

Japanese School...



National Agenda



Early years



Special educational needs and disabilities



Innovation

Inspection Report 2015-2016

Japanese School

Curriculum: Japanese

Overall rating: Good

[Read more about the school](#)



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



Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum

Contents

School information	2
Summary for parents and the community	3
Main inspection report	9
1. Students' achievement	10
2. Students' personal and social development, and their innovation skills	12
3. Teaching and assessment.....	13
4. Curriculum	15
5. The protection, care, guidance and support of students	16
Provision for students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).....	17
6. Leadership and management.....	17
The views of the parents, teachers and students.....	20

School information

<p>General information</p> 	<p>Location</p> <p>Type of school</p> <p>Opening year of school</p> <p>Website</p> <p>Telephone</p> <p>Address</p> <p>Principal</p> <p>Language of instruction</p> <p>Inspection dates</p>	<p>Al Wasl</p> <p>Private</p> <p>1980</p> <p>www.japanese.sch.ae</p> <p>04-3449119</p> <p>PO Box 7149</p> <p>Mr. OSAMU OKAMURA</p> <p>JAPANESE</p> <p>7 to 9 December 2015</p>
<p>Students</p> 	<p>Gender of students</p> <p>Age range</p> <p>Grades or year groups</p> <p>Number of students on roll</p> <p>Number of children in pre-kindergarten</p> <p>Number of Emirati students</p> <p>Number of students with SEND</p> <p>Largest nationality group of students</p>	<p>Boys and girls</p> <p>6-15</p> <p>Grade 1 to Grade 9</p> <p>140</p> <p>Not applicable</p> <p>0</p> <p>2</p> <p>Japanese</p>
<p>Teachers / Support staff</p> 	<p>Number of teachers</p> <p>Largest nationality group of teachers</p> <p>Number of teaching assistants</p> <p>Teacher-student ratio</p> <p>Number of guidance counsellors</p> <p>Teacher turnover</p>	<p>19</p> <p>Japanese</p> <p>4</p> <p>1:7</p> <p>0</p> <p>25%</p>
<p>Curriculum</p> 	<p>Educational permit / Licence</p> <p>Main curriculum</p> <p>External tests and examinations</p> <p>Accreditation</p> <p>National Agenda benchmark tests</p>	<p>Japanese</p> <p>Japanese</p> <p>Japanese National</p> <p>Japanese Ministry of Education</p> <p>N/A</p>

