DUBAI
Knowledge المعرفة

ARCADIA HIGH SCHOOL

UK CURRICULUM

INSPECTION REPORT
2021-2022

GOOD

Contents

School Information

General Information		
	Location	Barsha South
	Opening year of School	2019
	Website	www.arcadia.sch.ae
	Telephone	045522700
	Principal	Giles David Pruett
	Principal - Date appointed	7/1/2020
	Language of Instruction	English
	Inspection Dates	07 to 10 March 2022

Students		
	Gender of students	Boys and girls
	Age range	12-14
	Grades or year groups	Year 7-Year 9
	Number of students on roll	91
	Number of Emirati students	0
	Number of students of determination	13
	Largest nationality group of students	Arab

Teachers		
	Number of teachers	24
	Largest nationality group of teachers	British
	Number of teaching assistants	5
	Teacher-student ratio	1:12
	Number of guidance counsellors	1
	Teacher turnover	20%

Curriculum		
	Educational Permit/ License	UK
	Main Curriculum	UK
	External Tests and Examinations	Not applicable
	Accreditation	Not applicable

School Journey for ARCADIA HIGH SCHOOL

Outstanding · Very Good · Good · Acceptable · Weak · Very Weak

2021-2022

Summary of Inspection Findings 2021-2022

The overall quality of education provided by the school is **good**. The section below summarises the inspection findings for students' outcomes, provision and leadership.

Students Outcomes	• Student achievement is strong in English, mathematics and science. In these core subjects in the National Curriculum for England (NCfE), students achieve generally positive outcomes in their assessments. They are active and self-reflective learners. Student achievement in the Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Scheme (ASDAN) programme is particularly positive. Students have yet to reach the required standards in Islamic Education and Arabic. • Students have mostly positive attitudes towards school and learning. Relationships between students and staff are mutually respectful. Students have a deep understanding of their own culture and identity. They also appreciate other cultures including Emirati culture and customs. Students willingly accept roles of responsibility within the school community. They are active participants in the influential student leadership group.

Provision for learners	• Effective teaching practice is shared between most teachers. It is rooted in the their strong subject knowledge, skilful arrangement of time, and their expert probing questioning. Teachers know their students very well and collect assessment information to ensure that the learning needs of most students are met. Students value the oral and written formative feedback which they receive, and the clarity of their subject targets. • The curriculum is constructed to support the transition from primary to secondary school. It builds on the prior learning development and experiences of students. There is a wide range of curricular options and enrichment activities available. This forms an integral part of each school day. All students develop a clear understanding of UAE values, culture, and society. • The school has secure systems in place to guarantee the safety and well-being of its students. The physical education programme contributes significantly, with regular fitness testing, healthy food choices, and the promotion of their physical and mental happiness. The identification and support for students of determination is thorough. The school's complete approach to student development is evident in its emphasis on their welfare, counselling, guidance and care.

Leadership and management	• The principal has developed, in a short space of time, a cohesive and vibrant school community founded upon a shared vision. School leaders display strong professional competence and demonstrate an understanding of current educational practice. The school is extremely well equipped with all the necessary and relevant, up-to-date resources. It provides a stimulating learning environment for students and teachers.

The best features of the school:

- The school's vision which is providing a strong unity between the students, parents, teachers, and leadership
- The school's management, staffing and facilities in providing effective educational provision
- The quality of health and safety which ensure that all students are kept safe and well
- The quality of care and support for students ensuring positive outcomes in their personal development and social responsibility.

Key Recommendations:

- Improve the attainment and progress in Islamic Education and Arabic by:
  - modifying and using internal assessment data, to match tasks and activities which meet the learning needs of different groups of students
  - implementing the curriculum more effectively to address gaps in student attainment.

- Improve the consistency of teaching and learning by:
  - ensuring that all teachers are fully aware of what their students know, understand and can do with previous and newly acquired skills.
  - using students' attainment data to plan the next steps in their teaching.

