



The School of Research  
Science

Curriculum: UK

Overall Rating:

Very 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



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## School information



General information	
Location	Al Warqa 4
Type of school	Private
Opening year of school	1998
Website	www.srsdubai.ae
Telephone	04-2988776
Address	P.O BOX 27463, Al Warqa4
Principal	Ms Nan Billingham,
Language of instruction	English
Inspection dates	21 to 24 November 2016

Teachers / Support staff	
Number of teachers	302
Largest nationality group of teachers	United Kingdom
Number of teaching assistants	41
Teacher-student ratio	1:12
Number of guidance counsellors	5
Teacher turnover	13%

Students	
Gender of students	Boys and girls
Age range	3-18
Grades or year groups	FS1-Year 12
Number of students on roll	3531
Number of children in pre-kindergarten	0
Number of Emirati students	2510
Number of students with SEND	215
Largest nationality group of students	Emirati

Curriculum	
Educational permit / Licence	UK
This might be deleted	UK
Main curriculum	
External tests and examinations	GCSE, IGCSE
Accreditation	BSO
National Agenda benchmark tests	GL



## 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.

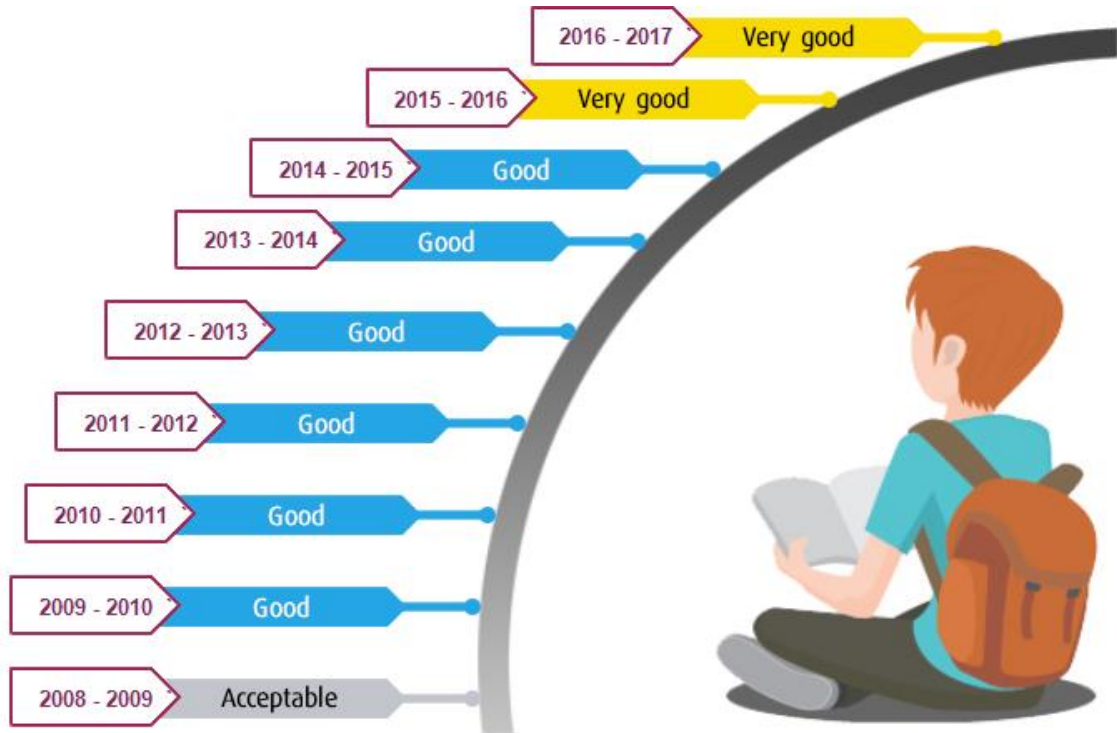
### Judgements are made on a six-point scale

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.

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



## Inspection journey for The School of Research Science



- The school opened in 1998 and provides education for students from age four to 18. Numbers of students have risen year on year from 2047 students in 2013 to the current figure of 3531. The principal joined the school in 2012. Teacher turnover in past years has been over 20 per cent but in the current year has fallen to 13 per cent.
- The school had remained good in its overall effectiveness from 2012 until the inspection in 2015 - 2016 when it improved to very good. Over the last three inspections consistent strengths have been found in leadership and management, and in provision for students with special educational needs and disabilities. Strong features have also been highlighted in teaching and students' personal and social development especially their understanding of Islamic values.
- Recommendations of inspections have in the past concentrated on the need to improve the consistency in the quality of teaching and increase the proportion of outstanding teaching. At the last inspection, recommendations focused mainly on the need to improve students' learning skills including the use of technology.

## Summary of inspection findings 2016-2017



The School of Research Science was inspected by DSIB from 21 to 24 November 2016 . The overall quality of education provided by the school is **very good**. The section below summarises the inspection findings for each of the six performance indicators described in the framework.

