



Dubai Scholars Private
School

🇬🇧 Curriculum: UK

Overall Rating:

Good



"We are keen to prepare the new generation that is ready to be creative and innovative to help us achieve our ambitions for even greater prosperity"

Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al-Maktoum



Contents

School information.....	3
The DSIB inspection process.....	4
Summary of inspection findings 2016-2017.....	6
Main inspection report	12
1. Students' achievement.....	12
2. Students' personal and social development, and their innovation skills.....	16
3. Teaching and assessment	17
4. Curriculum	19
5. The protection, care, guidance and support of students.....	20
Inclusion	21
6. Leadership and management	22
The views of parents, teachers and senior students	25



School information



General information

Location	Al Qusais
Type of school	Private
Opening year of school	1994
Website	www.dubaischolars.com
Telephone	0097142988892
Address	P.O.Box 2819, Al Qusais Dubai
Principal	APARNA YASHPAL VERMA
Language of instruction	English
Inspection dates	7 to 10 November 2016

Teachers / Support staff

Number of teachers	110
Largest nationality group of teachers	Indian
Number of teaching assistants	21
Teacher-student ratio	1:15
Number of guidance counsellors	1
Teacher turnover	15%

Students

Gender of students	Boys and girls
Age range	3-18
Grades or year groups	FS 2-Year 13
Number of students on roll	1615
Number of children in pre-kindergarten	0
Number of Emirati students	0
Number of students with SEND	0
Largest nationality group of students	Indian

Curriculum

Educational permit / Licence	UK
Main curriculum	UK
External tests and examinations	IGCSE, Edexcel, AS and A level
Accreditation	None
National Agenda benchmark tests	IBT, GL, 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.

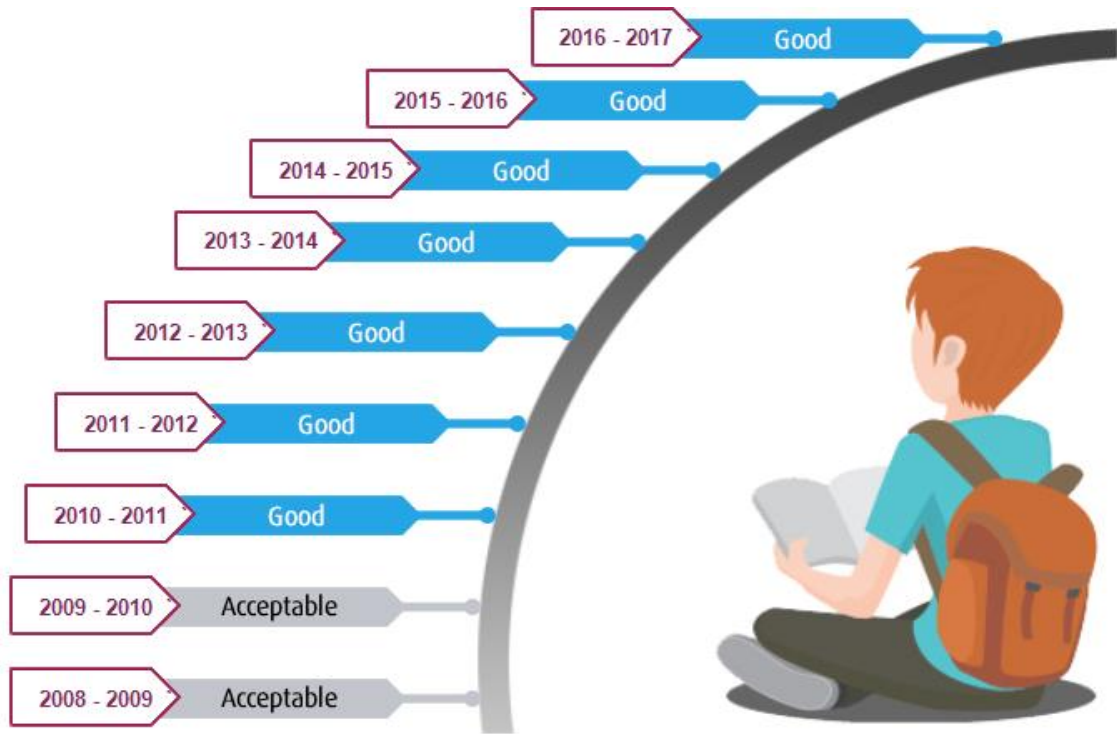
Inspection judgements are drawn from evidence gathered by the inspection team, including observation of students' learning in lessons, review of their work, discussions with students, meetings with the staff, parents and governors, and review of surveys completed by parents, teachers and students.

