



The International School  
of Choueifat - Branch

 Curriculum: SABIS

Overall Rating:

Acceptable



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

Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al-Maktoum



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## School information

General information	
Location	Dubai Investment Park
Type of school	Private
Opening year of school	2012
Website	www.iscdip-sabis.net
Telephone	04-8847884
Address	Dubai Investment Park
Principal	Jamal Hazbun
Language of instruction	English
Inspection dates	13 February to 16 February 2017

Teachers / Support staff	
Number of teachers	129
Largest nationality group of teachers	Irish
Number of teaching assistants	36
Teacher-student ratio	1:23
Number of guidance counsellors	7
Teacher turnover	39%

Students	
Gender of students	Boys and girls
Age range	4-18
Grades or year groups	KG 1-Grade 12
Number of students on roll	3010
Number of children in pre-kindergarten	None
Number of Emirati students	24
Number of students with SEND	0
Largest nationality group of students	Arab

Curriculum	
Educational permit / Licence	SABIS
Main curriculum	SABIS(UK/US)
External tests and examinations	AP, SAT, IGCSE, GCSE, AS-level, A-level
Accreditation	MSACS, NCPSA, AI
National Agenda benchmark tests	GL progress tests



## 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 International School of Choueifat - Branch



- The school opened in September 2012. The roll has increased from 2,179 in 2015 to 3,010 at the time of this inspection. It is part of the SABIS group of over 50 schools worldwide, and follows the SABIS curriculum. The principal has been in post since 2012.
- Recurring strengths of the school highlighted in the last two inspection reports include: students' attainment and progress in English and mathematics in some phases; aspects of students' personal development; and procedures for ensuring students' health and safety.
- Recommendations made over the past two years of inspection included: governors ensuring compliance with MOE requirements for teaching Islamic education and Arabic as an additional language and raising attainment in both of these subjects. Also highlighted was a need for the school to improve; teaching, learning, assessment, the curriculum and provision for SEN students.

## Summary of inspection findings 2016-2017



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

- Students' achievement is highest in English, where it is good from the elementary phase onwards, and in mathematics, good in both the middle and high school phases. Progress in science ranges from weak in the Kindergarten (KG) to good in the high school. Attainment in science is generally acceptable, as it is in Islamic Education and Arabic as a first language. In Arabic as an additional language, attainment and progress are weak. Students acquire and demonstrate learning skills to a good level in high school and to an acceptable level at the other phases.
- Students' personal development proceeds well, and by the middle and high school they have very positive and mature attitudes and behaviour. Understanding of Islamic values and Emirati and other cultures, and social responsibility and innovation skills are developed to an acceptable level.
- Teaching is good at the high school phase, where teachers benefit from more freedom to develop students' critical thinking skills. Assessment is acceptable at all phases, as is teaching across the other phases.
- The curriculum is designed to an acceptable level overall, though it is weak at the Kindergarten phase, where there is insufficient attention given to science. Adaptations to the curriculum to meet the learning needs of different groups of students are rare, and this aspect is weak overall.
- Staff pay good attention to ensuring that the school is safe, that healthy lifestyle choices are promoted, and that students are protected. Care and support are exercised to an acceptable level. There are weaknesses in the school's policy on students with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND).
- Leadership policies do not take sufficient account of the UAE School Inspection Framework nor of inspection findings from previous reports, and as a result, self-evaluation and improvement planning, and governance are very weak, and partnerships with parents are weak. Leadership, management, staffing, facilities and resources are at an acceptable level overall.

### What the school does best

- The school effectively develops students' attainment and progress in mathematics and science at high school, in English in Grade 1 to Grade 12, and students' learning skills in the high school phase.
- Staff successfully encourage and help students in their personal development, particularly in the middle and high school phases, where students have very well developed, mature and responsible attitudes to work and to others.
- The quality of teaching at the high school phase is good, and teachers develop students' critical thinking skills more effectively at that phase than at others.
- Staff pay effective attention to ensuring that students are safe, healthy and protected.

