



National Agenda



Early years



Special educational needs and disabilities



Innovation

## Inspection Report 2015-2016

New Academy School

Curriculum: US

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 .....	3
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).....	21
6. Leadership and management.....	21
The views of the parents, teachers and students .....	24

## School information

<b>General information</b>  	Location	Al Raffa
	Type of school	Private
	Opening year of school	1997
	Website	www.newacademyschool.com
	Telephone	04-3988873
	Address	PO Box 11439, Dubai, UAE
	Principal	Mohammed Sultan Ibrahim
	Language of instruction	English
	Inspection dates	25 to 28 January 2016
<b>Students</b>  	Gender of students	Boys and girls
	Age range	4-17
	Grades or year groups	Kindergarten 1 to Grade 12
	Number of students on roll	1,252
	Number of children in pre-kindergarten	0
	Number of Emirati students	750
	Number of students with SEND	30
	Largest nationality group of students	Emirati
<b>Teachers / Support staff</b>  	Number of teachers	107
	Largest nationality group of teachers	Egyptian
	Number of teaching assistants	24
	Teacher-student ratio	11.7
	Number of guidance counsellors	2
	Teacher turnover	21%
<b>Curriculum</b>  	Educational permit / Licence	US
	Main curriculum	US
	External tests and examinations	IBT, PSAT, SAT, MAP, TOEFL
	Accreditation	NEASC candidate
	National Agenda benchmark tests	IBT

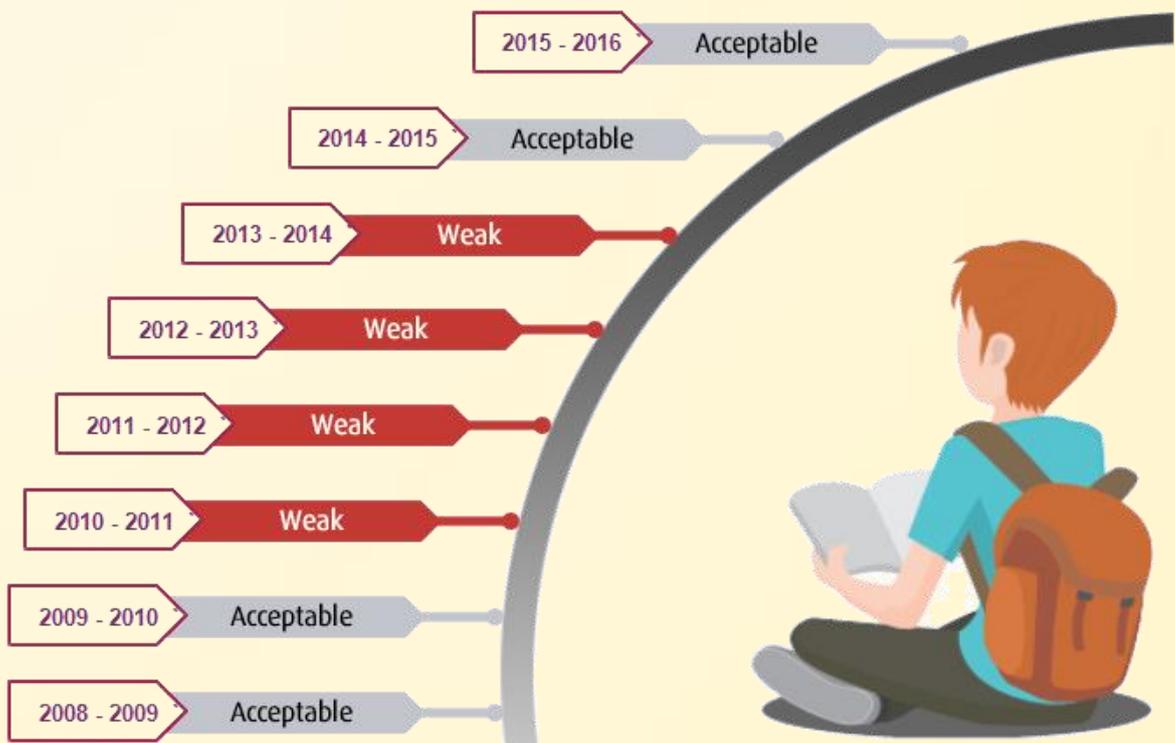


## Summary for parents and the community

**New Academy School** was inspected by DSIB from 25 to 28 of January 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, **New Academy School** provided **acceptable** quality of education for its students.

