in the Foundation Stage.
- The provision by the school for the protection, care, guidance and support of students was good.



What does the school need to do next?

- Improve students' progress in learning the key subjects, especially in the primary years, so that their attainment becomes good overall in all subjects.
- Improve the quality of teaching, especially in the primary years, so that most lessons are of good quality.
- Modify and adapt the quality of the curriculum so that it is good across all phases.
- Ensure that the internal evaluation of the school's provision and outcomes is accurate, and that improvement plans are focused on key priorities.



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

- Students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) made acceptable or better progress from their starting points across all key subjects.
- Reports on the progress of students were sent to parents on a monthly basis.
- The parents had regular communication from the school through progress reports, newsletters, class diaries and the internet portal. In addition to formal reporting sessions, parents called on the SEND coordinator and teachers to discuss their children's progress.
- The school consulted with parents when they observed the likelihood of a child having a special educational need. Parents' opinions were considered at all stages of the process. All individual education plans (IEPs) noted the ways that parents could help their children at home.
- The school offered some support and guidance to parents. They were in the process of developing a comprehensive programme, which developed clear partnerships to improve learning outcomes.

National Agenda Parameter



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

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

Main points:

- The school met the registration requirements of the National Agenda Parameter. Progress towards meeting the National Agenda targets was not secure.
- The National Agenda was not well promoted among stakeholders. Efforts had been made through circulars, assemblies, parent's meetings and governing body meetings to raise awareness of the National Agenda. However, stakeholders did not have clear understanding of the National Agenda and its targets. Students had inconsistent understanding of the Agenda.
- The school had started to review the curriculum to align it with TIMSS and PISA testing requirements for content and skills. Some areas of the curriculum had been modified. Planning to develop students' skills was not systematic across the different subject and year groups.
- The school had strived to make improvements to students' critical thinking skills. However, many teachers were not clear about how these skills could be developed. Although some professional development had been provided on the art of questioning, teachers were not using open questions to support the development of critical thinking. Teachers of English better developed this skill than those of science or mathematics.
- The school used a 'Bring your own device' scheme to promote the use of information and communication technology (ICT) in lessons. These were used well in mathematics and English lessons to develop research skills but not so well in science lessons. Their use was evident in some lessons, which used a 'flipped lesson' approach, whereby students did research at home before the lesson rather than after it. In the best lessons, students were accustomed to presenting their research findings to their peers.

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 new principal and other leaders had demonstrated understanding of innovation and the importance of the national innovation agenda. The school's strategic plan had not included a response for promoting a culture of innovation. There were many opportunities across the curriculum and in extra-curricular learning opportunities for the development and application of innovation skills. The school had not developed a specific plan for promoting a culture of innovation but leaders appreciated the benefits of encouraging teachers to be innovative in their practices as part of a culture change.

Overall school performance

Acceptable

1. Students' achievement

		Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Islamic education 	Attainment	Not applicable	Good	Good	Acceptable
	Progress	Not applicable	Good	Good	Acceptable
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	Acceptable	Acceptable	Not applicable
English 	Attainment	Good	Acceptable	Good	Good
	Progress	Good	Acceptable	Good	Good
Mathematics 	Attainment	Good	Acceptable	Good	Good
	Progress	Good	Acceptable	Good	Good
Science 	Attainment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good	Good
	Progress	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good	Good

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

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

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

3. Teaching and assessment

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

4. Curriculum

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

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

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

6. Leadership and management

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



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

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	Good	Good
Mathematics	Good	Good
Science	Acceptable	Acceptable

