




GEMS Our Own Indian
School

 Curriculum: CBSE

Overall Rating:

Good



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

Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al-Maktoum



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School information



General information

Location	Al Quoz
Type of school	Private
Opening year of school	1991
Website	www.gemsoo-alquoz.com
Telephone	04-3391188
Address	P.O. Box 26845 Dubai
Principal	Mrs. Lalitha Suresh
Language of instruction	English
Inspection dates	17 to 20 October 2016

Teachers / Support staff

Number of teachers	166
Largest nationality group of teachers	Indian
Number of teaching assistants	8
Teacher-student ratio	1:22
Number of guidance counsellors	1
Teacher turnover	19%

Students

Gender of students	Boys and girls
Age range	4-17
Grades or year groups	KG 1-Grade 12
Number of students on roll	3635
Number of children in pre-kindergarten	0
Number of Emirati students	0
Number of students with SEND	387
Largest nationality group of students	Indian

Curriculum

Educational permit / Licence	Indian
Main curriculum	CBSE
External tests and examinations	CBSE, CAT4, IBT, CEM
Accreditation	None
National Agenda benchmark tests	IBT, CAT4



The DSIB inspection process



In order to judge the overall quality of education provided by schools, inspectors consider the six standards of performance that form the basis of the UAE School Inspection Framework (the framework). They look at children's attainment and progress in key subjects, their learning skills and their personal and social development. They judge how effective teaching and the assessment of learning are across the school. Inspectors consider how well the school's curriculum, including activities inside and outside classrooms, meet the educational needs of all students. They judge how well schools protect and support children. In addition, inspectors judge the effectiveness of leadership, which incorporates governance, management, staffing and facilities.

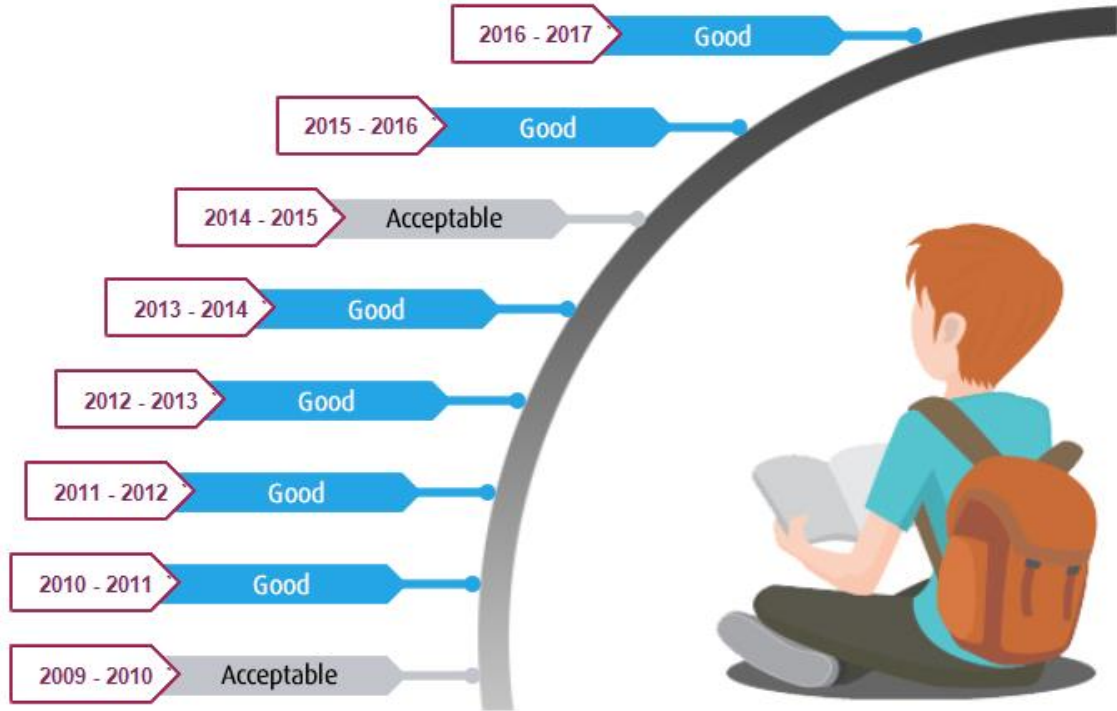
Inspection judgements are drawn from evidence gathered by the inspection team, including observation of students' learning in lessons, review of their work, discussions with students, meetings with the staff, parents and governors, and review of surveys completed by parents, teachers and students.

Judgements are made on a six-point scale

DSIB inspection teams make judgements about different aspects, phases and subjects that form the work of the school, using the scale below, which is consistent with the framework.

