




International Academic
School

 Curriculum: US

Overall Rating:

Weak



"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 Warqaa
Type of school	Private
Opening year of school	2006
Website	www.iasdubai.com
Telephone	00971-4-2800993
Address	DUBAI -AL WARQAA 1P.O. BOX 262
Principal	None
Language of instruction	English
Inspection dates	13 to 16 March 2017

Teachers / Support staff	
Number of teachers	102
Largest nationality group of teachers	Egyptian
Number of teaching assistants	21
Teacher-student ratio	1:12
Number of guidance counsellors	3
Teacher turnover	31%

Students	
Gender of students	Boys and girls
Age range	3-18
Grades or year groups	KG1-Grade 12
Number of students on roll	1189
Number of children in pre-kindergarten	0
Number of Emirati students	472
Number of students with SEND	26
Largest nationality group of students	Arab

Curriculum	
Educational permit / Licence	US
Main curriculum	US
External tests and examinations	MAP, IBT, CAT4
Accreditation	NA
National Agenda benchmark tests	MAP, IBT, CAT4



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.

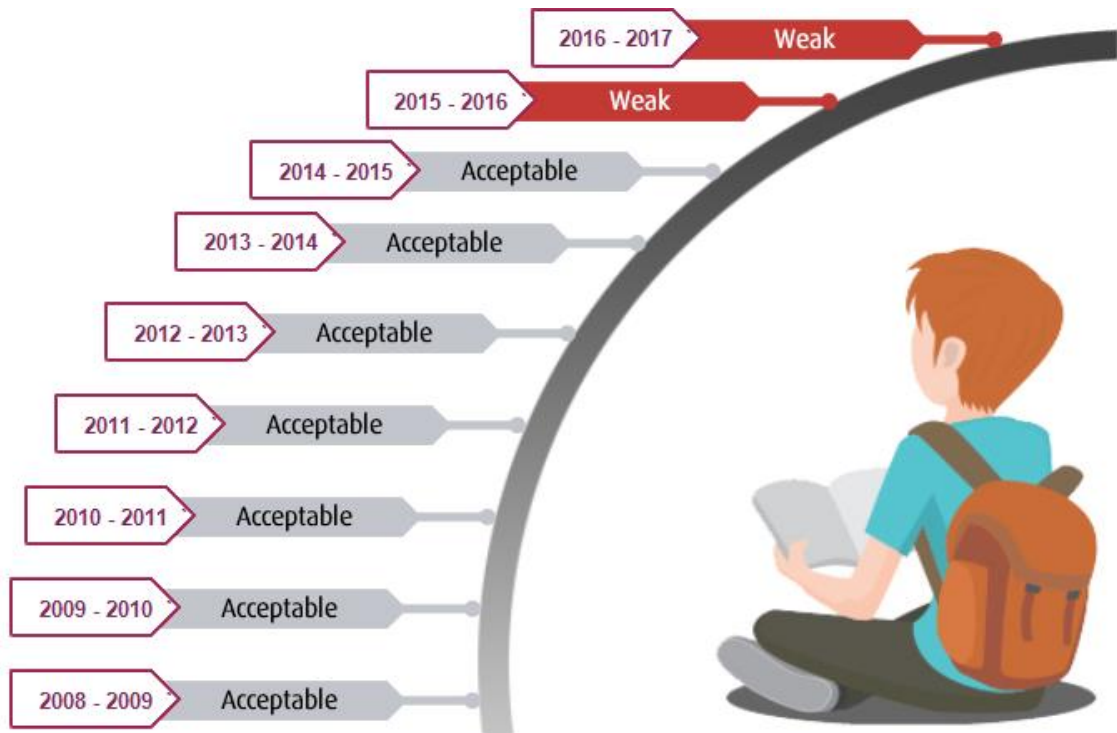
Inspection judgements are drawn from evidence gathered by the inspection team, including observation of students' learning in lessons, review of their work, discussions with students, meetings with the staff, parents and governors, and review of surveys completed by parents, teachers and students.

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 International Academic School



- The school opened in 2006. There are currently 1189 students attending the school of whom around 40 per cent are Emiratis. The vast majority of students, teachers and leaders are speakers of Arabic as a first language. There is no principal in post and the school is currently led by a consultant to the board of governors. He is supported by two new vice-principals. The school is licensed to offer a US curriculum but has as yet not met the requirement to obtain accreditation from a US organization.
- Recurring strengths in recent years have been attainment in mathematics in the high school, students' positive attitudes and behavior, the caring ethos and the productive partnership with parents.
- Recommendations in recent years have identified the need for improvement in: self-evaluation using external benchmarks, the quality of teaching, students' progress, including the progress of the children in the Kindergarten, and students' learning skills. Gaps in the teaching staff and its high turnover were also an issue. Concerns remain about the vacant post of the principal and the need to meet the KHDA requirements of all schools offering a US curriculum by the end of this academic year.

