



National Agenda



Early years



Special educational
needs and disabilities



Innovation

Inspection Report 2015-2016

Collegiate American School

Curriculum: US

Overall rating: Good

Read more about the school



www.khda.gov.ae

"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	10
1. Students' achievement	11
2. Students' personal and social development, and their innovation skills	16
3. Teaching and assessment	17
4. Curriculum	19
5. The protection, care, guidance and support of students	20
Provision for students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)	21
6. Leadership and management	22
The views of the parents, teachers and students	25

School information

General information



Location	Umm Suqeim 3
Type of school	Private
Opening year of school	2011
Website	www.casdubai.com
Telephone	04-4271400
Address	PO Box 121306 Dubai UAE
Principal	Tammy Tusek
Language of instruction	English
Inspection dates	21 to 24 March 2016

Students



Gender of students	Boys and girls
Age range	3-16
Grades or year groups	KG 1-Grade 10
Number of students on roll	807
Number of children in pre-kindergarten	26
Number of Emirati students	41
Number of students with SEND	57
Largest nationality group of students	Other nationalities

Teachers / Support staff



Number of teachers	88
Largest nationality group of teachers	USA
Number of teaching assistants	18
Teacher-student ratio	1:8
Number of guidance counsellors	3
Teacher turnover	7%

Curriculum



Educational permit / Licence	US
Main curriculum	US
External tests and examinations	IBT, MAP, PSAT
Accreditation	NEASC candidate
National Agenda benchmark tests	IBT

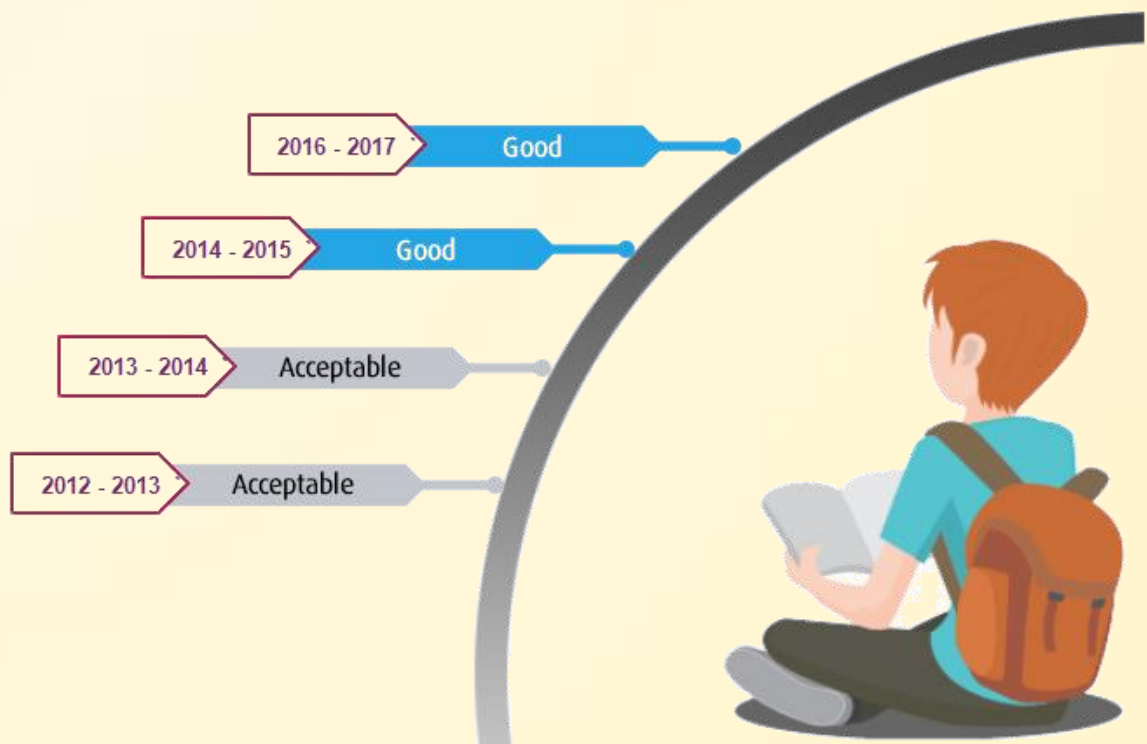


Summary for parents and the community

Collegiate American School was inspected by DSIB from 21 to 24 March 2016. The overall quality of education provided by the school was found to be **good**.

