




Al Ittihad Private
school

 Curriculum: US

Overall Rating:

Acceptable



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

Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al-Maktoum



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School information



General information

Location	Al Mamzar
Type of school	Private
Opening year of school	1978
Website	www.ipsmamzar.com
Telephone	00971-4-2966314
Address	P.O.Box 5126-Dubai
Principal	Mrs. Amna Mohamad Rafi
Language of instruction	English, Arabic
Inspection dates	13 to 16 March 2017

Teachers / Support staff

Number of teachers	128
Largest nationality group of teachers	Jordan
Number of teaching assistants	39
Teacher-student ratio	1:14
Number of guidance counsellors	1
Teacher turnover	20%

Students

Gender of students	Boys and girls
Age range	4-18
Grades or year groups	KG1-Grade 12
Number of students on roll	1847
Number of children in pre-Kindergarten	76
Number of Emirati students	1489
Number of students with SEND	34
Largest nationality group of students	Emirati

Curriculum

Educational permit / License	US
Main curriculum	US
External tests and examinations	MAP, IBT, CAT4
Accreditation	NEASC
National Agenda benchmark tests	MAP, 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.

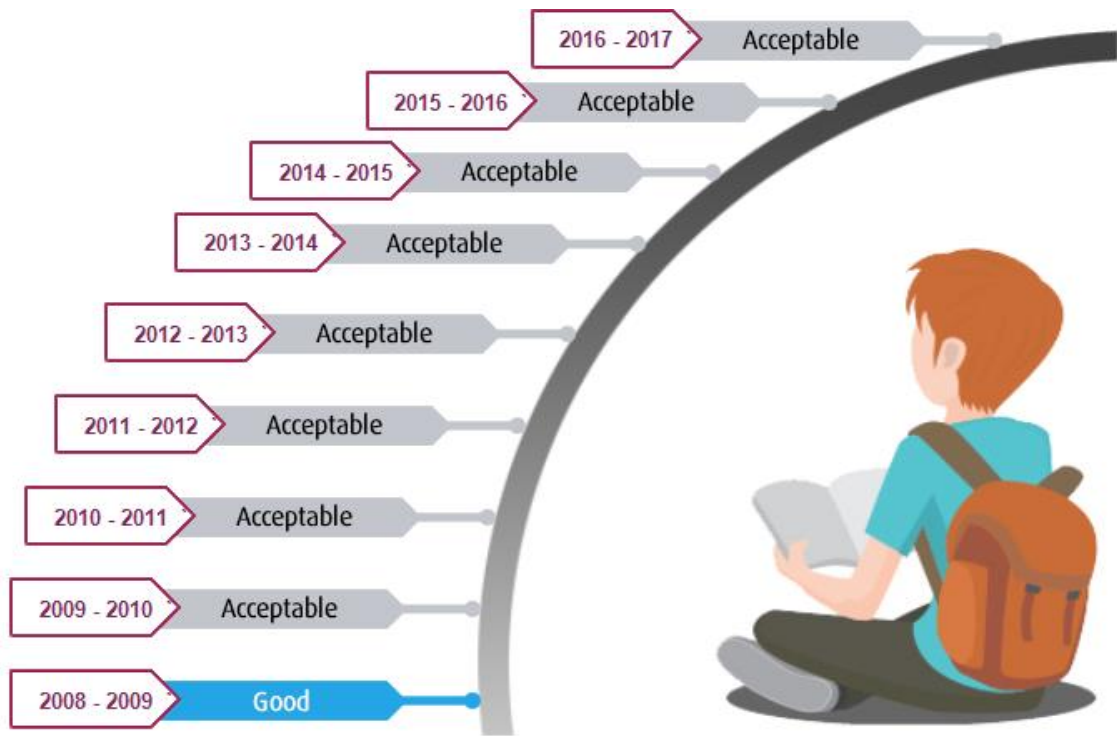
Inspection judgements are drawn from evidence gathered by the inspection team, including observation of students' learning in lessons, review of their work, discussions with students, meetings with the staff, parents and governors, and review of surveys completed by parents, teachers and students.