Summary of inspection findings 2016-2017



International Academic School was inspected by DSIB from 13 to 16 March 2017 . The overall quality of education provided by the school is **weak**. The section below summarises the inspection findings for each of the six performance indicators described in the framework.

- Students' attainment is weak in English in the KG, in mathematics and science in the elementary phase, and in science in the middle phase. Attainment is acceptable elsewhere. Students' progress is weak in science in the elementary phase while it is acceptable in other subjects and phases. Students' progress is good in Arabic as a first language and in mathematics in the high school. Students' development of learning skills is weak in the elementary phase but acceptable in other phases.
- Students' personal and social development are variable across the school. Relative to their age, children in KG and high school students demonstrate stronger awareness of Islamic values and Emirati culture, and their behavior is generally good in those two phases. Students' environmental awareness and community involvement are acceptable overall.
- The quality of teaching is acceptable across the school with notable good practice in each phase, especially in the high school. However, there are a number of weak features particularly in the elementary phase. Teachers' do not apply their developing knowledge of the curriculum standards in their teaching, which has a negative impact on students' learning. Assessment practices are weak except in the high school.
- The quality of the curriculum is acceptable in all phases with some improvements over the last year in the KG. It is adequately balanced and meets the Ministry of Education (MOE) requirements for Islamic education and Arabic. There are insufficient extra-curricular opportunities and the choice of subjects in the high school is restricted. There is limited emphasis on the development of skills. The school's adaptation of the curriculum to meet the varying needs of students is weak.
- Arrangements for health and safety are acceptable and most students say they feel safe at school. Support for students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) is improving but the quality of support provided for all students in the classroom, in most subjects, is poor and therefore the needs of many students are not successfully met.
- Leadership, self-evaluation and governance are weak. The new leadership team has had reasonable success in addressing a number of issues and have put in place systems and processes to ensure the smooth operation of the school. However, the implementation of many of these is negatively affected by the absence of a suitably qualified principal and curriculum leaders. Relationships with parents are appropriate and resources are adequate. However, many teachers lack the necessary experience and qualifications to teach the school's curriculum.

What the school does best

- Students make good progress in Arabic as a first language and in mathematics in the high school.
- Students' personal development, and their understanding of Islamic values in the KG and high school are good.
- The school operates smoothly and efficiently on a day-to-day basis.

Recommendations

- The governing board must, as a matter of urgency, take the necessary steps towards:
 - appointing a competent and qualified principal
 - strengthening the teaching staff by providing strong, experienced leadership in US curriculum and assessment
 - ensuring the school meets all the statutory requirements for US schools in Dubai.
- The senior leadership team must further develop teachers' understanding of the curriculum standards and how to implement them effectively in the classroom to meet the varying needs of all students in all subjects.
- The school must ensure that teachers consistently provide challenging, well-planned learning opportunities that focus on the development of skills in all subjects, particularly in English, mathematics and science.
- The school must ensure that its self-evaluation is based on reliable assessment information and that improvement plans have clear, measurable targets that focus on key school priorities.
- The school must provide more effective guidance and support for all students in order to improve their personal development and accelerate their progress in all subjects, particularly in English, mathematics and science.

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 the school's targets:

- The school does not fully meet the registration requirements for the National Agenda Parameter.
- Attainment on the National Agenda Parameter tests is below expectations for Arabic, English, mathematics and science.
- The school has started to review the data from MAP winter 2017 and CAT4 September 2016. The analysis and evaluation of this data is not yet complete and, as a consequence, is not yet fully linked to the school's National Agenda action plan. The initial review is providing senior leaders with some information about the strengths and weaknesses of groups of students. This information is not being used and has not yet been shared with the teachers or the students.
- The school has made some changes to the written curriculum that now broadly aligns to the requirements of TIMSS by including reference to critical thinking and problem solving in the key subjects. The curriculum now has a greater emphasis on literacy and reading in line with expectations for PISA 2018. The curriculum has been aligned to the State of California Common Core Standards but there are no external assessments completed by the students in relation to these standards.
- The curriculum identifies that teaching strategies should include a range of activities and problem-solving to promote students' critical thinking. Questioning, both verbal and written, remains predominantly knowledge recall but some teachers are beginning to use questions that require students to explain or justify their answers. Teachers do not regularly support the development of student understanding through the use of questions that may have a variety of possible answers or strategies that require students to evaluate multiple observations. There is little use of independent inquiry to enable students to become more responsible for their own learning.
- The students remain teacher-directed in their learning. Their research and inquiry skills are very limited, in part, due to the very restricted use of technology by students during the school day. The students, when given the opportunity to research or inquire, still require support to determine the extent of the information needed and how best to analyze and evaluate their findings. They are more confident in presenting the findings of their, albeit limited, inquiries.

