



National Agenda



Early years



Special educational  
needs and disabilities



Innovation

## Inspection Report 2015-2016

Al Mawakib School - Al Garhoud

Curriculum: US

Overall rating: Good

Read more about the school



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“Don't look  
behind to  
see who is  
following you,  
but look forward  
to be ahead”



Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum

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## School information

### General information



Location	Al Garhoud
Type of school	Private
Opening year of school	1979
Website	www.almawakeb.sch.ae
Telephone	04-2851415
Address	Al Garhoud - Dubai UAE. PO Box 10799
Principal	Omar Hatoum
Language of instruction	English
Inspection dates	14 to 17 March 2016

### Students



Gender of students	Boys and girls
Age range	4-18
Grades or year groups	Kindergarten 1 to Grade 12
Number of students on roll	2,530
Number of children in pre-kindergarten	0
Number of Emirati students	352
Number of students with SEND	27
Largest nationality group of students	Arab

### Teachers / Support staff



Number of teachers	144
Largest nationality group of teachers	Lebanese
Number of teaching assistants	18
Teacher-student ratio	1:18
Number of guidance counsellors	1
Teacher turnover	21%

### Curriculum



Educational permit /Licence	US
Main curriculum	US
External tests and examinations	IBT, SAT
Accreditation	None
National Agenda benchmark tests	IBT

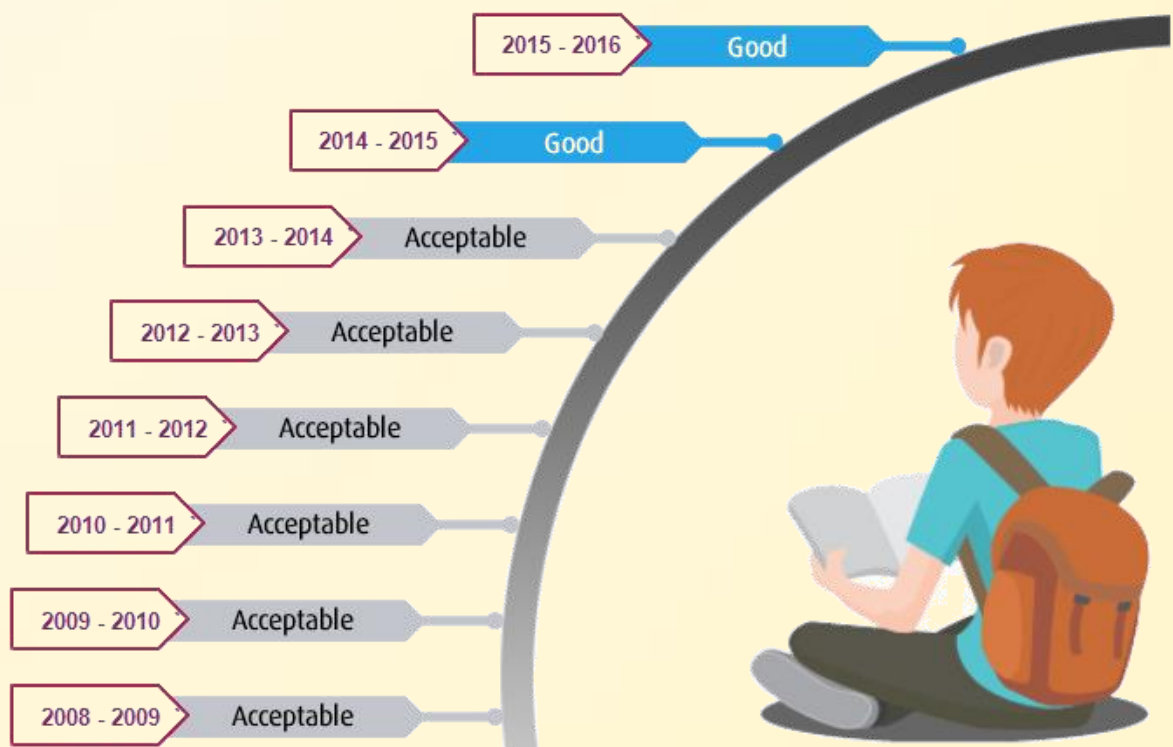


## Summary for parents and the community

**Al Mawakib School - Al Garhoud** was inspected by DSIB from 14 to 17 March 2016. The overall quality of education provided by the school was found to be **good**.

In order to judge the overall quality of education provided by the school, inspectors considered six key standards of performance. Inspectors looked at children's attainment and progress in key subjects, their learning skills and their personal and social development. They judged how effective teaching and the assessment of learning were across the school. Inspectors considered how well the school's curriculum, including activities inside and outside classrooms, met the educational needs of all children. They judged how well the school protected and supported children. In addition, inspectors judged the effectiveness of leadership and governance, including management, staffing, facilities and resources.

The inspection judgements were drawn from evidence gathered by the inspection team, including observing children learning in lessons, looking at their work, talking with children, meetings with the staff, parents and governors, and reviewing the parents', teachers' and senior students' surveys.





### How well did the school perform overall?

Overall, **Al Mawakib School - Al Garhoud** provided a **good** quality of education for its students.

