



National Agenda



Early years



Special educational
needs and disabilities



Innovation

Inspection Report 2015-2016

Al Ittihad Private School

Curriculum: US

Overall rating: Acceptable

Read more about the school



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



Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum

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School information

General information



Location	Al Mamzar
Type of school	Private
Opening year of school	1978
Website	www.ipsmamzar.com
Telephone	04-2966314
Address	PO Box 5126-Dubai
Principal	Mrs. Amna Mohamad Rafi
Language of instruction	English
Inspection dates	11 to 14 January 2016

Students



Gender of students	Boys and girls
Age range	4-18
Grades or year groups	Kindergarten 1 to Grade 12
Number of students on roll	1,811
Number of children in pre-kindergarten	70
Number of Emirati students	1,462
Number of students with SEND	27
Largest nationality group of students	Emirati

Teachers / Support staff



Number of teachers	124
Largest nationality group of teachers	Jordan
Number of teaching assistants	24
Teacher-student ratio	1:13
Number of guidance counsellors	1
Teacher turnover	23%

Curriculum



Educational permit / Licence	US
Main curriculum	US
External tests and examinations	IBT
Accreditation	NEASC
National Agenda benchmark tests	IBT

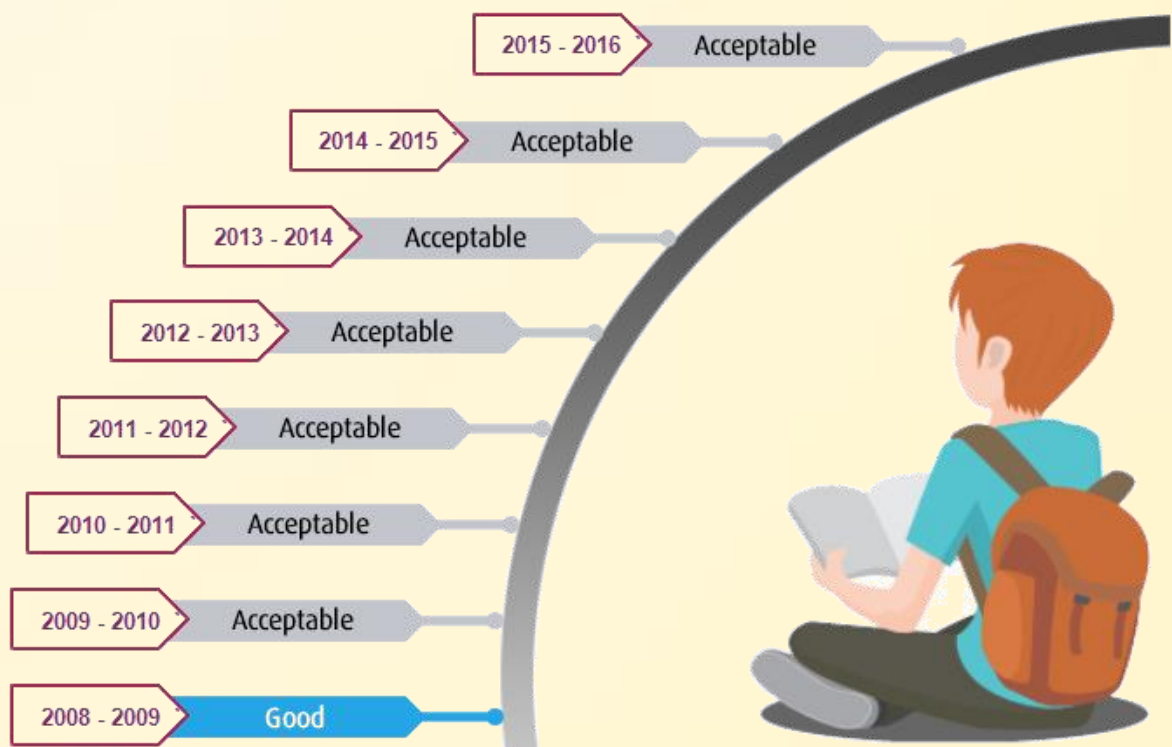


Summary for parents and the community

Al Ittihad Private School was inspected by DSIB from 11 to 14 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 Al Ittihad Private School provided an **acceptable** quality of education for its students.