Overall, the school's improvement towards achieving its National Agenda targets is not secure.

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 school has taken a few steps towards introducing innovation in the school curriculum. A small team plans and provides a number of regular opportunities in dedicated lessons, mainly for older students to develop some thinking skills. However, the school has not defined innovation clearly enough and so staff and students do not fully understand how to achieve it. There are insufficient opportunities in regular lessons to develop independence, problem solving, inquiry and higher order thinking skills. The school's actions to promote a culture of innovation across the school is at a very early stage of development.


Overall school performance

Weak




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	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
	Progress	Not applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good
Arabic as an additional language 	Attainment	Not applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
	Progress	Not applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
English 	Attainment	Weak	Acceptable ↑	Acceptable	Acceptable
	Progress	Acceptable ↑	Acceptable ↑	Acceptable	Acceptable
Mathematics 	Attainment	Acceptable ↑	Weak	Acceptable	Good
	Progress	Acceptable ↑	Acceptable ↑	Acceptable	Good
Science 	Attainment	Acceptable ↑	Weak	Weak ↓	Acceptable
	Progress	Acceptable ↑	Weak	Acceptable	Acceptable
		KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Learning skills		Acceptable ↑	Weak	Acceptable	Acceptable


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

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

3. Teaching and assessment

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Teaching for effective learning	Acceptable 	Acceptable 	Acceptable	Acceptable
Assessment	Weak	Weak	Weak 	Acceptable

4. Curriculum

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Curriculum design and implementation	Acceptable 	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Curriculum adaptation	Weak	Weak	Weak	Weak

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	Weak	Weak	Weak	Weak







6. Leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership	Weak
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	Weak	Acceptable 
Mathematics	Acceptable 	Acceptable 
Science	Acceptable 	Acceptable 

- Most children make the expected progress from their starting points in English, although less than three quarters of them attain levels that are in line with the curriculum standards. In lessons, children demonstrate acceptable levels of speaking and understanding. A few can talk confidently and enthusiastically about their work. Most children are still developing the ability to read simple words. A few read fluently and understand what they have read. Progress in writing is slower with only a minority of children developing the ability to write a short sentence.
- In mathematics, most children make the expected progress and reach levels that are in line with curriculum expectations. They have a secure grasp of the concept of number and can count to 20 using one-to-one correspondence. They can add two single digit numbers, sometimes using objects and pictorial representation. They have a basic understanding of length and measurement. A majority of children can identify 2D shapes and some can describe their properties in terms of the number of sides. The ability to talk about, and apply their learning to real-life situations is underdeveloped.
- In science, most children, measured against their starting points, make the expected progress and reach levels that are in line with the curriculum standards in terms of knowledge. Most children know that plants and animals are living things. They know about different types of weather. They are developing a secure understanding of the states of matter and a few are beginning to use the skills of observation and prediction. However, for most children, the scientific skills of inquiry and investigation are underdeveloped.

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

- In Islamic education, most students attain levels that are in line with the Ministry of Education curriculum expectations. They have a secure knowledge and understanding of Hadeeth and Seerah. Their recent work confirms that they have an adequate understanding of the Pillars of Islam and their recitation skills are developing. They make steady progress in understanding Islamic etiquettes and values. However, progress in linking what they learn to real life is limited. Different groups of students make variable progress.
- In Arabic as a first Language, most students achieve levels that are in line with curriculum expectations. However, in external assessments, students' achieve below the expected levels. In lessons, younger students show adequate levels in reading and responding. In the middle and upper grades, most students make appropriate progress in understanding poetry. Their oral expression is clear although sometimes influenced by colloquial language. Students make slow progress in the development of independent writing to express their own ideas
- In Arabic as an additional language, most students make the expected progress and attain levels in line with curriculum standards. They listen to, understand and respond to familiar instructions and answer basic questions. They know an adequate range of vocabulary, for example colors and shapes. They can read aloud very short, familiar sentences appropriately. However, only a minority can participate in simple conversations. Writing skills for many students are limited to copying. Progress in writing is generally stronger in the lower grades.
- In English, most students attain levels in line with curriculum expectations. This is reflected in lessons and their written work. They make steady progress against individual starting points, although MAP test results do not reflect this. Students' development of spoken language is secure and writing skills are developing to an acceptable level for an additional language learner population.
- In mathematics, attainment is weak with less than three quarters of the students working at the required level as defined by the Common Core Standards and as indicated by their performance in MAP tests. Most students make the expected progress against learning objectives in their lessons but lack the ability to solve problems. Internal assessment results do not reflect students' low levels of attainment.
- In science, internal assessments show that a large majority of the students are above the curriculum standards. However, when measured against international standards, students' attainment is found to be significantly lower. Most students are beginning to develop basic investigation skills through simple activities. Students' application of the scientific method is limited. The progress of all groups of students is similarly weak. Attainment trends over time, against internal data, have been consistent but when compared to international benchmarks the trend is downwards.