- Students' attainment, progress and learning skills were mostly good. Exceptions included mathematics in the middle and high school, where these aspects were at a very good level and attainment in Islamic education and Arabic as an additional language, which was acceptable in the elementary and middle schools.
- The quality of students' personal and social development was at least good. Their understanding of Islamic values, and awareness of Emirati and world cultures, was at a very good level across all phases.
- Teaching, assessment and curriculum were of good quality in almost all respects. The high school curriculum was acceptable, mainly because it was lacking in a suitable range of electives.
- The curriculum had a clear rationale and based on the promotion of shared values. Careful planning ensured continuity and progression across subjects and phases. Many teachers appropriately matched tasks and activities to the learning needs of different groups of students. However, elective class options were very limited.
- Staff looked after children and students well, ensuring their safety and a good level of care and support. The school promoted healthy living through a variety of programs, assemblies and initiatives. In addition, a referral system was implemented effectively for the initial identification of students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).
- The school was well led and managed. Teamwork among staff was a positive feature. Partnership with parents, and governance, were of good quality. Teachers had a well-developed knowledge of the school's strengths and development needs, and worked together well to implement school improvement plans, with some success. Some aspects of resourcing needed to be improved.



### What did the school do well?

- Staff had sustained the good progress made by students in almost all subjects at all phases, and had brought about improvements in some aspects of most subjects. Attainment and progress in mathematics were now of very good quality in the middle and high school phases.
- At all phases, children and students showed a very well developed knowledge of Islamic values, and respect and appreciation for the Emirati culture and heritage and other world cultures.
- Several aspects of the curriculum, teaching and assessment, was implemented effectively, including the promotion of Emirati culture, cross-curricular links especially in mathematics, and use of assessment information.
- Staff successfully implemented the school's arrangements for keeping students' safe, and supporting them in their academic and social development.
- The principal successfully promoted distributed leadership, ensuring that staff worked together very well in teams to sustain and spread good practice and bring about improvements in outcomes for students.





### What does the school need to do next?

- Assess students' strengths and weaknesses more accurately in Islamic education and Arabic as an additional language, particularly at the elementary and middle phases. Use the assessment information to match learning tasks and activities more closely to the needs of different groups of students, in order to improve attainment in those subjects.
- Continue to share best practice in teaching and assessment to ensure that the quality of lessons are consistently good or better, particularly at the elementary phase.
- Improve the progress of students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) by identifying specific individual needs more accurately and ensuring that class teachers support students more effectively in the achievement of IEP targets.
- Introduce more course options for students in high school so that they can pursue career pathways in a wider range of areas, and ensure that students who do not take Islamic education have purposeful tasks to complete when they have self-study time in the library.



### How well did the school provide for students with special educational needs and disabilities?

- The majority of students with SEND made good progress in most subjects.
- Parents were welcomed in the school. They received quarterly reports on their child's progress. The team leaders in the SEND department maintained regular contact with parents in their efforts to maintain positive support.
- Parents were very positive about the care and support provided for their child.
- Parents were invited on a regular basis to the school to discuss, contribute and review their child's individual education plan.
- Parents received very good advice on supporting and coping with their child at home.

### 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 intent 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. This academic year, KHDA introduced 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.

#### Main points:

- The school did not fully meet the registration requirements of the National Agenda Parameter. The attainment data was not sufficient to make a full judgement on the school's progress towards meeting National Agenda targets.
- The school had effectively promoted awareness and understanding of the National Agenda and the National Agenda Targets to most of its stakeholders. National Agenda facts and information were published on the school website. Parents had received letters with details about the importance of international assessments. Students in the elementary, middle and high school could articulate their awareness of the National Agenda because the principal had presented this important information to them.
- Staff had improved the curriculum to reflect the requirements of TIMSS and PISA external tests. Students in Grades 5 to 9, practiced questions typical of those in international assessments. However, the majority of students were unclear about what was expected of them in TIMSS and PISA. The resources available for teachers to support reading comprehension for students in the elementary school had been developed further.
- Teachers were aware of the necessary skills that students must demonstrate in order to achieve successful outcomes in international tests. They were working to improve lessons to develop those skills more effectively.
- In the best lessons, students were provided with opportunities to develop critical thinking skills, but this was not implemented consistently well. The school had already recognized this as an area of focus for their improvement planning. Students were frequently required to apply their learning to real life situations and this was a strength in mathematics. Students had too few opportunities to develop skills of research and investigation. Use of information communication technology (ICT) by students was limited.

## Innovation in education

The *UAE Vision 2021* sets out the National Agenda 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'. It provides a basis for evaluating public and private schools in order to deliver a world-class education for all children in the UAE.

Innovation is driven by a commitment to excellence and continuous improvement. It is based on curiosity, the willingness to take risks, to experiment and to test assumptions as well as questioning and challenging the status quo. Being innovative is about looking beyond what we currently do well, identifying the great ideas of tomorrow and putting them into practice.



## Promoting a culture of innovation:

- School leaders understood the importance of innovation and its development within their school culture. A newly formed innovation committee ensured that students were involved in innovation activities inside and outside the classroom. During weekly professional development meetings, teachers collaborated to explore innovative strategies for engaging students in learning. Innovation in the use of some technologies promoted student learning. Leaders acknowledged the need to build the capacity of teachers to embed innovation skills and strategies throughout grade levels and across subjects.