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

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





How well did the school perform overall?

Overall, Collegiate American School provided a **good** quality of education for its students.

- The majority of attainment and progress judgments were good or very good. In the Kindergarten (KG), children's attainment and progress were very good in English and mathematics and good in science. However in Islamic education and Arabic as a first and an additional language, their achievement was generally acceptable. In Arabic as a first language attainment was weak in the middle and high school phases.
- Students demonstrated very positive personal development and social skills.
- There was very good teaching in the KG, with improvements found in the elementary phase. However, teaching was less effective in the upper phases. Good assessment systems were in place across the school.
- There was improved alignment of core curriculum subjects to the US Curriculum, and a broad and interesting KG curriculum.
- There was outstanding health and safety across the school, and very good support for most students.
- Strong and visionary leadership contributed to a well-managed and resourced school.



What did the school do well?

- The quality of teaching and learning skills in the KG which resulted in positive outcomes for all children.
- The outstanding health and safety provision.
- The quality of care and support for children and students in KG and the elementary phase.
- The effective engagement and increased involvement of parents in school life.
- The improved resources available for effective teaching and learning.



What does the school need to do next?

- In Arabic, raise the level of expectations and challenge in the classroom to enable at least good outcomes for all students.
- Raise attainment and progress in the middle and high schools by:
 - improving the quality of teaching, through modeling and monitoring good practice, and providing high-level professional development
 - taking a consistent approach to developing the quality and range of higher level learning skills
 - ensuring more precise alignment of the chosen US State curriculum, with a clear sequence of learning and progress targets and expected learning outcomes for students in all subjects.
- Strengthen the improvement and action planning through a more focused process of self-evaluation taken from planning which is focused on securing improved student outcomes.



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

- The progress of students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) was consistently good in KG and elementary phase. The majority of teachers in the upper grades had not rigorously measured students' progress and outcomes outlined in the individual education planning process.
- Reporting to parents was useful in terms of the quality of information provided about their child's individual learning targets and social development.
- The school ensured that effective communication between home and school was regular and positive. The language in letters and reports to parents was supportive and helpful.
- The school was successful in engaging and involving parents in their children's learning and well-being. Parents and teachers shared in setting high expectations for children.
- High quality advice was available on a range of important matters, such as academic progress and personal counseling issues. Providing life-long learning skills to students with challenging and other behaviors was well-planned and a key element of guidance.

National Agenda Parameter



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

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

Main points:

- The school met the registration requirements of the National Agenda Parameter.
- Progress towards meeting the National Agenda targets was not secure.
- The school adequately promoted awareness of the UAE National Agenda through the regular newsletters sent to parents and the school community. The school also regularly discussed the UAE National Agenda in meetings with parents and staff. Parents demonstrated their good levels of understanding of the UAE National Agenda.
- The school analyzed its first complete IBT set of data and identified weaknesses in content and skills in the taught curriculum. They put more focus, for example, on reading in English and exposed students to TIMSS-like questions in mathematics and science, using an online program.
- In science, teachers consistently promoted students' critical thinking by providing them with problems that required solutions. Students were able to design and build their own models and devices such as solar ovens and hot air balloons. In mathematics, problem solving exercises were the single most important activity to extend students thinking. In English, questioning techniques were not consistently open-ended, and did not always promote critical thinking.
- The use of learning technologies in mathematics lessons was developing but was still mainly teacher-dependent and not widely regarded as an important feature of lessons. In science, however, students used ICT to run virtual labs and to explore topics related to their projects. In English, students often made use of online resources to develop ideas and extend their learning.