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 Dubai Scholars Private School



- Dubai Scholars Private School was founded in 1976. The principal joined in 1994 when the present building was opened. The school's theme is 'equity', as part of its 40-year celebrations. Two heads of department have been appointed within the last three years. Teacher turnover was 15 percent and teacher assistant numbers have increased to 21. Student numbers are remaining stable at 1615.
- Students' personal development was judged to be outstanding in recent school inspections. Their attainment and progress was good in English, mathematics and science in the secondary phase stage. Students, in the secondary and post-16 phases, showed recurring strengths in their understanding of Islamic values, awareness of Emirati and world cultures as well as in carrying out their social responsibility within the school.
- Recent inspection reports asked the school to continue to improve teaching and learning, particularly at the Foundation Stage (FS) and in the primary phase, to challenge more able and gifted and talented students, and to support students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) more effectively. The most recent report identified the need to provide a more stimulating learning environment, use assessment information more effectively and to promote consistently high student attainment.

Summary of inspection findings 2016-2017



Dubai Scholars Private School was inspected by DSIB from 7 to 10 November 2016. The overall quality of education provided by the school is **good**. The section below summarises the inspection findings for each of the six performance indicators described in the framework.

- Attainment in English, mathematics and science is acceptable in the Foundation Stage (FS). Progress at FS is good in English and science and is acceptable in mathematics. Attainment and progress in primary are good across all subjects. At the secondary phase, both attainment and progress are outstanding in English and are very good in mathematics and science. They are good in Islamic education and acceptable in Arabic as an additional language. Students' learning skills are good in FS, primary and secondary and very good at post-16.
- Students show outstanding behaviour, attitudes to learning and interaction with others. Children in FS have very good understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures. At Primary and FS, students and children's social skills and responsibilities are very good. They are outstanding at the secondary and post-16 phases. The school's developing innovation strategies enhance life-long learning skills.
- Teaching is consistently good. Most teachers construct lesson plans well and use assessment information to plan lessons. Assessment in FS is more effectively aligned to the curriculum to help teachers understand how to measure children's development and progress. However, across the school, teachers' ability to differentiate learning varies, resulting in students' needs not always being met.
- The curriculum is good overall. An annual review ensures that planning supports progression in students' knowledge and skills. Extra-curricular activities are enriching, providing additional breadth and balance to students' learning. The performing arts are integrated very successfully, significantly enhancing the quality of students' learning.
- Health and safety arrangements are good across the school. Staff ensure a safe and welcoming environment.
- Teachers' professional development is beginning to impact positively on the quality of teaching and learning. Staff morale is high. The principal is successfully extending leadership roles across the school, including enhancing students' responsibility. Governors are supportive of the school and relate well to staff, students and parents.

What the school does best

- The very positive action taken by the school to improve the learning environment, teaching approaches and assessment at FS and the continued high quality teaching in the post -16 phase in mathematics and science in post -16.
- The ability of students' in secondary to increasingly apply their literacy skills within the English subject curriculum and across other subjects.
- Students' outstanding personal and social development. This includes their full participation in the performing arts, which permeates the work of the school, promoting inclusiveness, creativity, critical thinking and a sense of achievement and social responsibility.
- The commitment of school leaders to the school's vision of developing tolerance and respect as a basis for academic achievement. This results in the enhanced roles and responsibilities of secondary and post-16 students, including their leadership roles in extra-curricular activities.

Recommendations

- School leaders should ensure that teachers in Years 1 and 2 make full use of recent training, and learning resources, to support students' independent learning and practical investigations.
- Ensure continued improvement in the quality of learning by:
 - school leaders making greater use of the enhanced assessment data being gathered to agree student academic improvement targets with their teachers
 - teachers being more rigorous in identifying the specific learning needs of students, including gifted and talented, the more able and those with SEND
 - teachers delivering lessons more consistently to meet the learning needs of all students and to sufficiently challenge and support different groups of students
 - reducing the repetitive, teacher led approaches, used in some classes across the school.
- School leaders and the board of governors should continue to develop strategic planning and monitoring to include more specific strategies and targets for improvement, to assist them in holding teachers accountable for students' attainment and progress

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:

- Students' attainment based on the National Agenda Parameter is in line with expectations in mathematics and science, and is above expectations in English.
- The school meets the registration requirements for the National Agenda Parameter.
- The school has shared findings from the recent round of IBT and GL international benchmark tests with parents. It has used GL results to provide individualised targets for students in English, mathematics and science. Staff have benefited from a range of training events to help them to interpret the results of the tests. The school's National Agenda Action Plan does not set out fully detailed strategies for raising attainment in international tests such as TIMSS or PISA.
- The school is working, with some success, to realign its curriculum in order to prepare students more effectively for TIMSS and PISA external tests. For example, in science there is a greater emphasis on interpreting data tables and graphs, and students have more opportunities to predict and investigate. Skills such as inference in reading and reasoning in mathematics are increasingly being emphasised.
- Staff have benefited from a range of professional development activities which were aimed at improving their ability to develop students' higher-order thinking skills. Internal assessments are being modified to include more critical thinking and problem solving. While there are some signs of improvement, the development of students' higher-order thinking skills is an ongoing priority area for development.
- Students are increasingly aware of their results on the National Agenda Parameter. At the appropriate years, students have individual targets based on their results in the GL tests. The school needs to continue to focus on supporting students to engage in meaningful, extended research and independent learning.

