




## The Millennium School

 Curriculum: CBSE/CBSE-i

Overall Rating:

Very 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 Qusais
Type of school	Private
Opening year of school	2000
Website	www.gemsmillenniumschool.com
Telephone	04-2988567
Address	Post Box No.32446. Dubai
Principal	Mr. Michael Guzder
Language of instruction	English
Inspection dates	17th to 20th October 2016

### Teachers / Support staff

Number of teachers	162
Largest nationality group of teachers	Indian
Number of teaching assistants	15
Teacher-student ratio	1:18
Number of guidance counsellors	4
Teacher turnover	17%

### Students

Gender of students	Boys and girls
Age range	4-18
Grades or year groups	KG1 - Grade 12
Number of students on roll	2,803
Number of children in pre-kindergarten	Not applicable
Number of Emirati students	0
Number of students with SEND	246
Largest nationality group of students	Indian

### Curriculum

Educational permit / Licence	Indian
Main curriculum	CBSE, CBSEi
External tests and examinations	CBSEi Grade 10, CBSE AISSCE Grade 12
Accreditation	None
National Agenda benchmark tests	ACER: 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.

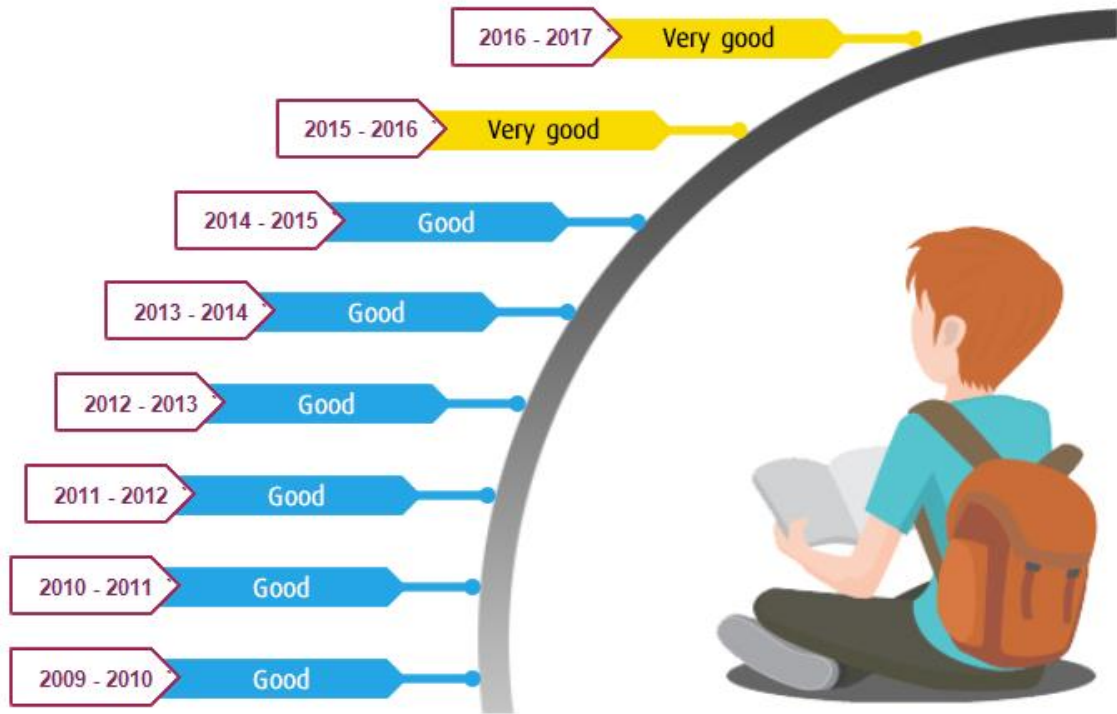
### Judgements are made on a six-point scale

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.

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



## Inspection journey for The Millennium School



- The quality of educational provision at The Millennium School has been steadily improving since it opened in 2000. The overall number of students has decreased marginally by 124 since last year. The school explained that this was due to a commitment to having lower class numbers, particularly in the Kindergarten (KG) phase. The principal has been in post since April 2006. Teacher turnover at the time of inspection was 17 percent, which is lower than last year's figure of 22 percent.
- The three previous inspections acknowledged the school's strengths in achievement across all subjects, students' extremely positive attitudes and deep understanding of Islamic values, and their high degree of social responsibility and entrepreneurial skills. In addition, positive comments were made about the quality of teaching and learning, underpinned by a challenging and engaging curriculum, the highly effective leadership and the caring and supportive school ethos.
- Recommendations over the same period included improving the quality of teaching and learning, especially in Arabic as an additional language, in order to raise students' achievement.

## Summary of inspection findings 2016-2017



The Millennium School was inspected by DSIB from 17 to 20 October 2016 . The overall quality of education provided by the school is **very good**. The section below summarises the inspection findings for each of the six performance indicators described in the framework.