Innovation in education

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

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



Promoting a culture of innovation:

- School leaders understood the importance of the national innovation agenda and had plans to promote a culture of innovation in leadership, learning, and teaching. They had provided professional learning and development opportunities for teachers that delivered implicit information on how to embed innovation in teaching and learning practices. The KG had a discovery room. An exploration area was provided for KG and lower elementary, which enabled students to explore, develop, and incubate their project ideas. The school also had a technology laboratory that gave students to develop the innovative ideas and solutions during creative learning activities.

Overall school performance

Good

1. Students' achievement

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

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Learning skills	Very good ↑	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable

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

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

3. Teaching and assessment

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Teaching for effective learning	Very good 	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable
Assessment	Good	Good	Good 	Good 

4. Curriculum

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Curriculum design and implementation	Very good 	Good	Good	Good
Curriculum adaptation	Good	Good	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	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Care and support	Very good 	Very good 	Good	Good

6. Leadership and management

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



Main inspection report

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

Judgements are made on a six-point scale



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

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

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

1. Students' achievement

KG

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

- In English, the large majority of children demonstrated literacy skills that showed mastery of the curriculum standards. Children were able to communicate their ideas effectively using a rich vocabulary. They listened attentively and followed instructions in class and during group activities. The older children combined 3 and 4 letters to form words, and the majority were reading and writing short sentences. They understood the meaning of books and talked about the various texts such as "how to" books. They sequenced stories and discussed other features of non-fiction, including a glossary and index. Their writing skills were well developed and they wrote for meaning and purpose daily. In lessons and over time children progress was very good overall.
- The large majority of children made very good progress in their mathematical knowledge and skills. The younger children were beginning to use their understanding of numbers and operations to add and subtract. The older children built upon this foundation to add 2-digit numbers and developed their own strategies for measuring and sequencing steps in a cooking activity. They found patterns in their school and created ones of their own. They could identify 2D and 3D shapes and compare them using informal descriptive language. In lessons and over time, children progress was very good overall.
- In science, the children's understanding of the world and healthy living was secure. They were given time for discovery and deepening their understanding of concepts through a play based curriculum. Their use of the scientific method was developing through focused activities that encouraged them to think and make predictions. During lessons, children used investigative and discovery skills to explain real life experiences. For example, they predicted how and why ice would melt and why a balloon might pop. Overall, the majority of children progressed better than expected.

Elementary

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

- In Islamic education, the attainment of most was in line with curriculum expectations. Most students in Grade 2 knew and understood how to pray. Students had expected level of knowledge, for example Zakat and the importance of being thankful to Allah. Over the last three years the school did not provide any information to sustain students' attainment, and therefore most students made only acceptable progress in relation to their starting points. The school data showed there was little difference between the progress of boys and girls.
- Most students attained levels that were in line with curriculum expectations in Arabic as a first language. Their listening skills were good. They spoke using the standard Arabic, although they had errors when reading. Most students wrote extended paragraphs using their own vocabulary. The school did not provide information in relation to students' attainment over the past three years, to identify patterns of growth. A majority of students made good progress from their starting points, in comparison to the curriculum standards, and in explaining the meaning of new words. Boys and girls made similar progress.
- Arabic as an additional language students displayed acceptable attainment levels against the expectations for non-native speakers. The majority of students could read short, simple sentences about familiar topics. They could name and describe familiar objects using common adjectives and nouns. Students wrote short sentences following a common pattern using high frequency words. In lessons and their recent work, the majority of students made adequate progress. There were few opportunities to challenge the more able learners which enabled them to make quicker progress.
- In English, attainment and progress against the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) were good for both boys and girls. Progress test results were slightly better than attainment on the International Benchmarking Test (IBT) results, where a majority of students were in line with international standards. Lesson observations and evaluation of student work gave a more positive picture than found on external and internal testing results. In the early stage, most students wrote accurately with simple sentences, usually with correct spelling. By the end of Grade 5 a strong writing structure was formed around simple paragraphs, with creativity and expression. Overall, a large majority of students made very good progress.
- Mathematics attainment for the majority of students, against US curriculum standards, was good and had remained consistent over the recent past. International benchmark data did not closely reflect students' attainment. The progress of students was also good from their starting point. Students with SEND made the same good progress as other students in class and over time because they received well-targeted support. Students' skills were built sequentially and they were confident in long division and multiplication, and manipulating fractions. Students enjoyed working in a range of word problems to convert them to simple mathematical equations, for example, money problems including the cost of goods, change from transactions and value for money.