Overall school performance

Good

1. Students' achievement

		KG	Elementary	Middle	High
<b>Islamic education</b> 	Attainment	Not applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good
	Progress	Not applicable	Good ↑	Good	Good
<b>Arabic as a first language</b> 	Attainment	Not applicable	Good	Good	Good ↑
	Progress	Not applicable	Good	Good	Good
<b>Arabic as an additional language</b> 	Attainment	Not applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good
	Progress	Not applicable	Acceptable	Good ↑	Good
<b>English</b> 	Attainment	Good	Good ↑	Good	Good
	Progress	Good	Good ↑	Good	Good
<b>Mathematics</b> 	Attainment	Good	Good	Very good ↑	Very good ↑
	Progress	Good	Good	Very good ↑	Very good ↑
<b>Science</b> 	Attainment	Good	Good	Good	Good
	Progress	Good	Good	Good	Good

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

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

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

## 3. Teaching and assessment

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

## 4. Curriculum

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Curriculum design and implementation	Good	Good	Good	Acceptable
Curriculum adaptation	Good ↑	Good ↑	Good ↑	Good ↑

## 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	Good	Good ↑	Good	Good

## 6. Leadership and management

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



## Main inspection report

The Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau (DSIB) is responsible for inspecting and reporting on the standards reached by students and the quality of education provided in Dubai's private schools.

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



Using this scale, the *Main inspection report* contains the judgements about the different aspects, phases and subjects that form the work of the school.

It provides the reasons for the answers to the questions in the *Summary for parents and the community*:

- How well did the school perform overall?
- What did the school do well?
- What does the school need to do next?

## 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	Good	Good
Mathematics	Good	Good
Science	Good	Good

- In English, a majority of the children demonstrated good levels of knowledge and understanding in language development. They were proficient in their literacy skills, which were above the expectations of the school's curriculum for Kindergarten (KG). They were able to communicate effectively with their teachers and peers. Children could write their names and spell words phonetically when writing for meaning and purpose. They showed good book knowledge and were able to sequence and retell stories. Some children were reading simple words and sentences and the more able could decode words to read short books.
- The majority of children demonstrated a good understanding of mathematical concepts and skills that were above curriculum expectations. They made good progress in relation to their assessed starting points and as measured against learning objectives. Their numeracy skills, including counting, sorting, measuring and patterning, were progressing well. Skills in mathematical operations were above the expected attainment levels. The children could represent addition and subtraction problems using drawings as well as mental images. During cooking activities, children were able to apply their measurement skills and understand the terms 'more' and 'less' when mixing ingredients.
- In science, a majority of children made good progress in their understanding of the world. A wide range of activities facilitated their learning of earth and life sciences. Older children had planted flowers and could explain what ingredients plants needed to grow. They were able to identify modes of transportation and could explain why a boat traveled on water and a train moved on tracks. They also understood their place in the world through recycling projects. Inquiry and investigative skills were still developing through practical lessons that related to their personal experiences.

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

- In Islamic education, most students demonstrated age-appropriate attainment by the end of the elementary phase as well as an acceptable knowledge and understanding of basic Islamic concepts. In Grade 5, the large majority of students understood key details of the prescribed Hadeeth of Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) about the true insolvent on the day of judgement. Although students made at least expected progress, the majority made better progress compared to their starting points. Students steadily acquired knowledge of a wide range of Islamic terminology, a majority of whom could relate to their own life.
- The majority of students attained levels that were above curriculum standards for Arabic as a first language, a trend that had been achieved, over the past three years. In internal examinations, the majority of the students attained levels that were above MOE expectations. In lessons, they attained levels that were above curriculum expectations. Students in the upper grades had better expression in speaking Arabic with confidence and fluency and in their writing and reading comprehension. Writing skills improved by Grade 5, and students were skillful in creating 'mind maps' to plan details of the stories clearly. Most groups of students achieved a good level of progress although girls, and students in the upper grades, made more rapid progress in this subject.
- In Arabic as an additional language, most students had developed good listening skills and were able to make appropriate responses to teachers' prompts. A large majority of students required assistance when unfamiliar, or their teachers asked longer questions of them. Speaking skills were in line with expectations. Students could form sentences and engage in dialogue with peers on familiar topics. Most students made appropriate attempts with independent writing and most were able to write at least three to five sentences describing their homes or school. Overall, progress was acceptable. Most students developed a range of new vocabulary but few could use the words to form complete sentences independently. Improvement in writing skills was acceptable compared to their starting points.
- In English, most students spoke confidently on familiar topics, and the majority could speak on unfamiliar topics. The majority of students could read and write above curriculum standards and, by the end of Grade 4, students had developed strong reading comprehension skills. Younger students could write several sentences on a topic with correct spelling and simple punctuation and grammar. By Grade 5, students wrote effective essays for a variety of purposes using accurate verb tenses, complex sentences and age-appropriate vocabularies. By the end of this phase, the students had well developed grammar, spelling and punctuation skills and had made good progress in all aspects of this subject.
- The majority of students attained levels of attainment in mathematics that were above the common core state standards in each grade. The achievements of Grade 5 students', benchmarked against international expectations, were above the international averages for a large majority of students. Students made good progress and gained skills in a range of mathematics concepts. For example, they learned how to compare fractions and identify equivalent fractions with different denominators. Engagement with their learning



was good, although greater access to more appropriate resources would have ensured further enhancement. In this phase, students had opportunities to apply their conceptual understanding in mathematics to real life examples and make sense of the world around them in meaningful ways.