- On entry to the school, the Foundation Stage children's knowledge of English was limited. Almost all made good progress from their starting points. They listened with increasing understanding and engaged in purposeful talk with each other. In reading, most children attained levels above those expected for their ages. They confidently sounded out new words and enjoyed reading to their partners. When writing almost all children formed their letters correctly and most could copy words accurately. A minority used their knowledge of letter sounds to write simple sentences, placing a capital letter at the beginning and a full stop at the end.
- In mathematics, children of all abilities made good progress. The majority, attained levels above those expected for their age group. Almost all children could name simple shapes and create repeating patterns. They were able to construct models with three-dimensional shapes. Most children accurately counted objects up to ten. A large majority could write numbers to ten from memory. Most of the older children could accurately record addition and subtraction calculations using an apparatus. A few were able to calculate mentally. Younger children were able to add two sets of objects together, work out how many there were and record their answers.
- In science, children's attainment was acceptable. They increased their understanding of the natural world through topics such as farm life. They named animals and knew why they were beneficial to humans. They played with water and sand, and had access to some scientific equipment. They planted seeds and knew these needed water to grow but did not record the event to subsequently observe changes and enter into scientific discussions. They observed the effects of salt in water but did not engage in discussion about how things work and why things happen. Progress was slowed because the children did not engage in scientific investigation and enquiry sufficiently.

Primary

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

- In Islamic education, the majority of students' attainment was above the Ministry of Education (MoE) curriculum expectations. Across this phase, the majority of students' knowledge of the biographies of the prophet Mohammad (PBUH) and companions was above expectations. Generally, a majority of students could understand properly the overall meaning of the verses and Hadeeth of the Holy Qur'an. In addition, they could give examples of how to apply what they were learning to their own lives. Students acquired knowledge and skills but their understanding was less developed, especially in the lower years. Progress of older students was slightly better than that of the younger ones.
- In Arabic as a first language, students' attainment across all language skills was good. A majority were able to listen, speak, read and write above expectations. Students made good progress in language acquisition but at different rates across the four language skills. Students in the upper years of the Primary phase could infer the meanings of unknown words. Students could identify story elements and re-tell a story using appropriate language.
- In Arabic as an additional language, most students demonstrated knowledge, understanding and skills that were in line with curriculum expectations. The assessments of learning were internal and no external benchmarking was carried out. Most students had strong listening skills and could understand and respond correctly to instructions. Most students could ask and answer simple questions and read the prescribed texts with few errors. Their writing skills were improving but the opportunities for extended writing were limited. In relation to their starting points, most students reached the expected levels of attainment in listening, speaking and reading, while the progress in writing was slower.
- In English as an additional language, most students showed acceptable attainment against the curriculum standards. Almost all students demonstrated progress against the external standards, in line with their age groups and starting points. Most students displayed acceptable knowledge of punctuation, grammar and vocabulary in their written and spoken work. A three-year comparison of students' attainment indicated a gradual development in basic skill areas. In lessons, most students were eager participants and made acceptable or better progress, including students with SEND.
- In mathematics, internal tracking showed that students' attainment was in line with expectations for their ages. By Year 6 they had reached expected curriculum standards. The results in International Benchmark Tests (IBT) showed that students were attaining above international averages in Year 5 and broadly in line in Year 6. Older students' attainment was better when the specialist mathematics teachers taught them. Although trends in attainment over time were improving, students were making the expected progress relative to their starting points. In lessons, most students made the expected progress. However, in some weaker lessons their progress was below expectations. The school did not systematically monitor any difference in progress made by groups of students.

- In science, students' attainment was broadly in line with curriculum expectations and international standards. They developed sound scientific knowledge, for example, of simple electric circuits and applied their understanding in practical work. The progress made by students, including those with SEND, was acceptable. As they moved through the Primary phase, they developed confidence in communicating their ideas but they were less skilled at investigating, hypothesising and drawing conclusions. They had only limited opportunities to link their learning to the real world.