- Attainment and progress in Islamic education and Arabic are at least good and often outstanding. In English, mathematics and science attainment and progress are more variable but never less than good. Children in the Foundation Stage (FS) consistently make meaningful connections between different areas of learning. Students in other phases do not consistently use learning technologies to find out things for themselves. Skills such as problem-solving are not intrinsic features of learning.
- Almost all aspects of students' personal and social development are outstanding. A key feature is the students' excellent understanding of how Islamic values influence contemporary UAE society. A few boys in the secondary phase do not always have positive attitudes to school. They arrive at lessons late and do not always demonstrate the levels of self-discipline evident in other students.
- Teaching is outstanding in the FS. Staff have an excellent understanding of how young children learn. In all phases team-teaching is planned to support and challenge students from their different starting points, including those who are most able. Nevertheless, this is not consistently effective in all lessons. Assessment data is extensive and rigorously analysed to provide staff with clear information regarding students' strengths and weaknesses.
- The school is highly successful in weaving together the breadth and balance required of a UK curriculum with the high expectations of Islamic values, which are central to the school's ethos. The curriculum is skilfully modified in the FS and primary phases to meet the varying needs of students including those with SEND. Modification is not as effective in the secondary and post-16 phases.
- The care and welfare of students is central to the school's day-to-day systems and procedures. All staff play their part in ensuring that the exceptional facilities are maintained to a high standard. Students' individual needs are expertly identified and provision is adjusted accordingly. The school's vision to ensure 'no child is left behind' is central to the outstanding level of guidance provided.
- Leaders set a very clear direction and vision for continuing school improvement. Outstanding systems of self-evaluation lead to detailed plans aimed at improving student outcomes. The school works hard to engage parents as partners in their children's learning. The governing board has an excellent knowledge of the school and uses this to hold staff to account. The facilities are outstanding, resources are plentiful and staff are very well qualified.

### What the school does best

- The very good and often outstanding attainment and progress in Arabic and Islamic education
- The outstanding provision in the FS, including the innovative practice of teaching in the dual languages of English and Arabic, which enables children to make outstanding progress
- The governing board's commitment to admitting students to the school irrespective of their ability or needs, and to ensuring very good provision to fulfil the vision that 'no child is left behind'
- The outstanding care, guidance and support which results in students' very good and often outstanding personal development
- Outstanding leadership and management, which skilfully links the rich and responsive curriculum with students' outstanding Islamic values

### Recommendations

- Continue to expand the amount of outstanding teaching and the development of students' learning skills in the primary, secondary and post-16 phases by:
  - consistently planning imaginative lessons that challenge students to research independently, consider innovative solutions to problems, draw conclusions and explain their thinking.
- Continue to raise attainment in English, mathematics and science by:
  - extending students' knowledge and understanding of a wider range of English vocabulary
  - further developing students' abilities to use the skills of inference and deduction
  - deepening students' conceptual understanding of mathematics and extending their ability to apply the skills of reasoning and problem-solving
  - extending students' abilities to investigate and draw scientific conclusions.

## National Agenda Parameter



In 2014, H.H. Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister of UAE, and Ruler of Dubai, launched the UAE National Agenda 2021, with education being a prime focus. The National Agenda includes two major objectives developed with the intention of placing the UAE among the most successful countries that provide world-class education. By 2021, it is expected that the UAE will feature in the top twenty countries in the 'Programme for International Student Assessment' (PISA) test and in the top fifteen countries in the 'Trends in Mathematics and Science Studies' (TIMSS) test.

In response to this, each participating school was issued a report on their students' performance in these international assessments and, in addition, they were provided with clear targets for improving their performance. In 2015, KHDA launched the National Agenda Parameter, which is a method for measuring and monitoring schools' progress towards achieving their individual National Agenda targets through the use of external benchmarking assessments.

**The following section focuses on the impact of the National Agenda Parameter in meeting their targets:**

- The school meets the registration requirements for the National Agenda Parameter.
- Attainment as measured by the National Agenda Parameter tests in English, mathematics and science is not secure.
- There is extensive analysis of data. Teachers effectively use data to provide in-depth analyses of students' performance, their cognitive abilities and their preferred learning styles. These analyses are used to set targets. The school's own internal assessments are used by teachers in their planning.
- Curriculum alignment is an integral part of the continual review that follows from data analysis. The full range of National Agenda Parameters are used to identify gaps in curriculum planning allowing for adjustments to be made to support students in meeting their targets. As a result, students are better equipped to handle the style of question and the content in external assessments.
- Staff are improving the quality of their questioning and are increasing the opportunities for problem-solving and independent research. Teachers have placed more responsibility on students to evaluate their work and that of their peers. In mathematics, strategies to improve number ability and mental agility have been introduced. These changes in strategy are developing students as active learners, although the developments are not consistently in place across all classes.
- Students know the results of their cognitive ability and progress tests and what they mean. There are more opportunities for students to enhance their research skills. However, the limited availability of technology, particularly in the secondary phase, is a barrier to carrying out meaningful research. The development of higher-order thinking skills is not consistent.