- The majority of students, in science, demonstrated knowledge and skills above curriculum standards. Most students in a Grade 1 lesson understood the factors affecting floating or sinking. By Grade 4, the majority of students showed better than expected understanding of materials that conducted electricity or were insulators. By Grade 5, students demonstrated good understanding of the action of lungs in the human body by building a model with balloons and straws. The majority of students made better than expected progress when measured against lesson objectives aligned with the curriculum at this phase. The results of older students in the external, International Benchmark Tests (IBT) tests were positive.

### Middle

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

- In Islamic education, most students demonstrated acceptable levels of understanding, knowledge and skills such as Islamic social etiquettes and the manners expected of a good Muslim. They were able to link these to daily life. In Grade 8, students understood the importance of knowledge and scientific progress in the advancement for any nation. They were able to recall some famous Muslim scholars who contributed greatly to civilization such as Ibn Sina, Ibn Alnafees, Ibn Alhaytham and others. Progress was good as measured against lesson starting points. The large majority of students improved their recitation skills of the Holy Qur'an as they moved through this phase. They could explain the main ideas of the prescribed verses and how they related to their own lives. Few students showed skills in more advanced, high-level thinking.
- The majority of students attained levels that were above curriculum standards for Arabic as a first language. This was evidenced from internal examinations and lessons. Some students were benefiting from an extra reading project. Girls were better than boys at expressing their ideas confidently. For example, a Grade 6 girls section showed depth of understanding and creativity in analysing stories. Students' writing skills were improving. Internal and external assessment data indicated that the majority of students made better than expected progress. This was borne out in lessons at all grades.
- In Arabic as an additional language, most students attained levels in line with curriculum standards, as shown in internal examinations and in lessons. Students' writing skills were the least well developed. The quality of handwriting was of a high standard, but students had difficulty in basic grammar and sentence building. They could read aloud to an appropriate level, but were better in listening and understanding. The achievements of most students, over the past three years, had broadly been in line with national standards. Internal assessment indicators showed that the majority of students made better than expected progress. In lessons in upper grades, they were making better progress in reading and in writing reasonable sentences with few mistakes.

- In English, the majority of students spoke fluently, expressing themselves with confidence and good vocabulary. When reading, they could derive the meaning of unfamiliar words using context clues. In a cross-curricular lesson, students effectively used their vocabulary words to explain data extracted from statistics in the National Agenda. Students read literary and informational texts and could successfully comprehend the main points in these texts, analysing dramatic and other structures. In writing, most Grade 8 students wrote thoughtful personal narratives using relevant descriptive details and well-structured event sequences. Overall progress of identified groups of students was good, as was attainment, with positive three-year trends.
- Internal test scores in mathematics showed that a large majority of students achieved standards above curriculum expectations. Students in Grade 8 achieved particularly high standards in geometry. Students' achievements were benchmarked against international expectations in mathematics in all grades in this phase. Results were above the international averages for the majority of students. Comparing students' test results over time revealed that a large majority of students made more than the expected amount of progress. Students could use ratios and the concept of mathematical similarity to determine the proportions of the actual measurements of iconic structures around the world, such as the pyramids of Egypt.
- In science, the knowledge and understanding of the majority of students were above curriculum standards. For example, Grade 6 students showed good understanding of the similarities and differences between incandescent and fluorescent light sources. At times, the pace of learning was too rapid, and little time was given to critical thinking, problem solving activities or reflection. As a result, progress in these aspects was less good than in acquisition of knowledge. Similarly, the focus on scientific inquiry was less effective. Teachers supported all groups of students, and some additional classroom resources supported students in understanding the lesson objectives. As a result, the majority of students made better than expected progress in lessons.

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

- In Islamic education, most students demonstrated good attainment of knowledge, skills and understanding of Islamic concepts and principles. Students were able to develop appropriate links between what they learned in lessons and their own life. They used evidence from the Holy Qur'an and Hadeeth to show how Islam emphasized the importance of avoiding drugs. The majority of students were making better than expected progress in recitation and interpretation for Holy Qur'an verses, using different resources such as hand-held technology and laptops. They were also developing good understanding of the main Islamic etiquettes, especially those related to social life that were driven from Sunna.