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

- In Islamic education, the majority of students demonstrated clear understanding of Islamic values and etiquette. A majority could prove their points and support their answers in specific Islamic topics such as Fiqh, using evidence from the Holy Qur'an and Hadeeth. A majority were making clear progress in relation to the set learning objectives in lessons. Students made clear progress, especially in learning about the Holy Qur'an, Seerah, Fiqh, Laws, Islamic principles, morals and values. High performing students had limited opportunities to do challenging work or independent research.
- When learning Arabic as a first language, students demonstrated good listening skills but they were still at acceptable levels in their speaking, reading and writing. Many were not able to use Arabic standards of language appropriately. Students could understand not only the main idea and subsequent topics but also most of the details in a text. Most could write a short story sequencing events. Lack of challenge and differentiated tasks matched to students' need restricted progress particularly for the most able.
- When learning Arabic as an additional language most students demonstrated knowledge, understanding and skills that were in line with curriculum expectations. All the assessments were internal and no external benchmarking was carried out. Most students acquired new vocabulary adequately, such as those related to different jobs. They could participate in prepared dialogues or short talks and could write familiar sentences. Their writing skills were less well developed, especially in free and independent writing and in writing about unfamiliar topics. Overall, students were making acceptable progress.
- In English the majority of students attained above the school's curriculum standards. Many students' knowledge and skills were above the external benchmarks. A majority displayed good use of proper English in their spoken presentations and written exercises. Students' speaking and writing became increasingly sophisticated and creative as they progressed through the years. Students, including those with SEND, made significant progress over time. A majority of students enjoyed challenging lessons and performed accordingly. Progress and engagement were slightly better in the girls' school than in the boys'.

- In mathematics, the internal tracking and external exam results showed that students reached good levels of attainment and made good progress relative to their starting points. Their good attainment and progress were evident in the work seen in their books where their knowledge, skills and understanding exceeded the curriculum expectations. The IBT results showed that attainment was average compared to international scores. Students' progress in lessons was mostly good. There was some basic monitoring of progress according to gender and other groupings.
- Students of science continued to build on their knowledge and understanding so that by the time they reached Year 11 their attainment was above the curriculum and IGCSE standards. Their developing skills in critical thinking enabled them to engage in thought-provoking discussions on issues such as smoking during pregnancy. In the laboratory, students confidently applied previously learned theories to practical work, for example, when identifying different food nutrients in solutions. However, there were few opportunities for them to devise their own scientific investigations.

Post-16

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

- In Islamic education, most students demonstrated levels of knowledge and understanding that were in line with the curriculum standards. Students' learning was restricted by limiting the links made with different subjects. The lack of opportunities for more able students to engage in higher order and critical thinking affected their ability to make rapid progress. Few opportunities were provided for students to work collaboratively and apply their learning. Tasks beyond the assigned textbooks were rarely observed, again limiting progress by students in this phase.
- In Arabic as a first language, students' four skills were of acceptable quality. Although their reading and writing skills were at the expected levels for their ages, not all could use the standards of Arabic language appropriately. Most were unable to participate fluently in extended conversations. Most demonstrated limited skills to engage in long dialogue using standard Arabic language. A lack of challenge and opportunities to apply their language skills in different contexts including reading for pleasure, restricted progress overall.
- Students of English performed above the school's curriculum standards. Their attainment against international English standards was good, with a majority of students exceeding expectations. Students led some lessons and their written work revealed sophisticated understanding of the English language, with most students writing analytical or expressive assignments well. Students made significant progress in lessons and from their starting points. Boys and girls performed well in this challenging environment. Students indicated a readiness for future educational opportunities in which they could apply their learning in a range of different contexts.

- Students reached good levels of attainment and made good progress in mathematics by Year 13. However, there was a significant difference between the outcomes for boys and girls in their A Level results; girls attained better. Work carried out in lessons and in books showed good levels of knowledge, skills and understanding. There was an overall upward trend in A Level results over the past three years and the girls made more improvements than the boys did during this time. The AS Level results at the end of Year 12 were below expectations. Students made good progress against individual lesson objectives. These were closely aligned to the curriculum standards.
- In science, students made good progress to reach levels of attainment above the curriculum and A Level expectations. Their laboratory skills were of a high standard and they worked with care and precision, making important links with their work in the classrooms. Students were developing skills in research and presented topics such as biodiversity and viruses to their peers. However, there were not enough opportunities for them to develop the skills of critical thinking, independent enquiry and to design experiments which tested their own predictions and hypotheses.