- Improve the quality of leadership by:
  - ensuring the appraisal system focuses upon the impact on student achievement
  - sustaining high quality recruitment and retention processes of staff to support the needs of an expanding school.

Overall School Performance

Good

1. Students' Achievement

		Secondary
Islamic Education	Attainment	Weak
	Progress	Acceptable
Arabic as a First Language	Attainment	Weak
	Progress	Acceptable
Arabic as an Additional Language	Attainment	Weak
	Progress	Acceptable
English	Attainment	Good
	Progress	Good
Mathematics	Attainment	Good
	Progress	Good
Science	Attainment	Good
	Progress	Good

	Secondary
Learning skills	Good

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

	Secondary
Personal development	Very good
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Good
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Very good

3. Teaching and assessment

	Secondary
Teaching for effective learning	Good
Assessment	Good

4. Curriculum

	Secondary
Curriculum design and implementation	Good
Curriculum adaptation	Good

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

	Secondary
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection/ safeguarding	Very good
Care and support	Very good

6. Leadership and management

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

For further information regarding the inspection process, please look at **UAE School Inspection Framework**

Main Inspection Report

1. Students' Achievement

Islamic Education

	Secondary
Attainment	Weak
Progress	Acceptable

- Achievement for non-Arab Muslim students' is slightly better than that of Arab Muslim students. More able students are progressing slower than that of other groups of students. Lesson observation, and students' recent work, do not support the school's internal assessment data.
- Students' knowledge of most Islamic elements is below expectation. They have a limited understanding of etiquettes, values and morals, Islamic law and Seerah. Their progress is adequate in developing Islamic etiquettes and Hadeeth but less so with recitation of Holy Qur'an, memorisation and Fiqh.
- As student ability to quote Qur'anic verses is limited, their ability to link the different elements of Islamic Education is also less well-developed.

For Development:
- Ensure that all students are progressing appropriately in their learning.
- Improve students' knowledge and understanding of all elements of Islam.
- Develop students' ability to link between various aspects of Islamic Education and be able to quote Qur'anic verses and the Hadeeth appropriately.

Arabic as a First Language

	Secondary
Attainment	Weak
Progress	Acceptable

- More able students are progressing more slowly than other groups. Girls' achievement is relatively stronger than that of boys. Students in Year 8 are making marginally faster progress compared to Year 7 and Year 9.
- Students attain strong listening skills although their speaking, reading, and writing skills are noticeably below expectations. Most students are also making adequate progress in all skills except writing.
- Limitations with the implementation of the curriculum is causing gaps in students' linguistic abilities. Consequently, students are not challenged appropriately, and their needs and potential are not met by the activities and tasks provided for then in lessons.

For Development:
- Improve students' language skills by providing high expectations and appropriate challenge in lessons.
- Adapt teaching styles and modify the curriculum so that all students' linguistic needs are met.
- Ensure that the activities and tasks challenge students and match their needs.

Arabic as an Additional Language

	Secondary
Attainment	Weak
Progress	Acceptable

- Girls' progress is slightly better than that of boys. The achievement of the few students with less years of learning Arabic is relatively stronger than other groups. More able students in Years 8 and 9 are progressing more slowly than those in Year 7.
- A majority of students show adequate listening and reading of prior learning of phrases and sentences. Their basic writing skills are developing. However, independent writing, reading comprehension and confidence in speaking, are weak. Progress across the range of linguistic skills is just acceptable.
- The school is developing a support programme for those students who have just joined the school or have very little experience in learning Arabic. This is beginning to establish a positive base for the acquisition of language skills.

For Development:
- Improve students' language skills by providing more consistent opportunities and an appropriate level of challenge to all students.
- Amend the curriculum so that it meets all the learning needs and language skills of all students.

English

	Secondary
Attainment	Good
Progress	Good

- Students are actively engaged in their learning and good progress is being made in lessons. Learning is enhanced by creative lesson planning and the establishment of positive learning routines for students.
- Students are making good progress in developing their reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills. This is being supported by the use of a wide range of digital learning technologies and appropriate opportunities to apply and develop these skills in lessons.
- A detailed data analysis process has allowed the department to identify reading skills as a focus area for teaching and learning. The development of the secondary school library, as a reading centre, is now beginning to provide the necessary support and reading opportunities for students across the school.