- Attainment and progress were good in all subjects in kindergarten (KG) and high school, and in Islamic education and Arabic as an additional language throughout the school. Attainment and progress were mostly acceptable in the elementary and middle phases. Learning skills, independence and the ability to take responsibility for learning were good in the KG and high school phases, but acceptable elsewhere.
- Most students behaved well, attended regularly and showed care and concern for one another, especially in the high school where these features were often outstanding, particularly for girls. Throughout the school, students had an outstanding appreciation of Islamic values and demonstrated that understanding in their interactions with others. They had outstanding awareness of Emirati and different world cultures.
- In the KG and high school phases, teaching across subjects was good. In the middle and elementary phases, it was improving but remained acceptable overall. In the KG phase good systems of assessment were in place and were used well to meet the needs of different groups of children. This was not as strong elsewhere because new systems of assessing students' skills were not embedded.
- Curriculum design was of good quality in all phases. It was well adapted in KG phase to interest and motivate children. In other phases, curriculum adaptation was acceptable.
- Health and safety procedures and practices, including child protection, were outstanding across the school. In the KG phase, good care and support provided helped children to learn school expectations and enjoy learning.
- Leaders had taken action to address the recommendations from the previous inspection and this had improved some elements of the school's work. Many of the actions were only recent so impact was limited. School self-evaluation was acceptable but not based on accurate monitoring and assessment. Communication with parents was improving and facilitated a good partnership. Governance was acceptable. Management, staffing, facilities and resources were good.



What did the school do well?

- Attainment and progress in KG and high school phases were good in all subjects.
- Students' personal development was at least good. Their understanding of Islamic values and their awareness of Emirati and world cultures were outstanding.
- The emphasis within the curriculum on skills development led to effective cross-curricular learning.
- The highly effective work of the health and safety committee ensured the safety and well-being of all members of the school community.
- The academic committee had a secure understanding of best practices in teaching and learning.
- The school's work through the UNESCO committee was helping students to develop into global citizens.



What does the school need to do next?

- Improve the quality of teaching and students' attainment, particularly in the elementary and middle phases by:
 - further improving the effectiveness of teachers' questioning in regard to promoting critical thinking skills
 - ensuring that full account is taken of students' starting points during lessons so that all groups are appropriately challenged
 - providing more opportunities for students to take responsibility for their own learning, to develop their research skills and to relate their studies to real life.
- Improve the accuracy of self-evaluation and its use in identifying and removing barriers to improvement by:
 - increasing the depth of teachers' knowledge of the age-appropriate expectations stated in the school's curriculum standards
 - ensuring the accuracy of teachers' assessments against the school's curriculum standards
 - extending regular international benchmark testing.
- Improve modification of the curriculum for students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) by ensuring that teachers make better use of assessment data and their knowledge of students' learning needs to plan tasks that enable students to make good progress.



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

- The students' rate of progress was mostly acceptable but was inconsistent across the school. In classes where the SEND team was directly involved, there was a better rate of progress.
- Parents received oral feedback from the SEND team on their children's progress towards individual targets and were invited to a termly meeting in school. Whole-school reporting provided detailed information on attainment, but lacked specific comments which could support further learning.
- The school had produced individual education plans for students. They had not been developed with parents or issued to them. This reduced their effectiveness and the potential impact on students' progress.
- Parents' direct involvement with the SEND department was limited, as few opportunities had been arranged to provide them with additional advice and guidance. Members of the department provided oral feedback when required to update parents on their children's progress.
- Whole-school reporting provided parents with information on attainment but lacked specific comments to indicate next steps in learning.

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 did not meet the registration requirements of the National Agenda Parameter. No attainment data from the National Agenda Parameter was available at this stage to make a judgment on progress towards meeting the National Agenda targets.
- The school had promoted awareness of the National Agenda and National Agenda targets among the governing board and parents, but not a well-developed understanding. Students were not specifically aware of the National Agenda, although they were aware of international testing through international benchmark tests.
- The curriculum had been aligned to the TIMSS and PISA test requirements for content and skills in all grade levels. Planning was focused on students' progression and continuity in subject skills and knowledge which were relevant to the National Agenda. Some professional development and resources were provided to develop teachers' questioning skills and the promotion of critical thinking. Their impact was not yet consistent.
- Across the phases, teaching was variable in how well it promoted the development of students' critical thinking, reflection and independent learning skills. In English, mathematics and science, each subject had strong examples of practice in this area but overall, there was inconsistency.
- A majority of students used learning technologies and other resources to support the development of their research skills as aligned to National Agenda testing requirements. The use of computer stations was the norm in Grades 1 to 4. Older students shared tablet computers.