- Attainment and progress of KG children are outstanding in all 3 key subjects. In the higher phases, most judgements are very good, with exceptions in secondary science where they are outstanding, and in Arabic as an additional language, where they are acceptable. In English in the secondary phase progress is outstanding, while attainment in all phases in Islamic education is good. In KG and the secondary phase students learning skills are outstanding. They are very good in the primary and middle phases.
- Students' personal and social development is a strength of the school. Students' attitudes and behaviours are exemplary. Their understanding of Islamic values and social responsibilities are excellent throughout the school.
- Teaching is outstanding in the KG and secondary phases. In KG, the learning, social and emotional needs of young children are met to a high standard. Children make outstanding progress as a consequence. In the secondary phase, students are increasingly challenged by teachers to be evaluative, to solve problems and to make inferences and predictions. Teaching is very good in the primary and middle phases, where questioning and challenge is not as strong. The assessment of children's achievement in the KG phase is outstanding, with extensive monitoring and tracking of their progress. Elsewhere it is very good.
- The CBSEi and the CBSE curricula are broad and balanced and provide excellent scope and sequence. The modifications to the curriculum for different groups of students, including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) are effective.
- There is outstanding provision for students' health and safety. A strong ethos of care pervades the school. Procedures for the care and support of students, including those with SEND are rigorous.
- The experienced leadership team knows the school well. Leaders are aspirational and continue to make improvements. However, monitoring of each student's progress and the school's analysis of its data require further development. The governing board and parental body are proactive in their approaches. The management, staffing, and resources reach the highest standards.

### What the school does best

- Senior leaders' vision and drive to ensure the holistic development of all students, along with outstanding governance, management, and relationships with parents and the community.
- The outstanding learning environment in the KG phase, which has led to consistently high levels of achievement in English, mathematics and science.
- Students' outstanding personal and social development, and innovation skills.
- The outstanding curriculum design, implementation and adaptation, including extracurricular initiatives such as 'Best Buddies', the 'Round Square' programme and 'robotics innovation', which support students' personal, social and academic development.
- Outstanding provision for health and safety.

### Recommendations

- Further improve students' academic achievement, and their ability to learn independently and think critically by:
  - improving the consistency of high quality teaching, learning and assessment
  - using available classroom and international benchmark data, and other forms of monitoring information, to ensure consistently high expectations are met
  - continuing to focus on improvements in the teaching of Arabic as an additional language.
- Introduce high quality-curriculum options for the small group of students, including those with SEND, who are currently exempt from a range of key subjects.

## 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:

- The school meets the registration requirements for the National Agenda Parameter.
- Attainment based on the National Agenda Parameter benchmarks is above expectations in English, mathematics and science.
- School leaders ensure that external assessment data is analysed promptly. It is compared to internal assessment information. A range of indicators are used to evaluate students' progress and attainment, as well as their strengths and weaknesses in their skill sets.
- The curriculum has been adjusted to include additional content relevant to the National Agenda Parameter. In addition, key content has been introduced to younger students to enable them to develop knowledge and understanding, encouraging greater levels of challenge. Lesson planning incorporates questioning to encourage students' thinking. While improvement has occurred, skill development is not consistently developed for all students and subjects across the school.
- Students have an increasing number of opportunities to be challenged. The best teaching promotes higher-order thinking skills, encourages collaboration and provides opportunities for students to take greater responsibility for their own learning.
- The majority of students have a good understanding of their National Agenda Parameter results. They understand the skill requirements of the external benchmark tests and use resources well to show that they have used higher order thinking skills to present their research reports.

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



## Innovation in Education

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









### Promoting a culture of innovation:

- Students are provided with opportunities to develop their innovation skills by engaging in problem-solving activities in lessons. The curriculum is innovative, with a broad range of extra-curricular programmes on offer. The best teachers plan lessons to incorporate problem solving, critical thinking and enquiry based learning to stimulate innovative development. Students support initiatives such as the 'Best Buddies', the 'Round-square' programmes and the 'Environment Club'. The school's senior management team has improved the CBSE international curriculum by enhancing it with such additions as science, technology, engineering, art and mathematics, (STEAM) and the promotion of the arts, sports, film making and robotics.

## Overall school performance

Very good

## 1 Students' achievement

		KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Islamic education 	Attainment	Not applicable	Good	Good	Good
	Progress	Not applicable	Very good	Very good	Very good
Arabic as a first language 	Attainment	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable
	Progress	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable
Arabic as an additional language 	Attainment	Not applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
	Progress	Not applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
English 	Attainment	Outstanding	Very good	Very good	Very good ↓
	Progress	Outstanding	Very good	Very good	Outstanding
Mathematics 	Attainment	Outstanding	Very good ↓	Very good	Very good ↓
	Progress	Outstanding	Very good ↓	Very good ↑	Very good
Science 	Attainment	Outstanding	Very good ↓	Very good ↓	Outstanding
	Progress	Outstanding	Very good ↓	Very good ↓	Outstanding

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Learning skills	Outstanding	Very good	Very good	Outstanding

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

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
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

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Teaching for effective learning	Outstanding	Very good	Very good	Outstanding
Assessment	Outstanding	Very good	Very good	Very good