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:

- All members of the school community give high priority to the creation of a culture of innovation. Strategies are constantly considered to support the development of strong skills, which support innovative practice. Highly effective partnerships have been established with a number of organisations including Dubai Institute of Design and Innovation (DIDI). As a result, the curriculum and extra-curricular provision have been strengthened to provide opportunities for students to develop a range of impressive design skills which support innovative practice.



## Overall school performance

Very good



## 1 Students' achievement

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

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

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

## 3. Teaching and assessment

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

## 4. Curriculum

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Curriculum design and implementation	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Curriculum adaptation	Outstanding	Outstanding	Very good	Very 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	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Care and support	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding


## 6. Leadership and management

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

# 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	Outstanding
Mathematics	Good	Outstanding
Science	Good	Outstanding

- In English, children make outstanding progress in lessons and over time, particularly in speaking and listening. The attainment levels of most children are in line with curriculum standards. Children listen attentively to instructions in both English and Arabic. By FS2 they are able to answer confidently in English when asked questions. From low starting points, reading in English is developing quickly because of the frequent opportunities the children have to try to decipher the meaning of print. Writing skills are not as secure with most children, particularly boys, at the level of mark-making.
- Progress in mathematical development is outstanding. The majority of children reach standards of attainment above curriculum expectations. As a result, children have a secure grasp of what numbers mean. They can make comparisons between numbers and are aware that numbers can increase or decrease depending on the type of calculations that are used. Play opportunities both indoors and outdoors ensure progress flourishes in open-ended activities. Despite this, problem-solving is the weakest aspect of mathematical attainment.
- The attainment of the majority of children in science is above curriculum standards. Children's progress is outstanding. Their skills in scientific enquiry are developing well. Children observe, explore and investigate their environment. Most understand that living things grow, that manufactured and natural objects might remain the same unless something causes them to change. The most able children can make predictions about why things happen and how things work but this skill is not well developed for all children, especially those new to FS2.

Primary		
Subjects	Attainment	Progress
Islamic education	Outstanding	Outstanding
Arabic as a first language	Outstanding	Outstanding
Arabic as an additional language	Outstanding	Outstanding
English	Good	Very good ↓
Mathematics	Good	Very good
Science	Very good ↑	Outstanding

- In Islamic education, internal data indicates that most students attain levels and skills that are above curriculum standards. In lessons and in their recent work, students demonstrate advanced understanding of Islamic concepts and values. They make a wide range of connections to their daily lives using their knowledge. Students make outstanding progress over time in understanding how the pillars of Islam influence their attitudes. Students very effectively use their prior knowledge to meet the objectives of new learning. Qur'an recitation is very well-developed with students able to memorize and explain the verses in depth.
- In Arabic as a first language, the school's internal assessments show that the attainment of most students is above curriculum standards. In lessons and in their work, students' listening and reading skills are very strong. They read familiar texts confidently and independently, and accurately summarise and explain the main points. When speaking, the majority of students use standard Arabic and convey their opinions clearly. They make outstanding progress throughout the primary phase. Most students use their greatly improved writing skills confidently to communicate their ideas.
- In Arabic as an additional language, most students attain language levels above curriculum standards. Students can use the language fluently in a given context. Their comprehension and writing skills are developed with very few spelling mistakes. Students make outstanding progress in their acquisition and use of vocabulary when speaking. They respond very well to instructions and demonstrate advanced listening skills. Most students make outstanding progress in relation to their starting points in lessons and over time.
- Internal data, evidence in lessons and in students' work indicate that the majority of students attain levels above curriculum standards in English. However, attainment is below national and international benchmarks in tests. This is due to a lack of depth of understanding of a wide range of vocabulary and the nuances of the language that, in turn, hinder progress in the development of the higher order skills of inference and deduction. Boys' skills in reading are underdeveloped, although they make very good progress, particularly in the lower primary classes.
- Students perform well against curriculum standards in mathematics with the majority attaining at a level above that expected. Most perform favourably when compared with students internationally. Students in Year 2 have good number skills and can write sentences using mathematical symbols. Students are very confident in the mathematical processes but struggle to explain why a particular method works. The majority of students have consistently attained above expected levels over time. A large majority of all groups of students make very good progress in lessons from their starting points.



- In science, internal assessment data indicates that the attainment of a large majority of students is above curriculum standards. However, international benchmark data indicate that their attainment is no better than good. This is because the underdeveloped language skills of some students are a barrier to their success in tests. In lessons, most students make better than expected progress and demonstrate very good knowledge and understanding of scientific concepts and processes.