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

- Students' knowledge and understanding of the Pillars of Faith, Islamic principles and etiquettes are adequate. Most students have a sound knowledge and understanding of the Islamic morals and values such as tolerance in Islam and its impact on the society. Their progress in developing their understanding of Hadeeth and Seerah is steady. However, their understanding of the verses of the Holy Qur'an is limited.
- Students of Arabic as a first language attain levels in line with curriculum expectations in most language skills. The development of listening and reading skills is significantly stronger than speaking. A minority of the students can write summaries of age-appropriate texts. By the end of the phase, most students show adequate understanding of grammar but they make limited progress in using it in their extended writing. External test results show the majority to be working at a low level.
- In Arabic as an additional language, most students attain levels that are in line with the expected levels. They steadily improve their listening and comprehension skills. They read and comprehend age-appropriate passages and can conduct a few conversations on a narrow range of familiar topics. The majority are able to write a few phrases independently to respond to familiar questions. Internal assessment data is not robust and does not accurately reflect students' achievement in relation to international expectations.
- In English, most students are progressing at acceptable rates in relation to their starting points and the curriculum standards. In lessons and in their most recent written work and portfolios, attainment and progress of most students are broadly in line with expectations for additional language learners. However, external assessments reflect poor student performance. Students' listening and speaking skills are developing adequately while reading skills are less secure. Progress in writing is limited.
- Students' attainment in mathematics, as measured against the Common Core Standards, is acceptable overall and make the expected progress from their starting points. Data from external tests indicates that student performance is weak, but this is not a reflection of what is happening in the classroom. In lessons, both attainment and progress, against the stated learning objectives, are acceptable and over time students understand, and can apply, key mathematical skills.
- In science, internal assessment data show that a large majority of students are at or above the curriculum standards. When measured against international benchmarks, student attainment is much lower. Based on the school's internal assessments, a large majority make expected or better progress. However, this is not fully supported by external benchmarks. Many students have limited skills in inquiry and investigation, and their application of the scientific method remains underdeveloped. Their knowledge recall is age-appropriate but their ability to express their understanding of scientific concepts, and to apply that knowledge in real-life contexts, is limited.

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

- In Islamic education, most students have an acceptable level of knowledge and understanding of Islamic principles, Seerah, Hadeeth and of Islamic laws, for example, about marriage. They also have an adequate understanding of Islamic morals and values. Although their skills in the recitation of Qur'anic verses are underdeveloped. Their understanding of the meaning of the verses is in line with expectations. Progress for different groups of students is variable. Progress for students with additional educational needs is slow.
- The majority of students of Arabic as a first language make better than expected progress and most demonstrate linguistic skills that are in line with the Ministry of Education curriculum expectations. Students, in particular older girls, can critically analyse familiar examples of Arabic literature including poetry and prose. While the school's internal assessments suggest that achievement is high for the majority, lesson observations and examination of students' work indicate that only listening, and to a lesser degree speaking skills, are well developed. A minority of students can compare and identify key features of unfamiliar texts. Students' skills in extended writing are not fully developed.
- In Arabic as an additional language, most students show adequate levels of listening comprehension skills. They know and can recognise a reasonable range of vocabulary. They can read appropriate, familiar passages without translation support. They can talk, for example about themselves, using simple sentences. Their writing is limited to familiar sentences and frequently has basic errors. Progress in developing listening skills is generally stronger. The school's internal assessment data is unreliable
- In English, most students, as observed in lessons, make the expected progress in relation to their starting points and reach the expected curriculum levels. However, students' achievement in MAP tests is below the expected level. In lessons, most students, particularly the girls, demonstrate the ability to document information in text. They write relatively cohesive paragraphs and explain the purpose and goals of their work, although with some errors. Internal assessments generally reflect inflated attainment and progress for most groups of students.
- In mathematics, a majority of the students make better than expected progress and reach levels that are above the Common Core Curriculum Standard. In lessons, the majority of students are building well on prior knowledge to develop the necessary skills in the five mathematical domains. They can apply their knowledge to the real world and both reason and solve problems. Attainment has been consistently acceptable over time.
- In science, most students, particularly in Grades 9 and 10, are reaching levels that are in line with the school's curriculum standards, although this is not reflected in external benchmark assessments. Most students are making the expected progress. The students in grades 11 and 12 who take elective science courses have higher levels of attainment and make better progress. Students in this phase steadily develop their practical skills using routine experiments but their skills remain under-developed in scientific investigation, inquiry and research.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Learning skills	Acceptable ↑	Weak	Acceptable	Acceptable