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 Al Ittihad Private school



- Al Ittihad Private School has 1847 boys and girls aged from four to 18 years from the Kindergarten (KG) to Grade 12. The number of students in the school this year is slightly higher than the previous year. The school is organized into KG, elementary school (Grades 1 to 5), middle school (Grades 6 to 8) and high school (Grades 9 to 12). Teacher turnover rate is 20 per cent.
- Previous inspections have acknowledged the schools' strengths including students' outcomes in Islamic education and Arabic as well as their personal and social development. These reports highlighted the highly effective work of the health and safety committee in ensuring the safety and well-being of all members of the school community.
- Recommendations over time have focused on improving students' attainment and progress as well as teaching, learning and assessment. Previous reports also indicated that the school needed to improve resourcing, identifying students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and supporting them. In addition, improving the school's self-evaluation processes has been a recurring theme.

Summary of inspection findings 2016-2017



Al Ittihad Private School was inspected by DSIB from 13 to 16 March 2017. The overall quality of education provided by the school is **acceptable**. The section below summarizes the inspection findings for each of the six performance indicators described in the framework.

- Students' attainment and progress are good in the KG and are good or better in Islamic education and science across the school. Student's enquiry, research, problem-solving and critical thinking skills are developing across the curriculum but are particularly strong in Islamic education and science where students carry out a range of activities that support these skills.
- Students' personal and social development is very good in the KG and high school, and good in the other phases. Their understanding of Islamic values and other cultures is outstanding. Students' community and environmental awareness is very good in the KG and good in the other phases. Attendance is very good overall. Students' punctuality in arriving to lessons is better than their punctuality in arriving to school at the start of the day.
- The quality of teaching is good in the KG, the middle school, and the high school and acceptable in the elementary school. Teachers demonstrate strong subject knowledge and lessons are well planned especially in the girls' section. Teacher-student relationships are strong, but teachers' strategies to meet the range of students' needs remain variable. Assessment is good and most teachers have a secure understanding of their students' abilities.
- The curriculum is good and follows the California State Standards with consideration given to the Ministry of Education (MoE) requirements for Islamic education and Arabic. It is enhanced through a range of extra-curricular activities that students and parents appreciate. Modifications to the curriculum for students with SEND are developing. Higher attaining students are not always challenged in their lessons.
- The provision for health and safety is very good overall and outstanding in the KG. The school provides a safe, secure and supportive environment for students. The protection, care and support of students are very good in the KG and acceptable in the other phases. The care and support for students with SEND are developing.
- The principal and the senior leaders have set a clear direction and have a sharp vision for the school. They have a secure understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses although self-evaluation is only acceptable. Relationships with parents are good and governance is acceptable. Management, facilities, staffing and resources are good with an increasing focus on using technology to support students' learning.

What the school does best

- Children's attainment and progress in the KG and students' attainment and progress in Islamic education and science in the other phases
- Students' personal and social development across the school
- Students' understanding of Islamic values and their community and environmental awareness
- The safe, secure and supportive environment for all students
- The effective partnership and communication with parents that keep them well informed about their children's progress.

Recommendations

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning, especially in the elementary phase, to raise students' attainment and progress by ensuring that:
 - exemplary teaching practice is identified and shared across the school
 - work is more closely matched to students' individual needs and students of all ability levels are appropriately challenged.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and self-evaluation by ensuring that data, especially from lesson observations, is rigorously analyzed.
- Make better use of students' assessment data to support students with SEND so that they make good or better progress.

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 the school's targets:

- The school does not fully meet the registration requirements for the National Agenda Parameter.
- Attainment in English, mathematics and science on the National Agenda Parameter is not secure.
- The school has organized some training for teachers on how to interpret the results of Cognitive Ability Tests (CAT4) and use the results to match teaching approaches to students' learning needs. Teachers are starting to use the results of Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) tests to set achievement goals for their students. They have not used the results of MAP tests to align their own internal assessment procedures to international standards.
- The school has aligned its science curriculum with the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) and believes that this is sufficient to prepare students for the science parts of TIMSS and PISA tests. In mathematics, the focus has been on giving greater emphasis to problem-solving. In reading, teachers match their questions and texts to the format of PISA tests. The results of the MAP tests have not been used sufficiently to modify the curriculum.
- The school is at an early stage of using CAT4 and MAP data to adjust teaching approaches. There is some use of online resources, but these are mainly drill and practice activities in which students answer short-response questions and get immediate feedback. Students are rarely asked to tackle open-ended problems or think critically, although some examples are evident in science, such as students' thinking about possible strategies to deal with the decreasing population of whales.
- Students who have taken MAP tests are familiar with their individual results and have set goals for themselves with help from teachers. Students' use of learning technologies to carry out independent research, investigations, and enquiry activities are not well embedded in the curriculum.

Overall, the school's improvement towards achieving its National Agenda targets is not secure.