### Recommendations

- Governors should urgently ensure that senior leaders and other staff address the recommendations, previously made in the last two inspection reports.
- Raise attainment and improve the quality of teaching and learning, particularly at the elementary and middle phases, and especially in Arabic as an additional language by;
  - using assessment information more effectively to ensure that work is challenging and well-matched to students' individual needs
  - developing students' critical thinking, problem-solving and independent learning skills
  - identifying and sharing the best practices seen at the high school phase
- Improve the curriculum by ensuring that it is adapted to meet the needs of all groups of students, and is compliant with the MoE's requirements for teaching Arabic as an additional language and Islamic education.
- Strengthen science teaching in the Kindergarten to secure high achievement and continuity and progression in children's learning.
- Review admission procedures for students with SEND, aligning them to KHDA requirements and best international practice to ensure that the systems for identifying and supporting students with SEND and those with gifts and talents are rigorous and effective in supporting the students to make good progress.
- Strengthen partnerships with parents by involving them more in their children's learning and the life of the school.

## 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.
- In relation to the National Agenda Parameter, attainment in English, mathematics, science is not secure.
- Senior leaders have not analysed the National Agenda Parameter results fully, nor have they produced a National Agenda Action Plan. They have modified the curriculum in a limited way. Teachers are being trained to help students to meet the requirements of PISA and TIMSS tests, based on an analysis of student performance in school-based tests.
- Senior staff have taken some steps to align the curriculum more closely to the requirements of TIMSS and PISA tests. For example, in mathematics, younger students now study the fundamentals of geometry and use simple graphs with confidence.
- In the high school, teachers are beginning to modify their teaching strategies to promote the development of critical thinking. In mathematics, students find different ways of solving problems. In English, students are encouraged to make inferences from what they read. Independent learning and critical thinking skills are less well developed at other phases.
- Students have a general understanding of the role of the National Agenda assessment, but do not have a detailed knowledge of their individual performance in the N.A.P tests. The school does not use these reports to inform students of their achievement and identify individual learning styles. Students use technological devices, books and other media to support research, especially in English but it is not supported as strongly in mathematics.

Overall, the school is making improvements in provision towards achieving its National Agenda targets at the expected rate.



Overall school performance

Acceptable

1 Students' achievement

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

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

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

## 3. Teaching and assessment

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

## 4. Curriculum

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

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

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

## 6. Leadership and management

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

# Main inspection report



## 1. Students' achievement

	 KG	
Subjects	Attainment	Progress
Islamic education	Not applicable	Not applicable
Arabic as a first language	Not applicable	Not applicable
Arabic as an additional language	Not applicable	Not applicable
English	Acceptable	Acceptable
Mathematics	Acceptable	Acceptable
Science	Weak ↓	Weak ↓

- In English, children have levels of knowledge and understanding in language development that are in line with age-related expectations. Opportunities to develop their vocabulary through speaking and listening are limited. Children can use their understanding of phonics to read words and write simple sentences. They make acceptable progress over time and against lesson learning objectives. Some children do not progress as well as others because the work is not sufficiently well matched to the necessary next steps in their learning.
- Most children make the expected progress and achieve in line with curriculum and national age-related standards in all aspects of mathematics. In lessons, they are developing an understanding of numeracy and can perform the key skills of counting, reading and writing numbers, and measuring different quantities. Children can add and subtract two numbers and record these using the correct symbols. They can identify and describe the features of simple shapes such as squares and triangles and compare objects that are taller or shorter than each other.
- For a large majority of children, their understanding of scientific concepts and their development of enquiry skills are below age-related expectations. Scientific investigations and the practical activities that support them are not a consistent feature of the curriculum. Consequently, children do not have regular opportunities to explore the world around them, develop skills or consolidate their understanding of science. This hampers the progress of children over time.