- In science, the majority of students demonstrated good knowledge and understanding of scientific concepts and made good progress. Although not all students' assessment data supported those levels of achievement, students' attainment and progress in lessons consistently showed that a majority of them were working at the high end of their grade-level expectations. For example, in Grade 5, students used their understanding of precipitation to design and build a device to measure the amount of precipitation in a certain area. Students' progress was especially good in lessons in which they were sufficiently challenged by the learning objectives.

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

- In Islamic education, most students attained the level that was in line with curriculum expectations. The school used its internal exams with an appropriate level of challenge. A majority of the students in Grade 6 knew and understood why it was important to respect and obey their parents. Attainment level had been acceptable over the past few years. A minority of students were working above expectations. The school data showed that there was no difference between the progress of boys and girls. Overall, in lessons and over time, a majority of students made good progress.
- In Arabic as a first language, fewer than three quarters of the students were attaining at in line with curriculum expectations. The school used internal exams covering the four language skills with an appropriate level of challenge. Most of the students' listening skills were in line with curriculum expectations. A few could speak or read using the standard language, and their writing skills were limited. The school did not show any information of students' attainment over the past three years. Most students made acceptable progress from their starting point, and in linking the lesson objectives to their learning. The school data showed that boys and girls made similar progress.
- In Arabic as an additional language, most students had attainment levels in line with the expectations for none-native speakers. Students' could understand basic spoken Arabic in a familiar context. Students' reading comprehension was limited to short, familiar texts. They could responded to teacher instructions, but their ability to seek and give information was less developed. Students made acceptable progress in lessons and in their work as compared to their starting points. Over time, most students made expected progress in majority of the language aspects.
- The attainment of the majority of students against the CCSS standards for English language arts was good. Students' progress results were slightly better than attainment on external IBT assessments. In lessons, students showed stronger literacy development than found on external and internal tests. For this age group students demonstrated secure competency in English comprehension. Students were on a continuous journey in developing persuasive writing skills, and creating their own graphic organizers. Most notebooks included comments from teachers showing students where to go next to improve and extend their writing, with positive effect.

- In mathematics, the majority of students had a good attainment level. Student work had remained relatively consistent over the previous few years but recently showed improvement. International benchmarking data indicated improvement in some grades. Progress for boys and girls and students with SEND was good in lessons and over time. Progress for students of higher ability was sometimes limited and increased challenge with greater use of the CCSS mathematics practices was needed. Students extended their skills with number, determined means and medians, worked with complex fractions and decimals, and calculated angles and sides of geometric shapes.
- Middle school students' knowledge and understanding of scientific concepts were in line with grade-level expectations. Students' progress, however, was much stronger. They demonstrated better than expected progress through consistent engagement in hands-on activities that enabled them to learn new scientific concepts at a good pace. In Grade 8, for example, students designed and built their own models, such as a solar oven, to demonstrate the transfer of energy. Their progress in lessons was especially good when the pace and the challenge were both appropriate.