- The attainment and progress of students in each phase in most subjects were acceptable. In the elementary phase, attainment and progress in Arabic as a first language were good. In kindergarten (KG), good progress was made in English and science. Learning skills were good in KG and acceptable in other phases.
- Students' personal development was acceptable in KG, elementary and middle school, and good in high school. In each phase, students had a good appreciation of the role and values of Islam in UAE society. They understood and appreciated their own and other cultures. Students' social responsibility and innovation skills improved as they progressed through the school.
- Teaching and assessment were stronger in KG. At other phases there was too great variation in the quality of teaching. The school's assessment system did not always provide accurate judgements on students' attainment and progress. The school did not make enough use of external data to check its own assessments.
- The curriculum was good in KG and acceptable at other stages. Senior students had an appropriate range of curricular choices. Very few modifications had been made to the curriculum in each phase to meet the needs of students.
- The school provided a safe environment. Students were well cared for by staff. However, the learning support provided was not consistent and did not always help those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) to progress at an appropriate rate.
- The principal was the driving force behind the school's improvement. Leaders regularly checked the quality of lessons. Training and mentoring were improving teachers' skills. The owners had provided a budget which had enabled the school to make considerable improvements in staffing, accommodation, information technology (IT) infrastructure and learning resources.



### What did the school do well?

- The steps taken by the principal to build teamwork and to improve the school.
- The quality of teaching, assessment and curriculum in KG.
- Attainment and progress in Arabic as a first language in elementary school.
- The development of students' innovative skills in high school.
- The improvement in the staffing, accommodation and IT facilities.



### What does the school need to do next?

- Improve classroom management skills of teachers and the impact of supervisors to ensure that the behavior of students, particularly at the elementary phase, is more conducive to learning.
- Improve teaching to meet more effectively the learning needs of all students, to challenge the higher achieving students and to place greater emphasis on the development of students' higher-order thinking skills.
- In the elementary, middle and high phases, use assessment more effectively to raise levels of attainment by:
  - aligning internal assessments with national and international benchmarks
  - analyzing all the external data thoroughly to identify strengths and weaknesses in students' performance
  - modifying the curriculum and teaching strategies as a consequence of data analysis.
- Ensure that the curriculum is aligned with the Common Core Standards for English and mathematics and the State of California Standards for other subjects, and that teachers apply these standards rigorously.
- Ensure that the needs of students with SEND are better met by:
  - making more time available for the SEND coordinator to plan, deliver and monitor provision for students
  - providing challenging work in classrooms that match the targets set in individual education plans
  - involving parents fully by informing them of their children's progress and providing guidance on how they could be supported at home.



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

- The progress made by students with SEND was not consistent across the school. Not all teachers planned work to provide good support or varied their style of teaching to motivate students and improve the progress they made.
- Parents were not provided with SEND reports nor did they know of their children's targets or progress.
- There was no regular communication with parents and no planned opportunities for them to gain an understanding of how they could help their children's development at home.
- Contact with parents was only made in special situations where the school wished to discuss a problem or if parents sought further guidance or information.
- Information about admission arrangements was clear and helpful. Specialist staff were always easily available to meet and help parents with any concerns or questions.

## 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.
- No attainment data from the National Agenda Parameter was available at this stage to make a judgement on progress towards meeting the National Agenda targets.
- The school had begun to raise awareness of the National Agenda. Governors and middle managers had been involved in the decision-making process to use benchmark tests. They understood the rationale for the process. Students in all grades demonstrated knowledge of the National Agenda and were able to explain its purpose. Coffee morning and orientation days had been used to discuss National Agenda content and purpose with parents.
- The school had identified the need to modify the curriculum to meet the requirements of TIMSS and PISA. Leaders acknowledged the fact that this was emerging and was not fully embedded.
- Critical thinking was a developing feature. It was not consistent across all phases and all lessons. A most encouraging aspect was that students were able to explain what critical thinking was, and were able to give examples of lessons in which it had been a key feature.
- The use of IT was inconsistent across the phases and between individual subjects. In lessons where IT was used effectively, it greatly enhanced students' learning. In mathematics, textbooks which offered extended challenge enabled students to refine their skills. In English, literary texts were carefully analyzed to improve the sophistication of students' use of language.



### Overall school performance

Acceptable

#### 1. Students' achievement

		KG	Elementary	Middle	High
<b>Islamic education</b> 	<b>Attainment</b>	Not applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
	<b>Progress</b>	Not applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
<b>Arabic as a first language</b> 	<b>Attainment</b>	Not applicable	Good ↑	Acceptable	Acceptable
	<b>Progress</b>	Not applicable	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable
<b>Arabic as an additional language</b> 	<b>Attainment</b>	Not applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
	<b>Progress</b>	Not applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
<b>English</b> 	<b>Attainment</b>	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
	<b>Progress</b>	Good ↑	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
<b>Mathematics</b> 	<b>Attainment</b>	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
	<b>Progress</b>	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
<b>Science</b> 	<b>Attainment</b>	Good ↑	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
	<b>Progress</b>	Good ↑	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
<b>Learning skills</b>	Good ↑	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