Innovation in education

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

Innovation is driven by a commitment to excellence and continuous improvement. It is based on curiosity, the willingness to take risks, to experiment and to test assumptions as well as questioning and challenging the status quo. Being innovative is about looking beyond what we currently do well, identifying the great ideas of tomorrow and putting them into practice.









Promoting a culture of innovation:

- The principal articulated a deep level of commitment to the UAE's vision for innovation. Partnerships with external agencies were being established to support staff with the delivery of the innovation agenda. Basic resources were available to support the initial introduction of design and technology and creativity. Recent alignment of the school's curriculum to Californian standards had resulted in some planned activities that promoted innovation skills.

Overall school performance

Acceptable

1. Students' achievement

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

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Learning skills	Good ↑	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good

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

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

3. Teaching and assessment

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

4. Curriculum

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Curriculum design and implementation	Good	Good	Good	Good
Curriculum adaptation	Good ↑	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	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Care and support	Good ↑	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	Good ↑	Good ↑
Mathematics	Good ↑	Good ↑
Science	Good ↑	Good ↑

- In English, the attainment of the majority of children was above curriculum expectations. Most children were confident in communicating orally with their classmates and with adults. They listened attentively to their teachers and to one another. They had acquired a good understanding of the sounds which letters make. Most could read age appropriate material and could spell simple three-letter words. Their writing skills were less well developed. Children's speaking and listening skills had improved and their overall attainment and progress had risen to good.
- The attainment of the majority of children in mathematics was above curriculum expectations. They were adept at using a variety of objects, to help in their addition and subtraction and to solve problems. An increased emphasis on practical activities and refinements to assessment had ensured that children's attainment remained strong. During lessons, children typically made good progress. For example, during one lesson, through measuring each other's height using hand spans, children quickly learned how to make comparisons and use accurate terminology.
- In science, the majority of children acquired knowledge and understanding that were above curriculum expectations. During lessons, children demonstrated a good knowledge of the characteristics of living and non-living things. They were beginning to acquire scientific skills, such as careful observation and making predictions. The majority of children were making good progress. They were developing the ability to sort items into different categories according to their characteristics. Progress in developing conceptual understanding was a little slower. There was no significant difference in the rate of progress of different groups, including the very few children with SEND. Occasionally, the most able children were not fully extending their knowledge, understanding and skills.

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

- In Islamic education, the majority of students attained levels that were above curriculum expectations. The majority could link their learning to real life examples. Students' development of their knowledge, understanding and skills in relation to the learning objectives in the lessons was good. They knew the five pillars of Islam and the prayer steps in detail. Recitation skills were adequate. The links between what they learned and the Qur'anic verses were limited. Progress of different groups of students, including those with SEND, over time and in lessons was inconsistent overall.
- The majority of students studying Arabic as a first language had strong listening and reading comprehension skills. Only a minority could write lengthy passages that were meaningful. The majority showed a good understanding of language styles and grammatical expressions that were above curriculum expectations. Most groups of students made acceptable progress in speaking and reading skills. They did not build sufficiently on their well-developed entry level skills during this phase.
- In Arabic as an additional language, listening and speaking skills were above the curriculum expectations for the majority of students. They were able to participate in long conversations using a large range of vocabulary and expressions. Reading and writing skills were also above expectations for the majority of students. Students learning Arabic as an additional language were included within the schools Arabic as a first language classes. This supported the good progress of most groups of students, both in lessons and over time.
- In English lessons, learning tasks enabled students to make acceptable progress in their listening, speaking, reading and writing skills. When working at activity workstations, students were able to practice their skills and demonstrated understanding which were in line with curriculum standards. Internal assessment data indicated that most groups of students were making expected progress from their starting points.
- The attainment of most students was in line with the curriculum standards for mathematics. In Grade 3, students were working on developing their skills of multiplication and division up to 100. There was no recent comparison with international data in this phase. Over time, most groups of students made acceptable progress.
- In science, the attainment of most students was in line with curriculum standards. Students demonstrated their understanding and knowledge of physical sciences through planning, predicting outcomes, conducting investigations and asking questions to verify their findings. They applied scientific ideas to design a structure and used tools and materials and build the structure. Most students were at the early stages of learning to analyze and interpret data. Most groups of students made acceptable progress overall.