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

- The learning skills of children in the Foundation Stage were developing well and they were excited about school and the new opportunities to explore their world. Students in the primary years eagerly participated in class activities, supporting the development of their speaking, writing and computational skills. However, opportunities to do so in all key subjects were limited.
- Children in the Foundation Stage worked well independently and in small and large groups, exploring and sharing their discoveries with their peers. Primary aged students were most successful when they had the opportunity to work in groups on open-ended tasks, as opposed to frequently observed teacher led lessons.
- Foundation Stage learners brought their life's experiences to each lesson and eagerly shared them with their teachers and classmates. Primary years students used their personal experiences to connect with lessons but not enough opportunities were provided across all the subject areas in this phase. Secondary students' studies enabled them to reach out to the greater community and make connections to their learning and the world outside of school.
- Foundation Stage children had a natural curiosity and were given opportunities to explore and investigate the world around them. Primary aged students began experimenting with personal computers to enhance their classroom experiences. Opportunities for critical thinking and problem solving were prevalent in some key areas but not used consistently across all subjects. Students in the post-16 phase used technology to explore knowledge beyond their textbooks.

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

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

- Students displayed positive attitudes toward school and their class work. Teachers lost very little time focusing their students on learning. Almost all students worked with high degrees of self-confidence. In the secondary and post-16 years, self-reliance was evident amongst almost all students and feedback on their work was received positively. The positive attitudes of the students were a highlight of the school.
- The good behaviour of the students across the school was a strength. Most students practiced self-discipline in lessons and during free times. No incidents of bullying were noted and their behaviour on buses was almost always appropriate. This behaviour set a positive tone for lessons and other activities.
- Relationships amongst students and between students and teachers were respectful throughout the school. In almost all cases student interactions were positive and supportive. All students were included in activities, including those with SEND. Visitors to the school were welcomed warmly and enthusiastically.
- Most students understood and practiced safe and healthy lifestyles. Physical education for both boys and girls stressed the importance of activity and students participated willingly. There was a high percentage of students identified as overweight by the school's medical staff. The school needed to engage parents in addressing this situation, both at home and in school, for students' well-being.
- The overall attendance and punctuality were good, but more so in the primary years. Instances of tardiness were addressed as they occurred and were generally resolved quickly. Attendance during the inspection week was slightly lower than during the last full term. Students' attendance in the post-16 phase was the lowest.

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

- Students had clear understanding and appreciation of Islamic values and the impact of them on everyday life in the UAE, such as tolerance and respect. They put into practice what they learned from their awareness of Islamic values.
- Students were knowledgeable and appreciative of the Emirati heritage and culture. Students identified and explained the local traditions and heritage and discussed the development of the UAE, referring to the vision of the rulers. They participated in a range of cultural celebrations, such as the UAE National, Flag and Martyrs' Days.
- Students had clear understanding and appreciation of their own and local cultures. Many opportunities for cultural awareness were embedded through the school curriculum and wider enrichment, such as the 'Ethnic Day' event. Students across the school participated in globally oriented projects. Their knowledge of cultural diversity and breadth, including art and literature from around the world, was limited.

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

- Students understood their responsibilities and contributed actively to the school's life, contributing positively upon the school and the wider community, for example, they helped marshal the younger students to classes. They participated voluntarily in activities such as preparing for sports day, an anti-bullying event and charity work. For example, they assembled gifts for the school's support staff and men in Dubai's labour camps at Eid.
- Students demonstrated positive attitudes toward work, especially the girls and younger primary students. However, the boys showed limited commitment to play a full part in organising their activities. Students' innovation skills were stronger amongst the girls. For example, they were producing the musical stage play 'My Fair Lady' for performance later in the school year.
- Students were well aware of environmental issues. They participated in projects to improve the school grounds and in activities such as recycling CDs and empty bottles and planting gardens. They were able to keep the school environment free of litter and graffiti.

