




New Academy School

 Curriculum: US

Overall Rating:

Acceptable



"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 Raffa
Type of school	Private
Opening year of school	1997
Website	www.newacademyschool.com
Telephone	04-3988873
Address	P.O.Box 11439, Dubai, UAE
Principal	Nazia Doha - Acting Principal
Language of instruction	English
Inspection dates	4 to 9 March 2017

Teachers / Support staff	
Number of teachers	112
Largest nationality group of teachers	Egyptian
Number of teaching assistants	25
Teacher-student ratio	1:16
Number of guidance counsellors	1
Teacher turnover	29%

Students	
Gender of students	Boys and girls
Age range	4-18
Grades or year groups	KG 1-Grade 12
Number of students on roll	1414
Number of children in pre-kindergarten	0
Number of Emirati students	823
Number of students with SEND	64
Largest nationality group of students	Emirati

Curriculum	
Educational permit / License	US
Main curriculum	US
External tests and examinations	MAP, PSAT, SAT, TOEFL, IBT Arabic
Accreditation	AdvancEd
National Agenda benchmark tests	MAP, IBT



The DSIB inspection process



In order to judge the overall quality of education provided by schools, inspectors consider the six standards of performance that form the basis of the UAE School Inspection Framework (the framework). They look at children's attainment and progress in key subjects, their learning skills and their personal and social development. They judge how effective teaching and the assessment of learning are across the school. Inspectors consider how well the school's curriculum, including activities inside and outside classrooms, meet the educational needs of all students. They judge how well schools protect and support children. In addition, inspectors judge the effectiveness of leadership, which incorporates governance, management, staffing and facilities.

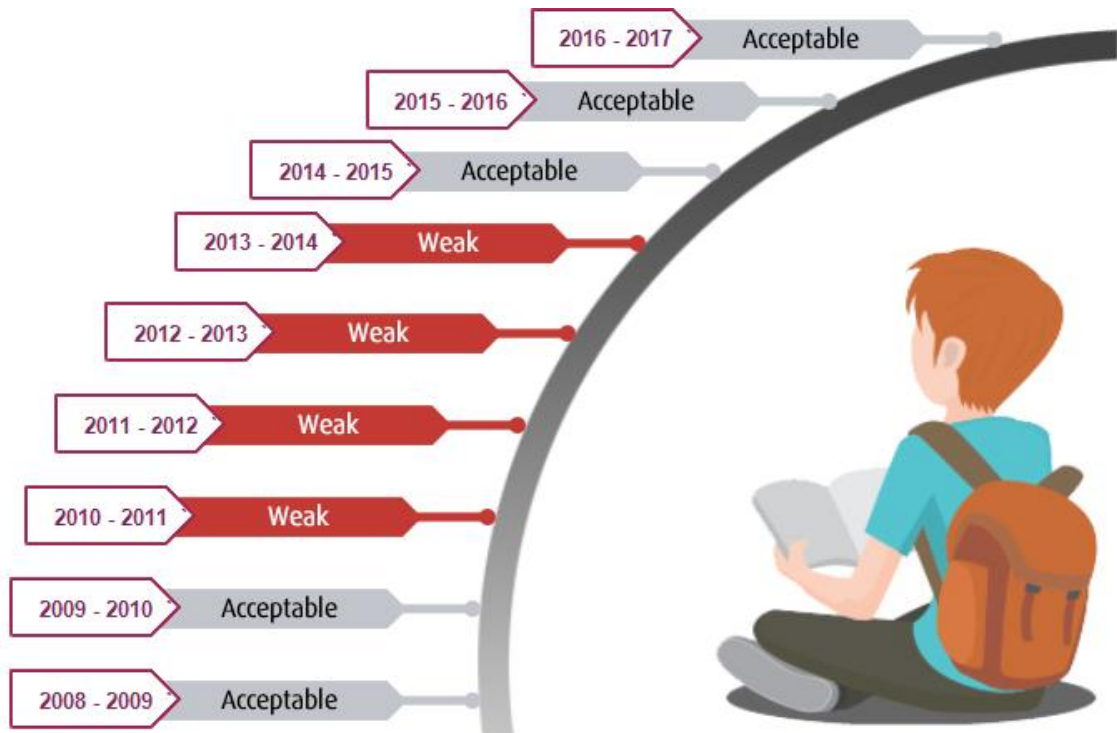
Inspection judgements are drawn from evidence gathered by the inspection team, including observation of students' learning in lessons, review of their work, discussions with students, meetings with the staff, parents and governors, and review of surveys completed by parents, teachers and students.

Judgements are made on a six-point scale

DSIB inspection teams make judgements about different aspects, phases and subjects that form the work of the school, using the scale below, which is consistent with the framework.