Secondary		
Subjects	Attainment	Progress
Islamic education	Outstanding	Outstanding
Arabic as a first language	Very good ↑	Outstanding ↑
Arabic as an additional language	Outstanding ↑	Outstanding
English	Good	Very good
Mathematics	Very good ↓	Very good ↓
Science	Outstanding	Outstanding

- In Islamic education, most secondary students attain levels that are above curriculum standards. In lessons and in their recent work, students demonstrate advanced knowledge about Islam. They can make connections between various concepts and how they are related to their lives as Muslims. Students make outstanding progress over time. They explore and explain concepts, draw conclusions and form opinions. They discuss contractual issues in depth. Recitation and citation from Hadeeth and the Holy Qur'an are well-developed.
- In the school's internal assessments, most students attain levels which are above the curriculum standard for Arabic as a first language. Whilst progress is outstanding, particularly in developing writing skills, a minority of students do not reach above the expected standard. The large majority of students have listening and speaking skills that are above curriculum expectations. They express their ideas thoughtfully and show great respect when listening to the views of others. However, their abilities to engage in extended conversations is not fully developed. Most students can read independently and refer to the text to support opinions and predictions.
- In Arabic as an additional language, internal data indicates that most students have knowledge, understanding and skills that are above curriculum standards. Students are able to practise dialogues and give presentations. Students demonstrate strong writing skills, especially in lessons where teachers extend thinking through challenging questioning and opportunities for independent writing. Most students make outstanding progress in lessons and over time. Progress in listening and speaking is more rapid than that of other skills in relation to students' starting points.
- Results in IGCSE English show improvement from the previous year, demonstrating the very good rate of progress students make over the whole secondary phase. When measured against international benchmarks, students' achievements are weaker. However, following analysis of benchmark tests, students are increasingly able to enhance their skills in comprehension and in literary criticism. In lessons and in assessment of reading skills, students make very good progress and the large majority attain above curriculum standards throughout the phase.


- In mathematics, internal data, observation of lessons and students' workbooks indicate that a large majority of students attain above the expected curriculum standards. In Year 7, students competently interpret and produce algebraic expressions. Year 11 students confidently apply the sine and cosine rules. Whilst processes are understood, a minority of students have difficulty justifying their methods due to gaps in their conceptual understanding. As a result, performance when compared with students internationally is weaker. However, cognitive ability tests and external progress tests suggest that students make very good progress and a large majority reach better than expected attainment levels.
- Students' attainment and progress are outstanding in the physics, chemistry and biology. Students consistently acquire knowledge and understanding through discussions, research, and practical activities. The most recent overall GCSE data indicates that this level of attainment is consistently maintained from year to year. Students make outstanding progress in lessons as they are challenged by tasks that enable them to achieve the learning objectives in a short period of time.

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

- In Islamic education, internal data indicates that the large majority of post-16 students attain levels that are above curriculum standards. In lessons and in their recent work, students demonstrate advanced knowledge about Islam and how it influences their life practices. They can design presentations, questionnaires and hypotheses about the role of Islam in their future lives. However, their research skills, based upon citation, are still underdeveloped. The large majority of students make better than expected progress over time in applying Islamic concepts to new situations. Qur'an recitation and memorization are well-developed.
- In Arabic as a first language, the school's internal assessments indicate that attainment is outstanding. This evaluation is not fully supported by evidence in lessons and in students' work. The majority of students attain above curriculum standards. Whilst listening skills are strong, speaking skills are at the expected level for their age. Most students can answer questions using well-formed sentences but few can speak at length. Reading and understanding of extended texts is good and progress over time is very good. Students' writing skills are also developing well.
- The small cohort size in English makes the measurement of attainment and progress against international and curriculum standards unreliable. In lessons, students demonstrate good literacy skills and skills in text-analysis. The number pursuing AS level courses has increased which is having a positive impact on the development of advanced literacy skills. Given their predicted

scores identified in cognitive ability tests, most students are making good progress and are on track to meet their predicted grades.

- In mathematics, a large majority of students reach higher than expected levels against curriculum standards and against other students internationally. Students are developing an awareness of the relevance of mathematics to other subjects and to the real world. A few students have a better knowledge of method than of mathematical understanding. Students are taking increasing responsibility for their own mathematical development and evaluation of their work. They make much better than expected progress when considering their starting points and all groups move forward at a similar rate.
- The most recent AS level data supports only a good level of attainment in all three sciences. However, in lessons and in their work, the large majority of students demonstrate knowledge, understanding and application of scientific concepts that are above curriculum expectations. They can draw subatomic particles in terms of quarks and classify particles and anti-particles according to their mass and charge. Whilst most students make outstanding progress in the lessons as they face challenging tasks, a few do not have the extended language skills needed to arrive at and explain conclusions independently.