Middle

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

- In Islamic education, the majority of students attained levels that were above national curriculum standards. They were able to link what they learned to real-life situations. Their knowledge and understanding of different types of prayer, Islamic etiquettes, morals and values were above expectations. Students' ability to use Qur'anic verses as a source and evidence in debates and discussion was weaker. Their recitation skills were starting to develop. The majority made good progress in their knowledge, understanding and skills in relation to the learning objectives in the lessons. Good progress in understanding Islamic morals and values was clearly evident.
- Listening skills were the strongest element of attainment for most students in Arabic as a first language, but their speaking skills were limited. Attainment was above national curriculum expectations. The majority of students used colloquial language rather than standard Arabic. Students had appropriate reading comprehension skills. However, their writing skills were underdeveloped in all classes in this phase. In lessons most students made acceptable progress in speaking and reading. Different groups of students made similar progress.
- In Arabic as an additional language, in the absence of external benchmarked measures, listening and speaking skills were above the general expectations for the majority of the students. Students could confidently conduct a conversation about a large range of topics. Their reading comprehension and writing skills were well developed. Studying in lessons alongside students for whom Arabic was a first language, most groups of students made acceptable progress. Progress over time was also good.
- Internal assessment data in English indicated that the attainment and progress of most students were acceptable. In lessons, most learning tasks focused on students practicing speaking and listening skills in order to work toward reading and writing objectives. Reading objectives were focused on common core standards such as identifying and analyzing characterization or cause and effect, which students were able to do at a variety of levels.
- In mathematics, the majority of students attained levels above the school's curriculum standards in lessons and over time. For example, in Grade 8, students were learning challenging concepts, including the use of equations. There was no recent data available to make comparisons with international data in this phase. The students' progress in relation to common core standards was good. Groups of students, including those with SEND, made progress in line with their classmates in lessons.
- In science, the attainment of most students was in line with California state science standards. In lessons, students could identify cause and effect relationships, which they tested and used to explain change. In lessons, most students made acceptable progress. This was an improvement from the previous year, when a large minority of students, especially girls, did not make expected progress.

High

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

- In Islamic education, the majority of students attained at levels that were above curriculum standards. Students had a strong knowledge and understanding of the Islamic principles, Seerah, Fiqh and the rules of marriage in Islam. Students' recent work demonstrated their good attainment. Their ability to use Hadith and Qur'anic verses to support their points of view were weaker. The majority of students made good progress in their knowledge, understanding and skills in relation to the learning objectives in the lessons. Their progress in understanding Fiqh and Islamic morals and values was rapid, while it was adequate in recitation. Progress of different groups of students, including students with SEND, was inconsistent. External assessments were not used for benchmarking.
- In Arabic as a first language, the majority of students had strong listening skills. Most could speak classical Arabic accurately and fluently. Senior students were more able to express their ideas at length. Students were able to read confidently and showed good comprehension skills. Creative writing was less well developed. The majority of students had developed a good understanding of literary texts and could analyze them well. Progress in lessons was good.
- In Arabic as an additional language the majority of students had good comprehension, listening and speaking skills. Most students could hold discussions about a broad range of topics. Their reading and writing skills were well developed. High expectations had a good impact on progress, which was good for the majority of students.
- In English, most students showed good levels of attainment against curriculum standards. They demonstrated a good understanding of complex texts and literary ideas. Students frequently gave high-quality media presentations in which they articulated their understanding and used skillful questions to elicit discussion. The progress of most groups of students exceeded expectations.
- In mathematics, the majority of students attained levels which exceeded the school's curriculum standards. In Grade 11, students were learning about permutations and combinations. In international mathematics tests, students' results were broadly in line with the international mean. They made good progress in relation to their starting points. Groups of students, such as those with SEND, made progress in line with others.
- The attainment and progress in science was above expectations for the majority of students. They demonstrated their understanding of meaning, formulae and factors that affected resistance well. All groups of students made good progress in developing the skills needed to analyze the nutrient content of food in a laboratory experience.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Learning skills	Good ↑	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good