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

Inspection journey for GEMS Our Own Indian School



- The school opened in 1991. The principal has been in post for the last five years. Students are almost exclusively drawn from the Indian community with a small minority of Pakistani families. Nearly all the teachers are from India. The students follow the Indian CBSE curriculum. Student numbers have remained constant for the last three years, although teacher turnover has risen this year from its previous low level.
- Strengths from last year include students' positive behaviour, enthusiasm for learning, their understanding of Islamic values and Emirati heritage, the responsibility they take in the school and for the environment. The curriculum in the secondary phase continues to support strong teaching and the development of effective learning skills and leads to good progress and high attainment in external examinations.
- The teaching of Arabic as an additional language has been slow to improve students' attainment. The small learning environments continue to challenge school leaders and teachers in their aim to provide the best opportunities for teaching and learning.

Summary of inspection findings 2016-2017



GEMS Our Own Indian School was inspected by DSIB from 17 to 20 October 2016 . The overall quality of education provided by the school is **good**. The section below summarises the inspection findings for each of the six performance indicators described in the framework.

- Attainment and progress remain at least good in most subjects. The development of learning skills is strong across the school and is particularly consistent in Kindergarten (KG) and the secondary phase.
- Students' personal and social development, their understanding of the culture and the history of the country in which they live, their awareness and safeguarding of their environment as well as their contribution to the school community is impressive.
- The quality of teaching is good across the first three phases of the school and very good in the secondary phase. The skills of the teachers in gathering, analysing and using assessment information to monitor, support and accelerate students' learning is at least good, across all phases.
- The curriculum continues to provide a very good framework for all students' learning. Modifications and enhancements to the curriculum continue to increase.
- The safety and protection of students remain at the highest level and care and guidance across the school is very good. Students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) feel included.
- The leadership group has been enhanced and leaders at all levels have developed a clear and appropriate direction for the school and have been successful in moving it forward.

What the school does best

- The students are successful ambassadors of the school. They display outstanding levels of self-discipline, have excellent attitudes to learning and are proud of their school. They have formed strong and positive relationships within the school community.
- Students in the middle and high school phases are highly responsible. They have outstanding understanding of Islamic values and Emirati culture and heritage.
- All staff continue to have the highest regard for students' safety and protection.
- Students make very good and better progress in mathematics and science in the primary and middle phases, as well in English, mathematics and science in the secondary phase.
- Children in KG benefit from improved support, guidance and accurate assessment. A modified curriculum provides many opportunities for inquiry and discovery learning.
- School leaders, led by the principal and governors, are very successful in involving parents and students in the school improvement process.

Recommendations

- Improve students' attainment and progress in Arabic as an additional language by:
 - providing training that develops teachers' competencies in teaching an additional language
 - ensuring that curriculum and lesson planning and the assessment criteria are well linked
 - ensuring lessons focus on the four skills of language.
- Improve the quality of teaching by developing teachers' skills, in making informed choices on the most effective strategy to use in developing students' learning
- Improve the quality of monitoring and evaluation by:
 - developing action plans that contain clear and measurable success criteria
 - making better use of external benchmark data to measure students' progress
 - developing leaders' skills in evaluating the quality of teaching in order to support teachers' development.

National Agenda Parameter



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

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

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

- The school meets the registration requirements for the National Agenda Parameter
- Attainment based on the National Agenda Parameter benchmarks meets expectations in English and is above expectations in mathematics and science.
- Owners of the school have carried out workshops, including the GL assessment workshop for heads of department and subject coordinators. School attainment and progress data are presented to the governing body for further analysis. Training on the analysis and use of Cognitive Ability Test (CAT4), International Benchmark Test (IBT) and TIMSS is provided for teachers.
- IBT results informed curriculum review and mapping. A team of coordinators, trained in interpreting TIMSS and PISA reports are leading a thorough re-planning exercise. Initiatives such as interactive learning, online courses and a coherent approach to the promotion of STEAM activities are already evident.
- Lesson plans include questions to promote critical thinking. Focused activities to improve the grammar of students across phases, has also been introduced. Plans all contain links to the National Agenda priorities and identify opportunities to link lesson content to the outside world. The school has invested in new Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and curriculum resources to support teachers in modifying their lesson plans to increase personalisation of learning.
- Students have regular dialogue with their teachers and discuss performance and targets for the future. The results from last year's National Agenda Parameter report have been shared with students who participated in the assessments. Many students engage in the Bring Your Own Device (BOYD) initiative and are able to use laptops and tablets to develop their research skills and enhance their independence in learning.