Innovation in Education

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









Promoting a culture of innovation:

- Students increasingly make use of opportunities for research, problem-solving and critical thinking especially in Islamic education, science and the KG. Students enthusiastically pursue opportunities to engage in community and charitable activities, but innovation in the classroom is inconsistent and opportunities are limited. Teachers' development of students' critical thinking, problem-solving, innovation and independent learning skills is variable and is especially evident in the KG and the high school. The curriculum has embedded opportunities for enquiry, critical thinking and independent learning, but the implementation of these aspects is inconsistent across the school. School leaders actively promote innovation and encourage the safe use of modern technology, but not all teachers appreciate embedding innovation into their lessons.

Overall school performance

Acceptable

1 Students' achievement

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

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

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

3. Teaching and assessment

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

4. Curriculum

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

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

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding	Outstanding	Very good ↓	Very good ↓	Very good ↓
Care and support	Very good ↑	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable


6. Leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership	Acceptable
School self-evaluation and improvement planning	Acceptable
Parents and the community	Good
Governance	Acceptable
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	Good	Good
Mathematics	Good	Good
Science	Good	Good

- In English, the majority of children have literacy skills that are above expected curriculum standards. Their ability to use these skills in conversations and classroom activities results in good progress from their starting points and as measured against the learning objectives of the curriculum. Assessment information and children's work indicate that a majority of children have above age-appropriate speaking and listening skills, phonological awareness and emergent reading and writing skills. The lack of ample opportunities for writing across subjects hinders progress in this area.
- The majority of children exhibit knowledge in numbers and operations that exceed curriculum standards. Their knowledge of counting, measurement, addition and subtraction is the foundation for continued understanding of mathematical concepts. Assessment data shows that, over time, children progress well in using their mathematics skills to solve problems and connect mathematics to their own experiences. In lessons, they make good progress using interesting practical material that allow them to get involved in meaningful mathematical activities.
- The majority of children are proficient in their understanding of the world and act as scientists in lessons. They have well-developed enquiry and problem-solving skills that are appropriate for their age. They make notable gains in lessons when designing and creating experiments using the scientific method. For example, children have built towers out of recycled materials to compare heights. Assessment information shows that progress over time, as measured towards learning objectives, is better than expected for a majority of children.

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

- Against curriculum standards, the majority of students attain levels that are above expectations in Islamic education. They have well-developed skills in reciting and memorizing verses of the Holy Qur'an. They can explain the main vocabulary and overall meaning of the prescribed Hadeeth. In lessons and in their recent work, the majority of students demonstrate progress that is above expectations in recitation. Their knowledge is improving and exceeding expectations. Their progress over time is good.
- In Arabic as a first language, the school's internal assessments show attainment that is above curriculum standards. Lesson observations confirm that students' listening and reading skills are strong. Most students exhibit acceptable speaking skills while a minority are confident and fluent speakers. Writing skills are not consistent, and only few students can engage in extended writing. Students' progress is acceptable. The development of language skills over time for most students is at the expected level, especially in speaking and writing skills.
- Students' attainment and progress in English are acceptable. They are below international benchmarks and most Grade 4 and Grade 5 students do not meet their targets on the MAP tests. Internal assessment data indicate that the majority of students are performing above curriculum standards, but these assessments are not fully aligned to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). Lessons focus on discrete skills such as vocabulary, phonics and reading strategies and, in some classes, students connect these skills through extended learning tasks, integrated discussion and extended writing.
- Most students make progress in mathematics which is in line with curriculum expectations. In Grades 1 and 2, they can count and perform additions and subtractions to 20 and tell the time to the half-hour. In Grade 5, most students can multiply fractions and decimals, and analyze solid shapes in terms of faces, edges and corners. Internal assessments show good attainment, but external tests are less positive. Internal and external test results are more closely aligned when indicating students' progress from relatively low levels of attainment.
- In science, a majority of students attain levels that are above curriculum standards and make better than expected progress in relation to their learning objectives. Students' attainment as measured by international tests is not high. However, internal assessment results show that students' knowledge, skills and understanding are above expectations. Students' progress over time is secure. Students learn to think like scientists, conduct age-appropriate experiments and apply the scientific method. They can generate simple hypotheses and test them with teacher guidance.