## 4. Curriculum

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Curriculum design and implementation	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Curriculum adaptation	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding

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

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Care and support	Very good	Very good	Very good ↑	Very good ↑


## 6. Leadership and management

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

# Main inspection report



## 1. Students' achievement

 KG		
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	Outstanding	Outstanding
Mathematics	Outstanding	Outstanding
Science	Outstanding	Outstanding

- Attainment and progress in English are outstanding. The attainment of most children is exceptionally high. They make rapid progress from their starting points in speaking, listening, reading and writing. Children's ability to ask questions and offer pertinent and relevant answers, is strong. Older children are building on their knowledge of letter sounds to form words and make sentences. Younger children can identify letters and the initial sounds in simple words. Their letter formation is accurate and very secure. Reading skills are developing well.
- The progress children make in their mathematical development is outstanding. Their skills are based on a very sound knowledge of the concepts of number. They understand when solving simple problems that numbers will increase or decrease. They have a very clear understanding of the significance of patterns, using shapes and colours and are able to sequence numbers and transfer these skills seamlessly into their work. They understand the similarities and differences between two and three-dimensional shapes and can identify these in their surrounding environment.
- In science, most students attain above curriculum expectations. They are able to explore for themselves, develop their ideas to solve problems and share their findings with other children. In a range of situations during the school day, they take the role of scientists and this builds on their natural curiosity and inquisitiveness to a high degree. During such times they continue to develop their language skills as well extending their thinking, particularly when encouraged to deduce outcomes for themselves.

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

- A majority of students attain levels in Islamic education that are above the UAE Ministry of Education (MoE) curriculum standards. They can recall facts about the prophet's life (PBUH) and that of his companions. They are well aware of Islamic law. For example, they can list and explain mistakes in Salah (prayer). They have a strong knowledge of Islamic values and manners, such as those related to the rights of Muslims. Qur'an recitation skills are adequate. A large majority of students make better than expected progress in lessons and over time.
- In Arabic as an additional language, most students' listening, speaking, and reading skills are at levels in line with MoE curriculum expectations. Students engage in short conversations with peers in familiar contexts but most rely on the teacher's translation in order to understand topic details. Only a few students in the upper grades, speak with confidence. The majority of students read a range of sentences and match letters to sounds. However, the writing skills are emerging; limited to the writing of a few independent sentences. Overall, most students make acceptable progress over time.
- In English, a large majority of students can listen to and read passages in stories. The development of speaking, listening, reading and writing is a common feature of daily lessons. Students' engagement in critical thinking exercises has enhanced higher order achievement. This results in above expected rates of progress. Students' writing is aligned to expected curriculum standards. Students attain very good levels of reading and make strong progress in syntax and spelling. International benchmark test results indicate high levels of attainment for Grades 3 to 5 students.
- Attainment and progress in mathematics are both very good. They are not outstanding because work is not always matched to students' needs. International benchmark test results indicate increasingly high levels of attainment for Grades 3 to 5 students. However, inspection evidence, including lesson observation and work scrutiny, indicates more variable attainment and progress in Grades 1 and 2. Students exhibit strengths in basic numeracy, such as multiplication skills. A large majority of Grade 5 students solve problems involving all four operations and negative numbers.
- Attainment and progress in science are above internal and international curriculum standards. A large majority of students make strong gains in their knowledge and understanding of science, with little variation between different groups of students. They learn well through practical activities which develop their investigative skills and understanding of scientific ideas. Inspection evidence and international benchmark testing indicates higher levels of attainment in Grades 3 and 4. By Grade 5 students understand the need for replication and controls in investigations and for drawing conclusions based on observational data.





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

- In Islamic education, a majority of students attain levels that are in line with MoE curriculum standards. Students have a good understanding of the meaning and context of prescribed Hadeeths. They have strong awareness of Islamic values and manners, such as respect to parents, and can infer lessons from the prophet's life, or instance, the Pilgrimage to Abyssinia. The majority of students have a good understanding of the Holy Qur'an, but their recitation skills are not as strongly developed as other skills. Overall, a large majority of students make strong progress in lessons and over time.
- In Arabic as an additional language, listening, speaking and writing skills are acceptable. Most students understand teachers' instructions, follow the themes of familiar topics and are developing and improving their speaking skills. However, when engaging in simple conversions, some students confuse the masculine and the feminine forms and singular and plural subjects. For most students reading comprehension is limited to familiar contexts. Progress overall is acceptable in developing basic language outcomes, particularly in the skills of speaking and writing.
- In English, most students write creatively using correct spelling and simple syntax. Almost all students think critically about their work, with speaking and listening more securely developed. The skills of writing and reading are developing. International benchmark testing outcomes show high levels of achievement across most grades. Although the school's cognitive ability data for Grade 8 students indicates above average verbal reasoning potential, this strength is not replicated to the same level in the school's international benchmark English test results. A large majority of students make better than expected progress in lessons and over time.
- Students' attainment and progress in mathematics are both very good. Students did not reach the highest standards because work is sometimes not always matched to their ability, and questioning and discussion does not consistently promote higher order thinking and result in better understanding of their work. Although the results of international benchmark testing show variability in levels of attainment across the phase, internal assessment data and inspection observations indicate that a large majority of students make better than expected progress in this subject.
- For a large majority of students, attainment and progress in science exceed internal and international curriculum expectations, despite the results being slightly lower than the previous year. Students regularly apply scientific and mathematical ideas to real-life applications of science and are able to predict results and explain observations with increasing detail and precision. The use of a wide range of apparatus enables most students to be confident in its use. There is little difference in the progress made by different groups of students. International benchmark testing shows consistently high levels of achievement across all grades.