3. Teaching and assessment

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

- Nearly all teachers had secure knowledge of their subjects but there were inconsistencies in their understanding of how students learn. In Foundation Stage, teachers gave children valuable opportunities to learn by finding things out for themselves. In the primary and a few secondary lessons, teachers often talked too much. They sometimes answered their own questions, giving their students few opportunities to learn through reflective thinking.
- All teachers used a common format for planning lessons and this helped to ensure that most lessons included a variety of engaging activities. Learning objectives were often too broad, for example, asking students to identify how to save the environment. Teachers' expectations of what students would learn during their lessons were rarely shared; consequently, they could not gauge their own success.
- There were some good, probing questions asked by teachers, which engaged students in carefully considered discussions. However, too often the teachers' questions only required one-word answers, which elicited shouted and choral responses. In the secondary and post-16 lessons, teachers planned paired and group discussions, which enabled all students to share their opinions. Such strategies were not a common feature of lessons in the primary phase.
- Most teachers planned work for students of different abilities but in the majority of lessons the high ability students were not sufficiently challenged. Students with SEND were helped to take their next steps in learning through effective classroom support and modified curricula.
- Critical thinking was often a feature of English lessons, for example, when discussing the effectiveness of persuasive language in different contexts. There were too few opportunities for students to develop these skills consistently in all subjects. Students made good use of their own electronic devices for research in


lessons but there were not enough planned activities to develop skills for independent enquiry and innovation skills.

- In Arabic as an additional language, most teachers demonstrated secure subject knowledge, planning lessons appropriately. Time and available resources were used to enhance students' learning. Strategies for collaboration and independent learning to meet the different needs of students was insufficient. Opportunities for developing students' critical thinking, problem solving, innovation and independent learning skills were limited overall but strongest in the post-16 phase.

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

- The school used a range of detailed assessment systems to measure students' attainment frequently against the National Curriculum in England (NCE) standards. However, the procedures lacked rigour in some subjects and did not consistently provide accurate and useful information about students' progress over time in all key subjects.
- The school had good systems in place to compare students' academic outcomes with UK national and international tests. These included the IBT, Cambridge Checkpoints, IGCSE, AS and A Levels. Subject leaders made appropriate use of the data to identify gaps in students' learning.
- Assessment information was analysed appropriately to track individuals. In English it was analysed in detail and areas of concern, such as writing and boys' reading skills, were identified. Assessment information about students with SEND was analysed well and used to track progress accurately over time. The scrutiny of data to identify trends and patterns in attainment was at an early stage of development.
- In the Foundation Stage, teachers observed and accurately recorded children's achievements. They made good use of this information to modify their lessons and ensure that children were challenged to take their next steps in learning. However, in the rest of the school procedures were inconsistent and not all teachers were making sufficient use of information to modify their lessons.
- Most teachers had good understanding of students' strengths and weaknesses. Assessment information was used to identify underachievement and students were offered valuable support. Written marking was inconsistent. In English there was often clear feedback on what students had achieved and what their next steps should be. However, in most other subjects, work was marked with ticks, in some cases inaccurately.