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

Inspection journey for New Academy School



- New Academy School has been growing in terms of student population since its opening in 1997. At the time of the inspection, the school had 1414 students, aged from 4 to 18 years which shows an increase of 162 students from last year. The school is going through a transitional period led by a vice principal due to the resignation of the principal in February 2017.
- In the two years prior to this inspection, the school had demonstrated some improvement in certain areas of its performance such as the provision in the Kindergarten (KG), elementary students' achievements in Arabic as a first language, and students' understanding of Islamic values and appreciation of Emirati heritage and culture. Some of these strengths have been maintained up to this inspection cycle.
- Recommendations over the previous two years focused on developing teaching, learning and assessment for all students including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). Staffing and resourcing were also areas that required attention, especially IT facilities. Although the focus this year is still on improving all aspects of education, there is a more urgent need for the school to improve leadership, governance, self-evaluation and improvement planning.

Summary of inspection findings 2016-2017



New Academy School was inspected by DSIB from 4 to 9 March 2017. The overall quality of education provided by the school is **acceptable**. The section below summarizes the inspection findings for each of the six performance indicators described in the framework.

- Students' attainment and progress are acceptable in most subjects and phases. An exception of this is English where students' outcomes are weak in elementary, middle and high school. In the KG, children show good attainment and progress in English and science. In Arabic as a first language, only the elementary school students show good attainment and progress. Learning skills are mostly acceptable and good in the KG.
- Students' understanding of Islamic values and Emirati heritage and culture is a strength of the school. However, students' personal development, social and environmental responsibility and their innovative skills are underdeveloped.
- Teaching and assessment in the KG are more effective than they are in the rest of the school. Although these indicators are judged as acceptable in the elementary, middle and high school, there are weaknesses in teacher's performance in delivering the curriculum and assessing students' outcomes. Tracking students' progress accurately is underdeveloped.
- The curriculum is broad and appropriately balanced but lacks enough depth in developing students' skills and understanding, particularly in English and science. The curriculum is not fully compliant with California requirements, especially in the high school. Adaptation of the curriculum is adequate but assessment information is not used well to inform modifications to meet the needs of all groups of students.
- The management of health and safety is not rigorous enough in the school. The lack of leadership in that area has negatively influenced the quality of health and safety supervision. The school provides good support for the KG children but this is less developed in the other phases of the school.
- The vice-principal, supported by the senior management team, has sustained the acceptable quality of education provided by the school. However, the absence of a principal, the weak governance and the ineffective self-evaluation processes have hindered the improvement in some areas and led to the decline of quality in other areas.

What the school does best

- The good quality of leadership, provision and outcomes in the KG
- Students' achievement in Arabic as a first language in elementary school
- Students' understanding of Islamic values and their appreciation of Emirati heritage and culture.

Recommendations

- Keep all students safe on school premises at all times by:
 - creating and implementing an overarching plan that systematically promotes healthy living
 - ensuring school buildings and equipment are appropriately accessible, maintained and secured
 - raising students' awareness of child protection especially cyber safety.
- Establish school governance that has:
 - a balanced representation of various stakeholders
 - clear roles and responsibilities for supporting school development and ensuring that the school meets its curriculum requirements
 - transparent lines of accountability in place for leaders at all levels.
- Promptly fill in the vacancies in the school leadership team, especially the principal position, and develop its role to make improvements in students' outcomes particularly their English language proficiency, their academic progress and their personal and social responsibility across the school.
- Develop the school's self-assessment processes to ensure that the school has an accurate and realistic view of its strengths and weaknesses using a rigorous analysis of internal and external evaluation of all areas of its performance.
- Improve teaching and learning across the school by:
 - developing teachers' understanding of how students learn
 - enhancing teachers' planning skills to promote enquiry and investigation
 - using assessment information rigorously to inform modifications in instruction.

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:

- Students' attainment on the National Agenda Parameter is below expectations in science and English and meets expectations in mathematics.
- The school meets the registration requirements for the National Agenda Parameter.
- The school analyzes Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) data to identify weaknesses in students' learning skills. The school does not do enough to modify the curriculum or the teaching to meet the needs of the different groups of students or to provide them with tasks that match their ability levels.
- The school works to familiarize students with TIMSS-like and PISA-like questions to target specific skills. This does not compromise an alignment of the curriculum but of the internal assessments.
- Teachers change the focus of their teaching to target the skills identified as weak. They do not modify teaching well enough to meet the learning needs of the different groups of students. The activities they provide enable a low level of collaboration among students and often lack challenge.
- Students have a basic understanding of their results on the National Agenda Parameter. They get limited opportunities to develop research skills in the classroom. Most of the research they do is part of lesson extensions outside the classroom such as projects and essays.