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

- In Islamic education, the majority of students demonstrate a good level of knowledge and skills including applying recitation rules to the Holy Qur'an and Hadeeth. They can talk with confidence about Seerah and explain economic sustainability from an Islamic perspective. In lessons and recent work, the large majority of students show an ability to infer the rationale behind prescribed Islamic laws and acts of worship. They make progress that is much better than expected given their starting points. Their progress over time is very good.
- In Arabic as a first language, students' listening skills are above the expected levels. Their speaking skills are in line with expectations. Students show limited confidence in engaging in extended speech or dialogue. Their reading with understanding is acceptable, but the majority lack confidence in reading. Internal assessment results show that most students attain levels that are above curriculum standards. Their progress is acceptable as their writing skills improve over time, and the majority demonstrate some independence in writing although with frequent spelling and grammar mistakes.
- External MAP data show that attainment in English for most students is below international standards. Only few students show proficiency in reading and language usage, and the large majority make expected progress. Internal assessment results indicate good levels of attainment and progress, but these assessments are not rigorously aligned with the curriculum standards. In lessons, there are limited opportunities for students to independently develop their literacy skills and produce extended writing.
- In mathematics, the majority of students make good progress in lessons and over time. External test data indicate that a majority of students make better than expected progress from relatively low levels of attainment. Students can calculate the areas of shapes such as trapezoids, work with prime factors and are starting to learn basic algebraic concepts. In lessons and in their recent work, students show acceptable attainment, but indications from external tests are less positive. Students develop better skills in applying techniques than in showing creativity in problem-solving.
- In science, a majority of students demonstrate attainment that is above curriculum expectations as measured by internal tests. External assessments show a lower level of attainment, but students' knowledge, skills and understanding are strong and the majority make better than expected progress in lessons. Students continue to enhance their scientific vocabulary as they get exposed to increasing levels of theory and ideas. They can predict, observe, analyze and draw conclusions. Their investigative skills are good especially in Grades 7 and 8 where they are pitched at a more sophisticated level.

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

- In lessons, the majority of students attain levels that are above curriculum standards in Islamic education. They apply their learning to their lives and can differentiate between the different types of Hadeeth. They exceed expectations in memorizing verses from the Holy Qur'an. They talk confidently about lessons learnt from the life of the Prophet (PBUH) and his companions such as the importance of tolerance. The large majority of students make progress that is above the expected level especially in developing their critical thinking skills. Their progress over time is similarly strong.
- In Arabic as a first language, internal assessment results show that attainment for a majority of students is above the curriculum standards. Their listening skills are very good, and most students can engage in a short prepared talk. Only a minority can elaborate or engage in more advanced discussions. Students' writing develops gradually so that at the end of Grade 12, the majority can write extended research papers. Students make good progress. The large majority, particularly girls, apply learning in new contexts through creative writing and debating.
- External MAP data indicate that students' attainment and progress are below expected international levels in English. However, internal assessments and students' work in lessons and workbooks confirm good attainment and progress. Students engage in a range of extended texts that support their critical thinking. Students' listening and speaking skills allow them to build arguments and support claims. Almost all students showed evidence of written work that reflects good progress over the course of the year.
- In mathematics, a majority of students make better than expected progress in lessons and over time. Internal test data show good attainment which is supported by lesson observations and samples of students' work. Students understand advanced concepts in trigonometry, algebra and calculus, and can apply techniques such as calculus procedures to sketch graphs of functions. However, their presentation skills are often untidy especially in the boys' section. External assessment results are not as positive as those produced by internal tests.
- In science, a majority of students attain levels that are above curriculum expectations as measured by internal examinations. External tests do not, however, show the same level of attainment. External MAP assessments are only administered in Grade 9. The progress of a majority of students, as measured by both internal and external examinations, is better than expected. Students take biology, physics or chemistry as electives. Their work in these courses is at a high standard and prepares them well for the next phase of their education.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Learning skills	Good	Acceptable	Good ↑	Good

- In most lessons, students show very positive attitudes towards learning, stay on task and want to do well especially in the middle and high school. In the elementary school, students' inattentive behavior in some lessons interrupts their learning over substantial periods of time. Students across the school are not routinely encouraged to evaluate their own work and that of their peers.
- Students' interactions in lessons are positive and they work well in pairs and small groups when given the opportunity. KG children share resources well, enjoy activities together and are encouraged to be independent. Students' confidence in thinking deeply around a subject, explaining their ideas and sharing them cogently with their peers is less developed.
- Lesson planning encourages the linking elements of the curriculum with real world examples, but such links are not carried out in lessons as a regular feature. Opportunities for students to make these links for themselves are also limited because class discussions are not always developed effectively. Links between areas of learning are well planned and are used imaginatively in the KG to make learning exciting.
- Innovation is developing well across the school. Older students enjoy using their science and IT skills in a range of robotics construction tasks to demonstrate what modern technology can provide cities of the future. Critical thinking skills are developing especially for older students in Islamic education and science. However, these are not a feature of students' learning in elementary school where lessons are more teacher directed.