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

- In Islamic education, most of the students attained level that were in line with curriculum expectations. The school used internal assessments with appropriate challenge. Most students made good progress in lessons. For example, students in Grade10 knew and understood the concept of forgiveness. The school data did not show any trend of attainment over the past three years. A majority of students made good progress in linking their knowledge to real life applications. The school data showed that boys and girls made similar progress.
- In Arabic as a first language, fewer than three-quarters of the students made acceptable attainment in relation to the curriculum expectations. Most Students had acceptable listening but only a minority had acceptable speaking and reading skills. The writing of a majority was limited. The school data did not show any attainment results over the past three years. Most of the students made acceptable progress from their starting points. Students made acceptable progress in using the vocabulary in meaningful context. The school data did not show any differences between the progress of boys and girls.
- In Arabic as an additional language, students' attainment was in line with expectations. Students read short familiar texts and replaced single familiar words in a passage. Although students could write basic text following a model, their independent writing was limited. In lessons, students made adequate progress towards the learning outcomes, as they did in their recent work as compared to the starting point.
- Attainment and progress within the CCSS standards for English Language Arts was good for both boys and girls, and they both made the expected progress for each grade level. Progress test results were slightly better than external IBT results. Students' oral and written language in class was well above that seen on external and internal test results. The majority of students identified a variety of complex vocabulary,

spoke with more clarity and had greater opportunity to work independently, acquire basic research skills, and use extended writing during class. Students' progress over time was good overall.

- Students' attainment in mathematics was acceptable, as also confirmed by international benchmark tests. Attainment had not improved significantly. The progress made by all students within the small cohort was good, and good for students with SEND because of the good quality of support provided for them. A majority of students made progress in solving complicated mathematical concepts such as lines of symmetry, simplifying and solving linear equations, and organizing, displaying and analyzing a variety of data.
- Students' attainment and progress in science were in line with grade-level expectations. Such levels of attainment was reflected in most of the assessment data the school collected. In lessons, students acquired the expected understanding of new concepts through experimentation. In Grade 10, for example, students used experimental observations to explain the impact of temperature on the solubility of gases in a liquid. Students' progress was often hindered by the slow pace of the lesson or by the insufficiently challenging learning objectives set by the teacher for the mixed ability class.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Learning skills	Very good 	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable
• The majority of students were actively involved in their own learning when teachers had high expectations, and used creative and interesting strategies. In the best lessons, students linked prior and new learning and used a good range of reflective and analytical skills, especially in English language arts and science lessons. These key learning skills were developed during project-based learning opportunities. • The range of collaborative practices varied across the phases and were most successful in KG and the elementary school. In the majority of lessons, paired and group tasks contributed to effective sharing of ideas and improved listening and speaking skills. In the upper grades, a minority of learners were disengaged during mathematics lessons and demonstrated little interest in the opinions of their peers. • A minority of students in the upper grades made successful connections between the different elements of learning and the wider world. Linkages were noted in lesson planning, but not implemented with rigor in the class setting, except in the kindergarten. It was an improved picture in social studies, where most students applied their knowledge of the UAE across a number of areas of the curriculum. • The majority of students used technology with confidence and skillfully researched age-appropriate sources of information. Good technology skills were used less in Islamic education and Arabic. In science, students' independent learning skills were strong, when they applied their knowledge of design to create practical outcomes. In middle and high school, there was a lack of consistency in problem-solving skills in mathematics and presentation skills in English.				