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:

- The majority of students across all phases of the school demonstrate confidence in learning. However, only a few demonstrate the creativity and tenacity needed to drive innovation and enterprise. A minority of students are engaged in critical thinking and problem-solving because only a minority of the teachers provide opportunities for them to develop those skills. The curriculum standards embrace innovation but the curriculum design and delivery do not provide adequate opportunities for students to be innovative in their learning. Few extra-curricular activities are offered to enhance innovation skills. However, not all school leaders and staff have a developed understanding of innovation and how to embed it into the everyday practices of the school.

Overall school performance





Acceptable

1 Students' achievement

		KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Islamic education 	Attainment	Not applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
	Progress	Not applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Arabic as a first language 	Attainment	Not applicable	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable
	Progress	Not applicable	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable
Arabic as an additional language 	Attainment	Not applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
	Progress	Not applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
English 	Attainment	Good 	Weak 	Weak 	Weak 
	Progress	Good	Weak 	Weak 	Weak 
Mathematics 	Attainment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
	Progress	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Science 	Attainment	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
	Progress	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Learning skills	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

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

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






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	Acceptable 	Acceptable 	Acceptable 	Acceptable 
Care and support	Good 	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable



6. Leadership and management

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

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	Good 	Good
Mathematics	Acceptable	Acceptable
Science	Good	Good

- The school's assessment information indicates that a majority of children are proficient in all areas of literacy. Evidence in lessons shows that the integrated curriculum provides good cross-curricular links, which allows children to use their speaking, listening, reading and writing skills well in all content areas. This results in good progress in lessons and over time. For example, the children consistently use their writing skills to label and describe their observations and predictions in both mathematics and science.
- Most children demonstrate mathematical knowledge in number, operations and geometry that is in line with the expected curriculum standards. Assessment data shows that children have basic competency in all areas of numeracy. In lessons and over time, children build on their skills showing acceptable progress in their mathematical understanding and skill development from KG1 to KG2. When given the opportunity, children can apply their learning to real life situations. However, a lack of challenge in the lessons hinders their progress.
- The knowledge and skills of the majority of children are above the curriculum standards in science. Their ability to use their investigative skills in real world applications results in good progress as measured against the learning objectives of the curriculum. Assessment information and work samples show that children's understanding of the world is above the curriculum expectations. In lessons, they make good progress when discussing the weather, differentiating between living and non-living things and experimenting with motion. Their curiosity about the world often results in creative questioning and problem-solving.

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

- In Islamic education, most students attain levels that are in line with Ministry of Education (MoE) curriculum expectations. Most students demonstrate appropriate knowledge of Seerah and the life of the prophets. Students' recitation of the Holy Qur'an is well-developed but their memorization is less secure. In lessons and in their most recent work, most students make the expected progress in linking their knowledge to real life situations. Non-Arab students make better progress than Arab students.
- The school's internal assessment data in Arabic as a first language show that the majority of students attain levels that are above the MoE curriculum standards. Students listen to instructions and other texts in standard Arabic and respond accordingly. They can identify familiar and unfamiliar vocabulary in sentences and read fluently. Students' progress in most lessons is good as they show steady progress in listening and reading comprehension. Their progress in writing is slower.
- In Arabic as an additional language, students' high results on internal exams are not reflected in their work in lessons and their work samples. According to the latter, the attainment of most students is in line with curriculum standards. Students' speaking skills remain acceptable because they can only respond to questions with short answers. Most students are able to read a range of sentences. They make acceptable progress in listening and reading. However, their progress in writing and speaking is slower due to lack of opportunities to develop these skills.
- In English, almost all students work at levels that are below the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). Lessons focus on discrete skills such as vocabulary but students do not connect these skills to wider understanding. Internal exams are not consistently aligned to the rigor and pacing of CCSS and the results of these are not analyzed. External assessment results such as the MAP demonstrate that students' attainment and progress are below international benchmarks, and that the large minority of students have not met their projected growth targets.
- Internal assessment data in mathematics indicate that attainment is well above curriculum standards for most students but this is not supported by the external MAP data. Evidence from lesson observations and students' work indicates that, for most students, attainment is acceptable and in line with curriculum standards. Attainment is not better because students are not challenged to extend their skills beyond the textbook requirements. Students make acceptable progress in developing their understanding of linear measure, geometric shapes, algebraic thinking and multiplication. Their progress over time is variable.
- Students' attainment and progress in science are acceptable. Students demonstrate the adequate understanding of scientific concepts such as waves and fossils but do not develop appropriate scientific skills such as making predictions. Their progress is often hindered by teachers' excessive talk or inability to manage students' behavior. Their most recent MAP data point to acceptable levels of attainment and progress.