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


	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Personal development	Very good ↑	Good	Good	Very good ↓

- Students demonstrate positive and responsible attitudes across the school. They take responsibility for their work, try hard to complete it well and amend it in the light of discussion. They become increasingly self-reliant as they get older and are not averse to taking academic risks. In general, girls and high school students are much more independent and self-controlled than others.
- Students show elevated levels of self-discipline in all areas of the school. Students' behavior, especially the girls', is positive. Students exercise self-control and follow school rules. They show respect to the school environment. KG children respond very well to their peers and adults. Bullying is rare but, when it does occur, it is almost exclusively in the boys section and during breaks or between lessons.
- Students enjoy excellent relationships with staff. They show consideration and sensitivity to the range of the differences among themselves. They report that they feel safe, happy, valued and supported by leaders and teachers especially by the Islamic education teachers. They are polite and helpful to school visitors.

- Students know how to live a healthy lifestyle and demonstrate this in the habits they adopt. They have positive attitudes towards healthy eating and maintaining active lifestyles through participating in physical education classes and extra-curricular sports after school.
- Students attend school regularly and enjoy their school days. Attendance is very good overall but is variable across the phases. Students are punctual to their lessons during the day, but many arrive late to school in the morning and miss the assembly.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding

- Students across the school have a very strong understanding of the impact of Islamic values on the everyday life and culture of the UAE. Students initiate and actively engage in a range of activities such as Kindness Day, UAE Martyr Day and National Celebration Day. Students' behaviors reflect tolerance, friendship, fairness and respect for all people.
- All students respect and appreciate the cultural heritage of the UAE and are aware of the traditions and pastimes. They can identify the contemporary culture of Dubai and confidently talk about features that have changed over time and those that have stayed the same.
- Students display an excellent understanding of their own culture and a very good awareness of other cultures around the world. International Day, for example, is predominantly organized and delivered by students and highlights the harmony that persists across the school. Students are respectful and mindful of other cultures in the school.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Very good 	Good	Good	Good

- Students are keen to actively participate in any activity that contributes to the life of the school and the community. They engage in a range of projects such as Model United Nations, the Career Fair, and fundraising initiatives such as those that support orphans. The student council plays an important role in the life of the school.
- Most students have a positive work ethic. They understand that they need to work hard to achieve their academic and career goals. Middle and high school students make helpful contributions to projects such as the Career Fair, Innovation Day and IT projects. However, opportunities to develop their entrepreneurship skills are limited.
- Students display a good understanding of environmental sustainability. They engage in several activities to improve the school and the local environment such as beach clean-ups and the Clean Up the World campaign. Children in the KG are particularly knowledgeable about environmental issues and actively take responsibility for their classroom environment.

3. Teaching and assessment

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

- Teachers have good subject knowledge and in Islamic education use this knowledge effectively to link areas of learning across the curriculum, making lessons engaging for all students. Teachers' understanding of how students learn is variable. It is better in the KG, where different strands of learning are carefully interwoven into activities which allow children to explore and find things out for themselves.
- Lessons mostly follow a common planning format and closely reflect the requirements of the curriculum. Learning objectives are shared with students in almost all classes but are not consistently revisited and evaluated at the end of the lesson. Teachers provide high school students with good opportunities to carry out research using IT resources and to explore their learning independently especially in science.
- Teachers' questioning skills are developing but most questions require short answers rather than encourage students to develop their critical thinking. In the better lessons, such as in Islamic education, questioning allows students to discuss complex concepts such as the Islamic perspective of economic stability and the relevant individual and community responsibilities.
- Teachers know their students well but their use of assessment information is inconsistent. The work planned in a large majority of lessons does not provide effective challenge for the most-able students. In a minority of lessons, especially in the elementary school, teachers' inadequate behavior management skills result in loss of teaching and learning time.
- Teachers are beginning to encourage advanced learning skills more confidently, especially for older students. They use problem-solving opportunities, critical thinking and real-life comparisons to effectively broaden students' learning experiences in some classes especially in Islamic education and science. Such exciting opportunities are not evident in the elementary school where lessons are more teacher-centered and students' interest and excitement in learning, as a result, are limited.