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

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Personal development	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good ↑
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Good	Good	Good	Good
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good ↑	Very good ↑

## 3. Teaching and assessment

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Teaching for effective learning	Good ↑	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Assessment	Good ↑	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

## 4. Curriculum

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Curriculum design and implementation	Good ↑	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Curriculum adaptation	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

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

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding	Good	Good	Good	Good
Care and support	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

## 6. Leadership and management

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



## 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

### 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	Acceptable	Good ↑
Mathematics	Acceptable	Acceptable
Science	Good ↑	Good ↑

- In English, most children performed at expected curriculum standards. Their knowledge and skills were demonstrated in lesson reviews and in large group activities. Attainment had been solidly consistent at these levels over time. Most children made better than expected progress in lessons, especially when they had opportunities to speak in English. Their listening skills were above expectations. Their written English was improving, as evidenced in their journals, but still needed to be developed. Different groups of children made similarly good progress.
- Children demonstrated acceptable recall of prior learning when using their mathematics vocabulary and numbers. Most could count to 20 and perform simple addition and subtraction problems. Some needed more repetition of number names and facts to embed their learning. Most children made expected progress in lessons, correctly forming their numbers to nine and performing appropriate activities at the learning centers. A few needed additional time and support to reach curriculum expectations. Different groups made similarly acceptable progress over time.
- Attainment and progress in science were good when compared with age-appropriate standards. Most children could recall basic scientific vocabulary and relate it to their world. A few needed teacher encouragement to share their information effectively. Children showed basic understanding of scientific ideas when answering probing questions. Most demonstrated good progress in hands-on science activities that involved investigation and enquiry. Almost all children had a strong interest in science. Most groups made good progress over time, except those with SEND.

### Elementary

Subjects	Attainment	Progress
Islamic education	Acceptable	Acceptable
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, most students demonstrated age-appropriate knowledge and understanding of basic Islamic concepts. In Grade 5, students understood the Islamic view of the Day of Judgement as one of the Pillars of Faith. They had acquired a range of Islamic terminology such as other names for the Day of Judgement, as mentioned in the Holy Qur'an. The majority made acceptable progress from their starting points. Students had improved their recitation skills of the Holy Qur'an. In Grade 3, most students knew the steps that should be taken to perform ablution (Wudu) correctly.
- In Arabic as a first language the majority of students' listening skills exceeded expectations. They had developed a good vocabulary. The majority used standard Arabic appropriately. Grade 4 students could talk about a school trip and describe what they had seen. Students could read sentences and understand the key ideas, which they could share with the whole class. Most had started to practice creative writing. Grade 1 students could write a greeting card and include 30 words, which was above expectations. In Grade 5, students used varied vocabulary when writing about the National Day. They demonstrated an understanding of grammar in line with curriculum expectations.
- Most students demonstrated strong listening skills in Arabic as an additional language. They responded well to teachers' instructions, but in the absence of national and international standards, attainment was uncertain. Most were able to use a limited and familiar Arabic vocabulary when speaking. They could form simple, short sentences within the context of the lesson. The standard of reading was acceptable. They could read text from the textbook but few understood its full meaning. Writing skills were less well developed. Students generally copied text from the board or textbook. Creative writing was underdeveloped. Progress made in each class was acceptable. Most students improved their language skills in line with lesson objectives.
- In English, students' attainment was broadly acceptable. Students made no better than acceptable progress as teaching did not constantly provide sufficient challenge and support. Speaking and listening skills were more advanced than students' writing skills. By the end of the elementary phase, students could write short descriptive and creative pieces and perform functional reading. They were secure in their basic understanding of grammar. Students with SEND also made acceptable progress.
- In mathematics, most students attained levels that were in line with curriculum standards. The school had started to use International Benchmark Tests (IBT) to measure attainment but the results were not yet available. In lessons, attainment and progress were acceptable. The work which they were expected to do did not always match the grade standard and, as a consequence, students were not sufficiently challenged. Grade 3 students were able to show that multiplication was an action of repeated addition. The information used to track levels of attainment, over time, was not consistently related accurately to the standards. Progress was similar for different groups of students.

- Internal tests showed that most students' attainment in science was above expected standards. However, external benchmark data and observations indicated that only a majority of students reached expected curriculum standards. Most made better progress in recall of knowledge than in understanding scientific concepts. Working alone or collaboratively, they could make predictions and perform simple experiments. They confidently used scientific terminology. Their ability to think critically about the underpinning reasons behind scientific phenomena was missing, due to the lack of opportunities. Students knew about different body systems, the planets, and how the seasons and weather affect people, animals, and plants. Progress in developing practical and enquiry skills was hindered by lack of challenge.