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

- Students' attitudes to their learning are extremely positive. They are active participants in lessons. In the FS classes, the free-play situations with language input in English and Arabic enhance learning experiences. As a result, children develop outstanding skills in controlling their own activities. In all phases, students demonstrate high levels of engagement and motivation especially in Islamic education and Arabic.
- In all phases students collaborate extremely well. They are confident communicators and share their ideas very readily. Students respond very positively to opportunities to be involved and participate in discussion and debate. Across the school students share their observations and resources well and, in the FS in particular, they are able to negotiate and explain their intentions through excellent reasoning skills for their age.
- Students make relevant connections between what they are learning and their everyday lives. They successfully build on their previous knowledge, especially in Islamic education and Arabic lessons. Taking the initiative is a significant feature in many lessons. Problem-solving and the ability to present their own solutions and ideas are increasingly evident in most subjects.
- Research projects and thinking critically are having a positive impact on how independently students can solve problems. This is especially evident in mathematics in the primary classes,; it is more variable in other phases. In the FS, children use technology frequently to explore and extend their learning. Students in other phases are extending and developing their abilities to use of technology for research.



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

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
<b>Personal development</b>	Outstanding	Outstanding	Very good	Outstanding

- Most students show positive attitudes to school life and have a strong work ethic. They are keen to learn and most demonstrate self-reliance. Most students are skilled at expressing their own views. In the FS, children's attitudes, dispositions and behaviour are exceptional for their age.
- Most students are self-disciplined and courteous towards one another. Their behaviour is exemplary. The occasional exception is the behaviour of a few boys in the secondary phase.
- Students have respectful relationships with teachers, their peers and visitors. With very few exceptions, students from all groups show support for each other in class and at break times.
- Students' knowledge of healthy living is evident across the school. Students make wise choices about their food and lifestyles, and willingly participating in activities that promote healthy living. Students' understanding of healthy lifestyles is evidenced by their contributions to food technology, biology and physical education classes and their involvement in physical activity during after-school clubs.
- School data indicates that attendance rates are high across all phases. However, there are some instances of lateness to lessons in the secondary phase. As a result, some opportunities for learning are missed which have a negative impact on learning outcomes.



	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
<b>Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures</b>	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding

- Students demonstrate an excellent understanding of the values of Islam and how Islamic values influence UAE society. There is a high level of participation in a wide range of cultural projects such as 'our golden history', 'the flying project', Holy Qur'an recitation competitions, lectures about the UAE, and many research activities such as 'the project of values'.
- Students are very knowledgeable and wholly respectful of the UAE heritage and culture. For example, they sensibly reflect on the Sheikh's vision for the UAE in discussions within lessons.
- Through a wide range of local and international trips, students develop an excellent understanding of their own and other world cultures. The UAE vision features prominently in many lessons throughout the school and provides students with multiple opportunities to consider their roles, positions and contributions to UAE society.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
<b>Social responsibility and innovation skills</b>	Outstanding 	Outstanding	Outstanding 	Outstanding

- Students participate enthusiastically in projects within the local community and those which contribute to the wider world. They show care for the less fortunate by getting involved in charitable activities such as 'Dubai Cares'. They organise donations for a school in Gaza and participate in visits to a local orphanage.
- Most students are resourceful and many participate successfully in local competitions such as the annual Formula 1 competition in Abu Dhabi.
- Students exhibit high levels of appreciation of the school environment with its state-of-the-art facilities. They are fully aware of environmental sustainability and are actively involved in raising awareness about various environmental issues, for example, recycling, utilizing fossil fuel to generate electricity and building model houses that run on solar power.

### 3. Teaching and assessment

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
<b>Teaching for effective learning</b>	Outstanding 	Very good 	Very good	Very good

- Teachers have very secure subject knowledge across the subjects and phases and most apply their understanding of how students learn. Consequently, students make very good and often outstanding progress in lessons. Teaching is particularly effective in the FS. In a few lessons in the secondary and post-16 phases, teaching does not sufficiently promote students' independent thinking.
- Lesson plans are clear and detailed and with a focus on learning outcomes. Teachers' use of time and resources is efficient and benefits from a team-teaching approach. In some English and mathematics lessons in the secondary and post-16 phases, lesson plans do not take sufficient account of the need to extend and deepen students' understanding.
- In the majority of lessons, teachers' questions enable students to think deeply and critically but this is not consistent. In the FS, adults' support for children ensures they are always active and focused learners. In other phases, discussions in lessons stay at a superficial level on occasion, with limited opportunities to reflect and draw meaningful conclusions.
- Most teachers use assessment information well to provide their students with the support matched to their learning needs. The school has worked hard to improve the level of challenge for high achievers but this is still inconsistent across the school. In a few lessons, especially in English, the learning needs of the most-able students are not always met
- Teaching to promote problem-solving skills is developing well but is inconsistent. In science, teachers regularly develop understanding of scientific language and skills such as predicting and investigating to find solutions. In mathematics, especially in the secondary and post-16 phases, students are given problems to solve but, too often, these only require the use of knowledge and do not require students



to develop conceptual understanding. Teaching to promote innovation skills is good but uneven across the school.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
<b>Assessment</b>	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding