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

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

- Students were responsible and actively participated in the life of the school. They respected their learning spaces and were often retrieving litter and taking care of classroom materials. In the KG and elementary phase, students welcomed feedback from their teachers and used this to improve their work.
- KG and elementary students exhibited exemplary behavior and developed good relationships with their teachers and peers. The older students were respectful and courteous towards each other but sometimes showed a lack of understanding towards the students with SEND. Overall, there was a sense of community throughout the school where the student body and staff were pursuing their educational and personal goals.
- Students had positive attitudes towards their learning and their school and they valued their relationships with the teachers. As a result, students felt comfortable and confident to share their questions and ideas. The student councils, which represented the elementary, middle and high schools, showed strong leadership and exhibited responsiveness to their classmates' suggestions.
- KG children were regularly reminded of how to make healthy eating choices. They had ample opportunities to engage in physical education and exercise throughout the week. Elementary, middle and high school students understood the value of eating healthy foods and participated in several physical activities, including yoga and Zen classes, which promoted both physical and emotional health.
- Attendance was good throughout all phases of the school, and students usually arrived to school in time. The few incidences of lateness did not usually disrupt the beginning of classes.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Good	Very good ↑	Good	Good

- Students had a broad understanding of key Islamic values underlying contemporary UAE society. They provided a variety of examples showing how these values impact the lives of people in the country such as tolerance.
- Students showed great respect for the history of the UAE and its leaders. They had visited key national monuments such as Sheikh Zayed mosque. They enjoyed the shopping malls and parks around Dubai, describing it as 'cool place' to live in. They recognized major UAE sports and recreational opportunities such as camel or horse racing, and desert trips.
- Students learned a great deal about cultures other than their own through their experiences in a diverse school community, supplemented by visits to global village, International day at school and their travels abroad. Social studies classes broadened their knowledge of world cultures and the UAE. Elementary students were involved in writing a book about different countries in the Middle East.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Good	Good	Good	Acceptable

- Students understood their social roles in school and participated in making the school community friendlier. They were involved in clean-up activities, and other projects supported by the school such as sports or guest speaking events. Students elected their representatives onto the student council.
- Students valued hard work in order to learn and get better grades. They knew how to approach and solve a difficult task by seeking help from parents, teachers, or prioritizing tasks. The elementary science project helped students learn about a topic and gain public-speaking confidence. High school students enjoyed the model UN experience but were generally less involved.
- Students demonstrated strong understanding of key environmental issues such as pollution and sustainability. They were involved in clean-up activities inside and outside school. They were well aware of the importance of sustainability through 'reduce, recycle and reuse'. Some students were involved in the environment club at school.

3. Teaching and assessment

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Teaching for effective learning	Very good 	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable

- Most teachers had good subject knowledge which they used well especially when explaining new topics to students. KG and elementary teachers were skilled in understanding that children and young students enjoyed learning by exploring in different ways and making discoveries, such as Grade 1 students who found different systems to measure objects in class.
- Lesson planning followed comprehensive formats. Lesson objectives were mostly clear but not always successfully delivered, especially in the upper phases. Resources were used well throughout the school to enhance learning in lessons. In most classes, a vibrant learning ethos existed and lessons proceeded at a good pace to sustain students' interest.
- Teachers' interactions with students were constructive and helped to establish a positive learning environment. Teachers' questioning skills to encourage dialogue and independent ideas were still developing. In the best lessons, questions were skillfully crafted to promote inquiry and depth of thought but this good practice was not yet shared across the school. Open-ended questions were used well in science to encourage students to predict the outcome of experiments.
- A rich variety of tasks and activities in lessons helped capture and sustain the interest of students. KG teachers matched tasks such as reading very well to different ability groups to extend word recognition and vocabulary. Carefully planned tasks for different ability groups were not consistently well developed in other phases to provide appropriate levels of challenging work for all groups, especially the most able.
- A range of appropriate opportunities were planned for students to work independently and collaboratively with others, to carry out research tasks and to solve problems, especially in mathematics and science. Less well developed was the opportunity for students to extend their thinking skills, explore their own ideas and communicate them to their peers.