- Students have positive attitudes to learning and can work for short periods of time without teacher intervention. Student engagement is slightly better in the high school than in the other phases because they take some responsibility for their own learning. Overall, however, learning is frequently teacher directed and students rely too heavily on their teachers for prompting, guidance and assistance.
- Most students can work productively in groups although the quality of their interactions varies across the school and is least effective in the elementary phase. Collaboration during group work is sometimes limited and, on occasion, some students rely on their more able peers to complete group work. Students are usually able to communicate their learning to their peers adequately. Independent learning is a weak feature of students' learning across the school.
- Students are able to make some connections between areas of learning and relate these in simple ways to their understanding of the world. High school students are beginning to solve some problems, but opportunities for this are inconsistent across the school.
- Most students can do basic research with teachers' direction or with support from their more able peers. Many engage in, and benefit from, project work and use learning technologies in limited ways to support their learning. Across the school, critical thinking and problem solving skills are underdeveloped.

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

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Personal development	Good ↑	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good

- Most students across the school demonstrate responsible attitudes and a developing self-reliance. They respond well to critical feedback when they receive it. In the high school, students, particularly in the girls' section, show a more consistent, positive attitude to their learning.
- Students' behavior generally contributes to a safe and orderly learning community. This is evident in most lessons, particularly in the KG and high school, although there are a few exceptions to this positive picture in the elementary and middle phases. Most high school students demonstrate self-discipline and respond well to others.
- Students are aware of the needs and differences of others. As a result, relationships amongst students and with staff are usually respectful and cordial. This was especially evident in the maturity level of the high school students.
- Most students demonstrate a basic understanding of safe and healthy living. They occasionally participate in school activities that promote safe and healthy lifestyles, but do not consistently make appropriate choices about improving their health.
- Attendance and punctuality are generally good, although on occasion, students arrive late for school in the morning particularly in the lower grades of the school.

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

- Students have a strong understanding of Islamic values, such as tolerance and compassion, and the impact they have on their lives in Dubai and the UAE. Students, especially in the high school, have clear awareness of the links between Islam and Emirati culture.
- Students demonstrate a basic knowledge of, and show respect for the Emirati culture, heritage and traditions. This is stronger in the KG and high school. Students know about the history of the UAE and how the union journey started. In addition, they know the main events and celebrations in Dubai and the UAE.
- Students share their opinions proudly about their own cultures and traditions. Across all phases, they respectfully speak about the cultures within the school. They can talk to some extent about how diversity influences Dubai's present and future. However, students' understanding of wider world cultures is less well developed.

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

- Students are aware of their responsibility in the school. They are keen to be involved in the activities within the school community. They make donations to charitable organizations to help less fortunate people and take part in a few relevant events. However, they rarely take the initiative and create opportunities to volunteer and support the school or the local community.
- Students generally have a positive work ethic. They engage in project work in the school and some demonstrate their leadership skills when given the opportunity. However, due to limited opportunities, they rarely demonstrate a sufficiently high level of independence and decision-making. They are beginning to think about what it means to be innovative, but skills in enterprise and entrepreneurship are underdeveloped.
- Students have an acceptable level of environmental awareness and reflect this in their actions in and around the school environment. They participate in a number of cleaning projects organized by the school, for example in planting and recycling projects. They have a reasonable awareness of key environmental issues and their impact globally.

3. Teaching and assessment

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


- In the high school, teachers' knowledge of their subjects and how students learn best, is stronger than in the other phases. In the middle school, most teachers demonstrate secure subject knowledge but in elementary, particularly in science, a minority of teachers are insecure in their understanding of how students learn effectively through practical activities.
- Lesson plans generally have clear intentions but are not always implemented to facilitate successful learning. Many teachers have a developing understanding of the expectations of the school's curriculum. Lesson objectives are often clearly stated, but the planned activities do not always help students to develop their full range of learning skills. Time is generally managed well and resources are used appropriately, although in some elementary lessons a lack of resources hinders progress.
- Across the school, most teachers have positive interactions with the students and engage them in purposeful learning. The quality of questioning is variable across the phases. In the better lessons, questioning is open ended and challenges the students to think. However, this is not common practice in the majority of lessons where questioning focuses on the recall of factual information.
- Teachers use a variety of strategies that adequately meet the needs of most students. They provide activities, usually through worksheets, that are intended to meet the needs of students of all abilities. In too many cases, learning is too teacher directed. The expectations for many students, particularly those with SEND, are not always appropriate, and more able students are not sufficiently challenged.
- The opportunities for students to think critically and learn independently are limited. This is relatively stronger in the high school where students are more involved in the learning process. In some instances, when allowed, they direct the learning by giving presentations to other students in order to initiate discussions. Across the school, the opportunities for students to investigate, solve open-ended problems and use technology are rare.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Assessment	Weak	Weak	Weak ↓	Acceptable