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

Innovation in Education

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









Promoting a culture of innovation:

- Whilst opportunities for creative activities in KG are less well developed, students throughout the rest of the school use critical thinking and attempt to bring fresh ideas to their learning. Students use their well-developed sense of social responsibility to find ways of contributing to the care of the internal and external environment of the school. Open questioning is an embedded feature of almost all lessons, resulting in fluency in problem solving and a preparedness to try new ideas. The school develops its curriculum provision each year and recently introduced new technical options, such as robotics. It continues to offer a diverse range of subject combinations, including online courses, for students who would like to broaden their multi-disciplinary thinking. The school leadership has a good understanding of innovation and creativity, and within a context of limited resources, encourages critical and fresh thinking.

Overall school performance

Good

1 Students' achievement

		KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Islamic education 	Attainment	Not applicable	Good	Good	Good
	Progress	Not applicable	Good	Good	Good
Arabic as a first language 	Attainment	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable
	Progress	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable
Arabic as an additional language 	Attainment	Not applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
	Progress	Not applicable	Good ↑	Acceptable	Acceptable
English 	Attainment	Very good ↑	Good	Good	Very good ↑
	Progress	Very good ↑	Good	Good	Very good ↑
Mathematics 	Attainment	Good	Very good	Very good	Very good ↓
	Progress	Good	Very good	Very good	Very good
Science 	Attainment	Good	Very good ↑	Very good	Outstanding
	Progress	Good	Very good ↑	Very good	Outstanding

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Learning skills	Very good ↑	Good	Good	Very good

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

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

3. Teaching and assessment

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Teaching for effective learning	Good	Good	Good	Very good
Assessment	Good ↑	Very good ↑	Very good ↑	Very good

4. Curriculum

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Curriculum design and implementation	Very good ↑	Very good	Very good	Outstanding
Curriculum adaptation	Good	Good	Good	Very good

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

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Care and support	Very good ↑	Very good ↑	Very good ↑	Very good ↑


6. Leadership and management

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

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	Very good ↑	Very good ↑
Mathematics	Good	Good
Science	Good	Good

- Children have well developed skills in listening, speaking, reading and writing as measured against the school's curriculum standards. By the end of KG2 they are well prepared for Grade 1. Children's speaking and writing skills in English are above expected standards for additional language learners. The large majority of children independently write sentences about their own experiences or specific purposes, such as a shopping list. Nearly all children enjoy looking at books and recognise common high frequency words. They use strategies very successfully to decode unknown words.
- In mathematics, KG1 children make good progress against curriculum standards. By KG2 the majority of children are working above age related expectations. They talk confidently about length, size and shapes. They have well developed skills in counting and can explain their work. Children show a good understanding of numbers. They, increasingly, practice their skills in practical situations, for example, using money in a class fruit shop. A few high achievers in KG2 complete tasks in the "challenge corner" and show their understanding of number bonds.
- In science, the attainment and progress of the majority of children are above curriculum standards. All children are keen to explore the activities provided by teachers. They are developing science skills and have an increasing vocabulary base. Their knowledge of scientific vocabulary extends beyond expectations for additional language learners. By KG2, they begin to use previous knowledge and make predictions. They also begin to record their observations and tell others about what they have discovered.

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

- In Islamic education, the majority of students demonstrate knowledge and understanding of Islamic concepts, key beliefs and values that are above curriculum expectations. Most students can read and memorise short Surahs from the Holy Qur'an. However, there is inconsistency in their recitation skills and the memorisation of expected Surahs. In lessons and in their most recent writing, students make better than expected progress.
- The attainment of most students studying Arabic as an additional language is in line with the expectations for additional language learners. Although students are beginning to write a few basic sentences to an acceptable standard, their knowledge of key vocabulary and basic sentences is still rudimentary. Students' make good progress in their listening and speaking skills in lessons and over time.
- In English, the majority of students attain levels that are above international standards. Progress measured in relation to their starting point is better than expected for the majority of students. Students listen and talk confidently in a range of contexts. In discussions they pay close attention to what others say and many of them express their own opinions clearly. Most students have well-developed decoding skills and many can deduce inferential meaning. Their writing is neatly formed, well punctuated and demonstrates a growing vocabulary.
- In mathematics, external benchmark tests indicate a large majority of students are attaining above age expected levels. In internally assessed tests, most students achieve levels that are above curriculum standards. Students are able to solve problems involving all four operations and negative numbers. They can read scales and convert metric units. Over the past three years, students have continued to attain standards that are significantly above age expectations in internal assessments. There is no difference in the rate of progress between boys and girls.
- Standards in primary science have improved in recent years as a result of improved teaching and innovative changes to the curriculum. Attainment is high compared with curriculum, national and international standards. Students of all abilities, learn well in lessons and make very good progress. The large majority of students have a very good understanding of scientific concepts and engage very well with practical activities. They effectively use a wide range of resources to develop their research and enquiry skills and can relate their learning to the outside world.