- Assessment processes are comprehensive and coherent, despite the transitional process of moving to assessment of the National Curriculum without levels. Where the changes are fully in place, they show clear links to the school's curriculum. The information gained provides a valid and accurate measure of students' academic and personal development.
- There is a commitment to extensive benchmarking of outcomes against national and international expectations. Students' achievements in English, mathematics and science are benchmarked using recognised international tests. Older students are assessed in subjects, including Arabic, through internationally recognised examinations. This extensive analysis provides valid international comparisons.
- In all phases, assessment data are analysed rigorously to enable the most effective use of the findings to be made. The analysis gives information at a number of levels and aids the monitoring of progress at the individual student level. The data provide for the comprehensive comparison of group and class performance, which is regularly monitored.
- The wealth of assessment data is understood and used very skilfully by almost all staff to meet the needs of all groups of students. Teachers are informed of the particular learning styles of students. They are able to plan appropriately to ensure students can access their work and progress at a better than expected rate.
- Teachers have a comprehensive, in-depth knowledge of students. They know what they do best and what provides the greatest challenge. They can support very effectively at a number of levels. Teacher's feedback gives guidance on what the students have achieved and what the next targets should be. Students are also gaining from involvement in evaluating their own work and that of their peers.

#### 4. Curriculum

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
<b>Curriculum design and implementation</b>	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding

- The rationale for the curriculum is very clear and identifies for each subject the opportunities to develop all necessary skills, concepts and knowledge. In addition, it takes a holistic approach and identifies opportunities for students' moral, physical and spiritual development. The UAE context is explicit and incorporated into all aspects of the curriculum. The school is exceptionally diligent in fulfilling all statutory requirements.

- Structured progression in the curriculum is clear. Best practice from different phases is incorporated into all parts of the school, supporting seamless transition between phases. All planning is digital, which enables relevant subject specific and learning skills to be incorporated very effectively in each lesson. This is monitored well and fully supports excellent links between subjects, year groups and phases.
- There is an excellent range of curricular choices for older students, including arts, humanities and sciences. They are connected by a clear vision of the UK curriculum that is strongly underpinned by Arabic and Islamic values. The flexibility and clarity of the options enables most students to pursue their choices. ASDAN courses are available for those students with particular needs.
- Interdisciplinary learning is evident across all phases. The delivery of lessons in English and Arabic is being expanded to include subjects except for science. A thematic approach is well embedded in the international primary curriculum. This provides excellent and clear opportunities for connecting learning through experiential approaches and extending students' creativity. In secondary, cross-curricular links are thoroughly extended by the 'learning without borders' programme.
- There is a clear sense of dynamism to the curriculum provision. It is underpinned by a systematic and thorough approach to reviewing, adapting and improving it to match the changing needs of the students, the community and the National Agenda. A representative sub-committee oversees the regular reviews and reports directly to the strategic board enabling them to implement pertinent adaptations to the curriculum.
- The school's social studies programme offers a wealth of activities about the UAE culture and heritage. These are embedded effectively within the curriculum and give a cohesive and coherent view for students of what this means in the context in which they live. In the FS, social studies are integrated within the curriculum and are reflected in lesson planning. In other phases, topics covered include energy markets and political geography. The sessions are planned effectively and make well-placed links between history and geography so that students gain in their understanding of the UAE and beyond.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Curriculum adaptation	Outstanding	Outstanding	Very good	Very good

- The curriculum is modified very well to meet the needs of the complete range of students. As an example, specific provision is made for children new to FS2 to develop their fine and gross motor skills. The impact of curriculum modifications is not as successful in secondary and post-16 phases where the increased rigour of the UK curriculum is yet to be fully implemented.
- The school's enrichment programme, 'learning without borders', complements a rich, responsive curriculum, which skilfully interweaves the UK curriculum with Islamic values. It not only offers a wide range of interesting and stimulating activities, but also affords an opportunity for the school to develop skills further, such as leadership, social inclusion and team-building with targeted students.
- Links with the Emirati culture and UAE society are embraced wholeheartedly and enhanced by the overt bilingual nature of the curriculum. Particularly strong examples are seen in art, where Islamic culture inspired the design of ceramic tiles and, in biology, where data regarding healthy lifestyles informed a stimulating discussion whilst comparing the UAE and USA.

- Arabic as a first language is taught in FS1 for 120 minutes per week and for 240 minutes in FS2. In addition, the incorporation of Arabic as a medium for delivery alongside English enhances curriculum provision and means that children are quite naturally developing as bi-lingual learners.