- The school has a clear set of processes and assessment practices, Teachers carry out regular assessments of students' attainment in key subjects. The results of these assessments, which are loosely linked to the school's curriculum standards, are used to provide a measure of a student's attainment and progress. The resulting information does not always reflect students' true attainment levels in relation to international standards.
- Results from the recent MAP assessments in English, mathematics and science, and from the IBT assessment in Arabic, are used to compare students' performance to international standards. In addition, the results from the cognitive ability tests provide a potential student profile in Grades 4, 6, 8 and 10. However, the results of these are not used to improve the quality of internal assessments.
- The school completes limited analyses of available data from internal assessments to measure whole grade and individual student's progress, plus the performance of some groups of students. There has been no comparison with assessments from international benchmarks. Reliable internal assessment data are not available in most phases, although this is better in the KG.

- The school has recently used international assessment results to make some modifications to its curriculum to align it to the State of California Common Core standards and to modify the delivery of the curriculum, particularly in relation to National Agenda requirements. A few initial steps have been taken to make use of assessment data to modify teaching in terms of lesson planning and the strategies used. However, this is at a very early stage of development.
- Teachers have a limited awareness of their students' strengths and weaknesses. They rarely provide groups or individual students with focused challenge and support, although this is better in the elective high school classes. Students are beginning to complete some self- and peer- assessment but this is often limited in value because of the quality of the assessment rubrics. The practice of ongoing assessment to provide a cycle of constructive and effective feedback to students remains under-developed.

4. Curriculum

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

- The curriculum is generally broad and reasonably balanced. It follows the Common Core and California State Standards for most subjects, Next Generation for science, and MoE for Islamic education and Arabic. While the stated curriculum is relevant and prioritizes the development of skills such as critical thinking and problem solving, the primary focus in most lessons is on the acquisition of knowledge.
- The curriculum plan meets the needs of a large majority of students, preparing them for transition between phases. There has been some improvement in the KG recently. Elsewhere, the lack of formal review makes it difficult to ensure consistency in continuity and progression. This is particularly evident between the middle and high schools.
- High school students have a few curricular choices to meet their interests. Elective options include four science courses, business, accounting and history, a considerably narrow range compared to the Common Core expectations. Extra-curricular options are offered for KG to Grade 6 students with only a small minority of students participating. A few in-school, academically-oriented activities broaden students' experiences.
- Cross-curricular links are generally planned and integrated into many classes, both implicitly and explicitly. However, a greater degree of coherence across different curriculum areas is not always evident when plans are implemented in the classroom.
- Some department leaders conduct a review of the curriculum content in their areas, strengthening alignment with standards. However, there has been no comprehensive formal review of the curriculum to prepare students for international assessments. Integration of technology is not fully evident. Department leaders are beginning to work with teachers to incorporate open-ended questions that generate critical thinking and problem solving. This has yet to impact on teaching in the classroom.

- The social studies curriculum, incorporated in Grades 1- 9, is in the process of being developed. The current curriculum is information and activity-based so that students develop an initial level of knowledge and understanding at the elementary phase. In the middle phase and Grade 9, specific units related to the UAE are taught by teachers of English with social studies teaching experience. Cross-curricular links to science and geography provide deeper understanding. Appreciation and awareness of the UAE culture is also evident in students' projects, discussions and writing. Assessment takes the form of internal testing, classroom contributions, and presentations.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Curriculum adaptation	Weak	Weak	Weak	Weak

- Despite some professional development for planning and modifying instruction, only a few lessons are successfully adapted to meet the learning needs of all students. Most teachers do not incorporate modifications and accommodations in their instruction of students with SEND.
- There are weekly classes in innovation for Grades 10 - 12. Some cross-curricular projects in innovation are emerging in some classes across different grade levels and this is now added to the daily lesson plan format as a section in all subject areas. Student and teacher efforts are mainly creative rather than truly innovative.
- Students are exposed to Emirati culture and UAE society across all grade levels. As an example, students in the elementary phase are developing an understanding of UAE history and geography, and middle school students visit the Ministry of Education with their social studies class. The whole school focuses on large campus celebrations of local holidays and main events such as National Day.