4. Curriculum

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

- The curriculum was reviewed twice a year, guided by the students' attainment, progress, aspirations, and the Emirate and national priorities. The school modified the curriculum to narrow gaps in students' knowledge, skills and understanding, such as those in earth science. The curriculum for teaching Arabic as an additional language was not reviewed.
- The curriculum throughout the school was broad and balanced, with a clear rationale. It was aligned to the National Curriculum in England. It showed some progression in the key subjects. All subjects were included and time was allocated appropriately to them. The content was matched to the ages and abilities of students. There was a greater emphasis on knowledge and less on skills.
- Planning between key phases in all key subjects helped students to transfer into their next stages of learning. There was adequate continuity and progression, to prepare students for higher education and equip them with age-appropriate skills. Some aspects of the AS curriculum lacked the challenge of the A level curriculum.
- The oldest students made choices from a range of subjects that addressed their future academic or career needs. Themed weeks and educational visits broadened the curriculum, extending learning. School clubs meant students participated in musicals and environmental awareness activities. The quality and range of extra-curricular activity was limited.
- Cross-curricular planning through a range of topics in the Foundation Stage and primary years made learning more meaningful, increasing students' knowledge and understanding. In the secondary years, the use of ICT was linked to various subjects. Opportunities for independent learning, research and critical thinking were planned in mathematics and English curricula, but less so in science and Arabic.
- The curriculum for social studies had a clear rationale and was well designed. It followed MoE curriculum in Years one through to eight and integrated within other subjects and projects in upper years. Cross-curricular links enabled students to transfer their learning about the UAE across a range of different subjects. Foundation Stage children learned about Dubai and the UAE as part of the weekly plans.

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

- The school had made appropriate adaptations to the curriculum to meet the needs of most students. Modifications to meet the needs of students with SEND had been improved and targeted more accurately. The school had started modification of the curriculum to meet the needs of other groups of students and those who were gifted and talented.
- The school had carried out a number of new initiatives to enhance the curriculum. These included the provision of additional subjects, development of cross-curricular themes, the use of themed clubs and participation in a number of literary competitions. The school supported enterprise and innovation through a range of projects, such as engineering 'buggies for use on Mars.'
- Links with Emirati culture and the UAE's society were promoted across all sections of the school. In the Foundation Stage parents worked with children, showing them how to cook Emirati food and make models of traditional homes. Subjects such as history were contextualized. Students had carried out projects such as 'Let's dive into the culture of the UAE'
- The school offered 45 minutes a week for learning Arabic to all of the children in Foundation Stage 2. Teachers developed the content of these sessions. They focused on letters, basic words and phrases.

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

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

- The school's provision for the protection and care of students was good, as there were effective policies and procedures in place that all stakeholders followed. Adequate steps had been taken to ensure that students were not subject to abuse, including bullying on site and online.
- The school was safe, secure and clean, with high quality medical care provided. Student supervision on the grounds and buses was effective although the school did not systematically check use of seat belts on buses. Not all parents cooperated with staff outside school grounds to achieve orderly traffic flow. Almost all of the food and drinks for sale in the school canteen were healthy.
- Buildings and equipment were well maintained. Thorough safety and maintenance records showed a diligent approach towards these matters. For example, emergency exit drills had been carried out that emptied all school buildings in less than three minutes. Medical records were complete and securely stored. Teachers were aware of any students who had medical conditions that required careful monitoring.
- The school premises were mostly safe and spacious but a few classrooms were crowded. The environments for teaching and learning were generally suitable and did not present obstacles to anyone with impaired physical mobility.

- The promotion of safe and healthy living was achieved in some lessons and during assemblies and special events. The school's medical staff provided health education to students on various topics, including the need for regular exercise and proper diet. There was careful monitoring of students who were overweight, which had resulted in a reduced number being classified as such this year.

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

- Relationships between staff and students were good. School counsellors promoted good behaviour through modification of interactions. The student council took an active part in monitoring the behaviour of their peers at appropriate intervals during the day. There was a good range of positive incentives to promote good behaviour.
- The school used a wide range of suitable strategies to promote good attendance and punctuality. Students with full attendance were rewarded with certificates of achievement. Attendance and punctuality were monitored daily and warnings and other corrective actions were implemented quickly when required. The student council assisted the school in monitoring their peers. Parents were regularly reminded through newsletters of the need for students' punctuality.
- The school used an appropriate range of methods to identify students with SEND. Diagnostic tests were carried out at admission and after referral by teachers. Testing needed to be more rigorous in order to better identify the specific needs of a few students. The school had recently instituted a process to identify students who were gifted or talented.
- SEND support was developing well across most academic areas, aided by the learning support teachers who effectively carried out in-class support, focused individual and small group teaching. Support for students in Arabic and Islamic education was less developed. Classroom teachers supported students mainly through provision of different tasks to match their abilities. Support for gifted and talented students was at an early stage of development.
- School counsellors provided good support for all students, effectively monitoring behaviour and communicating important information to the staff and students. Very good provision for career guidance was made. Information on subject choices and possible career choices were discussed formally and informally. Regular university fairs were held. Many universities visited the school. In addition, students visited different campuses across the UAE.