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

- Most students attain levels of knowledge and understanding of Islamic concepts that are in line with curriculum standards. They understand some basic ideas but cannot fully explain the impact of these on their daily lives. Although most students make expected progress in lessons, through response to direct questions from the textbook, progress over time, as seen in their recent written work is sometimes below expectations. Teachers sometimes do not have high enough expectations of what the students can achieve. Recitation skills are under developed.
- In Arabic as a first language, most students attain levels in line with learning objectives. Their internal examination results show better attainment than is often seen in lessons and in workbooks. Most students can understand spoken Arabic, but they tend to respond in dialect rather than standard Arabic. Students' writing skills are limited to copying short exercises, though a few can write short summary paragraphs reasonably well. They have difficulty in speaking fluently about their ideas and in understanding and interpreting poetry. Progress for most is in line with curriculum expectations.
- The large majority of students attain skills that are below curriculum standards for Arabic as an additional language. Even though students have been learning the language for some years, the outcomes are below expectations in all language skills and especially in speaking, because of their limited vocabulary. Most students do not make the expected progress in lessons. This is because of weak teaching strategies and low expectations of what different groups can achieve. Progress over time is not evident in their writing, again due to low expectations.
- Most students can read, spell, write and recite new vocabulary in English at grade level standards. Workbook exercises in reading comprehension show that students can recall information and respond with simple and complex sentences. Handwriting is not as well developed. By the end of the phase, writing skills, including use of imaginative vocabulary, are well developed. Overall, the majority of students make better than expected progress measured against learning objectives.
- Students make steady progress in mathematics, reaching acceptable standards. The results obtained in international tests are lower than standards typically seen in school, but school-based assessment results are overly positive. Students develop a good knowledge of number work and calculation. They memorise times tables thoroughly. A minority have difficulty in solving word problems. Students make slower progress in studying shapes and space, than in number. The most and least able students do not make as much progress as others because the work is not always matched to their needs.

- In science, internal and external assessment data suggest that most students understand concepts and have skills which are in line with curriculum standards. Opportunities for practical work are few, and, as a result, these skills are underdeveloped, as are investigative skills. Students progress through their studies at an expected rate in lessons and over time. Some groups of students lack the support and challenge required to make better progress.

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

- Most students attain levels in Islamic education that are in line with curriculum standards. They can explain simple concepts but struggle with more abstract ideas. A few students can support their views by reference to the Holy Qur'an and Hadith. Most of the students make the expected progress in lessons. Their ability to apply knowledge is limited, as much of it is based on memorisation rather than understanding. Recitation skills are also under-developed.
- Most of the students attain levels in line with curriculum standards in Arabic as a first language. Internal examination results indicate better results than other indicators. Their listening skills are in line with curriculum standards, but speaking skills are less well developed. Writing skills are limited to short answers, though some students can use paragraphs. Students can speak about their ideas using words they have gleaned from textbooks. They can read prescribed literature texts, but interpretation is less well developed. Progress is in line with appropriate expectations.
- In Arabic as an additional language, the large majority of students attain skills that are below curriculum standards. Their abilities to use the language in a context are weak, and many cannot start simple short conversations. They are not confident in using basic words to build a short paragraph or a sentence. Most do not make the expected progress in lessons as they cannot understand the spoken language. Low expectations by teachers hamper students' progress.
- Most students are articulate when asked to read, comprehend and speak about English texts. They can write clear and effective introductions, use word choice to convey purpose and use transition words and phrases to link ideas. By the end of the phase, most students can produce written work which develops topics in relevant detail. Overall, most students make good progress. Student workbooks show progress over time compared to their starting points. More able students are not sufficiently challenged, and so make less progress as a result.

- The majority of students make good progress in lessons and in written working, exceeding curriculum standards for mathematics, especially in work related to number and algebra. They make slower progress in geometry. Attainment is not as high as the school tracking system suggests. In classes for younger students, less and more able students make slower progress than others because the work set is not always appropriate for them. In older classes, more able students have a clear grasp of concepts and can suggest alternative means of solving problems.
- Students' knowledge and understanding of science curriculum topics, as suggested by internal and external assessments, is in line with standards. Over time and in lessons, students make expected progress. Not all groups of students progress at the same rate, and some lack the support and challenge required to make faster progress. Practical skills are developing, and analytical skills are beginning to emerge by the end of the phase.