- The majority of students attained levels above curriculum standards in Arabic as a first language. In internal examinations, students attained levels above MOE expectations, and this level of performance was reflected in lessons. They were able to express themselves in discussion, explaining their ideas confidently. The majority of students were involved in extra reading of literature. They could recognize narration skills of the author and character traits clearly. Skills in extended writing had improved. Students' work showed that they had appropriate research skills and could analyse literature texts carefully. The majority of students made better than expected progress. Students in the upper grades were better at comprehension and independent writing than those at lower grades. Girls made better progress than boys, and upper grade students made better progress than those in the lower grades.
- The majority of students attained levels that were above curriculum objectives in Arabic as an additional language. This was reflected in internal examinations and in lessons. They spoke standard Arabic well and read aloud with clear diction. Writing skills were good, taking into account the number of years the students had been studying Arabic as an additional language. Internal assessments indicated that the majority of the students made better than expected progress.
- In English, students had well developed skills of oral expression. They engaged in lively debates, clearly expressing their opinions. Reading skills were secure. By the end of Grade 12, students could effectively analyze texts, making complex predictions. They read from a variety of genres and were developing their skills in analysing a theme or central idea over the course of the text. Students wrote for a variety of purposes. Grade 11 students wrote imaginative descriptions using writing features from the Gothic genre. Their literary studies enabled them to engage more fully and with deeper understanding in debate and discussion on matters of relevance to modern day young people. They made good progress and attainment information showed positive three-year trends.
- A large majority of students achieved results in mathematics that were above curriculum standards. In an external test, the majority of Grade 9 students attained results that were above international averages. Students were extremely well taught in this phase, and, as a result, they made more than the expected progress. In Grade 12, students applied their knowledge of calculus to real life applications. They obtained data related to varying temperatures and using derivatives were able to find the rate of change of temperature over time. Higher attaining students in Grade 9 could use quadratic equations to determine the temperature of boiling water at different elevations.
- The majority of students demonstrated knowledge, understanding and skills above curriculum standards in science. In Grade 12, biology students were able to draw on their understanding of different processes to understand mammalian reproduction. Similarly, Grade 11 physics students demonstrated understanding of the conservation of linear momentum by directing some parts of the lesson and deriving the appropriate formula. Independent learning was fostered more effectively here, and this contributed to the majority of students making better than expected progress in relation to appropriate learning objectives and curriculum standards.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Learning skills	Good	Good	Good	Good

- Students in all phases were eager to learn and able to take responsibility for their own learning independently or in groups. They responded well to feedback from their teachers and peers in order to assess their own level of understanding and how they could improve.
- Students enjoyed working together in groups and sometimes took the initiative to work more collaboratively. Older students were able to work in pairs and smaller groups to achieve common goals and communicate their learning. In the Kindergarten, children learned best when they completed their projects by helping each other in small groups.
- In most subjects, learning was made relevant when teachers helped students to make connections between content and the students' real life experiences. For example, in the high school, students were able to make links from their knowledge of energy sources to how these might be used to create more environmental sustainability. In the better lessons, students were also able to make cross-curricular links, for example applying their writing skills to communicate their learning in mathematics and science projects.
- In KG, children were enterprising in the way they used classroom resources to accomplish a task. Older students showed innovative skills when they designed a school survey around a topic of interest and then analyzed the data for meaning and application. When students were given the opportunity to use ICT as a daily part of their school life, it was used effectively to enhance learning. However, this was only a strength in the upper high school grades, where the students brought their own laptops. In all other phases there was little use of ICT in lessons.

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

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Personal development	Very good 	Good	Good	Good

- Students were mature learners, had positive and responsible attitudes, and needed little reassurance. They showed some self-reliance but were not always risk-takers. They responded well and sought critical feedback.
- Students demonstrated positive behavior. They undertook a wide range of leadership roles and responsibilities, for example line leaders in KG, ECO-monitors in the elementary phase, club leaders and members in the middle and high school phases. KG children were highly responsible and self-disciplined for their age.
- Students enjoyed good relationships with staff and were very happy coming to school. Students positively interacted with their peers, teachers and other adults in a mature and responsible manner. They showed some independence of mind and co-operated well with others. Students used several initiatives to reflect their empathy towards others, such as the Big Sister Event, Act of Kindness, and A Favor to a Hard Worker.
- Students had an understanding of the value of healthy food and were encouraged to adopt an active lifestyle. However, a significant minority of students did not make healthy food choices from the options available in the school canteen, even though many were available. Several campaigns and lectures were carried out across all phases to emphasize the importance of healthy habits and life style, including an anti-smoking campaign, Diabetes Day, and Dental Awareness and Check-up.



- Attendance was good, but the punctuality of some students hindered their learning at the beginning of the day.

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

- Students' knowledge and appreciation of Islamic values were secure. They understood the relevance and impact of these values on everyday life in the UAE. They put their understanding into action in various activities, including assemblies and in the routine life of the school. Through activities such as visits to Sheikh Zayed Mosque and Sharjah museums, Muslim and non-Muslim students gained an appropriate understanding of key aspects of the faith.
- Students knew and understood Emirati heritage and culture well, this was particularly the case in upper grades and in the girls' section. All students were involved in celebrating the National Day of the UAE and being respectful on Martyrs' Day. The curriculum had many aspects of the Emirati culture woven through it in social studies, activities promoting the National Agenda, and in many other ways.
- Students benefited from the fact that there were many nationalities in the school. Especially in middle and high school phases, students showed great respect and appreciation for their own and others' cultures. Students were successfully encouraged to participate in activities such as presentations and role-plays exploring a range of traditions and cultures.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
<b>Social responsibility and innovation skills</b>	Good	Good	Good	Very good ↑

- Students participated eagerly in the school community in a wide range of supportive and charitable events. Across all grades, students engaged in meaningful issues such as community projects, classroom and assembly presentations. High school students had taken leadership roles and contributed to the development of middle school students' leadership skills as mentors, aligned with the school's core values.
- Students had positive work ethics and collaborated on a diversity of school campaigns, many of which had been initiated by students' themselves. In a variety of clubs, girls, particularly in high school, demonstrated strong management skills, and were successful in presenting topics such as anti-bullying as a theme, as part of a school-wide campaign. Students in the elementary phase and middle school boys were not fully engaged in such activities, nor fully responsible and self-reliant.
- Students demonstrated good environmental awareness through the active participation in events such as 'cleanliness awareness' and 'can collection' campaigns. The school's environmental club looked at the economic impact and the cost of violence on the poor, as part of a campaign against violence.