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

- The majority of students demonstrate knowledge, skills and understanding above curriculum expectations in Islamic education. Students know the rules and procedures of Hajj, can name the angels and their roles and compare them to other creatures. They can compare the life and wisdom of some prophets to that of other great rulers in history and draw their own conclusions. However, their memorisation of the Holy Qur'an is inconsistent. In lessons and in their most recent writing, the majority of students make better than expected progress against curriculum expectations.
- In Arabic as an additional language, most students display language skills in line with expectations for additional language learners. Their attainment level remains similar to previous years. Students can respond to direct questions using simple words and sentences. However, they have difficulty speaking about unfamiliar situations. In lessons, they are able to write a short paragraph. They make acceptable progress in their listening and reading of basic familiar text. They make slow progress in learning to speak beyond sentence.
- A majority of students' attainment and progress in English, is above curriculum, national and international standards. Students take an active part in discussions and debates, using a broad range of vocabulary. In reading, most students are developing their skills in extracting information from a range of texts. Their writing is varied and interesting, engaging the reader.
- In mathematics, a large majority of students attain levels that are above curriculum standards in school examinations. In external benchmark tests most students attain above age related expectations. By the end of Grade 8, students can solve word problems involving fractions and calculate percentage error and percentage change. They can match a graph to a given linear or quadratic rule. Over the past three years, most students have attained above age related standards in internal school assessments.
- In science, students' attainment and progress are very good. They have well developed enquiry skills which they use to good effect in practical activities. They are able to predict and carry out investigations to test their predictions. Students can express their ideas and understanding clearly, using accurate scientific language, and are able to interact and collaborate effectively when working to answer challenging questions. Students are able to relate their scientific knowledge to the outside world in almost all lessons. Progress, as evidenced in lessons and over time, is very good.

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

- In Islamic education, the majority of students demonstrate knowledge, skills and understanding above curriculum expectations. They have a solid understanding of Islamic beliefs and a good knowledge of the life of the prophet (PBUH). They can reason and debate the rationale behind some Islamic laws such as the prohibition of alcohol and intoxicating drugs. Their memorisation and the recall of references from the Holy Qur'an and Hadeeth is improving. In lessons and in their most recent learning, the majority of students make better than expected progress against curriculum expectations.
- The attainment of most students in Arabic as an additional language, is in line with expectations. Students have acceptable listening, speaking and reading skills, when using familiar text. They can follow a model to write a short paragraph. However, their skill in writing independently is underdeveloped. Students make adequate progress in the acquisition of new vocabulary and basic grammar. Students' progress in using their knowledge in every day contexts is improving slowly.
- Most students attain levels in English that are above curriculum standards. A large majority of students reach levels of attainment above national and international standards. Students can discuss their ideas using appropriate vocabulary, emphasis and with passion. They are able to respond appropriately to a wide range of texts demonstrating their awareness for structural features. Writing fluently, they can clearly express their ideas. Over the past three years students gain consistently high levels of attainment. Progress continues to be very good.
- In mathematics, the large majority of students attain levels above curriculum standards. In Grade 10 for example, students can solve distance measurement problems in non-standard contexts involving conversion of units and inverse use of formulae. The results from external examinations in 2016 and, over the past three years indicate variable levels of attainment across the phase. Progress overtime is also variable across the phase but is very good overall.
- Students continue to demonstrate outstanding knowledge and understanding of scientific concepts and methods, achieving levels well above curriculum standards. They develop strong skills in the areas of scientific enquiry and investigation, and are able to carry out experiments independently. They make outstanding progress because they have many opportunities to develop concepts and solve problems. They apply their skills and knowledge with great enthusiasm.

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Learning skills	Very good ↑	Good	Good	Very good

- Students across all phases of the school demonstrate high interest in learning. They understand what is expected of them and demonstrate a very good level of responsibility for their own learning, especially in the secondary phase. In KG, children quickly settle to tasks and independently choose activities from a range of learning areas.
- Students' very positive learning attitudes and strong relationship with each other, allow them to collaborate well in a variety of contexts. However, in a few instances, the limitation of space for learning, restricts more effective cooperation. They communicate clearly and productively with their teachers and peers. For example, in Grade 12 physics, students are able to share their understanding of the theory of thermionic emission with their peers and the teacher.
- Students' ability to link and apply their understanding to the real world is strong in secondary and KG. They consistently make meaningful connections between areas of learning. However, the opportunities to develop these skills are less evident in the primary and middle phases of the school.
- Students' creativity and innovation skills are illustrated in a range of quality projects displayed around the school. The use of technology is inconsistent across the school. It is strong in mathematics and science, but is less prominent and effective in other subjects.