### Middle

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

- In Islamic education, most students demonstrated age-appropriate knowledge of Islamic concepts. They understood Islamic manner and the importance of visiting patients. A minority of students were able to link Qur'anic verses or Hadeeth with this topic. Progress was acceptable as measured against the lesson starting points. Students could connect principles such as the importance of practicing obedience and patience with parents in their daily life. A few were able to apply more advanced concepts to their lives or to think critically.
- The majority of students' listening skills in Arabic as a first language were in line with age-appropriate expectations. They understood how to use different types of verbs correctly. Most students made acceptable progress in lessons, and could recall the content of recent lessons. When speaking, a majority could use standard Arabic. Older students could speak about morals using short sentences on subjects that were appropriate for their stage. They could read poems, and understand the vocabulary and summaries of poets' lives. Most had started to practice creative writing but the standard of work was below expectations. Students' use of grammar was in line with appropriate curriculum levels.
- In Arabic as an additional language, most students had good listening skills. They understood well their teachers' instructions. In Grade 6, most students understood the *Mouse and Lion* story read by the teacher, and could describe the main events. Their speaking skills were acceptable. They used short sentences in familiar contexts. In Grade 8, students talked about the four seasons and the appropriate clothing for each. They could read long paragraphs but with limited understanding. Writing skills were weak. Students copied from the board and the textbook. Students made acceptable progress.
- In English, attainment and progress were acceptable for all students including those with SEND. Students extended their ability to analyze texts and to write in a variety of genres. However, speaking skills were not as well developed, in particular for boys. They had few opportunities to develop their speaking skills by giving presentations to the class. By Grade 8, students could select a piece of poetry or prose and identify themes.

- In mathematics, levels of attainment and the rates of progress were in line with age-appropriate expectations. The school had recently introduced IBT. In lessons, students showed understanding of relevant skills, which was reinforced by written work in their books and through self-assessment. In one Grade 8 class, the majority of the students was able to organize data in a stem and leaf plot and understood that it made the organization of problem solving easier. This was not a consistent feature at this stage. Students made better progress in those lessons where there was challenge. Over time, most groups of students were acquiring the mathematical skills necessary to prepare them appropriately for the next stage of their education.
- Most students' attainment and progress in science was acceptable. More students were skilled in learning factual knowledge and performing recall, rather than understanding and applying concepts. As a result, students performed below external benchmarked standards. They made acceptable gains in knowledge, skills and understanding, as measured against the learning objectives in lessons. They had difficulty to think critically about the underpinning reasons behind scientific phenomena and so did not show appropriate levels of understanding. They could recall and use scientific terminology. They could build models of the respiratory system, construct series and parallel circuits and measure voltage across components. Most groups made similarly acceptable progress.

### High

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

- In Islamic education, most students demonstrated acceptable knowledge, skills and understanding of Islamic concepts and principles. They understood the Islamic concept of supplication, and most recognized the manner of making sincere Duaa. Students had improved their understanding of the ruling and concessions for missed prayers. They made acceptable progress in reciting prescribed verses from the Holy Qur'an and in applying the correct rules of recitation. Progress in lessons and over time was acceptable against national curriculum standards.
- In Arabic as first language, most students could use standard Arabic but some used colloquial Arabic in class. All could speak about innovation in Dubai using short, appropriate sentences. They could read prose texts and poems and had an acceptable range of vocabulary. All could write in short sentences but they made spelling mistakes and incorporated sentences which were not directly related to the topic. Students in Grade 12 knew how to write a short story. Their knowledge and use of grammar was in line with curriculum standards. Although data showed that most groups of students' progress over three years was above expectations, all assessments were internal and did not match national curriculum standards.
- In Arabic as additional language, most students showed good listening skills. They responded well to teachers' instructions. Speaking skills were acceptable. Students used short sentences in familiar contexts but had difficulty with the pronunciation of some words. They could read longer pieces of Arabic but did not understand the meaning, although they knew the vocabulary. Writing skills were underdeveloped. Students copied text from the board or the textbook excessively. Independent writing was weak. Progress at the end of each lesson was acceptable. Most students improved their listening and understanding in

line with lesson objectives. In the absence of national and international standards, attainment and progress by most groups was judged to be no better than acceptable.