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

- There are adequate formal procedures for the safeguarding of students, including a child protection policy, although there is no one individual responsible for ensuring it is effectively implemented. Training about the policy has not been extended to students or parents.
- The school meets the general requirements for maintaining the health and safety of students and staff with regular safety checks taking place. They provides effective supervision of students both within the school and on the buses.
- Generally, the buildings and equipment are maintained in sound repair. The school maintains secure record keeping including records of incidents and subsequent actions taken to reduce the risk of recurrence.
- The buildings and facilities provide a safe physical environment for most of the students. However, the premises do not enable easy access to all floors for people with mobility impairments.


- The school promotes safe and healthy living, for example through its Health Week. However, this is neither regular, nor consistent in its delivery and there are too few opportunities for participation in after-school activities to improve fitness levels.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Care and support	Weak	Weak	Weak	Weak

- Student relationships with staff are strong in most cases, but this is not the case throughout the school. Disruptive behavior occurs occasionally in hallways and in classrooms in the elementary and middle school grades when teachers are not present. The campus atmosphere is positive although the behavior management plan is not comprehensive in scope and lacks guidelines and consequences to promote and maintain good behavior throughout the school.
- Some improvement has been made to address the rate of tardiness. Students and parents sign a pledge to arrive on time every day and to attend all classes and activities. Parents are contacted immediately when students are absent or late.
- Very few students are identified as having SEND. They are identified at admittance to the school and by classroom teachers when they find learning difficult in the classroom. Some high-performing gifted and talented students are identified, while low-performing gifted and talented students are not recognized.
- Classroom teachers are inconsistent in providing support for students with SEND, although they sign the individual education plans and most have a copy to refer to in their classrooms. New SEND leadership is developing in-class teaching support for students with SEND. Some high-performing students occasionally participate in enrichment activities and competitions held at school and throughout the community.
- Students are provided with counseling support by several qualified counselors. Internship hours are a graduation requirement that provide students with experience in a variety of career settings within the community. A careers fair, and assistance in meeting the requirements of university applications within the UAE and abroad, are provided for high school students.

Inclusion

Provision and outcomes for students with SEND

Acceptable 

- The recently-appointed SEND leader is developing an effective programme of support for students with SEND. A SENCO with extensive experience has been appointed and both work together as a team, committed to improving the school's capacity to address and meet the learning and emotional needs of students with SEND.
- Students in need of SEND support and services are identified on entry to the school, when possible. Students are referred to the SEND staff when indicated by delayed progress or when they have difficulty engaging in classroom activities. A process of diagnostic assessment monitoring is followed and an individual education plan is written if additional support and intervention are necessary.

- Parents express their appreciation of the SEND staff and the support provided to address their children's emotional and learning needs. They especially value visiting their children's classroom and the campus whenever they have a concern or wish to talk with staff. The school has not provided workshops to increase parental knowledge of SEND and to help them to cope with any concerns they might have.
- The SEND and support teachers provide regular and effective teaching support in class as well as in one to one sessions. However, classroom teachers of all subjects and in all phases are inconsistent in their lesson planning and in providing modifications for students with SEND. Professional development is provided at a minimal level each year, but does not improve sufficiently their ability to meet the learning needs of each student with SEND.
- The progress made by students with SEND is variable, especially in whole-class lessons Those receiving one to one sessions make better progress because they are taught by qualified support teachers.

6. Leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership

Weak

- The school consultant is currently working in the capacity of a school director and is supported by two vice principals. First steps towards reviewing the vision and direction of the school have taken place. Essential systems and processes for the key school functions are in place. Most areas requiring improvement are appropriately identified and initial steps are taken to address them. However, the school still lacks the academic leadership of a principal, and insufficient action has been taken towards obtaining US school accreditation.
- A middle management tier is in place. Roles have been clearly identified and distributed amongst heads of sections and subjects, and leaders of different aspects of the school's work. Appropriate teams are now in place and working hard to implement action plans in order to meet the school's targets. However, some teams lack effective academic guidance and strong, experienced leadership.
- Relationships amongst staff, senior and middle leaders are professional and staff morale is improving steadily. A few staff members are resistant to change, and some new systems and processes are not clearly understood by them. Performance management systems are developing, but are not sufficiently linked to outcomes for students.
- In the absence of a principal, the current senior leadership team, led by the school consultant, has had some success in a number of areas, most noticeably with regard to the behavior of groups of students, and some aspects of attainment and progress. However, such improvements have not helped change the school's overall performance and the achievement of students, which has been declining in recent years.