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

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Personal development	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding

- Students demonstrate outstanding responsible attitudes, and are enthusiastic about their learning. Their very positive attitudes contribute to a congenial atmosphere in the classroom where they effectively work with their peers and teachers. Students feel free to ask questions and respond very well to constructive feedback.
- Students' excellent behaviour and consistent self-discipline make for harmonious relations throughout the school. Students display a genuine concern and sensitivity for the needs of peers, the school staff, and members of the community. Recently, the Prefectural Body, a student leadership team, conducted a workshop for students regarding attitudes. This team's exemplary behaviour is influential across the school.
- Students benefit from strong interpersonal relationships with their classmates and teachers. They know all their ideas, opinions, and voices count and are heard by school leadership. They take pride in participating in clubs, innovation and entrepreneurial practices, and social welfare activities. There are many student-led initiatives like "Children for Children" and "Read and Lead", programmes in which older students help younger students.

- Nutritional eating choices and healthy living are embedded into the curriculum and students have a strong commitment to following a safe and healthy lifestyle. The school promotes the development of healthy choices by offering the 'Honesty Store', where students donate a dirham or more to purchase a piece of fruit with the proceeds going to charity. The vertical garden programme gives students an opportunity to grow and sell plants.
- Student attendance was good from April to October this year. Students usually arrive to school on time but are sometimes slow in returning from their mid-morning break.

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Good	Very good	Outstanding	Outstanding ↑

- In the lower phases, students have broad understanding of how Islamic values influence life in modern UAE society. Students in the upper phases clearly articulate their full appreciation and excellent understanding of how Islamic values, such as charity, compassion and harmonious living in a diverse society, manifest themselves in the UAE. They fully understand how to apply these values to their lives in the UAE.
- Students in the lower phases are knowledgeable about the history, geography and key development projects in the UAE. They understand key national priorities outlined in the UAE National Agenda. In addition to that, students in the upper phases are very knowledgeable about Emirati culture and they initiate and participate in a number of events celebrating UAE heritage. They are able to link prosperity in the UAE to the role and vision of the UAE leadership.
- Students are very proud of their own culture and the cultural diversity in their communities. They participate in a variety of celebrations and events including National Day, Diwali and Haj. In the lower phases, students have a clear understanding and a broad appreciation of different cultures such as food, language and dress codes. In the upper phases, students initiate a number of events to raise awareness about important world health and environmental issues through the many clubs in their school.

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Very good ↑	Outstanding ↑	Outstanding ↑	Outstanding

- Students take their social responsibilities very seriously and willingly contribute to the life of the school and wider communities on a volunteer basis. Inter-school activities such as recycling campaigns and social welfare initiatives develop students' awareness of the needs of the elderly, disabled, and less fortunate.

- Students understand working very hard is essential to success and demonstrate an excellent work ethic in their classes. Through well planned projects, like the tyre recycling project and the vertical garden, students acquire key skills to innovate and be creative. Students use bake and plant sales, and market day to practice their entrepreneurial skills.
- Students care deeply for their school and are successful in improving its environment. The Environmental Club provides many opportunities for students to take part in recycling campaigns, environmental competitions, and gardening activities. Members have developed a school environmental policy and an anti-litter policy for all students to follow. One of many student initiatives is the use of recycled water from the air conditioning system to water plants in the vertical garden.

3. Teaching and assessment

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Teaching for effective learning	Good	Good	Good	Very good

- Teachers' subject knowledge ranges from good to outstanding, especially in the secondary phase. This strong subject knowledge helps teachers give accurate explanations, ask searching questions and adapt their approaches in order to ensure that students make good progress in their lessons and over time. In KG, teachers have a secure understanding of how young children learn and use this knowledge effectively to plan their lessons.
- Teachers use an increasing range of technology to widen students' learning experiences. The pace of learning is good and teachers usually make optimum use of the time available to ensure students learn a range of skills. Teachers work very hard to create the best possible learning environment for their students. However, large group sizes in relatively small classrooms, are a limiting factor, which can slow the pace of learning.
- Teachers use good question and answer techniques to develop students' understanding of what they are learning, particularly in science and mathematics. Teachers have excellent relationships with students and this gives students the confidence to ask for help or advice when they need it. In KG, teachers have a strong focus on developing literacy, particularly speaking skills so that children have a solid foundation and can access the curriculum further up the school.
- In most lessons, learning is planned to challenge and effectively meet the needs of different groups of students. Extension activities ensure higher attaining students are challenged effectively. In Arabic as an additional language, teaching at times lacks appropriately varied tasks to meet the needs of all students. Teachers often include too many strategies in a lesson without evaluating the one that will best promote progress.
- Teachers increasingly encourage students to take responsibility for their own learning. The range of opportunities for students to develop their investigative skills and their ability to think about how they can accurately explain their findings is improving. In many lessons in the primary, middle and secondary phases, particularly in mathematics and science, the opportunity to think critically plays an important role in promoting students' enjoyment and achievement.