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

- The school has a robust system of internal assessments across the phases that is linked well to the curriculum standards. Teachers in the various departments, including Islamic education, Arabic and science, have reviewed test questions to focus them more on critical thinking and problem-solving. However, this is still a work in progress. Internal assessment data provide mostly valid and clear measures of students' attainment and progress.
- External benchmarking of student outcomes is carried out on a regular basis using a variety of external assessments. However, these assessments are not given in every grade and subject. Therefore, students in the high school beyond Grade 9 in science and Grade 10 in English and mathematics have limited external assessments to benchmark their outcomes. In addition, the other subjects are not externally benchmarked.

- The school utilizes an online management system to record, track and monitor students' performance. Information about students both individually and as groups is available to teachers and administrators. This information is analyzed in some depth with a good level of accuracy in all the phases.
- Although assessment information is analyzed well and tracked over time, the use of data to fully inform teaching is weak. As a result, the needs of some groups of students are not regularly met and their progress is limited. This is particularly true for some students with SEND and those who are gifted and talented.
- Teachers across the school know their students well and are aware of their strengths and weaknesses. They utilize a variety of techniques to assess learning including self-assessment and provide students with both oral and written feedback. The former is more frequent and targeted, while the marking of written work does not always provide sufficient information on the next steps in learning and how to improve.

4. Curriculum

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

- The curriculum is broad, balanced and suitably aligned to the California State Standards. It meets the MoE requirements for Islamic education and Arabic. The curriculum is designed to develop students' understanding with a focus on both knowledge and skills in most subjects. In the high school, however, not all social studies and physical education courses align with US curriculum requirements.
- The curriculum is planned and sequenced to build well on students' learning so that most students are well-prepared for their next phase of education. Curriculum maps and unit plans are designed and used on a regular basis to establish the rigor required by the various curriculum standards that the school uses.
- Students across the school have access to some curricular options. High school students have some choices in mathematics and science, in addition to various IT and other elective courses. At the time of the inspection, there were no Advanced Placement courses offered in any subject.
- Cross-curricular learning is evident in most lessons, and the majority of lessons include opportunities for students to transfer skills across content areas. An integrated curriculum is most prevalent in Islamic education, Arabic and social studies. Mathematics and science lessons often incorporate cross-curricular learning, and English reading, writing and language skills are frequently reinforced in other subjects.
- The school reviews the curriculum regularly and some modifications have been made to better meet the academic needs of students. The school has various procedures and practices in place to develop and review the curriculum to take account of national priorities and address the gaps identified by external testing.

- The social studies curriculum is implemented in Grades 1 to 9 and follows the MoE guidelines. Lessons show clear planning and alignment to the MoE standards. Most lessons are structured around the MoE materials including textbooks, worksheets and visual aids. Students use the MoE social studies text books and materials to learn about regional history and analyze its connections to current events in Dubai and the UAE. Internal assessments are aligned to the MoE standards and administered regularly.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Curriculum adaptation	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

- The school adequately modifies the curriculum to meet the needs of most students. In the better lessons, especially in the KG, teachers differentiate objectives and activities to provide appropriate support and challenge based on student ability and interest. Productive learning experiences for students with SEND and the gifted and talented students is not always evident in lessons.
- The curriculum is functional and designed to engage students in meaningful academic experiences, especially in the key subjects. There is a wide range of extra-curricular activities where students participate in clubs and sports that extend their learning and support their personal and social development. Some successful links with the community provide high school students with valuable opportunities that promote their enterprise, innovation and creativity.
- Connections to the UAE culture and society are evident in many lessons. For example, the topic of tolerance, which is a strong feature in Islamic education, is linked regularly to other subjects. The school is committed to promoting the values of Islam and to living the traditions of the UAE. This is evident throughout the school in the design of curricular topics and related initiatives.

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

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding	Outstanding	Very good ↓	Very good ↓	Very good ↓

- The child protection policy and its implementation is a strength, particularly in the KG. Most adults in the school are familiar with it and have been trained on its implementation. Students know about bullying, including cyber-bullying, and have been trained on how to stay safe. The school also provides useful information to parents on these issues.
- In the KG, the arrangements to ensure health, safety, security, supervision and the promotion of healthy lifestyles among children are exceptionally effective. In the other phases, arrangements and checks to ensure safety, health, hygiene and security are not subject to regular scrutiny, and there are some risks to safety that require further consideration.