For Development:
- Ensure that transitions between the key stages are seamless and effective, offering students continuity and challenge in their learning experiences.
- Ensure that the library continues to become an active and attractive reading centre for students.

Mathematics

	Secondary
Attainment	Good
Progress	Good

- The majority of students attain levels that are above curriculum standards. The attainment of girls is generally higher than that of boys.
- Most students in Year 7 can recognise terms in sequences, including the Fibonacci series. They can represent sequences in tabular and graphical forms. Year 8 students can draw scatter graphs appropriately. Year 9 are able to explain and apply vertices, symmetry, transformations and quadrilaterals confidently to real life situations.
- The mathematical skills of the more able students across all classes are extended creatively in lessons and with homework. However, many students are not as strong in their mental mathematical ability as they are in reasoning and problem-solving. This is delaying their understanding of some mathematical topics and progress.

For Development:

- Ensure that all students' skills in mental mathematics, and their understanding of key mathematical vocabulary, provides a solid foundation for future work.

Science

	Secondary
Attainment	Good
Progress	Good

- In all years students are developing investigative skills and improving their understanding of scientific methodology through laboratory sessions and demonstrations. In the better lessons, students are more independent in undertaking research, developing a hypothesis, describing procedures and evaluating outcomes.
- Students are becoming adept in their use and understanding of abstract and complex scientific terminology. The emphasis on vocabulary is contributing to students' literacy and critical thinking skills, enabling them to make connections and offer explanations in their own words.
- The effective use of assessment data for planning is inconsistently applied in lessons. Teaching strategies such as, levelled assignments accelerate learning when implemented in a reliable way.

For Development:

- Enhance the effective use of data to maximise learning for all students by tailoring teaching strategies to meet individual student needs.

Learning Skills

	Secondary
Learning skills	Good

- Students have positive attitudes towards their learning and have formed respectful relationships with their teachers and with each other. Students report that they enjoy their learning experiences at school, and this is demonstrated in lessons.
- Learning skills are systematically developed in lessons and are supported by development opportunities provided through the wide range of enrichment programmes available.
- In some lessons, students are not provided with opportunities to practise and apply their learning skills. This is generally due to subject content being the focus of lesson design and delivery.

For Development:
- Ensure that the quality of learning skills development strategies is consolidated and enhanced.

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

	Secondary
Personal development	Very good

- Girls are more active in adopting and promoting healthy lifestyles than boys. The attitude and behaviour of students in Year 9 is more mature than in other year groups.
- Overall, students in the school are confident, self-reliant, and self-disciplined. They have very positive and responsible attitudes and behaviour. Students are really caring, supportive and sensitive to each other's needs. They have a very strong and respectful relationship with their peers, teachers and staff.
- Student attendance is very high and most are punctual to school in the morning. The school encourages, and students are adopting, healthy lifestyle, behaviours and habits for the future.

	Secondary
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Good

- Students in Year 8 understand world cultures slightly better than those in Years 7 and 9. Girls' knowledge of how their own culture and Islamic values' impact on their life is stronger than that of boys.
- Students have a clear appreciation of how Islamic values' impact on life within the UAE. They have a strong knowledge and understanding of their own and worldwide cultures. Their knowledge of Emirati culture and the heritage that is underpinning and influencing modern life in UAE is developing.
- The school is promoting world cultures across all year groups through a wide range of activities and events. This has had a positive impact on enhancing students' knowledge and the understanding of each other's culture, heritage, and tradition.