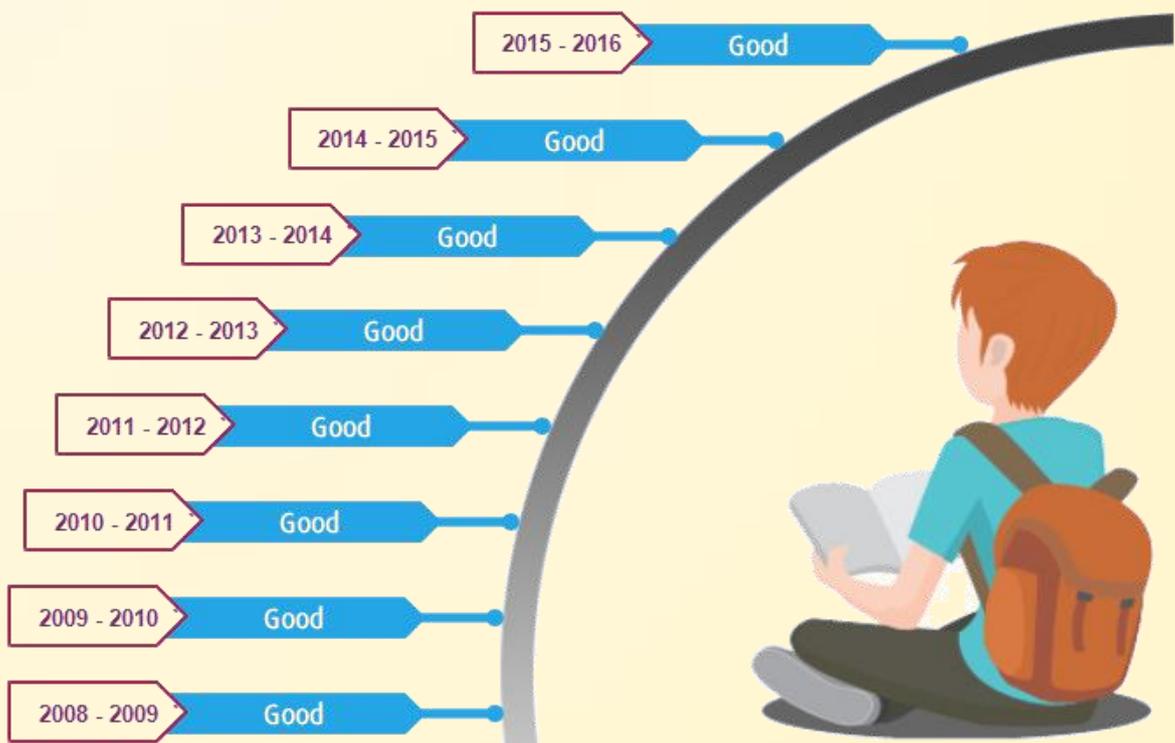


Summary for parents and the community

Japanese School was inspected by DSIB from 7 to 9 December 2015. The overall quality of education provided by the school was found to be **good**.

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

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





How well did the school perform overall?

Overall, **the Japanese School** provided a **good** quality of education.

- Students' achievements were good or better in science, mathematics and English, and outstanding in Japanese. In Arabic as an additional language, achievement was acceptable, the school still did not provide enough teaching time for this subject to comply with UAE Ministry of Education requirements.
- Students had very positive attitudes towards learning and towards others. They demonstrated self-discipline and a strong sense of responsibility. Students were respectful of Islam and Emirati culture, and a range of activities helped them to develop their understanding. They demonstrated a deep understanding of and pride in their own culture, as well as experience and appreciation of other world cultures.
- Relationships between teachers and students were highly positive. The best lessons included collaborative learning and hands-on investigations. However, teaching was variable across subjects and grade levels and did not always allow students of different abilities to work at the right level. The school gathered a range of assessment information from routine internal tests and regular external assessments linked to Japanese curriculum standards.
- The curriculum was broad and balanced, fulfilled the requirements of the Japanese Ministry of Education, and prepared students well for their return to Japan. However, it did not fulfil the requirements of the UAE Ministry of Education for Islamic education and Arabic. In most subjects, teachers did not modify the curriculum to meet the needs of students with different abilities.
- Procedures for safeguarding students were understood by staff. However, there was no formal written child protection policy. Many areas of the school premises required urgent repair, and cleaning of the premises was poor. Relationships throughout the school were very positive. The school welcomed students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) but there was no staff member with specialized expertise and provision was inadequate.
- School leaders provided effective leadership in line with the requirements of the Japanese Ministry of Education. The school self-evaluation process was broadly acceptable, however, the process of continuous improvement was not well established. Parents were highly positive about the school. The governing board did not hold school leaders sufficiently to account and none of the recommendations from the previous inspection report had been fully met.



What did the school do well?

- Students in both phases showed outstanding attainment and progress in Japanese and very good attainment and progress in high school in mathematics.
- Relationships between staff and students were highly positive and respectful.
- Students worked hard, were self-disciplined and showed a strong sense of responsibility.
- The school had very positive relationships with parents.
- The school provided a very effective music programme that helped all students develop confidence.



What does the school need to do next?

- Ensure that the school is compliant with the UAE Ministry of Education regulations by offering Islamic education for Muslim students and by increasing the amount of teaching time for Arabic.
- The governing body should ensure that:
 - the school premises are consistently safe and clean
 - a process of strategic planning, based on rigorous self-evaluation is established which determines short, medium and long-term improvement priorities.
- Adapt and modify teaching practices so that students of different abilities can work at the right levels.
- The school should hire staff with appropriate expertise to improve the provision for students with special educational needs and disabilities.



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

- Students with SEND made inconsistent progress in most subjects because teachers' expectations for them were inappropriate. In music, however, they made very good progress.
- Parents of all students, including those with additional needs, appreciated the regular written reports they received about their children's achievements. However, the reports did not contain sufficient information about personal targets set for students with special educational needs and disabilities.
- Parents were aware that their children were behind their peers academically. Communication with the school was not consistent for parents new to the school and they did not feel sufficiently confident to approach the school to ask for additional information and support.
- Parents were pleased that their children were happy at school and they were keen to support their children's learning at home. However, they were not involved in setting targets for improvement in learning.
- Teachers supported children's personal and social development very well. Support of academic progress was not as effective because teachers did not take account of students' varying needs and there was no specialist staff to support them.