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

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

Good

- The school had an inclusive admissions policy and a comprehensive policy to deal with students with SEND. School leaders had invested well in providing a range of very suitable resources for special education, including additional staff. The Special Education Needs Coordinator who, had been appointed since the previous inspection, ably led them.
- The school used a variety of suitable assessment strategies to identify students with SEND, including tests at admission and a range of diagnostic tests. Teacher observation was the main strategy used to bring students to the notice of the support team. The procedures used to identify students with specific learning difficulties sometimes, lacked rig
- Parents were engaged from the start of the process of identification of students with SEND. Meetings with the coordinator and with the class teachers took place regularly. Various means of communication were used to keep parents informed. Parents were advised on the areas in which they could assist their children. Parents' views were also taken into account when IEPs were being developed.
- Curriculum modification was provided in classes through strategies such as graded worksheets and different questions and tasks for students with SEND. Withdrawal sessions, in-class support and one to one teaching were used successfully. The school had drawn up IEPs for all students with SEND. The plans for students with more complex needs, lacked precise individualised targets.
- The school had established good procedures to assess the progress of students with SEND. Baseline assessments of attainment in curricular areas were firmly established and progress was regularly measured against them. The school used an appropriate tracking system to ensure that students were progressing at a suitable rate for their abilities. The students made acceptable or better progress in school tests across all subjects.

6. Leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership

Acceptable

- The principal and four other senior leaders were in their first year at the school. Most school leaders shared a vision that they pursued together. Many had teaching loads, which meant that their focus was on managing their sections rather than improving the quality of outcomes. There was awareness of the UAE National Agenda and a shared commitment to including students with SEND.
- Most leaders demonstrated knowledge of their specific curricula and the best ways to teach it. Their knowledge of assessment procedures was detailed, but no single leader had school-wide oversight of assessment processes. Consequently, the ability of all teachers to use assessment information effectively was inconsistent. There was a culture of shared responsibility for students' overall learning and personal development. Their commitment to students' success was evident.

- Relationships amongst leaders and other staff members were professional, respectful and productive. Responsibilities were delegated and different teams had worked to make improvements. Senior leaders held the staff accountable for their job performance. The morale at the school was positive amongst almost all staff members.
- The school's leaders were aware that further improvements were necessary and they demonstrated the capacity to make them. In a very short period, the new leaders had established themselves and had collaborated on improvements.
- The mostly new leadership team had maintained the school's performance and overseen a few improvements since the previous inspection. They had continued to ensure that the school was compliant in its statutory and regulatory obligations.

School self-evaluation and improvement planning

Acceptable

- Action plans and the school improvement plan had common elements and discrete subject/phase priorities. Not all leaders demonstrated thorough understanding of these plans. The self-evaluation document, based on internal and external data, contained more than 40 inaccurate judgements; school leaders perceived that the school was performing at higher levels across all indicators than it actually was. This impeded their ability to plan improvements with precision.
- There was regular monitoring and evaluation of teachers' work but at times the evaluations were inflated. There was frequently a focus on teachers' performances rather than the quality of students' learning. In particular, assessment information used by teachers to plan challenging lessons was inconsistently evaluated.
- School action plans identified many priorities for improvement, showing who was accountable and the criteria for success. The lengthy school improvement plan contained ten goals, some of which were very similar. Their combined length and detail resulted in too many action points for one school year. This meant that the main priorities for improvement did not receive the full attention and efforts of the staff.
- The school had made some progress in addressing previous inspection report recommendations. For example, assessment procedures were better aligned with the curriculum standards and MoE requirements for teaching Arabic as an additional language were met. The recommendation to improve the quality of teaching in the primary years had not been fully met.