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Assessment	Good ↑	Very good ↑	Very good ↑	Very good

- Assessment practices are coherent and consistent across all phases of the school. They are linked well to the CBSE curriculum standards to provide clear measures of students' academic attainment. Teachers of Arabic as an additional language are less secure in assessing the students' linguistic experiences. All teachers have access to a wealth of individual student and class information.
- The school effectively benchmarks students' English, mathematics and science outcomes against IBT tests in Grades 3 to 10. Data from standardised assessments to measure potential are also gathered in the same grades. Teachers in KG use Centre for Evaluation and Monitoring (CEM) as an objective measure for attainment. There is, as yet, no benchmarking of Arabic or Islamic education.
- The tests are rigorously analysed. Information about student progress is very detailed and used to make some changes to lesson planning. Class teachers and school leaders track student attainment at regular intervals. As yet, there is no use made of CAT 4 predictions to support the evaluation of student progress across grades and subjects.
- Subject leaders and teachers use assessment information in their planning to modify the curriculum and better meet the needs of all groups of students. This is a recent initiative, which is beginning to have an impact on student learning in lessons. Subject leaders regularly reflect on test outcomes to review both short and longer term planning.
- Teachers have a good knowledge of individual students' strengths and weaknesses. They provide some challenge, support and feedback. Feedback through the use of rubrics and regular teacher/student dialogue is a rapidly improving aspect of teachers' practice. Many teachers are giving immediate feedback on the student learning through the use of digital assessment tools.

4. Curriculum

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Curriculum design and implementation	Very good ↑	Very good	Very good	Outstanding

- The Indian curriculum is based on CBSE and modified in light of international bench marking tests. Arabic and Islamic education subjects are based on the MoE standards. Adequate time and opportunities are made available to provide practical experiences and develop creativity through art, music and drama. The curriculum for KG is appropriately child-centred.
- The curriculum for every subject is sequenced and graded for a smooth transition from one phase to the next. Preparation for the external examinations is given high priority in the middle and secondary phases in order to prepare students for entry into colleges of their choice.
- A wide range of curricular options within the CBSE provides the senior students with sufficient choices to develop their talents and areas of interest and serves to delay specialisation. The introduction of online courses have further increased curricular options.

- Cross-curricular links are well developed in KG. For example, numeracy, literacy and environmental studies are combined into a thematic approach to learning. This is enabling children to make connections and relate topics to daily life. The school's focus on comprehension, across all phases, is another example of good practice.
- The school carry out regular reviews of the curriculum, mapping it against student achievement. As yet, curriculum planning in Islamic education has not taken sufficient account of the students' abilities with regard to Quran memorisation and recitation.
- The UAE social studies curriculum has been woven into the CBSE program and is taught in English. Lessons are carefully planned focusing on teaching concepts and skills apart from developing knowledge. The curriculum continuity and progression are found in the Primary and Middle school. Students are encouraged to find cross-curricular links, make presentations and take ownership for their learning. Assessments like oral questioning quizzes, are used to measure student learning.

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Curriculum adaptation	Good	Good	Good	Very good

- This year, following analysis of the international benchmark results, major initiatives in the majority of core subjects are being launched to enrich and strengthen the curriculum. For example, there is an appropriate whole-school focus on comprehension, particularly focusing on engaging boys in reading. However, at this stage, the impact of some of these initiatives is not evident.
- Several developments enhance the curriculum. Learning in science and mathematics has been brought together in the STEM projects for some students, providing them with opportunities to apply learning to real life. The school's garden is being used as a resource for the study of hydroponics. Many students benefit from a wide range of extra-curricular opportunities.
- Links to Emirati culture and UAE society are integrated into the wider curriculum. This helps students increase their awareness of Emirati culture, especially in the primary and middle phases. Field trips, school based programs and celebration of festivals further deepen students' understanding of the school's cultural and historical context. One example of entrepreneurial opportunities for students is the middle phase's Market Day, which raises money for an educational charity.
- The school offers one 35-minute session every week in Arabic as an additional language for KG2 children. The programme targets the learning of basic phonics and is intended as an introduction to learning in Grade 1.

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

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding

- The school has highly effective procedures for the safeguarding of students including child protection. All teachers are fully aware of the policies and procedures. A 'buddy' system supports the induction of new teachers and students. The school employs a BOYD policy and a secure firewall system is installed to provide cyber safety.
- The school site is safe. Supervision throughout the school is thorough. There is an effective system for identifying visitors to the school and sufficient staff to monitor that students are accounted for at all times. A large number of CCTV cameras have been installed this year, which add to the high levels of security.
- The school consistently provides a safe and hygienic environment. Safety checks are regular and thorough. All records are accurate and up-to-date. In spite of the constraints on space, evacuation of students during the last fire drill took six minutes.
- The school is well-maintained and has a sufficient number of specialist areas. However, as reported previously, learning areas are cramped. Some improvements have been made to the site, most notably, the addition of an outdoor synthetic field for sports and recreation. There is no access for physically disabled students to the upper floors.
- There is an impressive range of activities for providing nutritious food and promoting a healthy lifestyle. The school actively monitors this provision and is successful in promoting healthy living. Outdoor areas are shaded and there are plentiful stations providing fresh, drinking water.