	Secondary
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Very good

- Students are actively involved in their school and participate in a wide range of activities, clubs, and after school programmes. The 'Reach Mentoring Programme' and the 'Unilever Hackathon' programmes is allowing students to participate and contribute through virtual settings.
- Students are demonstrating their entrepreneurial and enterprise skills through in the involvement and management of a business endeavour called, the 'Kiva Project'. This project is enabling students to acquire first-hand knowledge in business management and money matters as they run their own small enterprises.
- Students are keenly aware of the value of improving the environment and promoting sustainability. 'Building a Sustainable House', where students collaborate on the research, design, and the building of a prototype model, is an example of the opportunities on offer.

For Development:
- Enhance students' knowledge of Emirati culture and heritage that underpins and influences life in UAE.
- Develop students' social contribution to the school and wider community by providing more opportunities for volunteering and leadership roles.

3. Teaching and assessment

	Secondary
Teaching for effective learning	Good

- Skilful teaching is enabling a majority of students to make better than expected progress in most subjects . Effective teaching practice is shared and teachers are using strong subject knowledge, skilful use of time, and questioning to ensure that students become active and self-reflective learners.
- Lessons are planned intelligently with clear subject objectives and focused curriculum outcomes. Teachers know their students well and increasingly use assessment information to ensure that the learning needs of most students are met.
- In some subjects the quality of teaching does not help students to understand how to learn effectively and is not always based on what students know, understand and can do. Some lower attaining students have misunderstandings and gaps in their knowledge which are not addressed before teachers move on to more difficult content.

	Secondary
Assessment	Good

- The school's assessment, recording and reporting policies are thorough and comprehensive in content. The analysis of students' results is becoming increasingly robust.
- The aligning of internal and external tests is secure in English and mathematic and shows good progress in other subjects as the school expands.
- School data and classroom profiles are used well by many teachers to shape their planning and provide targets for students. This is not consistent across the school. Students value the oral and written feedback they receive and the clarity of their targets. However, feedback does not always focus on identifying gaps in learning and how students can address them.

For Development:
- Ensure that teachers of Islamic Education and Arabic enable students to learn effectively.
- Ensure that all teachers recognise what students know, understand and can do and use assessment information to plan the next steps in their teaching and learning in lessons.

4. Curriculum

	Secondary
Curriculum design and implementation	Good

- The curriculum, based on the NCfE, is constructed to support the transition from the primary school to the secondary school, building on the prior learning and experiences of Arcadia students.
- The curriculum has a clear rationale and is broad, balanced, and innovative. A wide range of curricular options and enrichment activities are available to learners in all year groups.
- Cross-curricular links are embedded across the curriculum. Review procedures, both at whole-school and subject levels, are firmly in place. Curriculum modifications, based on the reviews and identified learning needs of individual students, are actioned appropriately.

	Secondary
Curriculum adaptation	Good

- A wide range of curriculum enrichment opportunities provides students with innovative, diverse and exciting learning opportunities and experiences. Through the use learning data, subject leaders and teachers are modifying the curriculum to meet the needs of almost all groups of students in the school.
- The ASDAN programme is an example of an appropriate and effective curriculum initiative which personalises learning for students of determination, within this inclusive, supportive, and caring learning environment.

- Appropriate learning experiences, including the Moral Social Cultural Studies (MSCS) Programme, are being integrated across many parts of the curriculum, to enable students to develop a clearer understanding of UAE values, culture, and society. However, there is scope for further innovation and creativity in this area.

For Development:
- Ensure that the MSCS Programme is firmly embedded across the whole curriculum and especially in the humanities subjects.
- Identify opportunities for developing links with the local community, provide students with new learning experiences which promote social contribution.

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

	Secondary
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding	Very good

- The school has a systematic model of safeguarding to ensure the safety and well-being of all student and staff. Procedures and policies are thorough and cover all aspects of the school and grounds. In some lessons, and laboratories, safety procedures are not always followed consistently.
- Safe and healthy lifestyles are embedded into all aspects of the school culture. The physical education programme contributes significantly to student swell-being with regular fitness testing the promotion of healthy food choices and physical exercises.
- The school has developed and implemented a school wide action plan for the reopening of school following the pandemic. The social, and emotional care for all including vulnerable students, as well as protections against online and cyber bullying, are effective in supporting their return to the classroom.