- Record keeping is meticulous and up-to-date in all areas including the clinic. Emergency evacuation drills take place regularly and are reviewed after each drill. Fire equipment are labelled and inspected at regular intervals. Closed Circuit TV cameras are present across the school to ensure safety. However, maintenance is performed only as needed rather than through a systematic plan.
- The school's facilities, including the specialty rooms, assembly areas and multi-purpose spaces are conducive to meeting the learning needs of most students. Wheelchair ramps are provided and allow students with SEND to have access to all ground floor areas in the school. The buildings provide a safe environment for all students.
- Safe and healthy lifestyles, while promoted by the school through assemblies, are not strongly evident in the day-to-day reality of school life, especially in the unhealthy food offerings in the canteen and the heavy bags younger students carry. A range of activities is available for students to pursue healthy living.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Care and support	Very good ↑	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

- Staff-student relationships and a climate of care and support are strong features of the school especially in the KG. However, students' behavior management procedures are inconsistent in the elementary, middle and high school. Teachers and other staff do not implement the same behavioral procedures across the grade levels within each phase.
- The school has clear attendance and punctuality procedures. Students' attendance is well monitored, and absences are dealt with promptly. An effort is made throughout the school to have more students arrive punctually to lessons during the school day. However, apart from the KG, the school has ineffective systems and procedures for arrival on time at the beginning of the school day.
- The school is inclusive and provides a suitable learning environment for students with SEND. Identification of students with SEND and those who are gifted and talented is improving. Initial identification still rests with the class teachers. However, some training is provided to support teachers in identifying students' developmental needs.
- Improved systems of support for students with SEND are being developed. The new head of SEND has increased staffing for this section and has developed support teams in the subject areas. However, students still do not benefit from work that fully matches their needs.
- The school has a well-established system to monitor students' personal development and well-being. The appointment of an experienced counsellor this year is having a positive effect on developing a schoolwide culture of guidance including career counselling. However, many teachers in elementary, middle, and high school still do not fully understand students' need for guidance and support.

Inclusion

Provision and outcomes for students with SEND

Acceptable

- The recently appointed head of SEND has carried out a thorough review of the provision for students with SEND and those who are gifted and talented. He has introduced a range of significant changes to the school's practice and documents which are beginning to have an impact on the care and support students get. Comprehensive individual educational plans (IEPs) are written for students to promote their progress.
- Teachers can quickly identify a range of learning needs which are later confirmed by specialist staff at school or by qualified external diagnosis. There is a range of support available for students who find learning difficult, including support from specialist teachers in the SEND resource centers located across the school.
- Parents are involved in writing their children's IEPs and in helping identify their appropriate targets. Regular informal contact with parents is improving, but some of them believe they need more training and guidance to help them support their children's learning at home.
- The modification of work in the classroom to meet the needs of students with SEND and those who are gifted and talented is improving but remains variable across the subjects and phases. In the KG, tasks are closely matched to children's individual needs and learning provides them with interesting experiences.
- The progress students with SEND make is monitored with increasing care and assessed against individual IEP targets. The progress they make varies from student to student but is acceptable overall.

6. Leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership

Acceptable

- The principal and the senior leaders set a clear direction and have a clear vision for the school. The principal is suitably focused on improving the school and shows commitment to the UAE vision. She is supported by a group of capable middle leaders who have the capacity and determination to raise performance. Parents, teachers and students have expressed confidence in the leadership of the school.
- School leaders, including middle leaders, demonstrate a growing awareness of the US curriculum and the additional requirements for Islamic education and Arabic. Teachers understand best practices in teaching, learning and assessment but do not apply them consistently. The school is purposeful but not sufficiently focused on improving the learning outcomes of all students.
- Relationships and communications between the school and its stakeholders are professional and generally positive. Leadership is increasingly delegated to individuals and teams who are held to account for their outcomes. Staff morale is positive and most teachers say they enjoy working at the school.

- The principal is clear about what is needed to improve the school further. School leaders work hard to ensure the recruitment and professional development of effective teachers. Strengths of the school are known to school leaders and external assessments are increasingly being used to identify areas for improvement.
- School leaders have worked hard to improve all aspects of the school especially the quality of teaching and learning, assessment procedures and the empowerment of middle leaders. Self-evaluation and SEND remain as areas for improvement. The school is compliant with statutory and regulatory requirements.