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

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

- The school clearly has the safety and security of its students as a high priority. Thorough safeguarding and child protection procedures are in place and understood by both students and staff. The welfare department is very responsive in dealing with potential issues and readily involves parents in discussions regarding the care and well-being of their children.
- Transport arrangements are secure and very well-monitored. The school has clear systems in place to monitor entry onto the premises. These are not always adhered to by all parents.
- The maintenance team reacts promptly and efficiently to issues that are raised, keeping the facilities in outstanding condition. Evacuation procedures are logged and the outcomes evaluated and acted upon expeditiously. Fire extinguishers are checked and are sited appropriately. The clinic, with a generous complement of medical staff, maintains comprehensive records and deals well with day-to-day issues.
- There are ramps and elevators rendering the site accessible to all. The extensive campus is kept exceptionally clean and safe by a team which is on site all day and offers excellent, well-matched facilities for all aspects of learning.
- Healthy lifestyle choices are emphasised by clinic staff, as part of their ongoing advisory service, and in the canteen, with a wide range of healthy food choices available. There is ample opportunity for physical activity and the benefits of this form part of the curriculum. Clubs outside school, such as karate and gymnastics, supplement this provision.

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

- Positive staff and student relationships contribute to the caring, inclusive ethos of the school. The welfare team plays an important role in students' well-being; the team members know the students well and are aware of their emotional and social needs. There is a highly effective pastoral system in place in the secondary phase to support behaviour management. Students know whom to go to for support and guidance.
- The school works closely with students and parents to promote the importance of regular attendance and punctuality. Prompt action is taken when students are repeatedly late or absent. In the secondary phase, a persistent absence register is generated and interventions are put in place. Attendance data are shared with students, and parents can track students' attendance on the virtual learning environment (VLE).
- Identification of students with SEND is a whole-school priority. The process is comprehensive and rigorous and leads to accurate categorisation resulting in very good provision. Additional specialist staff are employed to target students and work closely with teachers to ensure effective practice. An Arabic SENCO effectively develops work across the English and Arabic curriculum.
- The school provides excellent support for students with SEND and those who are gifted and talented. This is focused, targeted and mainly consistent. Education plans are informative and effectively support the students to overcome their barriers to learning. Gifted and talented students receive effective support in the best lessons to help them meet their challenging targets.
- The well-being of students is at the heart of the school. There are effective pastoral systems in place to ensure every student has the opportunity to receive care and guidance if needed. Older students receive excellent advice and information about future educational pathways and career options.

## Inclusion

### Provision and outcomes for students with SEND

Very good

- Governors and leaders facilitate a highly inclusive ethos and have a clear understanding of the schools' provision and the areas for development for students with SEND. The special educational needs policy is detailed and sets out clearly the responsibilities for all stakeholders. Teachers receive well-structured, targeted training to support them in providing interventions for students with SEND.
- A wide range of assessment strategies is successfully used to identify students. The school operates a graded system of intervention. The majority of staff demonstrates an excellent understanding of the different areas of need and successfully provides for different levels of learning difficulty. The senior leadership team monitors data rigorously and, as a result, provision for almost all students is very good, although not always appropriately planned in the secondary phase.

- The strength of parental partnership is integral to SEND provision. The school has an open door policy and parents can contact the school at any time to be updated on their children's progress. Parents are invited to attend training sessions delivered by the SEND team and external specialists on specific areas of need.
- Most lesson plans identify clear links between outcomes and individual education plan targets. Provision is rigorously monitored and the curriculum is very well-adapted, particularly in the primary phase. SEND teachers provide outstanding quality of learning support in the specialist classrooms and almost all students make very good progress over time. Students with SEND actively participate in Arabic lessons through activities matched to their needs.
- Highly effective tracking and monitoring systems are used across the school to gather a wide range of information. This shows that the large majority of students with SEND make very good progress. All Wave 3 students have a modified timetable as a result of curriculum review and provision mapping. The quality and quantity of information analysed has improved progress for students with SEND, particularly in the primary phase.

## 6. Leadership and management

### The effectiveness of leadership

Outstanding

- Leaders at all levels are fully committed to securing the best outcomes for all students in this fully inclusive school. All leaders share the school vision that 'no child should be left behind'. They are successful in articulating this vision to the school community and developing a shared sense of purpose towards meeting the school and UAE priorities.
- The principal is highly effective in leading staff in the creation of a purposeful learning culture where high expectations of students' academic and personal development are effectively maintained. Leaders at all levels make outstanding use of their thorough knowledge of the curriculum and outstanding teaching practice to support other staff in meeting student needs.
- Relationships and communication between all levels of leadership ensure that the school's commitment to ethical principles permeates throughout the school. Distributed leadership and clear roles and responsibilities empower staff to devise and initiate improvements such as those relating to behaviour management. A system of team-teaching is used exceptionally well to continue to build capacity. As a result, morale is high.
- Leaders demonstrate a strong capacity to innovate, to strive for excellence and to deliver continuous improvement. They have recognised the barriers to raising attainment associated with students' language skills and have instigated a range of new initiatives. This has already met with much success in the FS and lower primary classes which are providing a firm foundation for future improvement.
- The principal has successfully created an ethos of collective responsibility through an effective system of performance management in which all staff are responsible for school improvement linked firmly to improved outcomes for students. Innovative practice such as the use of Arabic and English in the delivery of lessons in the FS contributes highly effectively to children's outstanding progress.