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

- Most students attain levels that are in line with curriculum standards for Islamic education. They can deduce rulings and guidelines from verses. Only a few students have the skills to use their knowledge to support their views about the impact on their daily lives. Most students make the expected progress in lessons in relation to learning objectives. The outcomes in their recent work reflect lack of depth and low expectations.
- In Arabic as a first language, most of the students attain levels in line with curriculum standards. Skills in comprehension and writing are better than other skills. Most students can listen to and understand standard Arabic, but they use dialect or slang when responding. They have difficulty speaking fluently as their vocabulary is limited, and in interpreting prescribed literature topics without teacher help. Progress is in line with curriculum expectations.
- Less than three quarters of students attain language skills that are in line with curriculum standards in Arabic as an additional language. They can start simple sentences but have difficulty in going further and expressing themselves confidently. Most students do not make the expected progress in lessons in relation to learning objectives. They can repeat what they hear, but are not confident when linking new knowledge with what they learned previously, especially in writing. Using the language in context is the weakest skill.
- Most students can write in English for different purposes and can analyse complex pieces of writing. They have the skills to annotate literature and show emerging understanding of literary devices such as foreshadowing and comparison and contrast of characters. High school students undertake textual analysis well to stimulate discussion and debate, and they can write well. Most students make good progress through opportunities for collaborative learning and the promotion of higher order thinking that fosters sophisticated discussion and analytical writing.

- Mathematics lessons and students' written work indicate good attainment in relation to curriculum standards. They obtain good results in public examinations, including IGCSE and AS level, and in international benchmarking tests, making rapid and sustained progress. Results in class and in IGCSE examinations have remained good over the last two years. Students' knowledge of a broad range of mathematical topics develops well. They have a well-developed understanding of mathematical concepts, engaging in increasingly challenging work. Students memorise pre-learned strategies and apply them well to solving problems. Students are beginning to develop skills in critical thinking.
- The attainment of students in physics is slightly better than in the other sciences. Overall, attainment for most students is in line with the curriculum standards. Progress is as expected for most students, and a majority make better than expected progress, particularly in acquiring investigative skills. As students focus on the requirements of external examinations, attainment and progress increase, especially in those areas related to investigation or problem-solving.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
<b>Learning skills</b>	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good ↑

- Students generally do what is asked of them and exhibit positive attitudes, although they are all too often passive learners, especially in the elementary and middle phases. In the high school phase, students take more responsibility for their own learning. Overall, engagement with learning improves as students move through the school.
- When opportunities occur, students interact and collaborate well, displaying effective communication skills. These skills are rarely witnessed in Kindergarten and the elementary phase, as teachers there tend to dominate rather than facilitate discussion. In the high school phase, more open, thoughtful discussions ensue between students and, as a result, learning is deeper.
- Students can make connections between different areas of learning when the opportunity arises. They can apply their skills to problems that reflect real-world situations. These opportunities are seen more in the high school phase, and are less frequent in the other phases, which limits students' understanding of the world.
- In the higher grades, some opportunities are created for the higher order skills of analysing, synthesising and hypothesising to be displayed. In the other phases these skills are not developed. Few examples of open, independent research, using technology are seen at those phases.

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

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
<b>Personal development</b>	Good	Good	Very good ↑	Very good ↑