- In the best lessons, learning was stronger when teachers enabled students to take more responsibility for their own learning. They were able to work independently and were confident learners. This was strongest in KG. Elsewhere, when working in groups the strongest student did most of the thinking, while other remained passive.
- Students' interactions, collaboration and communication skills were at an early stage of development in the elementary and middle phases. However, they were a strong feature in classes in the high school phase in most subjects, particularly in Islamic education and mathematics. In these subjects, students were developing strong skills in collaborating with fellow students and readily took on roles within groups.
- Links between subjects were routine features in the KG; children's learning was frequently integrated, for example in language development and science. Grade 12 students studying robotics made insightful comments about the application of control technology in activities such as re-cycling, warehouse storage and distribution. However, the extent to which students applied their learning to the world was variable. It was most evident in Islamic education.
- In some subjects, such as Islamic education, students were enterprising in their approaches. They could find things out for themselves and use technology to support their learning, although this was not routine in most subjects. Students' research skills were most secure in the high school. The use of textual evidence was typical practice in English. Boys in the middle school phase used technology effectively.

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

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Personal development	Good	Good	Good	Outstanding ●

- Students had positive and responsible attitudes, evident, for example, in their mature response to feedback from fellow students and teachers. Those in the high school demonstrated excellent self-reliance.
- Students behaved well. They followed the school's rules and exercised self-control. However, there were some exceptions in the middle phase, where some incidents of bullying took place.
- Relationships between students reflected how much they cared about each other. Students did not hesitate to give support to others, especially to those with SEND.
- Students had a good understanding of the benefits of a healthy life style. Many took part in sporting activities in and out of the school. They were aware of the importance of a healthy diet.
- Students were highly committed to attending school and arrived in class on time. Attendance had improved. It was at an outstanding level.

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

- Children and students across all phases had an outstanding appreciation of how Islamic values impacted on their life in Dubai and on their daily routines. In the middle and high school phases, students were able to demonstrate the positive influence that Islamic values had on their habits and relationships.
- Students across all phases had an exceptional awareness of Emirati heritage and culture. Students' understanding of the diversity of Dubai and the UAE and their appreciation of its impact on their future was exemplary. Students explained Emirati traditions with enthusiasm and understanding. They had a deep knowledge of the development of the UAE its national sports and its celebrations.
- Students were extremely proud of their own culture, heritage and traditions. They were highly respectful of others. They could clearly explain the main features of different cultures. They had actively participated in national and international projects and initiatives.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Good	Good	Good	Good





- Students were aware of their responsibilities in the school community. They were involved in many voluntary activities and charities. The support provided to 60 orphans in the wider community was beneficial to the students' development of social responsibility.
- Students had a positive work ethic and participated well in all aspects of school life. They took the initiative in many projects to develop their skills and creativity.
- The level of environmental action initiated by students reflected how much they cared about the environment and about preserving global resources. They took care of the school and its surroundings, although reminders from staff often instigated this. Students were active members in many exchange programmes, such as, UNESCO, sports competitions and acting as 'ambassador students' in Italy, Sweden and Spain.

3. Teaching and assessment

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

- In the most effective lessons, teachers were confident in their explanations, demonstrating good subject knowledge. In the high school, teachers' levels of expertise were generally used to ensure an appropriate level of challenge, for example, in the teaching of robotics. The understanding of how students learn was inconsistent. It was most secure in KG and the high school.