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

- In Islamic education, most students attain levels that are in line with curriculum expectations. Students' knowledge and understanding of Fiqh, Islamic morals, and Islamic values are acceptable. Students' recitation and memorization skills are developing. Most students make acceptable progress in their knowledge, understanding and skills in relation to the learning objectives in lessons. The majority of students show skills in real life applications that are below expectations. Non-Arab students make better progress than Arab students.
- In Arabic as a first language, most students attain levels that are in line with the curriculum standards. Their internal examination results reflect better attainment than the attainment evident in lessons and in workbooks. Most students are developing age-appropriate listening and reading skills. However, students have difficulty in speaking fluently and interpreting poetry. Most students make the expected progress in lessons in relation to the learning objectives. Students' progress is not rapid in their speaking and writing skills due to teachers' low expectations and lack of opportunities to develop these skills.
- In Arabic as an additional language, most students attain levels that are in line with curriculum expectations. Most students can recognize familiar words, memorize them and use them in classroom conversations. Reading comprehension skills for most students are developing. Listening for understanding is within expectations but writing skills, for most students, are below expectations. In lessons and in their most recent work, most students show that they make the expected progress. However, their speaking and writing skills are underdeveloped.
- MAP results show that the level of attainment for most students in English is below the international standards, and that more than half of the students have not met their expected growth targets between fall and winter. Because lessons rarely include content-rich texts, students' progress and attainment in reading are limited. Students are rarely required to take notes or demonstrate their learning through writing. The majority of lessons focus on discussion and content is mainly delivered using lecture. Students demonstrate weak listening and speaking skills.
- In mathematics, the attainment of a majority of students, as measured by internal school examinations, is good but at variance with the weak attainment shown in the MAP data. Evidence from lesson observations and students' work indicates that attainment and progress are acceptable and closely in line with curriculum expectations. Students' skills in using ratios and fractions develop appropriately but not in solving real life mathematical problems.

- Students demonstrate appropriate understanding of scientific concepts such as body organs and systems. Although their external MAP data do not support acceptable levels of attainment and progress, students can demonstrate these levels in lessons and in their written work. This is also supported by their internal assessment data. The progress students make in lessons is only acceptable because they do not get sufficiently challenging tasks to enable them to make better progress.

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



- In Islamic education, most students attain levels that are in line with curriculum expectations. Most students demonstrate appropriate levels of understanding of Qur'anic verses. A minority of them apply their skills to their personal lives and make strong connections to real-life situations. Most students make acceptable progress in acquiring knowledge and skills in relation to the learning objectives in lessons. Non-Arab students make better progress than Arab students.
- In Arabic as a first language, most students attain levels that are in line with curriculum expectations. Most students, especially girls, use standard Arabic correctly. Although most students lack confidence in using the language, a few of them are good presenters. Most can respond to basic texts, both verbally and in writing, with few grammatical mistakes. In Grade 11, most students can recognize metaphors in poetry. All groups of students make adequate progress in lessons and over time.
- In Arabic as an additional language, the majority of students show a limited understanding of unfamiliar words. The speaking skills of most students are just adequate as they often make errors in pronouncing letters. Their reading skills are acceptable since they can only understand short familiar texts. Most students make the expected progress in developing their listening, speaking, reading and writing skills as evident in lessons.
- In English, the external MAP results show that students' attainment and progress are below the expected CCSS. Although lessons require students to participate in discussions, many do not have the listening or speaking skills needed to understand and build arguments or to support claims with textual evidence. They do not engage with extended texts or writing assignments and most student-to-student discussions take place in Arabic.
- Although students' MAP results show weak attainment in mathematics, the school's internal data reveal better attainment levels. Evidence from lessons and students' work indicates that students' attainment and progress are consistently acceptable across the phase. Students expand their mathematical skills to include an understanding of calculus and statistical analysis. Their progress is not better than acceptable because the planned work does not match their needs well.