- In Arabic as a first language, teaching was inconsistent across the different phases. Teachers in the middle and high school had better subject knowledge and used appropriate teaching strategies to meet the needs of their students. Teachers questioning skills were used to the best advantage in the elementary school, but elsewhere did not allow students to develop their responses well.
- The quality of teaching in the Arabic as an additional language was inconsistent but acceptable overall. In some lessons, the teacher took an overly dominant role which restricted students' opportunities to extend their language ability.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Assessment	Good	Good	Good ↑	Good ↑

- The school aligned its internal assessments well with the adopted curriculum standards. The variety of internal assessments provided a valid measure of most students' achievement although the results did not completely align with results on external exams such as MAP and IBT. The school substantially improved the consistency of assessment processes across the grade levels especially in the middle and high schools.
- The school used appropriate exams such as MAP and IBT, in addition to Children's Progress Academic Assessment (CPAA) in KG, to benchmark students' academic outcomes against external measures. School leaders had begun to improve the depth at which they analyzed the results of these exams to find out more about the skills students needed to improve to meet their learning goals.
- School leaders collected and analyzed different types of academic achievement data and improved its monitoring of students' progress in most subjects. It started to track not only students' knowledge and understanding of content but also their development of specific subject-related skills.
- Teachers in elementary, middle and high schools used the MAP and other assessment results to modify their teaching to better meet the needs of their students. These included grouping students by ability in different subjects and providing them with appropriate challenge. The differentiated tasks, however, were not always sufficiently challenging for the most able students. In KG, teachers used CPAA results to guide their modifications.
- Teachers demonstrated good understanding of students' strengths and weaknesses and used that information to effectively create ability groups and provide them with the needed challenge and support in most lessons. Teachers' written feedback enabled many students to improve the quality of their work. In addition, students often set personal learning goals for themselves in lessons and effectively monitored their own progress towards these goals.

4. Curriculum

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Curriculum design and implementation	Very good ↑	Good	Good	Good

- The curriculum was in alignment to the New York State Standards for English Language Arts and Mathematics, which included the Common Core (CCSS). Next Generation Science Standards was taught in all phases. The learning approaches provided a relevant and comprehensive curriculum that was effective in developing a balance of knowledge, skills and understanding. The Arabic curriculum met MOE standards and was compliant with statutory requirements.
- In most phases, teachers' planning was structured to prepare students for each new grade and phase. This was especially successful in KG and elementary phase where students continuously built upon their prior knowledge and had ample opportunities to develop their literacy skills. There was less continuity found in the middle and high schools where learning outcomes were not always clear.
- The curriculum included a limited range of options and choices for students which created a prescriptive approach to course selection. KG children self-selected their work at times which supported their independent learning across a range of interesting and relevant activities. In the other phases, students took art and world languages but sometimes lacked the choice selection expected of a US curriculum in the high school.
- Cross-curricular links were strong in the KG through purposeful planning with thematic units. In the middle school this was less developed as the focus on project based learning was not yet strongly linked to the curriculum. Older students were adept at making connections across subjects using their involvement in community activities, such as persuasive writing linked to the impact of biodiversity on the Florida Everglades.
- There was an organized and detailed process for reviewing the curriculum. Unit and annual reviews identified gaps in student learning which enabled adjustments and better monitoring of the content taught in each subject. External research conducted by school leaders to identify new educational trends and resources allowed for the development of an enriching curriculum to meet the needs of most students, including those with SEND.
- The school included aspects of the UAE in its history and geography subjects. However, the UAE social studies programme was not offered at the school.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Curriculum adaptation	Good	Good	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable ↓

- The majority of teachers in the lower phases modified the curriculum to meet the needs of diverse groups. Good practice was evident when extra activities were provided and there were different strategies used to support students who needed more time, including those with SEND. In the upper grades, the same curriculum was applied but modification was often limited to leveled worksheets.
- The adaptation of the curriculum was creative and interesting for younger children. Elementary students built some links with the community through field trips and invited speakers who spoke about healthy living and career choices. The range of opportunities in the upper grades to promote innovation and social

contribution improved. There was an appropriate range of cultural, scientific and athletic extra-curricular activities to extend and enrich learning.