- Planning was inconsistent. In Islamic education, effective planning encouraged high levels of participation. Teachers allocated lesson time for feedback. The recently established practice of using stations to provide different activities had started to give students a wider range of options. However, in a significant minority of lessons, the approach was haphazard and ineffective. The strategy was not refined sharply enough to meet the needs of different groups.
- In the best lessons, teachers used questioning to draw out students' levels of knowledge and to prompt deeper understanding. However, some teachers simply asked questions requiring one-word answers and rarely went beyond this expectation. When teachers asked students to discuss responses in pairs or in small groups, the quality of students' thinking was greatly enhanced.
- The better teaching strategies increasingly challenged students with different abilities, aptitudes and levels of confidence. In many lessons teaching strategies required additional refinement to make them appropriate to meet the individual needs of different groups of students, such as those with and the most able.
- A few teachers regularly included critical thinking in their lessons. Others rarely did so and used basic, lower-order tasks and work that allowed the majority of students to opt out. However, in mathematics, where teachers skillfully asked questions, learning was more effective. Students working independently, for instance researching, was not a strong feature of many lessons.
- The quality of teaching in Arabic as a first language was acceptable overall, and strongest in the high school phase. In the best lessons, teachers knew their subject well. However teachers' knowledge of how to teach was variable. Teachers' planning had improved, but too many teachers did not use an adequate range of activities to meet the needs of different groups of students.
- In Arabic as an additional language, teachers had a thorough knowledge of their subject and were able to convey this confidently to students. The level of challenge for students of Arabic as an additional language was high. As a result, students gained confidence in their new learning and they made good progress.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Assessment	Good 	Acceptable 	Acceptable 	Acceptable 


- The school used a wide range of assessments, which were well aligned to the curriculum standards. Good systems provided teachers with a regular and accurate assessment of children's attainment and progress in KG. In other phases, teachers' assessments were not always accurate and occasionally demonstrated low expectations of what students needed to attain to reach the curriculum standard.
- The school had recently introduced International Benchmark Testing (IBT). The results were not yet available. Data from previous international tests such as TIMSS and PISA indicated that the attainment of students had been below UAE and international benchmark levels.
- Senior leaders carried out rigorous termly analyses of data. They used the results of this analysis to inform parents about their children's school performance. They also used the results to provide staff with an overview of attainment across each phase. However the analysis was not yet sufficiently developed to provide all within the school with an accurate view of each individual student's progress.
- Assessment information was not used consistently in all subjects or phases to plan lessons that ensured that the learning needs of all groups of students were met. In a significant minority of lessons, teachers gave all students the same task irrespective of their prior ability. This limited students' progress, especially the SEND students.

- Teachers, especially those in the KG, had a reasonable, and in some classes good, knowledge of children's strengths and weaknesses. The use of questioning to check students understanding in order to provide challenge or support was an improving feature of lessons. The marking of students' work was variable in quality. Feedback was not used effectively to help students to improve.

4. Curriculum

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

- The curriculum had a clear rationale and followed requirements in line with the California common core standards. It was sufficiently balanced in breadth and depth to develop students' knowledge, understanding and skills at an appropriate level. Teachers and leaders planned lessons collaboratively to support progression.
- The curriculum was planned and sequenced to build on students' previous learning in all key subjects. It met the needs of most students. Strong content and planning by subject leaders and teachers had supported students well and prepared them for success in the next phase of their learning.
- Students had a range of curricular options, developed to enhance their talents and interests. During school hours and as extra-curricular activities, they had choices including music, art, robotics, and tae kwon do.
- Cross-curricular links were meaningful and authentic. Students could transfer their learning and apply knowledge between different subjects. Some learning projects required students to draw on knowledge and skills from various content areas. Literacy skills were reinforced throughout the curriculum.
- The school regularly reviewed its curriculum to ensure that provision met the academic and personal development of most students. Teachers and subject leaders used additional effective support to meet the diverse needs of the student population.
- The social studies curriculum had significant gaps in content causing discontinuity. In KG, social studies was embedded in Arabic lessons. In elementary and middle phases, the curriculum was based on MoE standards. The MoE text book was the main source of the syllabus. There were some links to other subjects to enrich the curriculum. The social studies curriculum was taught in Arabic.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Curriculum adaptation	Good 	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable


- In the most successful lessons, especially in the KG, curricular materials included modifications for diverse learners. However, most modifications were aimed at serving struggling learners. Teachers provided few extension activities or enrichment programs for gifted and talented students.
- Teachers used technological resources to engage and interest students, who had some opportunities to be innovative and carry out research. The majority of learning tasks were teacher-led. Technology was predominantly used to access and manipulate pre-made curriculum tasks.
- Lessons included the history of Dubai, Arabic language, and the government of the UAE. Teachers had established cross-curricular links between Islamic education and social studies. Topics in these classes included connections to learning about the environment. Links to Emirati culture and society were less commonly made in English, mathematics, and science.