School self-evaluation and improvement planning

Weak

- The systems for self-evaluation are underdeveloped and based largely on internal assessments with little or no account taken of external data. As a result, the school's view of its performance is very optimistic and not based on any valid or secure evidence.
- Leaders monitor the quality of teaching and give constructive feedback to teachers with some support to improve their effectiveness, through continuing professional development. However, insufficient attention is given to the impact teachers have on progress in lessons and over time in relation to curriculum and international standards.
- School development plans contain some appropriate actions in response to the previous inspection report, and have a positive impact on some aspects of the school's performance. However, there is no long-term strategy for improvement in a number of areas. Targets for improvement are not based on any secure evaluation of students' achievements and there are no clear and measurable success criteria.
- The current school leadership is having a positive impact in some areas, most noticeably in the KG and elementary phases. The school operations are running more smoothly than before and most gaps in the teaching staff have been filled.

Partnerships with parents and the community

Acceptable

- The school involves parents in some aspects of school life such as social events. A few parents also support learning, for example, by sharing books and stories in the KG.
- Communication with parents is regular and provides them with adequate information on school events and matters concerning their children. Senior and middle leaders are easily accessible to parents who wish to share their comments, concerns and suggestions.
- The school keeps parents informed of their children's achievements in internal assessments. However, this information lacks sufficient detail and is misleading. It does not refer to the development of skills, results in external assessments or targets for improvement.
- Links with the local community are limited. They provide a few opportunities to enrich the learning experiences for students and involve them in the world around them. For example, KG children visit the local park and theatre, and middle school students visit the Ministry of Education as part of their social studies programme.

Governance

Weak

- The structure of the school's governing body includes a wider representation of the school's community, including students. It increasingly seeks their views but has only a limited knowledge of the school's performance.
- There is limited awareness of the low achievement levels of the students and their performance in external assessments. The board has not held the school leadership to account in this respect for a considerable amount of time.
- Governors support the school in meeting its essential needs including providing necessary resources and filling in gaps in the teaching staff. However, it has not been successful in addressing the urgent need to strengthen the academic leadership of the school with a highly qualified principal and experienced US curriculum and assessment leaders. Nor has it effectively ensured the school is making tangible progress towards obtaining US school accreditation. Consequently, its impact on the school's performance is limited.

Management, staffing, facilities and resources




Acceptable

- Most aspects of the day-to-day management of the school are adequately organized with effective procedures and routines in place. Despite a large turnover of staff and senior leadership, the school manages to operate without major disruption.
- The school staff is adequate in number. The majority of staff have relevant qualifications in the subjects they teach and benefit from occasional, relevant professional development. However, many do not fulfil the KHDA requirements regarding the level of their linguistic competence. Nor do they have the relevant experience and understanding of the school's curriculum. To the extent possible, staff are deployed to support students' achievements.
- The premises are adequate and specialist facilities are available including limited facilities for technology. Most learning areas are of adequate quality although a couple of the classrooms are relatively small for the number of students occupying them. Access into, and within, the school premises is appropriate for most students, but not for students with disabilities.
- The number and quality of resources has increased in some areas, most noticeably in the KG. They are generally sufficient to support adequate teaching and learning, but the lack of technology resources restricts the needs 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	138
	2015-2016	53
 Teachers	68	
 Students	70	

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

- Most Parents that responded to the survey are positive about most aspects of the school's work and in particular their children's awareness of the UAE and Islamic values, reading for pleasure at home, understanding of their roles and responsibilities regarding the home school contract.
- A minority of parents have negative views on a number of issues. Their greatest concerns are about: the quality of teaching in some subjects, students' limited independent learning, limited skills in the use of technology, teachers' limited awareness of students' strengths and weaknesses.
- A minority of parents also have concerns about some students not getting along with each other, limited care and support for students, the narrow range of extra-curricular, the quality or lack of leadership in the school and about not being consulted.
- A few parents have written some additional comments expressing concerns about teachers acting as bullies, teacher turnover in some subjects, the lack of communication and leadership, poor hygiene, access for wheelchairs and the poor quality of language and accent of Arabic teachers.
- Teachers that responded are mostly positive about most aspects of the school's work.
- Teachers have a few concerns about the lack of resources including technology, students' behavior, insufficient attention given to health safety, the lack of trust between management and teachers, limited opportunities for extra-curricular activities and the quality of support for students with SEND.
- Students that responded commented positively on many aspects. However, they do have a number of concerns about the quality of provision for Arabic, the quality of teaching, the poor quality of healthy food, the lack of interesting activities and field trips.

- Students are also concerned that they are not being involved in decisions about class rules and activities, the limited range of technology and resources, not being listened to, teachers knowledge of their strengths and weaknesses, hygiene, behavior on the buses, the furniture being old, and the lack of sports facilities.

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