	Secondary
Care and support	Very good

- Staff and students demonstrate caring and courteous relationships. Positive behaviour informs the management of student behaviour. School systems for promoting attendance and addressing punctuality are strong.
- The identification and support for students of determination is thorough. The school's alternative pathway for students of determination is beneficial to those students wishing to pursue a qualification. The school's identification and support for students with gifts and talents is developing further.
- The school's all-inclusive approach to student development is a strength and evident in its emphasis on well-being, counselling, care and career guidance.

For Development:
- Ensure that teachers, staff, and students are knowledgeable about best practices in safety procedures for lessons and within the laboratories.
- Improve the quality of support and challenge given in all subjects to ensure students of all abilities make stronger progress.

Inclusion of students of determination

Provision and outcomes for students of determination	Good

- Governors and school leaders are committed to the inclusive principles which permeate every aspect of school life.. The inclusion governor, the champion and the inclusive education improvement plan are in place.
- Procedures on entry to different classes are applied. The accurate identification of students of determination is in line with KHDA categorisation to inform appropriate interventions. The school's 'Identification of Need' flow chart is successful in mapping internal processes regarding identification and support.
- The school collaborates closely with parents of students of determination, including those who require higher level of collaboration and support. School leaders understand that greater co-ordination to maintain current levels of effective communication between home and school will be required as the school grows.
- Personal support for students of determination is focused and promotes the development of confidence and resilience. An appropriate modified curriculum ensures that, combined with personal support interventions, students' needs can be met. The 'Arcadia Creative Avenues Pathway (ACAP)' is the school's pathway for older students of determination wishing to pursue a valid qualification.
- Assessments are frequently made to ensure that teaching is leading to progress in students' learning. A range of information from students' work and teacher assessment ensures that they are well prepared for their next stages in education. For older students, this includes the achievement of valid qualifications.

For Development:
- Ensure that the learning needs of all students of determination are met so that they can make the best possible progress.
- Maintain the current levels of effective communication with parents.

6. Leadership and management

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

- Leaders, led by the principal, are dedicated and effective. They display strong professional competence and an understanding of current educational practice. Senior leaders share a clear sense of purpose and are successful in communicating the school's aims, including a commitment to inclusion. This creates a positive morale throughout the school. The impact of school leadership on school performance has been constrained by the arrival and induction of new staffing and pandemic limitations.
- Positive steps are taken to gather the views of all stakeholders about the quality of education provided by the school. Information from data is used well to inform the planning process. Leaders know the school well and identify accurately key priorities for the future. The processes for monitoring and evaluation include an appropriate focus on students' outcomes as well as the quality of teaching. Appraisal of teachers is established and supported by a thoughtful system of coaching.
- Parents are highly supportive of the school's leaders and teachers. A wide range of methods, including technology, is used to communicate with parents, despite some expressing concerns over its effectiveness. Parents receive regular reports regarding their children's progress and attainment, along with detailed and accurate information regarding next steps for improvement. The school benefits from strong links with the local community although these have been limited recently by the pandemic.
- The governing body which includes representation from the majority of school community, responds constructively to concerns and suggestions. Governors monitor and hold senior leaders to account for the achievements and personal development of all students. They have the expertise and knowledge to exert a positive and direct impact on the overall performance of the school. In doing so, they are active in supporting school leaders and investing substantially to help the school to meet its commitment to parents and to comply with statutory requirements.
- The operation of the school runs very smoothly. Teachers are appropriately qualified to provide a curriculum of quality. They benefit from a regular programme of professional development which addresses school priorities and is linked to an appraisal system. The premises and facilities provide a safe, accessible, and stimulating environment, well suited to supporting the curricular and extra-curricular activities of students. The school is extremely well equipped with all necessary and relevant, up-to-date resources.

For Development:
- Sustain high quality recruitment and retention processes to serve the needs of an expanding school.
- Ensure that communications processes and systems continue to improve.

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 QA.Schools@khda.gov.ae