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

Innovation in Education

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









Promoting a culture of innovation:

- A student director leads an innovation club with its own constitution, vision, mission and strategy. Secondary and post-16 lessons encourage students' research skills and preparation for projects at home. However, teachers' use of critical thinking prompts to promote enquiry is inconsistent. The curriculum promotes many projects that foster a high degree of student leadership opportunities and innovative thinking. Students have developed a helpline to support them in overcoming social and personal issues. They make films to raise awareness of Islamic values, anti-bullying and other social issues, through initiatives such as 'CineMagic', a collaborative filmmaking project, produced by students which will culminate in an awards night.

Overall school performance

Good

1 Students' achievement

		Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Islamic education 	Attainment	Not applicable	Good	Good	Good
	Progress	Not applicable	Good	Good	Good
Arabic as a first language 	Attainment	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable
	Progress	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable
Arabic as an additional language 	Attainment	Not applicable	Good	Acceptable	Not applicable
	Progress	Not applicable	Good	Acceptable	Not applicable
English 	Attainment	Acceptable	Good	Outstanding	Not applicable
	Progress	Good	Good	Outstanding	Not applicable
Mathematics 	Attainment	Acceptable	Good	Very good	Good ↓
	Progress	Acceptable	Good	Very good	Very good
Science 	Attainment	Acceptable	Good	Very good	Good
	Progress	Good	Good	Very good	Very good

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Learning skills	Good	Good	Good	Very good

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

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Personal development	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Very good	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Very good	Very good	Outstanding	Outstanding


3. Teaching and assessment

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Teaching for effective learning	Good	Good	Good	Very good
Assessment	Good	Good	Good	Good

4. Curriculum

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Curriculum design and implementation	Good	Good	Good	Good
Curriculum adaptation	Good	Good	Good	Good

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

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding	Good 	Good	Good	Good
Care and support	Good	Good	Good	Good


6. Leadership and management

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

Main inspection report



1. Students' achievement

 Foundation Stage		
Subjects	Attainment	Progress
Islamic education	Not applicable	Not applicable
Arabic as a first language	Not applicable	Not applicable
Arabic as an additional language	Not applicable	Not applicable
English	Acceptable	Good
Mathematics	Acceptable	Acceptable
Science	Acceptable	Good

- In FS2, children's attainment is acceptable in English. They make good progress from their starting points. They listen attentively, ask questions to clarify their ideas and are developing their imagination. Their spoken comprehension skills are good. Children readily respond and engage in conversations. Their skills in reading and writing have developed in the short time they have been in school. Most can identify letter names and know word sounds. They can read simple words and write their names independently.
- Children's attainment and progress in mathematics are acceptable. They can count accurately and have an awareness of what numbers mean through their attempts at solving simple problems. They are developing shape and pattern recognition. Children are able to build a variety of structures using two and three-dimensional shapes. They show a developing understanding of these concepts. Their skills in the area of measurement are not developing as rapidly as other aspects.
- Children's attainment is acceptable in their understanding of the world from a scientific perspective. Their progress is good. They explore their learning environment independently, and they take opportunities to investigate and make discoveries, for example, through excavating for 'fossils and dinosaur bones'. They understand the differences between natural and manufactured objects, living and non-living things, but they do not have an in-depth awareness of the way in which these can change, particularly over time. They can explain what they have observed, offer suggestions and make predictions of why things happen.

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

- In Islamic education, the majority of students demonstrate knowledge and understanding of important Islamic figures, values and practices that are above curriculum expectations. They make better than expected progress in their class work. Students can explain steps and conditions for praying and the importance of Mecca in Islam. While their memorisation of the Holy Qur'an is in line with expectations, they make better progress in other aspects of their class work, such as learning new values related to Islam.
- In Arabic as an additional language, a majority of students make above age related expectations in their attainment and progress. They can recognise familiar words, memorise them and participate well in classroom conversations. Reading comprehension skills for most students are strong. Students listen well for understanding but writing skills are more variable. Students are making good progress in learning new words and in pronouncing them accurately.
- In English, students acquire good skills in reading and writing. Their spelling, punctuation and use of grammar are generally very accurate by the end of primary. Most students are very articulate. They read fluently, but comprehension skills are a little less secure. Many students develop a real flair for writing. Students' progress in the older primary classes is quicker than in Years 1 and 2, where students often struggle to grasp ideas and to develop early reading and writing skills. The school does not use externally validated assessments to evaluate English attainment in primary.
- A majority of students make better than expected progress in lessons and over time in mathematics, particularly from Year 3 to Year 6. Many students score high marks in the school's internal tests, but results in international benchmark tests are more variable, ranging from weak to very good at different year groups. Students' understanding of numbers and shapes develops well through the phase. Reasoning skills also develop well, but are less secure than students' knowledge and understanding.
- In science, pupils' attainment is above expected curriculum standards. External benchmarking confirms that a large majority of students are also above international standards. In lessons and in course books students show a good understanding of how to analyse scientific phenomena and relate it to personal experiences using technical vocabulary. They develop investigative skills through setting-up electrical circuits and critiquing their work. Students have inconsistent exposure to independent investigative work. They make good progress related to their starting points and curriculum expectations in this phase