School self-evaluation and improvement planning

Acceptable

- The school gathers evidence from a range of sources to support self-evaluation, but the process lacks monitoring and the school development plan narrowly focuses on the recommendations from the previous inspection. The school is beginning to make a better use of internal and external data and lesson observations to identify its strengths and areas for improvement.
- Lesson observations are conducted regularly but focus on teaching rather than on the quality of students' learning and attainment. The analysis of the data obtained through monitoring is not sufficiently used to identify strengths and weaknesses in teaching or to inform lesson planning.
- Self-evaluation is too generous and the commentary to support the judgments given by the school is more descriptive than evaluative. The school has a detailed developmental plan which is carefully matched to the recommendations of the last inspection report. Self-evaluation does not take sufficient account of the impact of the school's actions on its performance.
- The school has made some progress in addressing the recommendations from the previous report. The quality of teaching and learning has been secured, teacher's questioning is more effective and assessment processes are more rigorous. The accuracy of self-evaluation remains a weakness, and the modification of the curriculum for students with SEND is being addressed.

Partnerships with parents and the community

Good

- Parents are involved and valued as partners in the life of the school. Their participation on the parents' council, the mothers' council, and other parent volunteer groups guarantees the smooth operation of many school events. Parents' attendance at the parent-teacher conferences is high which indicates that they play an active role in their children's learning.
- Effective communication with parents is a priority for the school. A wide range of effective methods are used to communicate with parents including technological methods. The school welcomes all families and keeps parents informed about school-wide events. The school listens to and acts promptly upon parents' concerns, ideas and suggestions.

- Parents are regularly informed about their children's achievements. Reporting is detailed and includes academic and personal development as well as strengths and targets for improvement. Termly conferences give parents and teachers time to discuss each child's learning and achievement in detail. Additionally, parents have daily access to the parent portal on the school's website to check their children's progress and grades.
- The school actively promotes students' involvement in the community. Students support neighborhood organizations through visits such as to a nursing home and an orphanage. Work placement opportunities for older students build relationships with the local community and promote the development of their leadership skills. Students' participation in national and international programs, such as the Model United Nations, enhances their learning and outcomes.

Governance

Acceptable

- Members of the governing body bring a range of experiences and expertise to the work of the school. The board does not include representation from parents, but feedback from parents comes through communication with the parents' council and the mothers' council. In general, the board's response to stakeholders' concerns is appropriate and timely.
- The governing board plays a significant role in supporting the school financially especially in the areas of staffing and resources. Governors have an adequate understanding of the school and its strengths and weaknesses, but are less knowledgeable about students' academic outcomes. Their involvement in the school's self-evaluation is too limited.
- Governors offer useful support to school leaders to ensure that the school meets its commitment to parents. The school is appropriately resourced, but governors are not sufficiently influential in shaping the school's further development. Governors ensure that the school complies with all statutory and regulatory requirements.

Management, staffing, facilities and resources




Good

- Most aspects of the day-to-day management of the school are well organized including timetabling, availability of replacement teachers, and the use of specialty rooms. An exception to this is the absence of proper management systems to improve the punctuality of students' arrival in the morning. Students are generally familiar with school procedures and are, for the most part, compliant with them.
- The school has enough staff to meet the curriculum requirements. The majority of staff have appropriate qualifications. Approximately 25 per cent of teachers in the elementary, middle and high school have a specific teaching certificate compared to 50 per cent in the KG.
- The premises are of a sufficient quality with a range of specialty learning spaces. Classrooms are of a very decent size and fully support effective learning. Outside areas, multi-purpose halls, the gym and the administration block all contribute to a positive climate for teaching and learning.
- Multiple resources, including technology, provide effective support for teaching and learning in the classroom. This is especially the case in the KG. However, an exception to this is the library in the boys' section which does not meet the needs of 21st century learners in both its Arabic and English collections.

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	350
	2015-2016	153
 Teachers	109	
 Students	483	

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

- Most parents who responded to the survey are satisfied with the quality of education provided by the school. Most feel that their children enjoy school and are safe in it. Many feel their children develop good awareness of the UAE and other cultures and have a good understanding of Islamic values.
- Most parents who responded to the survey agree that the school is well led but a minority feel that the school does not listen to their views or act upon them. A lack of communication with the school is also reflected in some of the comments from parents.
- Teachers' comments are very positive and almost all feel that this is a good school to work for. Most teachers who responded to the survey agree that professional development has helped them become better teachers. Some have expressed concerns about the provision of extra-curriculum activities and the identification and support for students with SEND.
- Most students who responded to the survey say that they are happy to be at school and that the school is a friendly and welcoming place. Most agree that they feel safe at school. Written responses in the survey highlight students' concerns over the length of the day, the availability of healthy food and the need for a greater range of extra-curricular activities.

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