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

- In Islamic education, school data and lesson observations show that a majority of students have levels of understanding of the subject that are above MoE curriculum expectations. Students have good levels of understanding of Islamic Law. For example, the rulings related to Zakah (charity). Students are well aware of the meaning of the Qur'an verses and Hadeeth (the prophet's sayings), and infer guidance from them. A large majority of students' make better than expected progress, both in lessons and over time.
- In Arabic as an additional language, listening skills for most students are at the expected level with a majority able to respond correctly to classroom instructions. Speaking skills vary from class to class with some students rarely engaging in simple dialogue without support from their teachers. Most students are able to read an Arabic text aloud although not all can understand the main idea and the key details of the text. Overall, most students make acceptable progress from their starting points and against lesson objectives in developing basic language skills in Arabic.
- In English, speaking, listening and reading comprehension are strengths for the large majority of students. Although writing is not a regular feature in most lessons, samples of students' writing reflect outstanding levels of progress particularly in their understanding of grammar, vocabulary, and syntax. Almost all students write complex, compound sentences with appropriate vocabulary and correct spelling. Through self and peer editing they can identify grammar and punctuation accurately. Response to questioning is strong, demonstrating confidence and understanding. However, attainment levels in international benchmark tests and external examinations vary between good and outstanding overall.
- In mathematics, attainment and progress are very good. Students' attainment in international benchmark tests is variable and does not reflect the outstanding school results for Grade 10 Central Board of Secondary Education International (CBSEi) examinations or the very good attainment for students who sat the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) examinations in Grade 12. As student work is sometimes not matched to their abilities, nor consistently promotes and challenges higher order thinking, it restricts overall attainment and progress.
- In science, almost all students readily use complex ideas to explain how modern science affects our lives. Their well-developed understanding of enquiry strategies used in investigations, supports exceptional progress. Most students are able to discuss abstract ideas in great detail and across all parts of the curriculum. International benchmark tests indicate high levels of attainment. The latest CBSEi Grade 10 results indicate outstanding attainment, while the CBSE examination results for

Grade 12 chemistry and physics indicate very strong outcomes. These results are consistent with the excellent standards demonstrated in previous years.

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Learning skills	Outstanding	Very good	Very good	Outstanding

- Across all phases students demonstrate enthusiasm and high levels of motivation to learn. They take responsibility and are actively involved in their own learning. This is a particular strength in the KG and secondary phases. In the KG, children show high levels of engagement with play, exploration and with their personal motivation. In the secondary phase, students assess their learning and make effective use of technology to support their learning.
- Students demonstrate excellent collaborative and independent learning skills. They contribute ideas to group work, responding thoughtfully and questioning each other to enable understanding. Most students think independently when problem solving and contribute productively to the learning environment to achieve common goals. In KG, children take responsibility for distributing resources and equipment.
- Students apply their knowledge and understanding to new learning contexts accurately and are able to make meaningful connections between areas of learning. They effectively relate learning to familiar situations to deepen their understanding of the world.
- Across the school, students are able to find out new information using a range of resources including books and technology. They make effective use of learning centres, school displays and resources to enhance their learning. Higher order thinking skills, particularly in the secondary phase, are increasingly developed, enabling them to think independently and solve problems through collaboration.

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

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Personal development	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding

- Students are extremely proud of their harmonious school. They embrace opportunities to showcase their work and are able to discuss their achievements with a mature attitude. Students take their responsibilities around the school seriously and show respect in their interactions with others. They provide a warm welcome to visitors.
- Positive relationships and self-discipline contribute to the compassionate school ethos. Students are supportive of others in the classroom and beyond. They are proactive in resolving any difficulties; incidents of poor behaviour are very rare.
- Students show genuine consideration for others within the school through the many opportunities to help and serve each other. This is exemplified through the "Best Buddies" initiative which has expanded rapidly since its inception in 2007. Students within the school welcome and befriend young people with SEND from a local centre. This has a far-reaching impact beyond the individuals concerned.
- Students have a secure understanding of health and well-being and demonstrate this awareness in their food choices. They are knowledgeable about the importance of adopting active lifestyles and



engage in many of the sporting opportunities on offer. They willingly participate in local and national health promotions.

- Attendance for the majority of students is high. Students enjoy coming to school. They arrive at school and to their lessons punctually, therefore demonstrating a positive work ethic.