- Students show knowledge and understanding of scientific concepts that are in line with curriculum expectations. Although their internal assessment data point to weak attainment, they demonstrate better levels of attainment in class and in their written work. Their progress in lessons is acceptable and often slowed by their teachers' ineffective teaching methods that do not enable them to deepen their understanding of concepts. Students tend to solve problems using mathematical equations to come up with correct answers but without having a firm understanding of the underpinning concepts.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Learning skills	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

- Students' engagement in lessons is variable across the school. In the better lessons, students are keen to learn and contribute positively. Most students can work independently and take responsibility for their learning but become passive learners when the lesson is teacher directed. In the elementary school, students lack motivation, especially in English lessons.
- Students work well in groups but do not always collaborate in ways that develop their deeper understanding of topics. Their skills in working together and in producing decent quality work are developing. In the KG, children consistently help each other in their groups and explain their learning to one another at the end of each lesson.
- In lessons, students can connect their learning to their experiences outside the school when prompted. This is mostly evident in mathematics where students apply their learning to real-world situations. In the other subjects, most students demonstrate success when repeating content but are not skilled in applying their knowledge in new contexts.
- Students, especially in the high school, can use investigative skills to broaden their understanding of concepts. The use of technology is a feature in some classrooms, but this is not consistently used to promote students' independent learning and critical thinking skills. Students tend to rely on their teachers to direct them during activities rather than use their own skills to complete the work.

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

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Personal development	Good 	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable 

- Most students show positive attitudes towards learning especially when it is interesting and stimulating. When they are not given the opportunity to be independent and involved in challenging tasks, their interest fades away. Students can assess their learning and identify where they need more practice.
- Children in the KG behave well, show awareness of the needs of others and respond quickly to adults. In the other phases of the school, students' behavior is more variable. In a large minority of classes, students are not respectful to their teachers and do not have a serious attitude towards their work.

- Students mostly respond positively to teachers and other staff. However, a minority of them in each phase show a lack of respect to adults. Older students are not always attentive to the needs of the younger ones especially at break time.
- Students have a sound understanding of healthy lifestyles. The girls in particular make sensible healthy eating choices, while the boys are more conscious of the importance of regular exercise.
- Attendance is acceptable overall but is better for the older students than for the KG children. Punctuality in arriving to school is an area of concern because a significant number of students arrive after the official start of the school day. These students show no sense of urgency in reaching their classes.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Good	Good	Good	Good

- Students demonstrate a clear understanding of Islamic values and the importance of Islam in the modern society of Dubai. They also respect and appreciate Islamic traditions. They can discuss some Islamic values such as cooperation and modesty. They understand the relevance of these values and their impact on everyday life in the UAE.
- Students exhibit positive attitudes towards the heritage and local traditions of the UAE and can describe some of the main traditional sporting activities in Dubai. They can speak in detail about famous buildings in the UAE. They confidently share their understanding of cultural activities and celebrations such as the National Day and the Flag Day.
- Students have a clear appreciation of their own culture and a variety of other cultures from around the world. They respect their peers of other nationalities, languages and religions. Although they are familiar with some cultures of other countries, many of them do not know enough about other world cultures, particularly in the lower grades.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable ↓

- Students have little involvement in the local community but this is an area that is improving, for example with a recent visit to a local children's hospital. Within the school, many students show limited awareness of the needs of others especially in the corridors and on the busy staircases. The role of the Student Council is evolving slowly.
- Most students understand that working hard is a key to their future academic success. They enjoy taking part in creative projects such as the science and mathematics fairs but do not routinely take the lead in initiating enterprising ventures. They enthusiastically support charities, and the National Day provides them with valuable entrepreneurial experience in managing their own booths.
- The Green Week provides students a good opportunity to consider many aspects of environmental responsibility. However, they show a casual disregard for the school's environment especially at break times when litter is abandoned around the school. The school effectively promotes recycling and conservation of energy among children in the KG.

3. Teaching and assessment

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

- Most teachers have good subject knowledge but miss opportunities to make their lessons interesting and engaging for students. In English, for example, tasks are often focused on vocabulary acquisition or improving grammatical construction, and they lack the flare to inspire students to develop their writing and comprehension skills. By contrast, in the KG, work themes are interesting and linked well across different areas of learning.
- Lessons mostly follow a common planning format and closely reflect the requirements of the curriculum, especially in mathematics and science. The use of resources, especially ICT, is variable and is better for older students who get more opportunities to carry out research and explore their learning independently. The more mature learning environment for older students also facilitates some discussion and sharing of ideas.
- Teachers' questioning to explore students' understanding and to promote discussions and critical thinking is developing. In the high school, teachers use appropriate questioning in some subjects to expand students' learning opportunities and to encourage them to think widely around topics. This is less evident in the other phases where formal knowledge-based teaching limits thoughtful exchanges between students and teachers.
- In the KG, teachers encourage children to show independence and build their own understanding of concepts through exploration. In the other phases, teachers frequently direct work to the whole class with little adaptation for the different groups. In the best lessons, teachers' careful planning of tasks provides challenge for the most able students and effective support for those who find learning more difficult.
- In the successful lessons in the high school, especially in science and mathematics, teachers have begun to promote students' advanced learning skills. Problem-solving opportunities, critical thinking and real-life comparisons are used effectively to broaden students' learning experiences. Such exciting opportunities are less common in the other phases where lessons are more routine and students' interest and excitement in learning are limited.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Assessment	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

- The school's internal assessments are aligned with the curriculum standards in all the subjects except in English. The rigor of those assessments gives the school an adequately clear idea about its students' academic achievement. In the KG, internal assessment processes are consistent and directly linked to the California and the Common Core Curriculum Standards. These provide reliable data about children's achievement.
- The school benchmarks its students' outcomes using external assessments including MAP and IBT. This allows it to draw an increasingly valid picture of its students' academic achievement through comparisons at the international level.