Partnerships with parents and the community

Acceptable ↓

- The school was successful in engaging parents in school life, particularly for special events. Their opinions were considered informally but there was no regular forum for parents to meet school leaders and express themselves in person. Contributions by parents enhanced the school's programme.
- Communication with parents was regular and informative. Parents had access to information about their children's progress using ICT. The communication with parents of students with SEND was detailed and helpful.

- The school reported to parents regularly on their child's academic and personal progress. Meetings were held each term. Report cards summarised students' achievements but the reports for students in Years 1 to 13 did not include the next steps that they should take to develop their knowledge and skills.
- Links with local and distant communities were productive and enriched students' learning. Students were able to participate in competitions and educational visits outside of the school, for example, in sporting events and the Model United Nations programme. Visitors to the school broadened students' horizons and raised their aspirations for the future.

Governance

Acceptable

- The governing body included representation from stakeholders but some of it was indirect. The opinions of all stakeholders were considered. Governors had reasonably detailed information about how the school was performing but it was not fully accurate. They believed that the school was performing at a higher level than it actually was.
- Governors held senior leaders to account and had made significant changes to key posts since the previous inspection, with a new principal and leaders in Foundation Stage, Primary and Boys' sections. Governors had overseen the implementation of the new National Curriculum in England, more teaching resources and revised systems for assessing students' learning. These changes were beginning to affect the quality of teaching and learning.
- Governors ensured that all statutory requirements were met, especially those regarding the provision of lessons for learning Arabic. They had a positive influence on the overall performance of the school. New staffing was planned to enhance the leadership of assessment and curriculum planning.




Management, staffing, facilities and resources

Acceptable

- The daily operation of the school was orderly. The timetables were somewhat complicated and the system of teacher rotation meant that some time was lost travelling between buildings. The school's routines and procedures were understood by all and followed reliably. Arrivals and departures were well managed.
- The school was adequately staffed, although the high number of new teachers impeded leaders' efforts to establish good teaching and assessment practices. Many teachers were still learning the National Curriculum in England and how best to teach it. A majority of teachers held a teaching certificate and the school's teacher development programme had positive effects upon the quality of teaching, a work in progress.
- Adequate school premises enabled good teaching and learning. There was sufficient space for most lessons and activities. The new building was not fully exploited to enhance learning across the curriculum. The library and ICT laboratories were used well to support learning. Classrooms were not always adequate for purpose. Specialist facilities for science, the arts and physical education were adequate.
- The resources for teaching and learning were adequate. The school provided all the necessary basic resources but some teachers made or bought their own resources. Some science lessons did not have enough resources to allow all students to have first-hand experiences.

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	407
	2014-2015	657
Teachers 	75	
Students 	321	

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

- Most parents were generally satisfied with the quality of education provided by the school.
- Most parents agreed that their children were making good progress in learning the key subjects. About a fifth disagreed that progress was good in learning Arabic as an additional language.
- Most agreed that their children were safe and well cared for at the school and when on buses.
- Teachers were very positive in their opinions about the school's provision and outcomes.
- Most senior students were satisfied with the quality of education they had received, but about a fifth were not.
- Most students agreed that they were making good progress in learning the key subjects. More than a quarter indicated that their progress in learning Arabic as an additional language was less than good.
- Similarly, more than a quarter believed that their progress in mathematics was less than good.
- A large minority of students expressed dissatisfaction with the range of extra-curricular activities the school offered them.
- A majority of senior students believed that the school's leaders did not listen to their opinions.

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