### 3. Teaching and assessment

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Teaching for effective learning	Good	Good	Good	Good

- Teachers demonstrated secure knowledge of their subjects, and most were able to deliver lessons that used appropriate teaching strategies. They were often able to plan engaging lessons that motivated students to take risks and think for themselves. Some lessons needed more variety of tasks beyond pencil and paper practice activities.
- Teachers' planning was effective and sufficiently detailed in most lessons. In KG, teachers planned lessons well and used hands-on materials, which helped children develop a deeper understanding of mathematics and science concepts. In the upper grades, appropriate use of resources helped to engage students, as well as support their progress. The use of information and communication technology (ICT) in the high school was especially important for the development of investigative skills. However, in several lessons, the pace was too fast, restricting students' ability to reflect on their learning.
- Teachers knew their students well and were able to engage them using skillful dialogue and questioning. This promoted thoughtful responses and relevant questioning from students and helped to support their independent learning skills. In the elementary phase, classroom management was sometimes an issue and, consequently, students made slower progress.
- In the better lessons, teachers used a wider range of strategies to help different groups of students to learn. This was most evident in mathematics and science lessons, in which teachers used interactive technology effectively. In other lessons, learning activities were less skillfully prepared for the different abilities of students, including those with special educational needs and disabilities.
- The development of critical thinking, inquiry and problem solving skills in lessons was at an acceptable level overall. In the better lessons, the use of the interactive white board created more opportunities for students to be collaborative learners and gain confidence in their own skills rather than relying on the teacher. There was sometimes an insufficient use of resources in the elementary phase, which hindered the development of independent learning and a deeper construction of knowledge and understanding.
- In Arabic as a first language, teachers had good knowledge of their subject and knew how students learn. Positive teacher and student interactions ensured that students were active participants. The development of students' critical thinking, problem-solving and independent learning skills was still emerging.
- In Arabic as an additional language, teachers had secure subject knowledge and could deliver the lesson using appropriate teaching strategies. Teaching was acceptable in the elementary phase and good in both middle and high phase. The development of critical thinking, problem solving and independent learning was developing but less secure in the elementary phase.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Assessment	Good ↑	Good ↑	Good ↑	Good

- The school's internal assessment processes had been further developed, were appropriately linked to learning outcomes and aligned to the curriculum. The processes included self, peer and teacher assessments. In a Grade 6 class, students assessed their writing based on the '6 traits rubric'. Staff had worked hard, and with success, to improve the quality of assessment. For example, internal assessments in mathematics had augmented their knowledge-based tests to incorporate tasks that tested conceptual understanding.
- The school was in its second year of using external international tests. Staff had analysed the IBT test scores to identify topic weaknesses and had adapted the curriculum to address them. Students in Grade 11 took the PSAT tests and students in Grade 12 took the SAT test. The school was planning to enter all graduating seniors for those tests in the following school session.
- Staff analyzed assessment data effectively. Heads of departments and departmental staff had a good understanding of the performance of different groups including classes, year groups, boys and girls, and various national groups. Staff monitored students' progress closely and regularly. Systematic checks, in lessons by teachers, ensured progress in lessons.
- Departmental leaders and teachers worked together well to use student assessment data to modify and enhance teaching practices and curriculum planning to meet the learning needs of all groups of students. Lesson plans included differentiated tasks and resources to meet the learning needs of different groups of students. However, these plans were not always implemented as consistently as they should have been. Assessment information for students with SEND in mathematics was helpful and used well to support students.
- Teachers had a good knowledge of the strengths and development needs of the students in their classes. They gave helpful oral feedback to students on the quality of their work in classes. The marking of student work and written feedback did not fully inform students about how to improve their work.

#### 4. Curriculum

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

- The school's curriculum had a clear rationale and based on shared values. It was generally broad and balanced, with the unique feature of a trilingual KG. Students continued the acquisition of three languages through to Grade 12. Lesson content and activities often matched the abilities and age group of students. The school met almost all curriculum statutory requirements. However, the KG curriculum did not fully address the common core standards.
- Careful planning ensured continuity and progression across subjects and phases. Revisions to the KG curriculum ensured a successful transition from KG to Grade 1. The curriculum met the needs of most students. The school prepared older students for their next phase of education by effective guidance and through information gathered from college fairs and presentations focusing on post-secondary career pathways.

- Older students had some opportunities to make choices within their classes and in extra-curricular activities. For example, students further developed their interest in mathematics by carrying out school surveys on topics of their choice and analyzing the results. However, elective class options were very limited, restricting students' ability to successfully pursue chosen career pathways and develop their talents, interests and aspirations.
- The school planned cross-curriculum links to support students' knowledge and key skills across subjects, enabling them to make connections across subjects and develop their critical thinking skills. Links were especially strong in mathematics, science and the fully integrated KG curriculum. In most subjects, there were effective links to Emirati culture and with the National Agenda, promoting an appreciation for the UAE society.
- The school regularly and annually reviewed the curriculum, incorporating suggestions from subject and teacher teams. Results from the analysis of student assessment data and the impact of the content on students' learning were thoughtfully and effectively used when considering revisions to the curriculum. Changes to the curriculum met the needs of most groups of students.
- The school used the UAE social studies curriculum and classes focused on geography at the middle school level. The teaching of Arab history followed the social studies requirements from the UAE. Students were often aware of the connections with geography outside of the UAE, as all teachers had received professional development in how to incorporate Google Earth, and analyze populations, especially at the high school level.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Curriculum adaptation	Good ↑	Good ↑	Good ↑	Good ↑