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

- In Islamic education, the majority of students demonstrate knowledge, understanding and skills above curriculum expectations. Students know the reasons why the Prophet (PBUH) had to leave Mecca. Almost all students can recite the Holy Qur'an in Arabic using Tajweed rules. Their memorisation of the Holy Qur'an and Hadeeth is inconsistent. In lessons and in their most recent work, the majority of students are making better than expected progress in linking their knowledge to real life applications.
- In Arabic as an additional language, most students attain levels in line with curriculum standards. This is confirmed in reviews of their coursework. While students are able to speak clearly using a range of familiar words they often do not respond accurately to words that are unfamiliar. Most students are making expected progress in reading and speaking skills. Their writing skills are more variable. They write with care and use appropriate grammar and punctuation but only a minority extend their writing beyond familiar short sentences.
- Students' attainment in IGCSE English is outstanding. Although there was a dip in 2016, most current students in Years 10 and 11 are on track to achieve outstanding results. When measured against international standards, students' attainment in Years 7 and 8 is very good and in Years 9, 10 and 11 it is outstanding. Students are highly articulate and use increasingly sophisticated language as they move through the phase. They use their excellent debating skills frequently in different contexts. Students make rapid progress in using a wide range of vocabulary and literary devices in their writing.
- A large majority of students make better than expected progress in mathematics. Their skills in algebraic manipulation and calculation develop very well through the phase, particularly in Years 10 and Year 11. The school's internal tests show at least good attainment, and students' performance in international benchmark tests are also of good or better quality. Students have achieved outstanding results in IGCSE examinations over the last six years. They can successfully tackle problems involving extended mathematical reasoning.
- Overall attainment in science is very good. Students demonstrate above the expected skills for their age in carrying out scientific experiments and in their knowledge of the subject. They are able to evaluate and measure their work accurately. Scientific enquiry is more variable with students having insufficient opportunity to make independent investigation choices or to answer their own hypotheses. At the end of secondary, attainment in physics, biology and chemistry, as measured against IGCSE standards, is outstanding. These very high levels of scientific understanding are also confirmed by international benchmarking measures.

Post-16		
Subjects	Attainment	Progress
Islamic education	Good	Good
Arabic as a first language	Not applicable	Not applicable
Arabic as an additional language	Not applicable	Not applicable
English	Not applicable	Not applicable
Mathematics	Good ↓	Very good
Science	Good	Very good

- In Islamic education, a majority of students demonstrate knowledge, understanding and skills that are above curriculum expectations. They have a highly developed understanding of why drugs are forbidden and can make connections to their lives in the UAE. They can quote from the Hadeeth and the Holy Qur'an accurately and their recitation skills are well developed. In lessons and in their most recent work, the majority of students gain knowledge and skills in applications to real life situations that are above expectations.
- A relatively small number of students study A-level mathematics and take the examination over the course of one year rather than the normal two. Progress in lessons and over that shortened time is very good overall. The numbers of students gaining A* to B or A* to C awards has increased over the last few years, but, expressed as a proportion of students entered for the examination, success rates are more variable. A majority of students entered in 2016 achieved A* to B awards. Calculus skills are well developed.
- Overall, students make very good progress in their A Level science courses, which they complete in one year. Students' attainment is good overall. Their performance in physics is weaker than in biology or chemistry. Recent student attainment trends in biology and chemistry are at least very good, judged against A Level A*-B grades. The physics outcomes declined in 2016. Students are very skilled in applying formulae in their work. Their abilities to enhance their scientific enquiry to an extended range of scientific experiments are limited due to time constraints.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Learning skills	Good	Good	Good	Very good

- Students increasingly take responsibility for their learning as they move through the school. They run a range of pre-school clubs and each year group takes full responsibility for leading assemblies. In classes, most students know what they need to do to improve. Most work well independently and collaboratively, including carrying out practical experiments in science or completing increasingly complex research activities in English.
- Most students make appropriate connections in their learning. This includes linking their learning to real world applications through, for example, the lead taken by Year 11 students in establishing a video production company or through exploring world issues through drama and performance. Often these activities are of very high quality but teaching approaches which enable students to make these types of connections are inconsistent.