- The school offered Arabic in the early years. The curriculum was designed internally by the school.

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

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


- The school had robust child protection procedures in place. The child protection committee ensured that the policy was updated and communicated through training to all stakeholders of the school. Regular events such as assemblies were used to raise students' awareness of their rights and to ensure that they knew how and where to seek help.
- The school's highly effective health and safety committee, which had representation from across the school, ensured that the school environment was maintained to a very high standard. It had an appropriate range of policies and procedures to check regularly the safety of the facilities and students.
- Rigorous systems were in place to monitor the condition of the facilities through the year and plan for future improvement. Record keeping was thorough, accurate and up-to-date. There was efficient monitoring of the contracts held for facility management.
- The school environment was pleasant and well maintained, and included well-shaded gardens and seating areas. It offered students a range of different facilities to support their learning, including sports activities.
- The school arranged a variety of events to support safety and to raise awareness of how students could achieve a healthy lifestyle. Specialist speakers, including the school doctor, successfully promoted health education to students and their parents.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Care and support	Good 	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

- The relationship between teachers and students was productive and respectful. The school had developed appropriate strategies to manage student behaviour. In KG, children were well aware of the high expectations for behaviour. School wide visual displays reinforced these values.
- The school was successful in promoting regular attendance and punctuality to class.
- The school was committed to being fully inclusive. It had started to develop systems to identify students' learning needs. They were not yet sufficiently developed or rigorous to ensure that all students' needs were identified.
- The school provided a range of support strategies delivered by specialist teachers. The quality of this provision was inconsistent across the different age groups. In addition, teachers' planning was at times not sufficiently effective at meeting the needs of all students in their class, including those with SEND.
- Students' academic and personal development was regularly reviewed and, where necessary, additional support was given by teachers and medical staff. In the high school phase, students were offered extensive careers advice, which enabled them to make informed choices about their future careers.

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 SEND policy outlined a range of systems to provide teachers with relevant information on which to base planning of provision and appropriate curriculum modifications. The student data held was not always of a sufficiently high quality for teachers, or the SEND team, to plan provision accurately or meet individual learning needs appropriately.
- The use of specialist screening procedures to identify students' learning needs was not yet fully developed. An inconsistent approach prevented a more rapid response to students' access to appropriate interventions and slowed progress as a result. When students with an existing diagnosis joined the school, learning support provision was organized more promptly and enabled students to access learning quickly and make better progress.
- Parents' direct involvement with the SEND department was limited. Few whole-school opportunities had been arranged to provide parents with additional advice and guidance. Members of the SEND department did however provide oral feedback when required to update parents on their children's progress.
- Curriculum modifications were of an inconsistent quality across the school, particularly for older students and for those who were not receiving additional support in class. As a result, some students were not actively engaged in their learning, particularly in the boys' section of the high school phase. This resulted in lower than expected progress.
- There was insufficient use of assessment data to inform planning and future learning. Targets in students' IEP's were not always measurable or linked to a required rate of progress. Systems to track and monitor student progress were underdeveloped.

6. Leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership

Acceptable

- The director general supported by others had developed a clear vision to guide the school's development. Leaders had set a realistic pace of change to achieve the planned aims, and teachers valued this. They were aware of the UAE and Emirate priorities and had begun to take action to meet national targets.
- Senior and middle leaders had a secure understanding of what constitutes effective teaching and learning. Dissemination of their knowledge to staff was limited. Knowledge of the Californian state curriculum linked to the US Common Core standards was not secure enough to ensure effective moderation of teachers' assessments against curriculum standards. As a result, leaders had an over-generous view of students' achievement.
- Leadership roles were effectively distributed. Teachers worked well in teams. Clear, detailed job descriptions ensured that staff understood their responsibilities and were held to account for school improvement. Regular meetings between all leaders ensured effective communication.