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Care and support	Very good ↑	Very good ↑	Very good ↑	Very good ↑

- Behaviour is managed exceptionally well. Students listen well to teachers and the rest of the school community, and feel that it is their responsibility to contribute as well as to learn. The 'Understanding Peers' assembly is an example of the school helping students to define bullying and how to deal with it. Attendance is good and systems for communicating absence to parents have recently been enhanced. The very efficient school transport system for the large number of students ensures high levels of punctuality. This contributes very positively to students' learning.
- Students requiring support are identified early and accurately. Most of those identified are correctly categorised for their learning need. Systems are rapidly developing and improving but are not embedded. However, the awareness is improving the capacity of the school staff to recognise special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) early in the students' lives at the school.

- Support for students with SEND is improving in the classroom. Students with individual education plans (IEPs) have helpful personalised targets. Gifted and talented students are identified early and techniques to challenge them to research, expand and broaden learning, think critically and innovate are clear in most lessons.
- Students feel well supported in the school and trust the advice they are given. Enhanced curricular opportunities are available to students, in response to their requests. Advice on further education and employment opportunities is readily provided in school and from external agencies. Career information is improving rapidly, both in accessibility and usability, through the availability of online resources.

Inclusion

Provision and outcomes for students with SEND

Good 

- The new SEND leader is significantly strengthening the school's provision for students and this is already improving students' progress in the classroom. Increasing expertise, by skilled and innovative training, is building confidence in leaders to make essential modifications to the curriculum.
- Identification of students with SEND is not yet fully accurate, although many more students are now receiving help. The identification of need is based on using many sources of information and is increasingly recognising the contribution from teaching staff, parents and the students themselves.
- Parents support the school in the SEND developments but recognise that personnel changes have reduced the effectiveness of communications between home and school. In spite of that, parents feel well informed, involved and consulted. They are confident that their children are making appropriate progress and they respect the knowledge that SEND staff and school leaders have of the needs of more vulnerable students.
- Consistent and expert advice is readily available to class teachers to enable them to support learning for students with SEND. Recent enhancements are not yet fully embedded in all classes but the majority of teachers have embraced the advice and are working hard to improve their practice.
- Students with SEND make good, and in some cases outstanding progress in their learning, as a result of adaptations made by teachers to the planning. This is because of improvements to teaching and assessment methods. Improvements in assessment of learning within lessons are enabling teachers to address weaknesses when they occur, and leaders are building systems to ensure that patterns of under-achievement are quickly recognised and addressed.

6. Leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership

Very good ↑

- The school direction is clear although the articulation of the mission and vision is not uniformly expressed. It is central to the decision-making process of leaders. The mission and vision statements are shared with the school community and are regularly reviewed. School leaders give significant emphases to the UAE's priorities and the school is inclusive of all students.
- Most leaders demonstrate a thorough knowledge of how students learn best within the demands of the 21st Century. They understand clearly how the curriculum and assessment practices enhance the academic opportunities for learning and fully recognise the need for systems that guide and support students' personal and social development. Leaders work together to provide the necessary conditions for both to happen.
- Relationships are professional, respectful and considerate. Channels of communication are clear. Consultation is an integral part of decision-making. Leadership is effectively delegated to individuals and teams. Leaders have clearly identified roles, responsibilities and lines of accountability. Responsibilities are organised effectively both vertically and horizontally.
- Most leaders are highly effective. Some, who have been in post for a short time, have made a very positive impact on student learning. The leadership group is enhanced through the creation of several key posts. However, the opportunity of some middle leaders to contribute fully to the improvement of the school is limited by the constraints of their heavy teaching commitments.
- Leaders have been very successful in developing aspects of school performance; for example, in the use of assessment. They have found creative solutions to the cramped learning spaces. Further initiatives are underway, but, at the time of the inspection, it was too early to measure the full extent of their effects on student learning. School leaders ensure compliance with all statutory requirements.

School self-evaluation and improvement planning

Good

- The processes for gathering data includes all members of the school community and is from a range of sources; analysis of internal and external exam results, surveys, reports from external bodies as well as the UAE priorities. The key priorities are successfully identified and are aligned to the school's vision. School leaders are becoming increasingly skilled in writing the school evaluation form (SEF). It is shared with the Friends of the School and available to all parents.
- Comprehensive systems are set up to monitor teaching and learning against set criteria. These form part of the school's performance management system, which includes high-quality training. Data from these evaluations is analysed to enable leaders to focus support where it is most needed. Leaders' evaluations of the quality of teaching indicate better performance than observed by the inspection team.