Innovation in education

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

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



Promoting a culture of innovation:

- School leaders were unaware of the UAE national innovation agenda. The curriculum and the approaches used for its delivery were determined by the Japanese Ministry of Education, with little scope for modification. The infrastructure was limited and did not promote a culture of innovation. There was little self-directed learning, collaborative group work or use of technologies.

Overall school performance

Good

1. Students' achievement

		Elementary	High
Islamic education 	Attainment	Not applicable	Not applicable
	Progress	Not applicable	Not applicable
Arabic as a first language 	Attainment	Not applicable	Not applicable
	Progress	Not applicable	Not applicable
Arabic as an additional language 	Attainment	Acceptable	Acceptable
	Progress	Acceptable	Acceptable
Language of instruction 	Attainment	Outstanding	Outstanding
	Progress	Outstanding	Outstanding
English 	Attainment	Good	Good
	Progress	Good	Good
Mathematics 	Attainment	Good	Very good ↓
	Progress	Good	Very good ↓
Science 	Attainment	Good ↓	Good ↓
	Progress	Good ↓	Good ↓

	Elementary	High
Learning skills	Good	Good

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

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

3. Teaching and assessment

	Elementary	High
Teaching for effective learning	Good	Good
Assessment	Good	Good

4. Curriculum

	Elementary	High
Curriculum design and implementation	Acceptable	Acceptable
Curriculum adaptation	Acceptable	Acceptable

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

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

6. Leadership and management

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



Main inspection report

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

Judgements are made on a six-point scale



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

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

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

1. Students' achievement

Elementary

Subjects	Attainment	Progress
Islamic education	Not applicable	Not applicable
Arabic as a first language	Not applicable	Not applicable
Arabic as an additional language	Acceptable	Acceptable
Language of instruction	Outstanding	Outstanding
English	Good	Good
Mathematics	Good	Good
Science	Good ↓	Good ↓

- In Arabic as an additional language, most students attained levels that were in line with expectations for the number of years they had studied the language. Students had adequate listening and speaking skills. They understood familiar speech and daily classroom instructions. They could talk about themselves in short sentences and respond to greetings. Most students were able to read familiar words, match sounds to letters and understand the key vocabulary of the lesson. However, students' reading comprehension and writing skills were less developed.
- Most students joined the school with little or no English. They quickly developed a good range of speaking and listening skills. By Grade 6 the majority was able to answer questions with confidence. The majority of students was able to read accurately and a few demonstrated fluency and expression. Writing included increasingly accurate use of punctuation and was sufficiently legible for the meaning to be understood by an outside reader. Students could write for different purposes, such as recounting a visit or giving information.
- Students in the elementary school exceeded the expected standards for Japanese curriculum in each grade level. Students spoke clearly, with increasingly correct pronunciation. They made outstanding progress in reading and understanding increasingly complex texts. In Grade 1, most students listened well, for example, following instructions and listening with understanding to stories. In Grade 2, students were able to continue a story from a given start, using spelling and punctuation that was mostly accurate. Older students could exchange their opinions and empathise with characters, for example, in a story about a tsunami.
- In mathematics, most students' levels of attainment matched the Japanese curriculum standard for each grade and the majority of them exceeded this standard. Students responded well to opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge and skills in meaningful ways. For example, they could represent time in various ways, using 12- and 24-hour digital formats, analogue clocks that displayed Roman numerals, and traditional Japanese clocks and calendars. Most students appreciated the importance of learning core mathematical facts, and by Grade 5, students were confident using all four operations to solve problems. From their starting points in this phase, the majority of students, including those with special educational needs and disabilities, made good progress in mathematics.
- In science, the majority of students attained levels that were above curriculum standards. Scientific knowledge and understanding was well-developed. For example, students could identify magnetic and non-magnetic objects, recognise and name constellations, and describe the function of the skeleton and muscles. However, students' enquiry skills were less well developed due to limited opportunities for hands-on investigations. Overtime, the majority of students made good progress in relation to their starting points. However, the progress of the lower ability students and SEND was slower.