- In secondary and, in particular, post-16, most students demonstrate high quality research skills. These range from writing scripts for films or working in cross-curricular activities to cost pre- and post-production video activities or through students producing high quality graphics. In a majority of classes, there remains a thread of teacher-dominated discussion during lessons that does not always facilitate the development of critical thinking and problem solving skills.

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

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Personal development	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding

- Throughout the school, students demonstrate very positive and responsible attitudes to their school life and their learning. They show appreciation, integrity, independence and respect for the school community. They strive conscientiously to improve all aspects of school life through their dynamic involvement in the activities initiated by the students' council.
- Exemplary behaviour was in evidence across the school both in class and during extra-curricular activities. Very good behaviour was further assisted through students being involved in overseeing many aspects relating to the movement of their peers around the school. This task is made easier as students are very self-disciplined and responsive to school rules.
- Excellent relationships are in evidence across all of the school. This is clearly evidenced by the amount of independence and leadership that the school and teachers accord students and the students' council. It is also seen in areas such as organising assemblies, developing after school activities and in taking into account student suggestions gleaned from the student initiated helpline.
- The high level of understanding of safe and healthy lifestyles underpins many of the actions of the school and its students. An award from Dubai Health Authority recognises the school's outstanding and dedicated work in health related services. In addition, many initiatives such as healthy living, happy living, green living, further develop students' understanding.
- Students have high levels of attendance at all phases across the school. They return to classes punctually from all activities, in a very orderly manner. Many students attend pre-school activities, often led by their peers who come very early to school to prepare and deliver activities.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Very good	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding

- In FS, children have a very good understanding of Islamic values for their age. Students across the school have excellent understanding of Islam and its impact on modern UAE society. They appreciate values such as modesty, honesty, and respect for Dubai society. Secondary school students have an outstanding understanding of the impact of tolerance on their lives.

- Students are very knowledgeable about the different aspects of Emirati heritage, culture and history that underpin life in the UAE. They speak about the UAE vision of 2021 and the National Agenda that is driving this vision. They sing the national anthem enthusiastically during school assemblies and take active roles in Emirati national celebrations.
- Students are very proud of their own cultures and they demonstrate a deep awareness and appreciation for other cultures. They interact positively and politely with people from different backgrounds. They participate in various cultural celebrations in the school. Senior students are very aware of the common elements among cultures within their school and communities.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Very good	Very good	Outstanding	Outstanding

- Students respond enthusiastically to the opportunities to support their school and the wider community. They voluntarily contribute to social projects and take responsibility for guiding and being role models for younger students in the school. Students contribute well to school's decision-making processes. They are considerate and sensitive to each other and offer academic and personal support to their peers and to younger students.
- Students have a strong work ethic, which increases as they progress through the school. They collaborate on a range of projects related to the environment. Students show initiative and offer innovative and feasible ideas for their school and the wider community. Children in FS and primary are still developing their abilities to take initiative and ownership of their ideas.
- Students raise awareness of environmental issues and promote action to preserve the Earth's resources. They participate in many projects to address the environmental issues that we face in our world today. Students show concern for the welfare of their school and wider community by providing information, holding discussion meetings and assemblies, and through competitions to promote actions about conserving resources that are important to help us to live.

3. Teaching and assessment

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Teaching for effective learning	Good	Good	Good	Very good

- Teachers have good subject knowledge. They are expanding their approaches to further motivate their students. This is evident in recent improvements in the way that they interact with students in physical education, mathematics, science, and in FS to help them learn. However, strategies related to how students learn best are not applied consistently in the lower end of the primary school.

- Most teachers plan their lessons well through linking age-related learning objectives effectively. Most display informative students' work in their classes. The best teaching maximises the use of time and resources and has the flexibility to change to best suit the needs and abilities of differing student groups. In Islamic education and Arabic as an additional language, further work is needed to adapt strategies according to students' needs.
- Teachers' outstanding relationships with their students impact positively on learning. Most teachers are skilled in using appropriate questioning to continually extend thinking. A feature of the dialogue in English, mathematics and science lessons is that it results in students being motivated to volunteer their own incisive questions. In a minority of classes, extended teacher talk results in a lack of student engagement.
- The best teaching provides challenging tasks, ensures monitoring and support, and results in students understanding the next steps in their learning. Most teachers set tasks with different levels of challenge and in science extended learning projects aid students' understanding. A minority of teachers do not ensure that all students are working towards appropriate targets, especially those who have SEND and those who are gifted and talented.
- When teachers provide opportunities for independent enquiry, this results in deeper student understanding and progress. This is strongest in mathematics and science in post-16 where the teachers encourage student presentations based on their choice of research. Teachers across the school make insufficient use of ICT in the classroom. In Islamic education and Arabic as an additional language, too few students are given opportunities to learn independently.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Assessment	Good	Good	Good	Good