- In English, overall attainment was acceptable for all groups of students. Students made acceptable progress in refining and improving their written and spoken English, gaining confidence as their skills progressed. Speaking was developing in line with expectations through lively class discussions which students enjoyed. A group of Grade 12 girls took delight in analyzing pieces of prose to identify and evaluate persuasive language. Reading skills were developing well for most groups of students over time, by comparison to their writing skills.
- In mathematics, most students attained and progressed in line with expectations and curriculum standards. In external examinations, most attained at levels that were in line with national standards, although performance was weak in the non-calculator paper as a result of inadequate preparation. Grade 10 students knew facts and techniques for manipulating logarithmic expressions. Progress in lessons was acceptable. In lessons where progress was better, lesson objectives were clearly stated and students were challenged by higher order thinking tasks. There were no significant differences between the performances of different groups in the school. Over time, attainment was broadly in line with international standards for most student groups.
- Most students in science reached expected standards and objectives in lessons and internal tests. Few international comparisons were drawn. Students worked independently and collaborated well in groups to investigate problems and make predictions. They analyzed and interpreted data, and showed a good understanding of scientific principles. Some built models of hydrocarbon molecules and experimented to determine how glucose and starch moved across a semi-permeable membrane. The science fair promoted high levels of critical thinking and independent work. Progress was similar for most groups.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Learning skills	Good 	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

- Learning skills were too variable across the school. They were better in KG, where children took delight in exploring new things. Elementary students were often distracted from their tasks and required close direction by teachers. Students in many classes effectively assessed their learning at the end of lessons, but were less sure of what they needed to learn next.
- Most students were able to work constructively in pairs and small groups. They were less effective in explaining their ideas. In KG, children shared their games happily and enjoyed working together. In elementary, they answered teachers' questions appropriately but did not readily formulate their own views or share their ideas.
- The ability of students to recognize how one subject could be linked to others was not widely developed. It depended too much upon the interest in the work generated by the good quality or otherwise of the teaching. Similarly, students did not readily identify for themselves real-life examples of what they were studying, such as how water management is important in both desert and cold climates.
- Critical thinking and open questioning to find new meanings or to develop a personal perspective were underdeveloped. Valuable to promote students' progress, was the ability to carry out research both in class and independently at home. Innovative work was evident in senior students' science projects.

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

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
<b>Personal development</b>	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good ↑

- Most students displayed a positive, responsible attitude and took a confident approach to their work. Students were enthusiastic about the school and showed self-reliance and independence. Most responded well to constructive feedback from their teachers.
- In the middle and high school, positive behavior prevailed in most classrooms. Students demonstrated self-discipline which made for harmonious relationships with their fellow students and teachers. Incidents of bullying were rare. In the higher grades, students demonstrated a mature attitude to learning. However, in the elementary phase some classes exhibited poor behavior which disrupted lessons.
- Relationships between students and teachers were almost always cordial and respectful. Students cared about each other and accepted the multi-cultural differences within the school. They demonstrated their care for others by donating clothes to the poor through a school charity box. Students were sensitive to the needs of others, including those with special difficulties. They participated in cultural events such as National Day, International Day, Flag Day and the Cultural Fair.
- The promotion of healthy eating choices and healthy living in classes resulted in the students internalizing the importance of good choices. Students ate healthy meals and participated in physical exercise before, during and after school hours.
- Attendance was very good. However, a significant number of students arrived late each morning. During the day, most students were punctual and arrived to class on time.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
<b>Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures</b>	Good	Good	Good	Good

- Students were aware of Islamic values in the contemporary life of Dubai and they respected and appreciated Islamic traditions. In their Islamic education classes, they learned to be kind and respectful of others and to be tolerant of other religions. They could talk confidently about the importance of Islamic values, the main calendar dates and their Islamic and Emirati culture.
- Students respected the heritage of Dubai. They could describe some of the major tourist attractions and recreational activities. They had a good knowledge of traditional foods and clothing worn in the UAE.
- Students fully appreciated and celebrated their own Islamic culture in many ways throughout the year. They recognized different Islamic events. Although they were interested in learning more about foods and traditions from other countries, they had a limited awareness of other societies.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good ↑	Very good ↑

- Students had many opportunities to interact with the wider community through their participation in clubs and projects supported and encouraged by the school. Students volunteered in activities such as Diabetes Week, Peace Week and Breast Cancer Awareness. They were aware of the importance of donating their time to good causes.
- Students were interested in participating in school-sponsored projects. They enjoyed events such as academic fairs, the 'Mathematics Competition', and the 'Spelling Bee'. They had leadership responsibilities in extra-curricular activities and club activities, and in the students' council. They participated in the science fair and in the national 'Think Science' competition, both of which helped to increase their skills of innovation.
- Through lessons, students were aware of the importance of conserving and improving the environment. In the middle and high school, they actively participated in many projects aimed at improving both the school environment and the wider local environment. Some had initiated and sponsored an interactive presentation on 'Sustainability'. A number of the science fair projects promoted conservation.