High

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

- In Arabic as an additional language, most students were working at levels that were in line with the curriculum expectations for the number of years they had studied the language. In some aspects of the language, particularly knowledge of vocabulary and script decoding skills, progress was better. In lessons, most students made acceptable progress in learning to respond to simple oral questions using one or more words. However, progress over time was inhibited by insufficient time allocation for the subject. There were no external assessments and there was insufficient information on the performance of the different student cohorts.
- In English, the majority of students demonstrated confidence in speaking and listening. They spoke clearly and used a widening vocabulary to develop and explain their ideas, and they usually listened carefully to others. Students' writing was organised and clear, sequences of sentences extended ideas logically, and spelling and basic punctuation were usually accurate. However, writing was mainly limited to paragraph length pieces. Students' reading was generally accurate, with good comprehension. Overtime, the majority of students progressed well in developing their language skills in comparison to their starting points.
- Most students had maintained high standards in Japanese in the junior high school, and most students' levels of attainment exceeded the Japanese curriculum standard for each grade, enabling them to access their high school of choice at the end of Grade 9. In lessons, students made rapid progress across all language skills as a result of the challenging learning activities provided. For example, in Grade 8, students demonstrated skills in persuasive writing related to the appropriate literature that they felt should be included in the school's library. All groups of students, including those with special educational needs and disabilities, achieved extremely well in Japanese.
- In mathematics, the level of attainment for the large majority of students in the junior high school exceeded the Japanese curriculum standard. In Grade 9, most students could formulate and use algebraic techniques to solve challenging problems. From their starting points, a large majority of students, made at least good progress in mathematics, as a result of the engaging learning activities presented to them. They could apply their mathematical knowledge in a range of different contexts accurately and talk clearly about the next steps in their learning.
- In science, the majority of students in the junior high school achieved good standards in examinations and made better than expected progress. They demonstrated a good range of secure scientific knowledge, for example, clear understanding of magnetic fields, the impact of environmental changes on food chains, and knowledge of volcanic formation. Overtime, the majority of students made good progress especially in developing their science knowledge and skills and vocabulary. However, in some lessons, there was less practical work restricting challenge and progress for the more able students.

	Elementary	High
Learning skills	Good	Good

- Students demonstrated genuine keenness to learn and actively engage in the work given to them and when given opportunities, they readily took on responsibility for their own learning and showed awareness of their strengths and weaknesses. In almost all cases, students responded very well to feedback.
- Students responded to and interacted very well with their teachers. When given opportunities, they demonstrated that they had the skills needed to work well with others, although collaborative learning was not a main feature of learning across the school.
- Across most areas of learning, students had clear understanding of how what they learned was linked to real life. This was a particular strength for students in the elementary phase, especially in mathematics.
- Students could find information from a range of sources and acquire knowledge in different ways, although their use of technology as a learning tool in the school was limited. Critical thinking was still a developing feature of learning in both phases.

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

	Elementary	High
Personal development	Very good ↓	Very good ↓

- Students had very positive attitudes towards learning and towards others. Throughout the school, they demonstrated self-reliance and responded well to the feedback they received from their teachers.
- Students demonstrated outstanding self-discipline across the school and needed little adult supervision. Their behavior and manner within and outside lessons were always sensible and sensitive.
- Positive relationships prevailed amongst students, and between students and staff. Students felt valued and respected by their peers and by adults in the school. All members of the school community were sensitive to the needs of others.
- Students had a clear understanding of how to keep safe and maintain healthy lifestyles. They made wise choices about their own health and safety and participated in activities that supported those choices.
- Students' attendance was good and almost all students arrived on time for their lessons during the school day. This resulted in lessons starting on time.

	Elementary	High
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Good	Good

- Students' behavior represented their respect for Islam and Emirati culture. Although their understanding of Islamic values was still developing, they showed a clear appreciation of how Islamic values had influenced Emirati society.
- Students demonstrated secure knowledge of Emirati culture and were able to compare it to their own culture. Exchange visits between schools, and celebrating national events helped students to value UAE heritage.
- Students demonstrated excellent understanding and appreciation of their own culture, for example, by celebrating Japanese New Year and performing traditional dances. They also demonstrated appreciation of other world cultures.