- Students display positive attitudes towards school. Children in Kindergarten are eager to please, and willingly take part in activities when given the opportunity to do so. Students gain increasing confidence as they move through the school, so that by the time they reach the middle and high school phases they show maturity in their attitudes and behaviour.
- Students are mostly self-disciplined and respond well to their peers and adults. They follow the school rules and their behaviour contributes to a co-operative learning environment. They mostly show concern and sensitivity to the needs of their friends and report that they feel safe and supported by all in the school community.
- Students are respectful towards each other and adults. The Student Life Organisation (SLO) is run by students, and prefects in the group help to resolve any difficulties that may arise between other students. In the middle and high school phases, students do not hesitate to provide support to others when appropriate.
- Students in all phases have positive attitudes towards healthy eating and understand the reasons for maintaining a healthy lifestyle. They take part in a variety of sporting activities during lessons and extra-curricular sessions, organised by teachers. They understand the school's guidance on maintaining a suitable weight, and making healthy lifestyle choices.
- Attendance is very good across the school, with an attendance rate of 96% from Grades 1 to 12. Students are aware of the need for good attendance, though some students arrive late to school and occasionally to lessons.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
<b>Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures</b>	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

- Students demonstrate an adequate understanding of Islamic cultures and the impact of these on their daily lives in the UAE. Students are aware of importance of Islamic occasions, such as Ramadan and Eid al-Adha. Values of co-existence and honesty prevail throughout the school.
- Emirati heritage and culture are adequately understood by students. In the Kindergarten, the children have limited understanding of the UAE culture. Students and stakeholders are interested in participating in events linked to the UAE such as the National, Flag and Martyr Days.
- Students from the many nationalities in the school are appreciative of their own culture and have respect for the culture of others. They are broadly aware of the features of other cultures in terms of food, dress and attitudes. Students across the school and parents organize and celebrate the Culture Day in interesting ways.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
<b>Social responsibility and innovation skills</b>	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

- Students contribute to the life of school and wider community through some activities offered by the school and, to a lesser extent, through limited student-initiated projects. They can share their own opinions on how the school might improve, although the school does not always respond effectively.
- Students have a positive work ethic. They show interest in activities both inside school and in the wider community although they rarely take the lead to be creative or entrepreneurial.
- Students understand the importance of taking care of the environment and the need to be proactive in its protection. There are limited opportunities in this regard and are not encouraged sufficiently to transfer their thoughts and ideas into actions.

### 3. Teaching and assessment

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
<b>Teaching for effective learning</b>	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good ↑

- Almost all teachers have secure subject knowledge and can teach students at a level appropriate to their understanding, especially those who teach in the high school phase. In many lessons in the Kindergarten, elementary and middle phases, teachers do not adapt their teaching to ensure that all groups of students have opportunities to learn in different ways.
- Teachers plan and deliver lessons so that the purpose of each activity is clear and that time is managed appropriately. However, teachers provide a limited range of learning activities, and this reduces the opportunities for collaboration, independent learning and the use of technology. In the high school phase, teachers create more positive learning environments to which students respond by focusing intently on their work.
- In the better English lessons, especially in high school, teachers' questions initiate discussions and opportunities for students to reflect on ideas. Across all phases, questioning focuses too narrowly on seeking short responses, and this limits opportunity for students to reflect and consider more extended, open responses.
- In some lessons, teachers use imaginative approaches to meet the needs of different groups of learners. However, teaching too often focuses on the whole class of students rather than attempting to meet the needs of individuals. As a result, opportunities are missed to provide further challenge to those who already understand, and further support for those who do not.
- Across most phases, lessons do not provide sufficient opportunities for students to think creatively, solve problems and be innovative. This is a better feature in high school, but the limited range of resources used limits opportunities for students to research independently across all areas of the curriculum.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
<b>Assessment</b>	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

- Internal assessment systems are regular and robust. They are used to measure where students have reached in relation to the school's curriculum, through frequent, formal testing. Much of the testing is knowledge-based. Key skills and higher level thinking processes, such as critical thinking and problem solving, are not assessed sufficiently.
- The school has used an international benchmark test which compares students' academic outcomes in several grades with those of students internationally. The senior team has neither analysed nor used the information to support improvement planning for individual student achievement. The school now offers IGCSE, and AS and A-levels, in addition to US tests such as SAT and Advanced Placement.
- The analysis of assessment data is an ongoing practice which informs the school and teachers about individual and whole cohort progress. It is a stronger feature in high school English. Students who are identified as experiencing problems can revisit areas they find difficult. However, when re-teaching, teachers frequently use methods like those which have previously proved unsuccessful.
- Internal assessment information is used to make limited modifications to the curriculum. External data is not used to modify teaching or the curriculum. Despite the wealth of data available, individual teachers do not use this to adjust the curriculum or teaching to meet the needs of their specific students, especially in the elementary phase.
- Teachers know their students' strengths and areas for development well. Across English, mathematics and science, in the high school, teachers carefully monitor students' progress in class, providing support and challenge when necessary. This is not such a strong feature in classes for younger students, where limited challenge is provided for the most able students and lower attaining students frequently find the work too difficult.