- Leaders were aware of the further improvements needed in their areas of responsibility. The actions taken had begun to bring about improvement, for example in attainment and progress of children in the KG. Innovative projects such as in the use of technology were bringing about improvements in some classes. These were not consistent enough to improve all levels of attainment.
- Leaders had already successfully improved a number of important areas of the school's work, for example, in the development of students' critical thinking skills. These improvements were not consistent in all lessons. In some, they were too recent to be impacting fully on students' attainment.

School self-evaluation and improvement planning

Acceptable

- The school had recently participated in IBT to provide a better awareness of how well the school performed compared with others in the UAE and internationally. Results of these tests were not available at the time of the inspection. Data from a range of assessment practices was analysed. Inaccuracies in teachers' assessments and in understanding of KHDA benchmarks limited the effective use of data.
- Improved arrangements to monitor teaching and learning had been introduced. The advice given in the monitoring process was detailed and was consistently followed by leaders. However, greater attention was required to the levels of teachers' performance. Greater evaluation of the impact of teaching on students' learning was required.
- School improvement plans were rigorously focused on addressing the recommendations made in the previous inspection report. Plans included measurable success criteria. They were more often linked to completion of actions rather than to aspirational targets for student attainment and progress.
- The school had made acceptable progress in addressing most of the recommendations from the previous report. Training to improve teachers' questioning skills, to challenge students and to make them think critically, were developing well in a number of classes, but remained inconsistent across subjects and phases.

Partnerships with parents and the community

Good




- The school was actively seeking the views of parents and in improving opportunities for parents to be involved in their children's learning. Through the use of surveys, the views of parents were sought and considered when shaping school improvement priorities.
- The school was continually improving the means by which it communicated with parents. Parents confirmed their satisfaction with the improvements that had taken place. Parents of students with SEND were not always fully included in the setting of targets in IEPs.
- Regular reports provided parents with details of students' attainment against curriculum standards. They helped parents to understand their children's strengths and in which subjects they needed to improve. Additional comments made by teachers were variable in quality and effectiveness. They did not always explain clearly what students needed to do next to make good progress.
- The work of the UNESCO committee ensured that the school made regular effective contributions to the local, national and international communities. Partnerships with other schools through competitions, for example, had had a positive impact on students' academic and personal development.

Governance	Acceptable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The governing board consisted of representatives of the school's owners, but there was no direct representation of parents or other stakeholders. Steps had been taken to provide all stakeholders with a direct means of communication with the board, but had not yet become fully functional. Through communication with the director general, the board periodically monitored the school's actions. The board was aware of the school's performance. It shared the school's vision and determination to improve students' achievement and to maintain strong systems to ensure effective personal development. The governing board had provided the school with improved technology resources, and had supported the formation of a new academic committee in order to increase leadership capacity. These changes had not yet been in place long enough to show significant impact on the overall quality of school performance. 	

Management, staffing, facilities and resources	Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effective procedures were in place to make sure that the school operated well on a day-to-day basis. Staff understood their roles. Staff and pupils were well inducted into school routines. Most teachers were well qualified in their subjects, but few had a specific teaching qualification. Staff benefited from regular professional development which was matched carefully to the school priorities. Training was delivered to different phases at a sensible pace to bring about change. Its impact had begun to be evident in lessons, but not consistently across all lessons or subjects. Buildings were well maintained. Outside areas were adequate for the number of students. There was restricted access to upper floors and other raised areas for physically disabled students. Resources were adequate. Technology resources had been improved and were beginning to have a good impact on students' learning, especially in English lessons. There were well-stocked libraries in all sections. 	

The views of the parents, teachers and students

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

Responses to the surveys		
Responses received	Number	
Parents* 	2015-2016	141
	2014-2015	147
Teachers 	107	
Students 	239	

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

- Almost all parents who responded to the survey agreed that the school kept their children safe and provided them with a good quality of education.
- Almost all agreed that their children make good progress in Islamic education, English and mathematics; most agreed that progress was good in Arabic as a first language and in science.
- Almost two thirds of parents did not know what progress their children were making in Arabic as an additional language.
- Most parents agreed that the school listened to and acted on, their views, and that they were kept well informed about how well their children were doing.
- Most parents, teachers and students agreed that the school was well led.

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