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding

- Across the school, students have a strong appreciation of Islamic values. They understand the relevance of these values and their impact on everyday life in the UAE. The school's Islamic Council has greatly deepened their understanding of Islam and its values. Most students talk about tolerance in the UAE society and how they feel comfortable and at home in Dubai.
- Students display a great respect for Emirati heritage and culture. They recognise the importance and relevance of the local people of the UAE. They can speak in detail about famous buildings in the UAE such as Burj Khalifa and the Grand Mosque. They share with confidence their understanding about cultural activities and celebrations in the UAE such as the National Day, the Flag Day, Eid Al-Adha and Eid Al-Fitr.
- Almost all students are keenly aware of the cultural diversity in Dubai. They fully appreciate and celebrate their own culture, and show great respect and understanding for cultural differences. Most can compare and contrast the different aspects that make certain cultures unique. Included are aspects of their language, history, dress, music and folklore, which they compare with their own cultures.

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding

- Student initiated projects are a strength of the school. Students speak with maturity, confidence and enthusiasm about the value of their service projects. They also appreciate the challenge of projects that aid in their reflection and deepen their understanding of global issues and the plight of others.
- Students show an excellent work ethic and speak proudly of the positive social impact they make when volunteering in school and in local and global initiatives. Through their work, students have a strong sense of responsibility and contribute positively to the school and the wider community. Student leaders describe well-planned club projects and activities that they initiated and led.
- Students speak enthusiastically about their work with environmental projects that benefit the school and the local community. They collaborate actively with Emirati organisations and global campaigns to improve their school environment and Dubai. Club activities provide additional real life skills such as marketing, budgeting and volunteering in campaigns for recycling of cans, paper, and printer cartridges. Some students are also involved in tree planting initiatives. Student leaders speak to classes to promote global awareness as a way to involve all students in their environmental work.



### 3. Teaching and assessment

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Teaching for effective learning	Outstanding	Very good	Very good	Outstanding

- Most teachers know their subjects well and also know how students learn best. This is particularly strong in the KG and secondary phases. In the KG, teachers provide a careful balance of teacher directed learning opportunities, with free flow early childhood learning pedagogy. In secondary, teachers provide increasingly challenging work, supported by probing questioning which allow for interaction and occasional dialogue.
- High quality lesson planning is a strong feature in the school. Plans are populated with learning objectives, activities to cater for different student needs, and often skilful differentiation. In the KG, very good use is made of a wide variety of inside and outside resources such as sand, water and household objects. Classrooms and corridors are attractive and most are stimulating learning environments. Technology is increasingly used to support learning.
- In the better lessons, teachers use a range of questioning strategies to ensure maximum involvement, thinking and articulation. They encourage enquiry by asking thoughtful, open-ended questions and encourage students to ask questions of each other. They probe understanding of concepts and encourage dialogue both with the teacher and one another. A few teachers employ 'wait time' after posing questions, to support thinking and the development of understanding.
- In most lessons, work is matched to the needs of all students. In the more successful lessons a rich array of interesting activities captures the interest of students, and widens their experience of the world around them. However, in a few lessons, particularly in the primary and middle phases, teachers do not provide the challenge or tasks for all abilities to enable them to learn effectively.
- Where teaching is highly successful, teachers encourage students to search for evidence and link concepts to real-life situations. In these lessons, higher-level thinking through better questioning, research, problem solving and investigative work, is a strong feature. This is not consistently established within all subjects and phases.

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Assessment	Outstanding	Very good	Very good	Very good

- The school's internal assessment systems closely align to the requirements of external examinations and international benchmark tests. Information about students' attainment is effectively shared between all phases of the school. Although the school tracks students' progress against curriculum expectations, the comprehensive monitoring, of students' skills, knowledge and understanding is a developing feature in the upper phases of the school. Skilful baseline assessment of KG children determines their strengths and abilities.
- Comparison of how well students are learning compared with their external international peers is developing. Leaders analyse results from international benchmark tests promptly and in detail. Teachers are beginning to use the information to determine how well students are performing in the different subjects they study. Electronic devices and portfolios of work help to track progress and ensure that students are learning as well as their international peers.

- Teachers use a wide range of assessments to identify students' strengths and weaknesses. A range of internal and external assessments, including students' self-assessments helps to guarantee that judgements are valid and reliable. Students and teachers regularly check agreed targets for improvements in performance and take action if necessary.
- Assessment information is used effectively to adjust planning and teaching so that learning is successful. Curriculum plans are modified if gap analysis indicates specific areas for development. However, consistency and precision with the monitoring of student progress by subject leaders, from data and classroom sources, requires further development.
- Most teachers know their students' strengths and areas for development. Skilful questioning and discussion helps teachers to check for understanding in class but the quality of written feedback is too variable and students do not respond well enough to the advice they receive. Rubrics to help students assess their own and their peers' work sometimes lacks challenge. In the KG phase, teachers demonstrate a confident knowledge of each child's developmental pathway. Teachers consider ways to support each child and deepen their current learning and development.