#### 4. Curriculum

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
<b>Curriculum design and implementation</b>	Weak ↓	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

- The curriculum is generally broad and balanced in its coverage of key subject areas, with a strong emphasis on the development of knowledge. There are insufficient opportunities for students to develop higher-order learning skills in most subjects, although this is a better feature in the high school phase. While most key subjects allocate appropriate teaching time, the allocation to Islamic education and Arabic as an additional language are not compliant with statutory requirements.
- The curriculum features continuity and progression in all key subjects across the phases, including Kindergarten, although this age group is not offered a science curriculum, which is a weakness. There are no identification strategies or modifications to meet the needs of students with special educational needs or disabilities.

- A range of curricular options provide students in the high school phase with opportunities to develop their academic interests. There are fewer options available for the younger students.
- Cross-curricular links are occasionally included in some lessons in the elementary phase and are better featured in the middle and high school phases. The frequency of such interdisciplinary links is not sufficient to provide regular opportunities for all students to make connections and apply concepts learned in one domain to another.
- Senior leaders, subject leaders and Academic Quality Controllers (AQC's) review the school's curriculum, and some measures of improvement to it result, such as the addition of accelerated English courses to support underachieving students.
- The MoE Social Studies program has a strong focus on the UAE culture and heritage, taught in the Arabic Social Studies/Civics lessons. Teachers follow the Ministry of Education textbook. Arabic as a first language students have one 55-minute class per week, while non-Arab students in Grades 4-9 have one 25-minute class per week. Pacing charts for each grade outline the content of the course to ensure that all teachers cover the MoE Social Studies curriculum. Assessment in the subject takes the form of a short multiple choice test.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
<b>Curriculum adaptation</b>	Weak	Weak	Weak	Weak

- School instruction closely follows the SABIS curriculum with little or no modification by classroom teachers. The learning needs of individual students are not addressed effectively in classes. Special classes in core subjects provide instruction to assist students in passing class tests. Some students take advanced placement programs or self-study courses.
- The curriculum is based on a philosophy that is defined and linear, but which does not allow for teacher-inspired curriculum enhancement, enterprise, and innovation during class sessions. High school students participate in Model United Nations, and a "Rising Inquisitiveness" project has recently been introduced in the elementary phase.
- Students learn about Emirati culture and UAE society in Islamic education, Arabic and social studies classes, and in other ways such as school-wide celebrations for National Day, Flag Day, and Martyr Day. On National Day, some students celebrated in Zabeel Park with Sheikh Mohammed.

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

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
<b>Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding</b>	Good	Good	Good	Good

- The school's records on safeguarding are detailed and comprehensive. Child protection policies and procedures are well known by staff and students. The few instances of child protection concerns that occur are dealt with satisfactorily. The safety and security of all are taken seriously.
- Buses are organised although not all children wear the seat belts which are available. A register is taken, and an adult accompanies each bus. Drop-off by parents is monitored by security personnel. Visitors are issued with a pass on arrival, which allows access.
- Maintenance repair work is rapid and responsive to need, and a thorough log is kept of in-house and externally contracted work. Fire equipment is in sufficient supply and is maintained well, and all necessary safety checks, including water and power, are carried out as required.
- The site is accessible for all, with ramps and elevators available. Shaded areas, with padding on some concrete pillars, create a suitable facility for breaks so that students may relax comfortably all year round. Toilets are clean and hygienic.
- The school promotes the notion of healthy lifestyle choices in a variety of ways. School nurses, SLO (student life organisation), lessons, the cafeteria, notices and PE staff all contribute to this message, which is acted on by students, though with more vigour in the lower grades than in the upper.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
<b>Care and support</b>	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