- The school's internal assessment procedures link well to relevant curriculum standards. They effectively measure individual student progress in each subject over time. In contrast, short tests do not always evaluate the complete range of students' knowledge, understanding and skills. Therefore they do not provide fully comprehensive information on students' progress.
- Teachers are knowledgeable about the required standards in IGCSE and A-level examinations. They use this effectively to assess students' attainment throughout secondary and post-16. They take good account of students' performance in international benchmark tests in primary and secondary. Staff are working to bring the school's internal tests into line with external expectations and standards.
- The school is analysing its assessment data in increasing depth, and progress is being tracked over time. This is providing more information on the progress of students and their specific strengths and areas for development. The school has started to analyse the results of tests of students' cognitive abilities and other assessments to set achievement targets for individuals.
- Senior and middle leaders use assessment information to improve the curriculum. Teachers in FS employ a wide range of approaches to gather information on children's progress and use it to modify the next steps in learning. Assessment information is not used consistently at the other phases to fully differentiate learning tasks and activities for different groups of students, including those with SEND.

- Teachers have good knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of individual students. In most classes they ensure that questioning helps measure student understanding and recall of prior work. The quality of written feedback has improved, but students would benefit at times from more time to read, absorb and apply the advice they are given. Students are often involved in assessing their own work and that of their peers.

4. Curriculum


	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Curriculum design and implementation	Good	Good	Good	Good

- The curriculum is broad and balanced and is aligned with the National Curriculum for England. The integrated approach used in performing arts classes provides well-balanced experiences for the students. Islamic education and Arabic courses comply with Ministry of Education (MoE) requirements. The curriculum provides appropriate opportunities to develop students' skills, knowledge and understanding.
- Children in FS benefit from themes, which capture their interest. Courses on UAE heritage and culture and the performing arts provide stimulating opportunities for students to make progress. Students in Year 1 are sometimes faced with concepts they find difficult to grasp. Students are generally well prepared for the next phase of education, although continuity and progression in Arabic is less secure.
- Students choose from an appropriate range of course options. The physical education programme is being improved and extended to provide increased opportunities for student choice. All year groups study personal, health and social education. Older students take environmental management courses and all students benefit from very well planned assembly activities, which develop their awareness of these topics. Students studying IGCSE are required to study an additional language.
- Curriculum and individual lesson plans routinely include references to how students might link their learning across subjects. In geography, for example, students practise, consolidate and extend their literacy skills. Units of study encourage students to link their learning to life outside school. The culture and traditions of the UAE feature strongly within many subjects.
- Teachers regularly review the curriculum to ensure that units of study are linked effectively. Curriculum development takes account of students' aspirations, for example, in the strong emphasis on mathematics and science at Post-16. Opportunities for students to practise and develop their critical thinking skills are increasing. However, some inconsistencies remain, notably in Islamic education and Arabic.
- The UAE social studies curriculum is fully integrated into the humanities curriculum. Lesson plans include links with the culture and traditions of the UAE. This means students have very good opportunities to acquire a wide range of information in a variety of contexts. Students across the school enjoy learning in UAE social studies. This is reflected in their enthusiastic participation in various projects. They take a pride in their work and this shows in the care they take when writing and illustrating. Students learn about the various communities living in the UAE and develop a strong sense of citizenship. Teachers use detailed assessment guidance to provide feedback to students and to track students' progress as they move through the school

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Curriculum adaptation	Good	Good	Good	Good

- The curriculum is modified effectively to meet students' needs. This is especially so in FS and post-16. In the FS, individual assessments are used to plan children's learning. Courses in the secondary and post-16 also provide tasks that challenge and support students' learning. While courses in the primary are well planned, they are not always adapted in the lower primary to meet all students' needs.
- A wide range of activities are planned to extend and enhance students' learning. Dynamic assemblies, in which students play very active roles, include presentations on highly relevant topics for modern day society. This makes their learning meaningful through connecting their life in Dubai to the wider world such as exploring the plight of children in conflict zones. An integrated approach to performing arts permeates the curriculum.
- A feature of the school's curriculum is the integration of Emirati culture, values and heritage. Students benefit from extensive pre-school and weekend activities. This includes a wide range of sports clubs. They go on regular educational visits and participate in community celebrations highlighting the diversity of the region and the features within it.