- The monitoring of students' academic progress is of adequate quality but is not part of an overall systematic process. This does not enable the school to know its students well enough to provide them with learning opportunities that meet their needs or match their ability levels. Monitoring of progress is better in the KG than in the rest of the school.
- The school uses the assessment information available to make some modifications to the teaching and only few modifications to the curriculum. The school has not evaluated the impact of these modifications on student outcomes. In the KG, teachers may possibly note that a learning objective needs to be retaught but they provide no details on how this will be done.
- Teachers' knowledge of students' strengths and weaknesses is variable across the school and is of acceptable quality overall. In most lessons, the feedback students receive is not sufficiently effective to enable them to make good progress. The quality of the written feedback from teachers varies but is better in the elementary school than in the middle and the high schools. In the KG, most teachers know their children well and plan specific activities for them based on their interests and needs.

4. Curriculum

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

- The curriculum is generally broad and aligned to the CCSS and the California State Standards. While the curriculum in the KG is well balanced, the curriculum in the rest of the school does not address the full breadth and depth of the standards and is more focused on knowledge than skills in most subjects.
- The curriculum is planned and sequenced to build on students' learning in most phases. A scheme of work is designed to meet the needs of most students. However, some areas of the curriculum lack adequate progression to establish the rigor required by CCSS and Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). In the KG, learning is integrated and sequenced to build student learning.
- Students have some access to curricular choices but course offerings in the high school limit students' pathways to learning. High school students follow one track of integrated mathematics and science with various elective courses. Although some students have expressed interest in taking Advanced Placement (AP) courses, these are not offered in any subject.
- Cross-curricular learning is rarely evident and students do not regularly transfer their knowledge and skills across the content areas. Lessons are not regularly planned to incorporate authentic and integrated learning. In some lessons, students employ mathematical skills to explore scientific concepts but most lessons do not require students to use overlapping skills. In the KG, learning is skillfully integrated and cross-curricular approaches are used throughout lessons.
- The school reviews the curriculum at the end of every school year but it is not clear how it develops the curriculum based on this annual review. There is little evidence that school leaders ensure an ongoing review of the curriculum. In the KG, regular reviews of the curriculum ensure modifications to meet the needs of all children.

- The school follows the UAE social studies curriculum and members of the department use the curriculum standards and the MoE textbooks to create unit and lesson plans that cover the course of the year. The head of the department oversees administering internal assessments and analyzing the resulting data to adjust the curriculum and teaching. Most teaching strategies are based on the MoE textbooks and deliver adequate provision for students. Students discuss significant historical events, connect UAE history to contemporary life in Dubai, and do basic writing exercises to reflect on past and present events in the UAE.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Curriculum adaptation	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable


- Teachers have received some training on curriculum modifications in their subject areas but very few adjustments to the curriculum are made in lessons to meet the learning needs of individual students. The SEND staff provide pull-out instructional support adapted to the needs of students with SEND. They also advise teachers on Individual Learning Plans (ILPs) and Individual Educational Plans (IEPs) when needed.
- The school has provided an adequate schedule of program enhancement offerings, instructional support and field trips for students across all grade levels. Students have engaged in creative ventures in different subjects and throughout the school but have not engaged in truly innovative projects in or beyond the classroom context.
- Students are exposed to Emirati culture and the UAE society in social studies, Islamic education, and Arabic lessons in addition to world history classes in the high school. They learn about the UAE community in the past, the present, and the future through working on projects, reading local literature, participating in school and community activities, and listening to guest speakers.

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

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

- The school has a child protection policy in place. Students, parents and staff are aware of this. The school understands the need of cyber safety and has IT systems to protect the school's network and computers but there are no comprehensive procedures to raise students' awareness of the potential dangers of the Internet.
- The school has procedures in place to ensure students are safe on campus and school transport. Students, however, have access to areas in the school that are potentially unsafe such as some storage rooms in the outdoor area. The school meets regulatory and legal requirements including emergency evacuation drills.