### 3. Teaching and assessment

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Teaching for effective learning	Good ↑	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

- Most teachers had a secure subject knowledge. Their understanding of how students learn was more variable. In KG, teachers used practices well suited to the age of the children. In other phases, approaches to learning were less well matched to students' ages and abilities.
- KG teachers planned interesting lessons with effective use of resources, which enabled children to learn successfully. In other phases the quality of planning was too variable. In a minority of lessons, plans which had been centrally produced for all classes in the one grade were insufficiently adapted for individual classes. The quality of the learning environment was more stimulating in the lower grades and was rich in language in KG
- In elementary, middle and high school phases the quality of interactions between students and teachers was significantly better in girls' classes than in boys'. In elementary and middle school, questioning was ineffective in a significant minority of lessons for boys. This, together with a lack of pace, resulted in boys being insufficiently engaged in learning. In mixed classes in KG and lower elementary, effective questioning and challenge maintained students' interest effectively.
- Overall, lessons were insufficiently adapted to provide interesting and effective learning activities for all groups of students. Lesson plans usually made reference to different ability groups. In practice, most lessons were delivered to the average level for the class. In most lessons there was insufficient support for weaker students and a lack of challenge for the most able.
- In KG, children were encouraged to work independently and to use technology to help their learning. In middle school science, students used laptops for independent research. In a minority of high school lessons, students were also encouraged to research independently, think critically and debate issues. Elsewhere, students were rarely given the opportunity to work independently or challenged to think critically about their work.

- In Arabic as a first language, teachers' planning led to effective learning. Good subject knowledge ensured that students learned correct Arabic. Teachers' interactions with students were positive and questioning engaged students in meaningful discussions. Throughout the school, teachers broadly met the students' needs. However, the level of challenge was insufficient for the most able students and the development of critical thinking was limited.
- In Arabic as an additional language, most teachers used the Arabic language correctly. However, some teachers used informal Arabic which limited students' learning of the classical form. In general, the teaching strategies were too didactic and formal. Teachers managed time and used resources appropriately to provide a basically productive learning environment where students met acceptable learning standards.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Assessment	Good ↑	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

- The school had recognized the need to benchmark student performance against national and international expectations. To this end, it had entered all students, from Grades 3 to 10, for the IBT.
- The school had begun to analyze assessment data. Teachers used Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) testing and the Skills Navigator as pointers for developing skills. The data from the IBT would further inform the school about individual student performance. In KG, accurate recordings were made of each child's physical, cognitive, social and emotional development to ensure that children were progressing in accordance with identified standards.
- Information from external assessments such as TIMSS, PISA and SAT had been used to identify students' strengths and weaknesses. Some modifications to the curriculum and to teaching had taken place to ensure that teachers focused more on critical and higher order thinking. However, this practice was not consistent across all lessons.
- The school had a range of formative and summative assessments. There were inaccuracies in the way in which the school interpreted outcomes against US assessment norms. Summative assessments were linked to the Common Core Standards, but in some instances they tested the recall of content rather than the understanding of concepts. Their use as a measure of progress was therefore limited.
- Teachers' knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of their students varied from phase to phase and from teacher to teacher. Where knowledge was better, teachers challenged students and supported them well. Self-assessment helped students to be involved in their own learning, but not all students understood the importance of accurate self-assessment. Children in KG were well supported by their teachers who used praise effectively to encourage them.

#### 4. Curriculum

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Curriculum design and implementation	Good 	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

- The school had adopted the California State Common Core Standards and The Next Generation Science in all phases. Along with the Islamic education and Arabic curricula, it had breadth and depth and met MoE requirements. Subjects such as IT, art, physical education, psychology and business economics extended the curriculum beyond the core subjects.
- In KG, teachers closely adhered to standards in their planning, delivery and assessment of lessons. The use of these standards ensured that learning was continuous and progressive in this phase. In the other phases of the school, there was a need for lessons to be more closely aligned with the adopted curriculum to meet the needs of the students more effectively.
- KG choices were based on the standards and made available to students in learning centers in every room. Curricular choices were limited in the high school. They included media and technology, web design, French and art. Students' identified courses, through surveys, which supported their choice of future careers. New offerings had been developed for the coming school year.
- Cross-curricular links were underdeveloped in most phases. Teachers did not always make links between subjects to help students to integrate their learning.
- Teachers reviewed and developed the curriculum on a regular basis across all phases. In KG, curriculum review was a weekly activity designed to improve children's success. In the other phases, the curriculum standards were not uniformly implemented.
- The school taught UAE social studies in the elementary and the lower middle school through stand-alone lessons. Across all phases, social studies was integrated with other subjects.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Curriculum adaptation	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

- The school made limited modifications to the curriculum to meet the needs of most groups of students. It had improved the identification procedures for students with SEND. All students had broad learning targets but they were not consistently used in class to modify work appropriately.
- The curriculum was designed to engage the majority of students. Opportunities for enterprise, innovation and social contribution were inconsistent. There were extra-curricular activities and community links, but additional choices in the middle and high schools were limited. Students were given opportunities to be creative through their involvement in activities, such as the publication of magazines and participation in science fairs, rather than through routine lessons.
- Students had some appropriate learning experiences to develop their understanding of the culture and society of the UAE, but they were not fully integrated into the curriculum. Attempts were being made to connect lesson planning with UAE and Emirati culture and through celebrations, such as National Day, Flag Day, and other appropriate assemblies and class projects.
- In KG, children were introduced to in Arabic lessons. They learned Arabic to at least an acceptable standard for 150 minutes per week from qualified Arabic teachers.