## School self-evaluation and improvement planning

Outstanding

- The school rigorously analyses a wide range of monitoring and assessment information. The inclusion of international benchmark testing and the conversion to an assessment system without levels has enabled the school to identify accurately the barriers to further improvement and where expectations need to increase.
- Monitoring and evaluation of the quality of the teaching through a range of activities, including scrutiny of work in students' books, is regular and consistently applied through well-constructed rubrics. This provides leaders with a clear view of the impact of teaching on learning and where improvements are needed. All staff have a clear understanding of the school's 'Teacher Standards' and strive to meet them.
- Improvement plans are based firmly on the school's commitment to building on its success and meeting National Agenda targets. Actions are time limited and linked clearly to improvements in students' personal and academic development. Creative and innovative solutions are sought such as the engagement of specialist staff and the dual language teaching in science.
- School leaders have acted upon the recommendations from the previous inspection. The school had made considerable efforts to improve the use of technology but had not fully achieved the desired outstanding impact on students' learning skills or ensured consistency of teachers' questioning.

## Partnerships with parents and the community

Outstanding

- The school successfully involves parents in their children's learning and in the life of the school especially in the after-school activities. Parents' views are consistently sought and parents feel that the school listens to them and responds to their suggestions appropriately.
- Parents confirm their appreciation for the highly effective channels of communication between home and school. The school has increased the number of telephone lines and other channels of communication to inform them about school activities and to share information. The school keeps a comprehensive record of parents' complaints and concerns.
- Reporting on students' progress and personal and social development is effective in keeping parents informed. Most parents appreciate the information they receive about their children's achievements through the end-of-term reports which include guidance on how to interpret their grades. Parent-teacher conferences provide further opportunities to build partnerships that have a positive impact on students' learning.
- The partnerships the school builds with the local, national and international communities leads to improved learning experiences for all students. The partnership and exchange visits with a school in Kenya are widening students' understanding of world cultures. In addition, the school involves students extensively in philanthropic work that has a very positive impact on people's lives in other countries.

<b>Governance</b>	Outstanding
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- The governing board is representative of the school and local community. The views of stakeholders are sought and acted upon. As a result, governors have a deep knowledge of the school and the community it serves.
- Regular communication and partnership working between the board and the senior leadership team is excellent. Outstanding systems of monitoring through termly reviews ensure that all provision is fully evaluated and staff are firmly held to account. The board uses their expertise and educational knowledge to great effect in providing the school with comprehensive reports and training to bring about improvement.
- The governing board, including the owners' representative, plays a highly-effective part in developing the school. The board fully delivers on the vision to 'ensure that no child is left behind'. Investment to support the school in increasing the number and stability of staffing has ensured that the school continues to benefit from the expertise of committed leaders and teachers.




<b>Management, staffing, facilities and resources</b>	Outstanding
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- All aspects of school life are managed well and procedures are in place to ensure the very smooth running of the school. Routines are established and well-known and aid the management of a large student body.
- The school enjoys very generous staffing levels with staff suitably qualified. The staff members are deployed thoughtfully and imaginatively to meet the needs of the complete range of students. There is on-going professional development for staff, which is thorough and linked to the needs of students, as with the recent team-teaching training at the start of the school year.
- The premises are of an excellent standard, with light, spacious learning areas. Specialist facilities, such as the well-stocked libraries, multiple sports halls and swimming pools, mosque, prayer rooms and STEM, art, design and technology areas, all contribute to an atmosphere and environment which are conducive to learning.
- All classrooms have large, interactive panels and there is, additionally, a very wide range of appropriate specialist equipment for art and design, and in the laboratories and technology areas. A recent development is the facility for some students to bring their own device for use in lessons.

## 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	
 <b>Parents*</b>	<b>2016-2017</b>	378
	<b>2015-2016</b>	234
 <b>Teachers</b>	142	
 <b>Students</b>	280	

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

- Almost all parents agree that their children enjoy school and are safe in school and on school transport. All teachers support this view.
- The large majority of parents is satisfied with the quality of education provided by the school and most agree that good teaching helps their children to do well. However, a large minority does not agree that the school welcomes those with special educational needs.
- All teachers agree that they know students' strengths and weaknesses well and that the school promotes students' literacy and a love of reading in Arabic.
- Almost all teachers and most students and parents agree that the school helps students to gain a good understanding of the importance of Islamic values in Dubai.
- Most teachers agree that the school helps to ensure that students are safe while browsing the internet and social media at school. Although a large minority of parents have a different view, evidence from the inspection does not support their concerns.
- Almost all students agree that they know that the school wants them to follow school rules, do their best and succeed. However, a large majority disagree that they have the opportunity to decide class activities and rules.
- A few parents have a number of other concerns, in particular regarding fees, the lack of text books, the use of phones and other devices in school, students' behaviour, and some students being treated more favourably than others.

### 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](mailto:inspection@khda.gov.ae)