- The maintenance coordinator position is vacant which has a negative impact on the school's record keeping. Records on health and safety are, therefore, not up to date and risk assessment procedures are not in place. The nurses keep medical records in electronic format on every student and frequently updates them.
- The school premises and equipment are kept in functional state. The school does not have an elevator to give students with physical disability full access to the upper floors. Some of the classrooms are too small and the corridors contain too much furniture, which can be potentially hazardous in case of emergency.
- The school clinics play a basic role in promoting healthy life styles across the school through frequent seminars. However, this is not done through an overarching plan and detailed records of what has been achieved are not kept. The canteen provides both healthy and unhealthy food items which undermines the school's efforts to promote healthy living.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Care and support	Good 	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

- Students' behavior is good in the KG but is often chaotic and disruptive in the hallways and the classrooms in the upper grades. The school does not have a full discipline policy that contains guidelines and consequences to promote good student behavior throughout the school.
- The school has adequate systems to manage attendance and punctuality. Although the overall attendance has been good over the year, attendance during the inspection was weak. Many students and staff arrive late to classrooms, and some parents report that they are not called about their children's absences.
- Students with SEND are identified at admission to the school. Enrolled students are provided with wave one intervention and wave two ILP support, before moving them to wave three IEP support as students with SEND. Students identified with SEND are three percent of the total student population. High-performing students with gifts and talents are identified through testing while low-performing students are not identified.
- Students with SEND receive instructional support through pull-outs as indicated in their IEPs. Very few teachers provide modifications in instruction for students with SEND within the classroom, although most of them have copies of the IEPs. Instructional enrichment for students with gifts and talents is not provided.
- Staff who do not hold the proper credentials in school counseling provide students with guidance across the school. They organize career fairs that expose students to colleges and universities across the UAE. They also provide students in Grades 11 and 12 with assistance in meeting testing requirements and in applying to colleges within the UAE and abroad.

Inclusion

Provision and outcomes for students with SEND

Acceptable

- The school has hired a highly-qualified head of SEND department who is knowledgeable and is building a strong program of support for students with SEND. She is committed to improving the school's capacity to meet the instructional and emotional needs of students with SEND.
- Students are identified as in need of SEND services at entry to the school when possible. Enrolled students are provided with wave one intervention, wave two ILPs by classroom teachers, and wave three IEPs by the SEND staff when additional support and intervention are needed.
- Parents of students with SEND have expressed their appreciation of the frequent communication between them and the SEND staff. The staff is proactive and informs parents of anticipated changes and updates. Parents are building their knowledge of SEND to cope with the learning needs of their children.
- Instructional planning by classroom teachers to meet the specific learning needs of students with SEND is not always evident in the lessons. The SEND staff are available to provide guidance and training to classroom teachers on modifying lessons but the classroom teachers are not always responsive to that support. Students with SEND are provided with individual and small group instruction as indicated in their IEPs.
- Many students with SEND make gains as expected at their grade level despite their learning difficulties and behavior. Some of them are not challenged at their individual level because they work at a level that is far below that of other students in their classroom.

6. Leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership

Acceptable

- In the absence of a principal, the vice principal leads the senior leadership team. She has worked well with her team to sustain the school's performance at an adequate level. School leaders are committed to achieving their set UAE National Agenda targets and have shown some success in this regard. They fall short, however, in their efforts to improve the school's inclusivity.
- The senior leadership team has several newly promoted and appointed members. The majority of the school leaders possess appropriate knowledge of effective practices in curriculum design and delivery and assessment. However, they demonstrate varying levels of understanding of how to comply fully with the requirements of the adopted curriculum. They have put plans in place for developing provision and for improving students' outcomes.

- Relationships and communication among school leaders and staff are informal and lack effectiveness. Though the school has developed plenty of policies and procedures, implementation of these is not effective due to poor communication and lack of monitoring and feedback. Staff, parents and students show mixed feelings of apprehension caused by the uncertainty of this transitional period, and excitement about future development.
- The majority of school leaders demonstrate appropriate capacity and will to improve the school. However, the absence of a principal, the weak governance and the lack of accountability are impeding such improvement efforts. The leaders' varying understanding of good practice in teaching, learning and assessment presents an opportunity for them to learn from one another and a challenge for them to improve the school at a better pace.
- The school leadership team has managed to sustain the good provision and outcomes in the KG and an acceptable level of performance in most aspects of education in the other phases. However, the school has declined this year in areas such as English, students' behavior, health and safety, and some areas of leadership and management.