- Learning outcomes were modified in most lessons to meet the needs of specific students. Many teachers appropriately matched tasks and activities to the learning needs of different groups of students. This differentiation was less successful in the elementary phase, where, in some lessons, students were not challenged as fully as they should. Effective modifications had been integrated into lessons for students studying English as an additional language.
- The curriculum was interesting and motivating for students. Opportunities provided through the curriculum and a wide variety of optional extra-curricular pursuits facilitated student engagement in activities promoting enterprise and innovation. The curriculum also supported the personal, creative and social development of students. However, these opportunities were not consistently available in the core curriculum.
- The school ensured that studies of the UAE society were often interwoven into lessons in all phases. Participation in a variety of field trips, and school and community events, had helped students to establish good links with UAE society and Emirati culture, and to develop understanding and appreciation of the culture.
- The school provided Arabic lessons for all children in the Foundation Stage. One lesson of fifty minutes per day for KG1 and one lesson for sixty minutes per day for KG2 focused on providing children with basic skills in listening, reading, writing and vocabulary.

### 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

- The school effectively pursued student safety and child protection. All staff, including all support staff, had been trained and updated in child protection and knew incident procedures. Effective programs were in place to protect students from cyber-bullying and the dangers of social media. The safeguarding of all students was a common feature.
- The school was hygienic, and the environment was secure. The school provided a safe environment for all students. Bus monitoring and gate security was in place and supervision of students was effective throughout the day. The school met all legal and regulatory requirements for operation. Evacuation plans were fully in place, and drills carried out.
- The school had well maintained equipment, facilities and all records were detailed and secure. Senior staff carried out regular fire drills, monitored annually by Civil Defense. Students were well cared for by the appropriately staffed clinic and their medications kept safe.
- The school environment supported student learning and met the needs of all. It was inclusive and nurturing for all students as well as faculty and staff. Ramps were in place and for building access, but the lack of elevators prevented easy access to second floor areas for those with physical mobility issues. Students were safe and secure at all times while engaged in the school day.
- The school promoted healthy living through a variety of programs, assemblies and initiatives. Healthy options were available in the school canteens. Students were protected from the sun when outside and water was readily available to hydrate them.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Care and support	Good	Good ↑	Good	Good

- Staff-student relations based on trust and mutual respect permeated the school. Students were encouraged to develop a strong sense of role as members of the school community and to take responsibility for their own behavior. The promotion of good conduct guided by a positive school policy and practice ensured that student behavior was good in most observed lessons.
- An attendance policy, a positive management approach and a range of intervention strategies had resulted in a good rate of attendance. A punctuality policy was in place, with an escalating range of interventions designed to target tardiness, although this had met with some success, the school recognised that further efforts to reduce lateness was still required.
- A referral system effectively identified students with SEND. Referrals were followed up with structured observations that informed the individual education plan (IEP). However, this process required further development as there was no process for the formal identification of students who were gifted or talented.



- The school provided good quality academic and counseling support for students with identified needs. Students attended a range of extra classes, which targeted academic knowledge and learning skills as well as personal development. There was no targeted support for students who were gifted and talented, nor any school policy on this aspect.
- All teachers worked collaboratively with the counselors to ensure the effective support and care of their students. A school careers and guidance counselor provided suitable information in an online e-folder and personalized support for high school students in making appropriate career and university choices. Practice sessions helped to develop students' familiarity with international standardized tests.

#### Provision for students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)

The overall effectiveness of provision for students with special educational needs and disabilities

Good

- Senior leaders had shown a positive commitment to developing an inclusive school through the ongoing development of the provision for students with SEND. The school's SEND team provided good leadership. They worked collaboratively with teachers, department heads, parents and senior leaders to develop the provision, plan interventions and promote understanding.
- A referral system, structured observations and analysis of professional reports helped to identify the difficulties to be targeted in the IEPs. The current processes of identifying and monitoring the specific individual needs of students with SEND needed further development to include the use of standardized assessment data.
- Parents attended IEP planning and review meetings, and received regular progress reports. They were advised on how to support their child at home. Quarterly progress reports issued to parent focused on the positive and exceptional care and support that their child had received.
- The SEND department had worked collaboratively with the heads of subject departments and their teaching staff to improve curriculum modification and differentiation across the school. The majority of teachers provided a level of individualized support to students in their classroom who had SEND or who were underachieving. However, in some lessons, these students were not always sufficiently engaged or challenged which affected their progress. Teachers received copies of their students IEPs, but did not always play an active role in the achievement of learning and behavior targets.
- Student progress was monitored through their IEP targets, teacher observations, classwork, and the results of academic testing. Overall the majority of students with SEND made good progress. This was evidenced by their participation in classwork, their interactions with peers and their oral responses. Students' written work and the school's assessment data also contributed to the evaluation of their progress.