- Action planning develops from the priorities identified in the SEF. Students and parents are invited to contribute their suggestions. The plans contain both whole school and subject specific objectives. These plans result in improvements in learning. As yet, the school's action plans do not contain objectives that make reference to the school's core purpose. The plans lack measurable success criteria, which prevent the impact of initiatives being measured.
- The plans are delivering improvements in most of last year's recommendations. Progress in Arabic, as an additional language, has risen in the primary phase. Some creative solutions are being found for the overcrowded learning environments. The level of challenge for less able boys is being addressed by adapting teaching approaches and the provision of additional resources such as the Reading A-Z programme.

Partnerships with parents and the community

Very good

- Many parents are actively engaged in the life of the school, as volunteers, as members of Friends of School (FOS) and on the local governing body. Additional, informal opportunities for parents to share their views are provided through regular coffee mornings. As a result this year, several developments have been made to the provision; for example, improvement to the food in the dining room and the creation of Scouts and Guides groups.
- Parent teacher communication is enhanced by the use of digital applications and email. Parents feel that the school operates an 'open door' policy, all staff are approachable and issues are resolved promptly. Parents of students with SEND feel they are closely involved in discussions about their children's future learning.
- Nearly all parents are highly satisfied with the comprehensive reports from the school. The regular parents' meetings with teachers keep them informed about their children's next steps in learning. Most students in the secondary phase also believe that the reports help them to better understand their performance.
- The school has effective links with the community and students are engaged in environmental campaigns with DEWA and Emirates Environmental Group, partnerships with Standard Bank as well as charitable projects such as distributing Iftar kits to workers' camps. A link with the University of York Canada, provides scholarship to students for higher studies.

Governance

Very good ↑

- A recent development this year is the creation of a local governing body, comprising of members of the school and community. The local governing body's purpose is to encourage greater involvement of the community, to devolve important decision-making to the local level and to have an impact on student learning. This body works alongside the GEMS governing body.
- Through a variety of strategies, such as regular meetings, learning walks, drop in visits, the GEMS governing body is very knowledgeable about the school's performance and well aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Targets are set for school leaders in an appropriate range of key performance indicators. School leaders' accountability for the quality of the school's performance is monitored through these targets.

- As a result of its detailed knowledge, the GEMS governing body has a very positive impact on school performance. It provides a rich resource of training programmes and can link the school staff with a number of colleagues in similar situations. There are numerous examples of how GEMS can support the journey of the school. This year, it has increased the number of leadership positions and improved the school site and resources. However, the issue of over-crowded classrooms remains an obstacle to maximising student performance.

Management, staffing, facilities and resources




Good

- School leaders organise the day-to-day running of the school efficiently. They have high expectations of what all students can achieve and aim for high standards of provision. Informative displays keep the school community up-to-date with school developments and the positive links with parents contribute to their support of the school.
- Department leaders help to improve staff practice through the systematic monitoring and feedback of teachers' performance. Teachers attend appropriate professional development courses which are linked to performance management. All staff are academically qualified and employed effectively depending on their experience and expertise. Newly appointed teachers benefit from an induction programme.
- Although, space is restricted in some areas, teachers use the premises well. In the absence of a primary phase library, students use the smaller libraries in their classrooms. KG has increased its use of teaching space by using corridors and outdoor learning areas more effectively. Nevertheless, overcrowding limits the development of learning in some lessons. The lack of an art room for older boys restricts teaching in this subject.
- In all areas of the school, students' work is displayed and celebrated. Classrooms and corridors provide an attractive environment for learning. The new gardens inspire students' enquiry skills. Newly equipped, high quality science laboratories provide good resources for learning and offer teachers a greater range of opportunities for different teaching methods.

The views of parents, teachers and senior students

The views of parents, teachers and senior students

Before the inspection, the views of the parents, teachers and senior secondary students were surveyed. Key messages from each group were considered during the inspection and these helped to form inspection judgements. A summary of the survey statistics and comments from those who responded to the survey follows:

Responses to the surveys		
Responses received	Number	
Parents* 	2016-2017	1444
	2015-2016	1458
Teachers 	161	
Students 	560	

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

- Parents, teachers and students feel positive about their school and the leadership of it. Parents are especially positive about safety and school transport.
- Most parents and students report that students have access to a good range of resources in school and believe that relationships with teachers are very strong.
- Parents report that bullying is rare and when it occurs, the school deals with it well.
- Most students feel that they receive good support.
- Most students and parents and all teachers consider that the school listens to their views.
- Most parents and students, alike, believe that the school offers good careers guidance.

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