School self-evaluation and improvement planning

Weak ↓

- The self-evaluation processes have reflected the school's weak knowledge of its strengths and weaknesses. The self-evaluation document is characterized by many discrepancies between stated judgments and supporting evidence. The school's unrealistic views of its own performance and its students' outcomes are shown in the significant lack of alignment between its own evaluation of a majority of indicators and the findings of the inspection and accreditation teams.
- The school leadership team monitors teachers' performance and the quality of students' learning. However, the variations in the leaders' understanding of good practice and effective monitoring have led to an inaccurate self-evaluation of performance and have hindered improvement in most subjects. The appraisal system applied in the school is appropriate but is not implemented effectively to have an impact on improving teaching and learning.
- Developmental plans are adequately tied to previous recommendations and contain goals and procedures. However, actions for implementing these plans are not practical and success criteria are not clear. The plans are not annotated or reviewed to monitor progress. As a result, the school has shown slow progress and some decline in students' achievements and other aspects of school performance.
- The school has not been able to improve any of its aspects. There has been some decline in the achievement of students in English and their social responsibility in the upper phases of the school. The quality of health and safety provision has dropped from good to acceptable, and several aspects of leadership and management have declined, particularly self-evaluation and improvement planning and governance.

Partnerships with parents and the community

Acceptable ↓

- The level of involvement of parents in the learning of their children has regressed over time. Although parents attend to teacher-parent conference meetings to discuss their children's attainment and progress, these meetings have not been conducive to improvements in students' outcomes.
- The school uses several means, such as letters, SMS, and coffee mornings to communicate with parents about various aspects of the school's life. Although leaders are positive about the effectiveness of such communications, some parents have expressed lack of satisfaction with their knowledge of the school's performance and the leaders' response to their concerns.
- Reporting on students' progress is regular but not frequent enough. Report cards include attainment scores at different points in time, letter grades, and MAP results that inform parents about their children's progress in the subjects. Teachers' comments vary in quality, and some contain constructive feedback. The KG progress report cards are more comprehensive and descriptive of children's performance.
- The school's partnerships with local, national and international entities are limited. The impact of these partnerships on students' learning or on their personal and social development is not clear. The school does not do enough to encourage students to become active members of the local and wider community.

Governance

Weak ↓

- The governing board's representation, roles and responsibilities are not clear to all the stakeholders. Although the School Management Committee has reviewed existing policies, systems and leadership performance, its focus has not been on aspects of education that are related to the quality of provision and outcomes. Stakeholders do not influence decision making in the school and are not well informed about the challenges facing it.
- The lack of a clear governance structure and policy, and the weakness of the role of governance in developing the school and holding the school leadership team to account have created an atmosphere of uncertainty and mistrust among the stakeholders. This has led to disruption in the functioning of the school leadership and in vacancies in key leadership positions at a critical point in the school's journey.
- The inefficient reaction of the governing board to fill in the significant vacancies in the school leadership and the current lack of clarity of responsibility has led to a decline in the quality of certain aspects of the school's performance, such as teaching. The impact of the governance on meeting the school's curriculum requirements and on keeping its promise to stakeholders is minimal.

Management, staffing, facilities and resources




Acceptable ↓

- The school has satisfactory routines and procedures to support students' overall daily educational experiences. The schedule allows the school to make an efficient use of time, space and the resources needed for adequate student learning.
- Most staff are qualified with subject or phase expertise appropriate to their deployment. Professional development is ongoing for all staff, including training that is based on areas of need. However, because of the substantial number of new teachers, there is inconsistency in the quality of teaching across the school. In addition, teachers' English language skills sometimes impede students' progress in certain subject areas.
- The school premises are of satisfactory quality. Learning areas are sufficient to meet the academic and social needs of all students. However, the classrooms in the upper grades are crowded, which limits the opportunities for students to participate in group work. Instructional technology is available in all classrooms but its use to promote student learning is limited.
- The school is equipped with sufficient resources to meet the learning needs of all students. In the KG, there is a wide range of hands-on and discovery materials that support children's sense of curiosity and unique way of learning. In the other phases, textbooks, practical materials and technology adequately aid in the delivery of the curriculum.

The views of parents, teachers and senior students

The views of parents, teachers and senior students

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

Responses to the surveys		
Responses received	Number	
 Parents*	2016-2017	151
	2015-2016	75
 Teachers	87	
 Students	212	

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

- The parents who responded to the survey believe that their children develop a good awareness of the UAE and other cultures and a good understanding of Islamic values.
- Almost all parents who responded believe that their children are safe at school and that the academic reports and regular meetings keep them informed about their children's progress.
- Most teachers believe that the quality of the education in the school is high.
- The majority of students who responded to the survey say that they do things that make a difference at their school.
- A large minority of students who responded to the survey indicate that they are not listened to and are not given the opportunity to make decisions. They also feel that there is no teacher or adult within the school who really cares for them.

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