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

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
<b>Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding</b>	Good	Good	Good	Good

- Staff had been trained to recognize signs of child abuse. Most broadly understood the revised and very comprehensive child protection procedures. The school took internet safety seriously and monitored its use in school closely. Teachers and students had been trained on cyber safety. The school had produced an information leaflet for parents. However, it had not yet produced a policy for dealing with all issues of internet safety or cyberbullying.
- Students felt safe in school and on school transport. The arrangements for arrival and departure were very effective. Pedestrians were safely separated from moving vehicles. The school was secure, clean and safe. There were regular, thorough but informal safety checks which identified potential problems. The school did not have a system of regular formal risk assessments.
- The building and equipment were maintained to a good standard, with appropriate records of all maintenance and safety contracts. The school had a good evacuation procedure, but fire drills were infrequent. Records of incidents involving students were held confidentially by the Heads of School and first-aid records by the clinic.
- Overall, the premises provided a suitable and safe environment for education. Some classrooms were small and cramped. The upper floor classrooms and auditorium were only accessible by stairs and so not suitable for students with mobility issues.
- The school systematically promoted healthy living through workshops arranged by clinic staff and also in science and physical education lessons. The sale of unhealthy food in the school canteen undermined messages on healthy eating.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
<b>Care and support</b>	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

- Relationships in the school were mostly respectful. Students felt confident to seek guidance from adults. In a few classes, particularly in the elementary phase, students were discourteous. Their poor behavior towards teachers and other students interrupted learning. The school behavior policy was clear but not consistently applied by all teachers. Behavior issues were not always dealt with quickly and effectively.
- Regular and prompt attendance was consistently encouraged. Matters relating to attendance and punctuality were monitored and followed up swiftly with students and their families.
- The identification of students with SEND had been improved with the assistance of the two SEND coordinators. They sometimes recommended additional helpful external assessments of students' needs. They used information on students' needs appropriately to plan support for them in the school. Identification of gifted and talented students had been initiated.

- Support for students with SEND was variable in classes. There was very little one-to-one support available. In a few classes, support was inadequate because teachers did not adapt work to meet students' needs effectively. Support staff were not deployed efficiently in classes to help students with SEND.
- Students were appreciative of the advice which they received when they had personal problems. To meet the aspirations of older students, specialist staff provided effective guidance on career routes and university courses. Appropriate systems were in place to monitor students' academic progress, with additional support provided when required.

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

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

Acceptable

- The special educational needs coordinator, with the support of the principal and governors, had been provided with additional resources to support the care and guidance provided for students with SEND. This included an additional coordinator. The deployment of support staff was managed by subject leaders and support for students in the classroom was not consistently available or efficiently targeted.
- The identification of students with SEND was generally inadequate but was improving. As a result, more students had been properly assessed and identified.
- Parents were not closely involved in all stages of their children's development and progress. They were not informed of their children's targets or given guidance on how to support them at home.
- Adaptation of class work to meet the different needs of students with SEND was too variable across the school. It was not monitored to ensure that students' work was effectively matched to their needs.
- Students' progress was acceptable overall, but too inconsistent to be good. There was also too much variation in the quality of teaching. Teachers did not consistently plan suitable work in lessons to ensure that students with SEND received either the challenge or support necessary to make appropriate progress.

### 6. Leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership

Acceptable

- The principal had a clear vision for the school. It had been developed through consultation with governors and other stakeholders. This vision had been communicated successfully to the whole school community. The admissions policy was clear and had been revised to be more inclusive.
- The principal had been very successful in bringing about change to the school. He was determined to deliver the school's mission and to improve the learning experiences and outcomes for all students. He had a good knowledge of effective educational practice and school improvement. The majority of other leaders was skilled and had brought about improvements in their areas of responsibility, particularly in the early years.
- Most senior leaders had good relationships with teachers and other staff. Communication was very good in the school as a result of the meetings structure, teamwork and staff bulletins. Leadership was distributed effectively across the school. Heads of department were developing their effectiveness as leaders of change. Morale throughout the school was positive.

- The school had a good capacity to improve and innovate. Managers and staff were committed to the improvement of learning and teaching. The extended senior leadership team and the quality assurance team provided an effective way of bringing about improvement through innovation. There were effective arrangements for improving teachers' skills through reflecting on their current practice, sharing good practice, mentoring and training.
- The principal held senior managers to account for the performance in their areas of responsibility. Other staff were similarly held to account for their performance. This approach was well planned, but the inaccuracy in some of the school's judgements of students' attainment prevented the approach from being fully effective.