- Staff and student relationships are courteous, contributing to a calm atmosphere on campus. Behaviour is maintained by supervisors and staff in each section of the school. Students are friendly and collaborate well with each other during classes and around the campus, during lunch and scheduled breaks in the school day.
- The school maintains a very good level of attendance through the daily monitoring by staff, who establish close contact with parents to address reasons for absences and provide follow-up as warranted. However, late arrival of students in the morning is a concern. Attendance in the Kindergarten is well below the average of the other phases.
- The school does not accept students with special educational needs or disabilities for admission. No individualised education programmes have been written for currently enrolled students. Students who have difficulties in their schoolwork are identified, through testing and their low achievement in class and are subsequently offered additional instructional support, in special classes.

- Students failing class tests are enrolled in special classes. Peer tutoring also helps students who are having difficulties to stay on track. Students with behavioural issues are not always provided with appropriate guidance or intervention. Support provided for high-achieving students includes self-study courses. Gifted and/or talented students who are low-performing are not identified for support or enrichment.
- Student needs are addressed through the guidance and support provided by counsellors and supervisors. The Student Life Organization guides students in making healthy life choices. Exposure to local and international culture is provided through excursions and trips abroad. Counsellors guide students applying to university and focus on life choices, starting in Grade 9 with increasing support through their senior years.

## Inclusion

### Provision and outcomes for students with SEND

Weak

- The school's leadership team does not promote an inclusive ethos. The school has not appointed a member of staff to lead the development of provision for students who develop SEND after joining the school, and the programmes of instruction for students with special educational needs are under developed.
- Students are not identified for SEND provision at entry to the school nor while enrolled and consequently some struggle to make acceptable progress in classes.
- Parents attend an information meeting at the beginning of the school year and receive updates on subject-related attainment and progress. They do not receive any specific information, advice or feedback in relation to the specific learning needs of their children.
- The school promotes a whole-class teaching model. This prevents teachers from modifying lessons to meet the instructional needs of individuals and groups of students. Students who fail weekly class tests are enrolled in additional classes that prepare them for retaking the unit assessment.
- Students with SEND are not identified by the school and appropriate systems of personal support, curriculum modification, and progress tracking do not exist. Consequently, students with SEND continue to experience significant barriers to learning in the school.

## 6. Leadership and management

### The effectiveness of leadership

Acceptable

- Senior leaders in the school implement policies decided centrally by the SABIS group. They are well supported by middle leaders such as heads of department and academic quality controllers. s. They show commitment to the UAE National Agenda but do not demonstrate commitment to making provision for special educational needs.
- Leaders have established a learning culture as defined by SABIS policies on the curriculum, teaching, learning and assessment. Understanding or acknowledgement of best international practice in respect of these key aspects is not evident.
- Relationships and communications between staff members are courteous and professional. Roles and responsibilities are clear. Morale is generally positive, but some teachers are frustrated at the limited scope for trying different approaches to lessons.
- The awareness of different leaders of what improvements are required is variable. Heads of department have not demonstrated sufficient capacity to improve provision or outcomes in their subjects.
- Working together with other leaders and staff, the director and principal are improving some aspects of the school's work, including the quality of teaching at the high school phase. They have not ensured that all aspects of the curriculum are compliant with MoE requirements.