#### 4. Curriculum

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Curriculum design and implementation	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding

- The school follows the international curriculum offered by CBSEi for Grades 1 to 10 and the CBSE curriculum at Grades 11 and 12. The KG curriculum is based on the seven areas of learning and is inspired by the Reggio Emilia approach. Overall, the curriculum has a clear rationale aligned to the UAE national vision and aims to prepare students for global challenges. It provides broad, relevant and enjoyable learning experiences to all students, with a balance of knowledge, understanding and skill development across all key subjects.
- The curriculum ensures continuity and progression due to the vertical mapping of the content. Well planned lessons take into account students' previous knowledge and learning experiences, enabling them to be well prepared for smooth transitions into each phase. Older students are well equipped to face the world beyond school with confidence.
- The school curriculum provides a range of subjects, including languages, to meet the needs of all students. Students can follow their interests through a variety of activities within and after school. Older students are able to choose between commerce, humanities and sciences courses. In the KG phase, where there is a holistic approach to learning, the focus is on literacy, numeracy and language acquisition.
- There are numerous well planned cross-curricular links in most lessons. The home assignments and projects embed systematic and meaningful links between subjects. There is a balance of independent learning, research and critical thinking.
- The curriculum is rigorously reviewed by the curriculum heads, subject leaders and teachers. Curriculum content is modified to include topics that promote attainment in external examinations aligned to National Agenda targets. The personal development of students is also considered when the curriculum is modified. STEAM and Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) programmes are new initiatives

supporting curriculum innovation. The successful revamping of the KG curriculum, since the previous DSIB inspection, is making an impact on this phase of the school.

- The school teaches the MoE social studies which is integrated with CBSE social studies and links with other curricular areas. The curriculum is planned to incorporate concepts, knowledge and skills of the UAE social studies framework. Teaching sufficiently engages students in lessons. Teachers' have reasonable subject knowledge and plan appropriately. Collaboration is a key element of learning in this subject although it does not always enhance critical thinking skills. The subject is assessed together with CBSE social studies to ensure students are making progress.

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Curriculum adaptation	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding

- The school is generally successful in modifying the curriculum to provide relevant learning opportunities for almost all groups of students. The school's formative assessment is modified to provide additional support for SEND students and beginners of Arabic as an additional language are supported with preparatory learning material. A remediation programme provides additional support for learning after school hours. However, further review is required to ensure that the few SEND students who are exempt from key subjects have their individual learning needs met.
- The curriculum is enriched with a variety of activities. The KG Enhancement Programme for early years develops creativity and the after-school Self Enhancement Programme provides excellent extra-curricular support to extend learning and students' interest. Additional activities after school activities ensures great learning experiences of students without compromise. Entrepreneurial activities such as the bake sale, the Manzil Carnival, and charity drive programmes, benefit the community as well as students' personal development.
- The curriculum includes coherent learning experiences to develop students' knowledge and understanding of the heritage of the UAE. Special assemblies, literature festivals, visits to museums and heritage centres all enhance students' appreciation of Emirati traditions, culture and its values.
- The school offers two 40-minute sessions per week of Arabic to KG 2 children, where common phrases, basic vocabulary and letter formation are introduced.

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

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
<b>Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding</b>	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding

- The welfare, safety and well-being of students is at the heart of the school. Child protection arrangements are rigorous and understood by staff, students and parents. Regular, high quality training and policy updates keep safety practices up to date and effective. Information is shared promptly across the school, which ensures that all understand their own and their shared responsibilities.
- Risks to students' safety and well-being are anticipated through early evaluation and prompt intervention. Medical and emotional needs are met through the targeted work of the school's professionals, such as the doctors and counsellors. Transport arrangements for students are exceptionally well-organised. Effective use of technology, detailed record-keeping and timely communication, make these arrangements highly effective.
- There are frequent rigorous checks to ensure that all safety equipment and other key aspects, such as the effective provision of water and electrical services, occur. Daily checks of written records and actions are taken. The school meets and often exceeds external standards and expectations set out by Dubai authorities.
- The school uses its resources very effectively. Although space in some classrooms is not always generous, adverse effects on learning are limited. Almost all students are able to access resources and parts of the school they need to, so that learning is beneficial. The absence of a lift makes it more difficult for students with particular physical disabilities to move around the school with ease.
- Healthy living is fully integrated into learning with staff modelling healthy living and well-being. Students understand short and long term effects of healthy eating, exercise, and the need for positive thinking. Many students absorb and share what they learn with family and friends outside of the school. The school has helpful guidelines to protect students from over exposure to the sun and the effects of excessive heat when they are in outdoor areas.