### School self-evaluation and improvement planning

Acceptable

- The principal had a realistic view of the schools strengths and its priorities for improvement. However, not all of the other managers and teachers were fully aware of the school's performance. They had made little use of external data to benchmark internal assessments.
- There was a range of processes to monitor and evaluate the quality of learning and teaching. Senior managers, heads of departments and team leaders used an appropriate system to monitor the quality of teaching and learning in class. Although this took account of both teachers' and students' views, the level of students' attainment was not always accurately assessed.
- The school had produced an ambitious, comprehensive improvement plan based upon its audits. Each area of priority had a detailed action plan. Overall, there were too many areas of priority for the plan to have an immediate impact upon the school.
- The school had made progress in addressing all of the recommendations of the last inspection report. It had taken steps to improve teaching through training, mentoring and recruiting more qualified teachers, but there was still scope for further improvement. Students' learning experiences had improved in most curriculum areas. The changes were not yet sufficient in elementary, middle and high school to alter the judgements in most core subjects since the last inspection report.

### Partnerships with parents and the community

Good

- Parents participated actively in the life of the school. They were encouraged to be partners in their children's learning and in related decisions made in the school. The school sought their views through questionnaires and meetings, and took their responses into account. Parents volunteered to help with school activities in and out of the classroom, and in events such as preparation for national and international days.
- The school used a good range of communication channels to enable parents to be partners in their children's education, including access to the website educational portal. Parents were informed about their children's learning and progress and the different activities that were taking place in the school. They were encouraged to make suggestions as to how improvements in the life of the school could be made.

- Parents' meetings were held at the end of each term. Along with written reports, these meetings informed parents about their children's progress in class and in other activities. Parents regularly received three reports: an assessment report card, a MAP test analysis, and a physical fitness report. The reports gave details of strengths and weaknesses, with suggestions on next steps in learning.
- The school built strong links with the local and wider communities. The established partnership with Synergy University gave students access to training, internships, workshops and college courses. The school also had links with some of the neighboring businesses. Students' learning was enhanced through inter-school sporting activities, participation in a variety of visits to local places of interest and a range of international visits.

### Governance

Acceptable

- The owners had improved governance by restructuring the board and by having a parent and a teacher member to enable other views to be heard. The board did not yet have a systematic way of obtaining the views of stakeholders. Governors had a detailed knowledge of the school and the UAE national priorities.
- The board held the principal to account for the performance of the school. There was frequent communication between the owners and the principal. However, the reporting processes were not yet sufficiently systematic or rigorous.
- The governing board exerted a positive influence on the school. It was committed to improving the provision of quality education with an Islamic ethos for local people. The board had provided a large budget to enable the school to be refurbished, with additional classrooms and staffing. It had also improved the IT infrastructure and facilities.

### Management, staffing, facilities and resources

Good

- The school was well organized and operated well on a day-to-day basis. Most aspects of the school contributed well to students' experiences.
- The school was staffed with a sufficient number of teachers. Almost all were approved by KHDA and approximately 40 per cent had additional teaching qualifications. The deployment of support staff in departments was not sufficiently targeted to support students with SEND.
- The premises provided a good learning environment. The school had specialist facilities for art, IT and science. Its sports facilities included refurbished basket-ball courts and playing fields. Most classrooms provided a pleasant learning environment. Staff used display spaces well to celebrate students' work and achievements. The upper floors of the building were not accessible to students who could not use the stairs.
- Areas of the curriculum were well resourced. Classrooms had interactive whiteboards. Portable laptops and tablet computers could be booked by teachers. An attractive library had been included in the school's refurbishment.

## 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	
 <p>Parents*</p>	2015-2016	67
	2014-2015	153
 <p>Teachers</p>	84	
 <p>Students</p>	133	

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

- Parents, teachers and students who responded to the survey were positive about almost all aspects of the school. Almost all students and parents were satisfied with the quality of education provided. Most thought that the school offered a good range of subjects and extra-curricular activities, and that there were appropriate resources to support learning.
- Almost all parents thought that their children made good progress in English and mathematics. Most considered that their children made good progress in Islamic education; and a majority thought that their children made good progress in Arabic and science.
- Most parents indicated that assessment, including marking, helped their children to improve. Almost all said that their children had developed a good range of learning skills.
- A large majority said that the school prepared students well for the next stage of life and learning.
- Although almost all parents thought that their child was safe in school, a minority were unaware of the schools cyber-safety programme. In addition, a large minority of teachers were not aware of the benefits of the schools cyber-safety policy.
- Almost all teachers, and most parents and students, considered that the school was well led.
- Almost all parents felt that they were kept well informed of their children's progress. Most parents also felt that the school listened to them and acted on their views.

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)