## 6. Leadership and management

### The effectiveness of leadership

Good

- Under the guidance of the principal, who set a very positive example, leaders at all levels had established a clear idea among all stakeholders of the high standards for which the school was aiming. Leaders were working to build the inclusive nature of the school, and had a strong commitment to the UAE National Priorities.
- Over the last few years, the school's leaders had developed their understanding of best practice in curriculum, teaching and assessment, and were being increasingly successful in applying their knowledge to improve those processes and raise students' attainment and progress levels. The school learning environment was positive.
- Distributed leadership was a strength of the school's work. A wide range of people with additional responsibilities worked together in teams effectively. The building of relationships through effective communication with stakeholders strengthened the family ethos of the school and staff morale.
- Leaders at all levels had an accurate knowledge of the priorities for school improvement. They were working hard, with success, to sustain good standards and improve matters where necessary. While there was evidence of improvement in teaching, there was still a need for further development of the curriculum and more consistency across subjects, teachers and phases.
- Under the leadership of the principal, senior leaders and others had improved a range of key aspects of the school's work and had sustained many of the previously good parts. However, a few aspects remained at an acceptable level. The school met all statutory and regulatory requirements.

### School self-evaluation and improvement planning

Good

- Senior staff involved teachers in a wide range of processes for gathering information and analyzing it to evaluate the quality of the school's work. The processes included surveys of stakeholders' views, observation of lessons, and analysis of data. As a result, the school had an accurate view of its strengths and development needs. Senior staff used the information to prepare appropriate improvement plans.
- Senior staff and other leaders carried out a large number of lesson observations and gave helpful feedback to teachers. The school's processes included peer observation and sharing of good practice. There was a shared understanding of the quality of teaching in the school, as well as areas of improvement. Lesson observations however, did not always fully focus on the impact of teaching approaches on students' progress.
- The school's improvement plans were appropriately set out and based closely on the results of the school's self-evaluation and the recommendations from inspection. Although these helped staff to take the school forward, the criteria for judging success was not always set out rigorously with quantitative measures where appropriate.
- The processes of self-evaluation and planning for improvement had ensured that significant progress had been achieved in addressing recommendations from the previous inspection report.




Partnerships with parents and the community	Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The school carried out systematic surveys of parents' views as part of the preparation for the development of their improvement plans. Parents were appreciative of the responsiveness of senior leaders when they expressed concerns about their child's education. There was no parents' association that could act as a channel for communication or promote parental involvement in the life of the school.</li> <li>Communication with parents was a positive feature of the school's work. Staff used a wide variety of ways to inform parents and take communications from them, including online forums, paper reports and newsletters, text messages and through the school website.</li> <li>Parents received regular reports about their child's progress on an ongoing basis and at key points, for example at the end of each term. Reports included students' grades in key subjects; although the basis of coding test marks to exam grades was not always in line with US curriculum expectations. Reports needed to say more about the next steps in students' learning.</li> <li>The school made regular contributions to the community in a range of ways. The school itself benefited from a range of partnerships, including with other schools.</li> </ul>	

Governance	Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The governing body did not include any parental representation, although they did consider their views into account in several of ways. Representative of the governing body were in regular contact with the school through visits and telephone contact.</li> <li>Governors were briefed on a regular basis on the school's progress. They used a range of ways to hold senior leaders accountable for the school's performance.</li> <li>Over the last few years, together with senior leaders, governors had ensured steady progress in the school's work. They had guaranteed that appropriate staffing levels were available, and were aiming to recruit teachers with a good command of the English language. They had not however, ensured completely suitable levels of resources in a few aspects of the school's work.</li> </ul>	

Management, staffing, facilities and resources	Acceptable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Senior staff and others managed the day-to-day life of the school well, so that the timetable and other processes operated smoothly. The school ensured that procedures and routines were implemented with efficiency and the operational management resulted in good conditions for learning.</li> <li>• The school was well staffed with appropriately qualified teachers in almost all aspects. Staff development activities was a positive feature of the school's work. Teachers benefited from a range of training opportunities, which were mostly well matched to the school's priorities.</li> <li>• The premises were appropriate and able to support effective learning. Science laboratories were rather small and there was no lift in the parts of the school building, which had several floors.</li> <li>• The school had good stocks of textbooks, and interactive whiteboards with suitable software applications. However, there were shortages of manipulative materials for English and mathematics in the elementary phase and hand-held technology such as tablet computers for student-centered learning across the phases.</li> </ul>	

## The views of the parents, teachers and 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> 	2015-2016	379
	2014-2015	273
<b>Teachers</b> 	113	
<b>Students</b> 	191	

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

- Most parents, the majority of students and around one-quarter of parents responded to the survey.
- Most of the parents and students who responded were satisfied with the quality of education available at the school. Parents thought that their children enjoyed school and were making good progress in the key subjects, views echoed by the students.
- Most parents were happy with aspects of the curriculum, teaching and assessment. For example, they thought that teachers' marking of their child's work helped the child to improve, and that the school offered a good range of subjects and extra-curricular activities.
- A large minority of students did not agree that the school continually upgraded its facilities and resources to support their learning.
- Almost all parents who responded felt that children were safe in school and on school buses. Students' views were similar.
- Most parents and the majority of students thought that the school dealt well with bullying. The majority of students felt that student behavior was good, but only around half thought that they were treated, fairly.
- Most parents and students, and almost all teachers thought that the school was well led. Parents and teachers felt that leaders listened to their views and acted upon them, though students were less positive about this aspect.
- Most teachers felt that they were involved in reviewing the curriculum and in the process of school self-evaluation. Almost all agreed that they received regular feedback on the quality of their work from their line managers.

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)