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
<b>Care and support</b>	Very good	Very good	Very good ↑	Very good ↑

- There are highly effective and consistently implemented behaviour management and support strategies in place across the school. The focus on good behaviour starts in the KG phase where clear expectations are made and promoted within the curriculum. Positive relationships between staff and students enable a partnership approach to learning.
- The school's attendance policy provides clear guidance for parents of the requirement for regular student attendance. Swift contact is made with parents when unexplained absence occurs. Consequently, the majority of students attend regularly and are punctual to school and their lessons.
- The school has suitable systems to identify students with SEND and uses baseline assessments and monitoring of learning to follow referrals of concern from parents or teachers. Identification



procedures are followed and facilitate the ongoing review of learning needs. More streamlined processes for identifying gifted and talented students are now in place.

- Individual education plans (IEPs) are focused and provide guidance for staff in supporting students with an identified learning need or disability. However, a small minority of students who have exemptions from academic subjects are not in receipt of a high quality curricular alternative. Students identified as gifted and talented benefit greatly from a rich variety of extra-curricular opportunities.
- The school staff motivates and encourages students to be aspirational in outlook. An established programme of visits by representatives from national and international universities helps to guide students in planning the next stages of their education or employment. Students with personal and academic concerns are able to seek confidential advice from the school counsellors.

## Inclusion

### Provision and outcomes for students with SEND

Good

- School leaders demonstrate a commitment to inclusion through the employment of a team of specialist staff. The quality of provision is being enhanced through regular training and support but remains inconsistent across grades and subjects.
- Routine procedures are followed to undertake baseline assessments for students following a referral of concern by parents or teachers. Specialist staff regularly monitor students in class and implement appropriate support strategies. They will occasionally make a formal identification of need but there is an over-reliance on formal external assessments to categorise the learning need or disability.
- Parents value highly the advice and guidance they receive from the specialist staff. They believe the child-centred approach of the school is fundamental to the quality of support their child receives. Parents are confident in approaching the school to discuss any concerns. They appreciate the regular communication from staff outlining the academic and developmental progress of their children.
- The majority of students with SEND benefit from appropriate support and modifications in teaching strategies including collaboration with their peers. Occasionally however, for the small minority of students with subject exemptions, the alternative curriculum is not sufficiently well designed or planned to meet their needs or to ensure continued progression of functional and focused learning skills to support their future career choices.
- The school staff measures progress using a range of tools, including formative assessments and monitoring progression against IEP targets. Across the school, the progress made by students with SEND is variable, although it is stronger in KG and in Arabic as an additional language.

## 6. Leadership and management

### The effectiveness of leadership

Outstanding

- The school is in the process of revising its educational aims and objectives. The executive principal is driving a very positive vision for the future of the school. The pursuit of academic excellence and the raising of the performance of all aspects of the school to ensure that it ranks among the top schools in Dubai is an ambitious aim. Currently there is the expectation that every student will attain their full potential in a holistic manner. This is articulated within the school community in many ways. For instance, in the KG phase, there are highly ambitious aims to enhance and extend discovery, investigation and critical thinking alongside innovation.
- Senior leaders give very clear direction and take appropriate measures to ensure that all staff share the collective vision. They are rigorous in ensuring that the school community delivers the expected and consistent quality of classroom experience to improve the overall attainment of students. Middle leaders often provide direct and inspirational leadership. This contributes towards seamless teamwork.
- A high degree of professionalism permeates through all levels of the school's leadership. Staff are committed to the school; as is evidenced by the retention rate of experienced teachers' and the enthusiasm shown by the newly appointed staff. The roles of senior leaders are clear and kept under review. The executive principal opens avenues of management experience for senior staff, and actively supports their development.
- Leaders use a wealth of data to clarify their direction and decision making. However, not all are secure in their analysis of information. A number of opportunities, are missed to anticipate potential issues and address them in a timely manner. Morale throughout the school is extremely positive.
- The principal directs a shared vision and strong sense of purpose at all levels. Senior management and heads of department are generally successful in maintaining expected educational outcomes and, in one or two specific areas such as the KG, of bringing about noticeable improvement. However, leaders are also aware of the need to ensure constancy of processes, more accurate individual monitoring, and a faster response to identified needs, in order to achieve fully the vision and mission of the school.

### School self-evaluation and improvement planning

Very good

- The school has comprehensive and detailed school self-evaluation procedures. All staff are involved during the process, ably led by the executive principal and senior colleagues. The views of parents, students and teachers are carefully collated and graphically displayed. This enables senior management to focus on issues of concern. However, a number of senior departmental staff lack the necessary analytical skills to evaluate their internal and external data as fully as expected.
- There are strong systems of teacher monitoring. The staff at departmental level are carefully observed, enabling an oversight of classroom practice to inform developmental planning. The

foundation of all judgements is focused on the question, “What impact did the teacher have on the children’s learning?” In the KG phase, where systematic and rigorous monitoring reaches the highest standards, the head regularly observes her teachers in their lessons.

- The school’s annual improvement plans are comprehensive although the outcomes and success criteria are not sharply defined. The four priorities of the overall school development plan represent a good balance of personal, professional, pedagogical and resourcing aspects. Identified improvements include raising students’ academic attainment across all subjects, particularly in Arabic as an additional language, through better teaching and the better use of international benchmark data.
- The last inspection report recommended action to improve students’ achievement in Arabic as an additional language, and teaching across the school. While improvements in Arabic were noted, further development is still required.