	Elementary	High
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Good	Good

- Students were able to carry out their responsibilities effectively. They had opportunities to participate in charitable activities in and out the school. They were also involved with the local community through exchange visits with other schools.
- Students had a positive work ethic. They had various opportunities to lead projects, for example, the school had environment, sports, library, and international communication leaders. Students were able to express their ideas by participating in the 'invention board'.
- Students demonstrated awareness and positive attitudes towards the environment. They were knowledgeable about environmental issues that face the world such as global warming, desalination, and the importance of recycling. They were also involved in taking care of plants and animals around the school.

3. Teaching and assessment

	Elementary	High
Teaching for effective learning	Good	Good

- Most teachers made good use of their subject knowledge to structure lessons that engaged students' interest. In many Japanese lessons, and some mathematics lessons, teachers made very good use of their knowledge of how students learn, to ensure that the work was closely matched to students' needs. However, this was not a consistent feature of teaching in all subjects.
- There were examples of imaginative lesson planning in several subjects. In these lessons, teachers made good use of assessment information to plan work that was suitably challenging and all groups of students made equally good progress. However, teachers did not always take account of students' attainment levels in planning. As a result, progress was slower for different groups of students.

- Very strong and respectful relationships between adults and students provided a firm base for the good class management seen in most lessons. Most students responded well when they were provided with opportunities to take responsibility and learn with less reliance on the teacher.
- The very best lessons provided students with a suitable mix of individual, small group and whole class learning. This range of activities enabled students to learn from each other as well as from the teacher. This was seen, for example, in several lessons in English conversation and music. In a few lessons, however, teachers were unclear about how best to promote this form of learning,
- There were examples, both in the elementary school and the junior high school, of teachers providing opportunities for the promotion of critical thinking skills, and, in these lessons, the application of research and reasoning skills was built into the learning activities. The further development of high level enquiry and critical thinking skills was a continuing school development priority.
- The quality of teaching in Arabic as an additional language was acceptable overall. Teachers had secure subject knowledge which helped them plan for lessons with adequate progression. The use of frequent oral questions supported students' learning well. The scope of the tasks they planned and the pace of lessons was not supported by the limited time allocation for the subject.

	Elementary	High
Assessment	Good	Good

- Appropriate internal assessment processes were in place. Internal assessment of students' work was clearly linked to the Japanese curriculum standards and expectations for each grade in most subjects.
- Relevant external standardised tests linked to the Japanese national standards were undertaken in each grade. Students' outcomes were compared to schools in Japan. In the elementary school, these external assessments were in Japanese and mathematics, and in the junior high school, they were in Japanese, English, mathematics, science and social studies.
- In addition to the external tests, the school gathered a range of assessment information from routine internal assessments. Subject teachers were well informed about how students were achieving at the time of the assessment, as were students and their parents. The refined analysis of this information to track students' progress from their starting points was developing.
- Teachers had a good knowledge of most students' abilities and skills in different subjects. However, this information did not always inform teachers' planning to ensure that classroom-based learning activities met the needs of different groups of learners. Assessment information was not always used to modify the curriculum to meet the needs of different groups of learners, especially those with SEND and the most able.
- Students were involved in self-assessment of their own work. Marking of students' work and feedback to students recognised what they knew and could do. They were becoming involved in identifying their next steps in learning.

4. Curriculum

	Elementary	High
Curriculum design and implementation	Acceptable	Acceptable

- The curriculum was broad and balanced and fulfilled the requirements of the Japanese Ministry of Education. It focused mainly on the acquisition of knowledge and understanding and the development of skills was variable. It did not fulfil the requirements of the UAE MoE to teach Islamic education for Muslim students. Insufficient time was allocated to Arabic.
- Continuity and progression was ensured because the curriculum followed the Japanese requirements from Grade 1 to Grade 9 using the appropriate text books for each subject and grade. It met the needs of most students in most subjects, and by the time they left Grade 9, most students were very well prepared for the next steps in education, including those that returned to Japan.
- The curriculum offered limited choice particularly, for older students. Enrichment to curriculum was seldom, consequently, the interest and aspirations of students were not always effectively met.
- In some lessons, students were able to apply the knowledge and skills learned in other areas of the curriculum. For example, students wrote a poem in Japanese and drew an illustration to enhance their work. However, this was not always purposefully planned and did not facilitate transfer of knowledge well. In a minority of lessons, students carried out research about a topic of their choice and presented their findings.
- The core curriculum was not internally reviewed for its effectiveness and revisions were only made when determined by the Japanese Ministry of Education. The school had reviewed the period for integrated study that allowed for a wider range of learning related to international understanding. This included choices about visits to places of local interest and exchanges with other schools in the area.
- UAE social studies was not formalized into the school curriculum. However, students had sufficient opportunities to learn about UAE Social Studies through cross curricular links in subjects and through the 'Minare' classes (classes for general education).