### School self-evaluation and improvement planning

Very weak

- The governors gather information about a range of aspects of the school's work, including students' internal and external test results and attendance. Senior leaders and governors do not analyse data or information accurately which results in a significantly inflated view of its performance and standards.
- Academic quality controllers monitor the quality of lessons and make judgements about teachers' competence. The criteria used do not include evaluation of the progress of students in the lesson. However, evaluations of teachers do include a judgement on students' attainment, but these are at times out of line with the judgement of their teaching.
- The Job description for the role of director make only scant reference to any responsibility for school improvement planning. The school does not have a plan which sets out projects for improvement, with success criteria and strategies for implementing objectives. Alterations to the curriculum are made by the owners and leaders have the responsibility for implementing them.
- Minimal attention has been paid to addressing recommendations in the last two inspection reports. Improvements over time have been limited.

**Partnerships with parents and the community**

Weak

- The school does not sufficiently involve or encourage parents in their children’s learning. While some parents see this as a strength of the school, many do not feel that the school welcomes their views about school improvement priorities or encourages their involvement.
- Parents can approach the school to request a meeting to discuss their children’s academic progress or personal development. These meetings are with an academic quality control officer, and not with any of the student’s teachers. All parents have access to the school’s website, which helps to keep them up-to-date with events.
- Reporting procedures involve detailed information about test marks, but do not set out next steps for learning or fully explain the students’ strengths and needs in personal development.
- Links with other schools or organisations are under-developed. The school makes few social contributions to the local, national or international communities.

**Governance**

Very weak

- The governing board includes officials of the SABIS group but does not have representation from parents or people in the community outside the school or group. Governors have responsibility for final decisions on strategic and operational matters and only delegate to senior leaders responsibility for implementing policies.
- Governors hold staff to account for implementing SABIS policies, but do not consider best international practice in curriculum, teaching, learning or assessment in their judgements about how well the school is working.
- Governors have not addressed the statutory requirements for teaching Arabic as an additional language or Islamic education. In addition, they have made little or no attempt to act upon recommendations in the previous two inspection reports.

Management, staffing, facilities and resources

Acceptable

- Day-to-day operation of the school is smooth. Students and staff moving around the school with ease in the amply proportioned space, and this instils a calm atmosphere which pervades for much of the time. Clear policies and procedures inform the planning, communication and lines of command in the organisation.
- Staff are deployed to ensure the timetable is implemented effectively. Most members of staff are suitably qualified apart from those teaching Arabic as an additional language. Only a minority of teachers have a post-graduate teaching qualification. There is an induction programme for newly appointed colleagues and there is update training for returning colleagues.
- The library contains too few books which can be used to provide a basis for satisfactory research in the upper grades, and the laboratories cannot satisfy the need of all grades carrying out experimental work. The sports hall, swimming pool, field and track are suitable for purpose.
- The range of resources in the Kindergarten is inadequate to encourage discovery and exploration. The tablets used in lessons are little more than an e-book version of textbooks and do not permit research. The range of books is sufficient to support the SABIS curriculum. Large screens in rooms allow for imaginative presentations, although this facility is not fully utilised.

## 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>	2016-2017	165
	2015-2016	264
 <b>Teachers</b>	18	
 <b>Students</b>	7	

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

- Around 9% of parents have responded to the survey, a drop from last year. Fourteen percent of teachers have responded. The number of students who have responded is too low to allow meaningful comment.
- Almost all parents who have responded are satisfied with the quality of education and feel that their children are safe in school and on school transport.
- Most parents feel that teaching is good, students are well behaved, and instances of bullying are rare. They think that their children enjoy school.
- While most parents think that the school is led well, almost half do not think that school leaders and staff listen to parents and act upon their views, and around one-third do not agree that school leaders and staff are approachable and open to discussions and solutions.
- While a majority of parents have positive views about aspects of the curriculum, around one-third have concerns about the development of creativity and social responsibility, and the helpfulness of reports on their children's progress.
- Almost half of the parents who responded do not feel that the school provides good quality counselling or other ways to help students with social or emotional needs.
- Only a minority of parents agree that the school promotes literacy and love of reading in Arabic.
- Most teachers enjoy working in the school. A majority feel that students are well behaved. A majority feel that professional development has helped them to become better teachers.
- A majority of teachers feel that students with special educational needs have not been identified accurately.

### 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)