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

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding	Good 	Good	Good	Good

- The school has thorough systems and procedures to ensure health and wellbeing. Staff know the school's child protection procedures and what to do in the event of an issue arising. Students feel safe in the school. Staff diligently monitor the external areas of the school. A student led initiative is encouraging students to raise any issues of concern and a pilot buddying initiative has been introduced this session.
- The school ensures that all policies and procedures are communicated to staff, parents and students. It is continuing to monitor closely the occasional incidents of bullying and conflict resolution strategies are being developed. A student council feedback message system and post-16 videos featuring anti-bullying messages further support students' understanding. The school also raises their awareness of cyber-bullying and the need to be vigilant when using the internet and social media.
- The school is well maintained, clean and secure. The FS has stimulating safe and hygienic learning centres and play areas following recent school adaptations. The school campus and equipment are well maintained. Fire drills take place three times a year. There are facilities to support a collaborative learning environment for older students. The school building lacks suitable access for students or staff with limited mobility.

- Staff and students promote healthy lifestyles. The recently enhanced physical education department is particularly proactive in encouraging students to live healthy lives through regular exercise. The increased sports activities combined with student led pre-school sports clubs are beginning to have a positive impact on a significant number of students.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Care and support	Good	Good	Good	Good

- Positive relationships between staff and students are of a very high order. They are based on mutual respect and trust and are aided by very suitable systems for the effective management of behaviour. These systems are supported by the students' council and by the whole school body. Student behaviour is highly commendable and is supported by the use of behaviour contracts and mediation processes where necessary.
- The core values of the school of accountability and responsibility as well as integrity, compassion, empathy and respect, set an expectation for good attendance and punctuality across all phases. This is further supported and developed by appropriate policies and procedures being in place. As a result, student attendance is very good.
- The school has a vibrant SEND team who are further developing methods for identifying students with SEND. To date these processes have identified students from Year 1 to Year 8. The involvement of all teachers across all phases in the identification of students with SEND needs to be improved.
- The school provides targeted support for a number of students with SEND. This is mainly in the area of language development and based on identified needs. As yet the full range of student needs are not being identified, which limits support opportunities. A review of support is planned so that the school can further develop interventions to cater for an even wider range of needs.
- The school provides commendable guidance and support to all students. At the heart of this support is the care and assistance supplied by the counsellor and teachers. The student council also plays a vital part in providing support. The school promotes the development of life skills through a wide number of initiatives. Career guidance provides accurate support to students when planning their futures.

Inclusion

Provision and outcomes for students with SEND

Acceptable

- The school has improved its provision for SEND since the start of the academic year. The SEND team now in place, is qualified and dedicated. The counsellor ably leads this team and reports directly to senior management. The action plan for SEND is ambitious and achievable.
- In many cases initial identification of a student with SEND, lies with the class teacher. While a cohort of students with SEND have been identified, the quality of assessments suggests a delay in identifying some students' needs or that assessments do not reflect accurately their greatest needs.

- The school offers very good support to parents. From the initial identification phase to the development of Individual Education Plans (IEPs), the school diligently reports to parents and includes parental feedback in the provisions proposed.
- The school shares IEPs with parents and parental involvement in the delivery of the programme for students with SEND is an essential aspect of the provision.
- The school earnestly strives to meet students' needs mainly through the development of IEPs. Under their present format, IEPs contain targets that are generally too broad and not easily evaluated. They are not fully shared with all class and subject teachers.

6. Leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership

Good

- The principal and school leadership team strongly promote the school's values, such as tolerance, a sense of community and life-long learning. They are committed to the UAE national priorities and to improving provision for students with SEND. The principal and recently enhanced leadership team have impacted positively on aspects of teaching and learning. They recognise the need to develop further strategic leadership at the secondary and post-16 phases.
- The senior leadership and middle managers communicate very well. Staff and students are increasingly taking on leadership roles. They collaborate at all levels of the school. This has resulted in a range of recent school initiatives including students initiating and taking responsibility for leading pre-school extra-curricular activities. School leaders increasingly consult staff, students and parents who in turn are beginning to be involved in systematically identifying and agreeing areas for improvement.
- School leaders regularly collaborate both formally and informally to enhance the quality of teaching, learning, assessment and aspects of the curriculum. This has had a particularly positive impact on the quality of FS provision and in supporting students' personal and social development. Staff, at all levels, willingly take on agreed roles and responsibilities aimed at improving educational opportunities for students.
- Across the school there is a commitment to continuous improvement. Agreed action is supported through regular discussion and formal meetings. School leaders in partnership with parents and students have been successful in developing a range of innovative activities, which are enriching school life. They have yet to evaluate the impact of these initiatives and to develop strategies to ensure sustainability over the longer term.
- The school carries out regular reviews on the impact of its work, resulting in improvements to teaching and learning. Most leaders have a clear understanding of improvement priorities and are increasingly using students' attainment information to evaluate progress. The focus on identifying priorities and allocating resources is strong. It is less well developed in setting challenging targets for further improvement, particularly in relation to student attainment and progress.