	Elementary	High
Curriculum adaptation	Acceptable	Acceptable

- The school made a few modifications to the curriculum. The best example was in music in the elementary school. The teacher was very skilled in providing appropriate challenge for all. Teachers in most subjects did not modify the curriculum to meet the needs of students with special educational needs or those who had gifts and talents. There was no curriculum for Muslim students.
- The curriculum included art and social studies. Students enjoyed sports and keeping fit during physical education (PE) lessons, putting on plays and rehearsing traditional dance routines to perform for parents. Opportunities to develop their skills in the use of technology at school were limited. Extra-curricular activities were mostly limited to additional classes for music appreciation, language and PE.
- Students had an adequate number of opportunities to develop their understanding of Dubai and UAE culture, for example, they visited mosques, Dubai Museum, supermarkets and Safa Park, and they camped out in the desert. They also visited other schools to develop their understanding of cultural diversity.

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

	Elementary	High
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable ↓

- The school clinic was effective and medical staff kept meticulous records. However, no designated member of staff was responsible for the maintenance, cleaning and security of the school premises and this negatively impacted on the quality of these aspects of the school.
- Many areas of the school buildings required urgent repair. Cleaning of the premises was not of a sufficiently high standard. Monitoring of the premises was not vigilant enough and record keeping related to school maintenance was not effective.
- The school had improved students' awareness of potential internet and social media dangers. Procedures for safeguarding were understood by staff but not shared with parents and there was no formal written child protection policy.
- Some aspects of the premises and facilities required adaptation to further support learning. Adjustments to the building provided basic access for those with physical disabilities.
- Students' health and wellbeing was regularly monitored. Healthy lifestyles and keeping safe was positively promoted through the curriculum and systematically built into most aspects of school life. Self-discipline was strongly encouraged and this supported students' ability to keep themselves safe.

	Elementary	High
Care and support	Acceptable ↓	Good

- Relationships between staff and students and amongst the students were very positive and purposeful throughout the school. Teachers had clear expectations for behaviour. They were positive role models for their students and gained their respect. They rarely needed to admonish them.
- The school had effective systems for promoting good attendance and punctuality. As a result, most students were punctual and demonstrated respect for the school timing.
- The school welcomed students with special educational needs and disabilities. However, systems for identifying their additional needs were ineffective in most cases and, consequently, only a few students, in the elementary school, had been identified.
- Teachers cared very much for all students and looked after their personal, social, emotional and physical needs. As a result, students with additional needs were able to make consistent personal progress. They were especially well supported in music, and, as a result, they grew in confidence and self-belief. Support for their academic progress in other subjects was not as strong..
- The well-being and personal development of all students were monitored at intervals throughout the year. Teachers knew the students well and provided appropriate personal guidance and support for them. The guidance and support for senior students preparing to leave school was particularly effective. However, the guidance and support for students' academic development was inconsistent.

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

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

Weak

- The SEND department was ineffectively led. The SENCO was also Head of Science. He, along with all staff, cared for students' personal, social, emotional and physical wellbeing but he had no specialist knowledge or qualification in SEND. There was no clear strategy or effective plan to improve provision for SEND.
- The identification of students with SEND was weak. There were two students who had been categorised according to the DSIB framework. Several others students clearly had additional needs, but had not been identified by the school.
- Parents of students with SEND were aware that their children were behind their peers academically but their priority was for them to be happy at school. They were not involved in setting targets for improvement, so did not know whether their children were reaching these targets. They recognised the need for additional support from a specialist.
- Most teachers were not proficient in modifying the curriculum to take account of the varying needs of all students. Consequently, the expectations in most lessons were the same for all students regardless of the range of abilities. Students with SEND often struggled to achieve what was expected of them.
- Lessons were not adapted to meet the specific needs of students with SEND. As a result progress for those students was generally weak in most lessons.

6. Leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership

Good

- School leaders provided effective leadership in line with the requirements of the Japanese Ministry of Education and the school's mission to serve Japanese families in Dubai. The school had an inclusive ethos, although once accepted, students with SEND were not adequately provided for.
- School leaders were knowledgeable about the curriculum, teaching, learning and assessment in the Japanese context, although this could be further disseminated by designating leadership for specific subject areas to provide models and direction for improving the consistency of the quality of teaching. They had established a very positive learning culture focused on high standards of academic and personal achievement for students.
- Relationships and communication were respectful, professional and relaxed. Staff members were clear about their responsibilities and who they were accountable to. As a result, morale throughout the school was positive.
- School leaders and staff were aware that improvements were needed but the 3-yearly changes in leadership inhibited continuity, longer-term planning and prioritising.
- School leaders had made some improvements but other areas of need remained unaddressed, including significant recommendations from the previous inspection report. The school did not meet the UAE Ministry of Education requirements for Islamic education and Arabic. They had maintained high levels of performance in Japanese across both phases but levels had dropped in science.

School self-evaluation and improvement planning

Acceptable

- Self-evaluation was not a strong feature of the school. The self-evaluation form for inspection was incomplete and lacked detailed evidence to support the school's judgements.
- Teachers were appropriately evaluated twice each year and students' achievements were monitored through Japanese national examination results.
- Improvement plans were basic and produced in reaction to external recommendations. There was no evidence of strategic planning or prioritizing of short, medium and long term actions resulting from these external recommendations.
- The school had not addressed all aspects of the recommendations from the previous inspection report, including those relating to non-compliance for Islamic education and Arabic, special education needs provision, and health and safety.

Partnerships with parents and the community

Outstanding

- Parents were highly positive about the school. They felt that their children were very happy there and achieved levels of attainment that enabled them to make a smooth transition back to high quality schools in Japan. The school sought parents' views through regular surveys and informal communications.
- Parents felt that communication with the school was highly successful in keeping them informed and involved. They received regular class newsletters and teachers and school leaders were always available for discussion if any concerns arose.
- The school sent regular, detailed reports to inform parents about their child's academic attainment and progress, and their personal and social development. However, these did not include the next steps in their learning.
- The school involved students in a range of partnerships, including close connections with the UAE Japanese community and with local Emirati schools.

Governance

Weak ↓

- The governing board was appointed annually through the Japanese Association of Dubai and included representation from parents and Japanese companies.
- The discontinuity caused by the annual turnover created a lack of accountability by the board for key aspects of the school's performance, including strategic improvement planning and the development of effective systems and policies. Opportunities to hold the school leaders accountable for the overall performance of the school were limited.
- None of the recommendations from the previous inspection report had been fully met. Despite having opportunities within the school schedule to do Arabic, the school was still not complying with the UAE Ministry of Education regulations for Islamic Education and Arabic. The governing body had a limited influence on the school's development.

Management, staffing, facilities and resources

Acceptable

- Most aspects of the day-to-day management of the school ensured it ran smoothly and was adequately organized. Most of the school's procedures and routines were effective. Staff were well informed about what was expected of them and students responded well to established routines, such as those at the start of each school day.
- The school was adequately staffed with suitably qualified class and specialist subject teachers, with the exception to this being the absence of a qualified Special Education Needs specialist.
- The buildings and premises restricted some curriculum delivery, for example, the science laboratory did not meet expected standards, the outdoor sports facilities were limited, the library was small and some classrooms were overcrowded.
- There were adequate resources to support most curriculum subjects. A few teachers made good use of the available technology to visually support learning by playing carefully selected video clips and sharing pertinent photographs and illustrations. However, this was not consistent practice.

The views of the parents, teachers and students

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

Responses to the surveys		
Responses received	Number	
Parents* 	2015-2016	49
	2014-2015	80
Teachers 	16	
Students 	0	

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

- All parents who responded were satisfied with the quality of education provided by the school and felt their children were safe.
- Most parents felt their child made good progress in English, although a few did not. Almost all parents felt their child made good progress in mathematics and science.
- Almost all parents felt their child developed good learning skills but a minority did not know whether child could get a recognised qualification at the end of schooling.
- A minority of parents did not agree or did not know that the school provided adequate protection against cyber-bullying.
- Almost all parents and teachers felt that the school was led well.
- Almost all parents felt well-informed and that the school listened to their views.

If you have a concern or wish to comment on any aspect of this report, you should contact inspection@khda.gov.ae