#### Partnerships with parents and the community

Outstanding

- Parents are wholly positive about the inclusive nature of the school and their involvement in their children’s education. There is a parent focus group for each phase in the school to give a more specific view of the different age groups. This new system has also increased the number of parents involved. Parents take on roles as shadow teachers, especially in supporting their children with SEND. There is a parent relationship executive who coordinates parental involvement and acts as a liaison officer. The school has a ‘transparent open-door policy’ and the parents feel welcomed at any times.
- Communication links are a significant strength. There are very regular circulars, e-mails and frequent reminders to ensure everyone is informed. Feedback for parents includes students’ personal development and any gifts and talents they might have. Parents value this positively worded communication as it raises their children’s confidence and self-esteem. Parents of children with SEND feel much supported by the school.
- Parents consider that the reports they receive from the school give them a clear view of their children’s potential, the difficulties they might face and how these are being addressed. However, scrutiny of reports reveal inadequacies. The reports do not give enough clear detail of how students are progressing or what they should do next to improve their work. Nevertheless, ‘Open house’ is held regularly so that parents can attend the school and speak directly with the staff about their children’s progress. Feedback gives guidance on talents that students might have and offers opportunities for the students to enhance their skills, for example in sporting activities.
- There is a very wide and varied range of partnerships, some through the parents’ work place links, such as involvement in initiatives and enterprises in outer space. There is the ‘Best Buddies’ scheme which involves local schools and offers those students a chance to take up sport and creative activities in the school. The ‘Round Square’ programme promotes links further afield and enables students to go abroad, for example to visit South Africa, Singapore and Germany.

## Governance

Outstanding

- The governing board is representative of a wide range of astute and able professionals, including those with business interests, GEMS representatives, staff and students. Senior leaders of the school are ex-officio members. The governing body is beginning to have a positive influence in supporting school improvement. The board guarantees that systematic evaluative processes are in place, and also acts in an advisory role in supporting the management team, teachers and parents. It also ensures that all statutory requirements are met.
- The governing board is aware of the school's performance in international benchmark tests and external examinations. Governors are fully aware of the previous DSIB inspection recommendations and the school's required National Agenda Parameter targets. They set high expectations and rigorously hold senior leaders to account for the quality of the school's performance.
- Evolving as a critical friend to the school community, the governing board is well attuned to the needs of the Millennium School and actively seeks to support its acquisition of additional resources and an appropriate number of high quality staff. It has been generous in its support for professional development of staff. It has the potential to impact further on the future performance of the school.

## Management, staffing, facilities and resources

Outstanding




- The school operates efficiently in all aspects, from the traffic management to the structures which allow for curricular revision. Timetabling is skilful, allowing maximum use of facilities and resources. Daily procedures form an important part of the life of the school. They are communicated well and implemented consistently.
- Staff are appropriately qualified. The induction procedures for new staff are thorough and the monitoring of their progress is regular. The principal offers personal support as appropriate. The school has employed a suitable number of teaching ancillaries to assist students in their learning.
- The premises are of a good quality and are very well maintained. The classrooms and corridors provide good, attractive surroundings that encourage respect for property and responsibility for the environment. There are eye-catching, topical, classroom and corridor displays. However, only few displays encourage an enquiry approach in children, by asking pertinent, thinking and challenging questions. Some classrooms are relatively small in size, with more limited opportunities for groups to engage in practical research or problem solving activities. Large numbers in classes often intensify this problem. There is still a lack of access to higher floors for the physically disabled and not all classes are taught in appropriate classrooms.
- An abundant range of curriculum matching resources, support the school's teaching programme. The BYOD programme ensures that appropriate levels of technology are available to support classroom research and investigative projects. The library is increasingly used for work and study. It is generously stocked with an impressive range of fictional and non-fictional books. The Arabic department is beginning to use this facility to encourage the reading of Arabic texts.





## 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	
 <b>Parents*</b>	2016-2017	853
	2015-2016	1106
 <b>Teachers</b>	162	
 <b>Students</b>	353	

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

- Less than half of parents, all teachers and a large majority of eligible students completed their surveys this year.
- Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school and its operations.
- All parents agreed that children with SEND are accurately identified, well supported in their learning, and informed about their children's education.
- Almost every parent who responded agreed that their children are safe at school and while on school transport.
- Almost all agreed that their children enjoy school and is provided with a quality education.
- Parents are complimentary of the teachers' feedback to students, the well behaved students and general absence of bullying, and the development of literacy and the love of reading.
- Almost all parents agreed that the school is well led and that they are consulted appropriately on their children's progress.
- Most students felt that their parents want them to do their best, while a majority agreed that it is the school that motivates them. Most students believed that they will succeed in their education.
- A large majority of students agreed that they follow the school rules and that they have opportunities to become environmentally responsible.
- Almost every teacher responded positively to every question in their survey. Comments include "a good working atmosphere, leadership and care."

## 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](mailto:inspection@khda.gov.ae)