School self-evaluation and improvement planning

Good

- School leaders regularly meet with staff to agree school priorities. Overall, leaders know the school's strengths and weaknesses. There is less consistency in identifying variations in teaching, attainment and progress across the school. The increased data being gathered is beginning to help leaders at all phases form a more accurate picture of students' academic starting points and the progress they make over time.
- A regular programme of lesson observations is helping school leaders evaluate the quality of teaching and learning. This is linked to teacher performance review and support for new teachers. The focus of these observations has been enhanced through the school's professional development programme. This is increasingly helping to focus both formal and informal observations and discussions on the quality of teaching and learning.
- School and department improvement plans identify the actions being targeted, resource requirements and staff roles and responsibilities. Expected improvements are most clearly defined in relation to teaching and learning resources. They are less clear when identifying targets to raise students' attainment. This is restricting the ability of school and department leaders to identify areas of strength or weakness in student progress. School priority plans lack clearly defined review dates.
- The school has developed into a more vibrant learning environment, particularly in FS and Years 1, 2 and 3. It has addressed the safety concerns at the FS fully. There is improving support for students with SEND and the school is starting to identify gifted and talented students. In a minority of classes, teacher directed learning remains too prevalent. In these classes teachers still rely on class chanting rather than using appropriately differentiated teaching strategies.

Partnerships with parents and the community

Good

- Parents are very supportive of the school and feel very welcome by staff. Their role in the life of the school has increased this session. They are increasingly being asked their views and, when issues are raised, the school responds positively. However, formal methods for gathering parental views and means through which the actions of the school can be shared with parents, are at an early stage of development.
- The active parents' council has been strengthened through a formal constitution and is now consulted more regularly by the school. It is working with the school to establish an on-line parental consultation forum. FS parents participated in a workshop to help them understand changes in the school. These types of activities take place across the school but are not embedded throughout the school year.
- Regular parent meetings take place. Parents receive report cards each term, which provide them with helpful information on their children's academic, personal and social development. The quality of children's reports in FS has improved both in the range of assessment information and objectives provided. While report cards from Year 1 to Year 13 contain assessment information, it is not clear how this compares to local and international standards.

- Community involvement is increasing in the school, in part due to the role of senior students in providing extra-curricular activities. These sessions linking with sports and video production companies have been established as a result of the active involvement of staff, parents' council and students. These developing initiatives, including sponsorship events, are at an early stage of supporting life-long learning.

Governance	Good
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- The relatively small governing board contains a wide range of experience. It has only one parent representative, although two members are school staff. The school board holds three formal meetings each year and non-staff members are in regular contact with the school. While members respond positively to parental and student requests for improved extra-curricular activities, they do not have a systematic method of gathering parental views.
- Board members are knowledgeable about school priorities and improvement plans. They are aware of the progress made by the school in meeting the recommendations from the last inspection. They scrutinise the attainment data and discuss this with school leaders. They have a developing understanding of the newly introduced benchmark tests and, more generally, how to scrutinise student attainment and progress.
- The governing board has supported the school in developing its technology resources and in introducing more rigorous staff recruitment and training programmes. Membership of the board includes the counsellor who provides helpful input into developing procedures to support SEND. Other members of the team make valuable contributions in this area, but governors have yet to fully analyse and evaluate the impact of the SEND support in the school.




Management, staffing, facilities and resources	Good
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- The school is managed efficiently on a daily basis. The management of the school's procedures and routines ensure its effective operation. The timetable is well implemented to meet the needs of students.
- Teachers are generally well qualified. However, the school has not ensured that all teachers of Arabic and Islamic education are approved by KHDA. The school has increased the opportunities for professional development. Staff participate in professional development sessions one day a week after school. This has not yet had a consistent impact on teaching, in particular, in developing the quality of students' critical thinking skills across the phases.
- The premises are of good quality. Although there has been an improvement in aspects of ICT, overall learning technology is not sufficiently available in the school to support improved learning. As a result, students in secondary and post-16 use technology outside of school to complete research projects.
- Enhanced resources include new laptop computers. The range of English language reading books has increased. Books are categorised to match age appropriate use and an electronic record helps staff keep track of students' reading choices. Students who are more able are not sufficiently encouraged to read more challenging books. There are significantly better resources to promote learning and enquiry skills in the FS than at other stages.

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	373
	2015-2016	666
 Teachers	79	
 Students	174	

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

- A large percentage of parents and teachers, who responded to the survey, indicated high levels of satisfaction with the school. Overall, students were positive about the school.
- Almost all parents and teachers felt that the school was well led, that students enjoyed school, and that it was a safe and secure environment for learning.
- Almost all parents and teachers thought that school leaders were approachable and parents felt that they were kept well informed and involved in their children's education.
- Most students, who responded to the survey, thought that the school was well led, liked the school and thought that teachers wanted them to do their best.

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