- In the majority of lessons, there was an increased effort to include relevant links to UAE traditions and history. KG children used recycled materials to build Dubai landmarks and Emirati dress was on display in the discovery center. Implementing a fully integrated curriculum in the middle and high schools was a priority, and social studies lessons enhanced most students' understanding of local and wider cultures.
- The school provided Arabic to 31 children for 100-minutes in KG1, and 150-minutes for Arabic children in KG2. The level of provision was acceptable for most children.

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

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

- The school had established a clear, written policy for child protection and safeguarding. These policies were well embedded and highly effective. Staff had good relationships with students and promoted their welfare well. Effective systems were in place to protect children when using the internet and other forms of digital technology.
- Staff supervised students very well throughout the day. The school was safe and secure and kept clean and hygienic. Students felt safe within the school. The school carried out regular fire drills to practice evacuation procedures. During the inspection a fire drill was conducted with students and staff, and all knew what to do in an emergency.
- School buildings were very well maintained. Any incident which affected students' health, safety or well-being was systematically recorded along with any subsequent action. Appropriate medical information was shared with staff to ensure students' medical care at all times. Medication was stored securely.
- The school premises were very clean. The learning environment supported students' learning exceptionally well, including those students with special educational needs. The school ensured that it was supportive for the needs of students with SEND, including the availability of lifts and ramps. The management of the science laboratories was very effective, with all the necessary protocols being followed.
- Students were encouraged to make healthy life choices, such as having good hygiene, eating healthily and taking regular exercise. All students had an annual body mass index check. Following this, where appropriate, the school doctor contacted students and their parents to give advice and support about healthy living.

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

- Very good levels of care and mutual respect characterized the daily interactions between staff and students in the lower grades. The policy and procedures for managing older students' behavior required greater support from class teachers, as the current procedures placed a heavy burden on counselors to deal with students' misbehavior which could be better managed in class rather than relying on counselors.
- The monitoring of attendance and punctuality was effective and very good systems supported the well-being and safety of students. Data was carefully managed, analyzed and used as evidence to promote this positive feature of the school. The high expectations of school leaders, along with the support of parents, resulted in responsible student attitudes to attend school timely and be punctual to most lessons.
- The school had detailed procedures on its website for identifying students with SEND and applied the process for admissions and enrolment. Specialists and expert staff engaged with parents from the beginning so as to ensure a good understanding of the school's expectations. A very diverse group of students were identified and the gifted and talented were included on the register.
- The quality of support for students varied across the phases. A good range of facilities and resources were provided to enable staff to support students with academic and sensory needs. Individualized planning was in place. However, the modifications necessary for some students in some lessons were weak. A minority of teachers were not familiar with the specific learning needs of some students.
- Across all grades, there was consistent provision of counseling for students to seek high quality advice and guidance about a wide range of developmental issues including peer relations, academic progress, health, behavioral management and emotional growth. This advice was given and managed in a caring and personal manner, and was reflected in high levels of mutual trust between counselors and students.

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

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

Good

- The effective leadership and management of the school's provision for SEND resulted in improved practices across the KG and elementary phase. Policy and strategic planning took into account the diverse needs of most students, and resources were enhanced to support provision.
- The school published detailed and effective procedures for identifying children and students at the earliest opportunity. Formative, summative and developmental assessments and screening methods were used to accurately identify learning, social or emotional needs.
- High quality information was shared by the school staff with parents which benefitted students with SEND in their learning and development. The care and sensitivity used by the counseling and SEND team when discussing personal concerns or the academic progress of children was highly regarded by parents.
- In middle and high school lessons, the quality and range of modifications were not effective or sufficiently targeted to support students' achieving their individualized targets. Better support was observed during withdrawal sessions, and progress was more rapid for those students.

- The progress of students with special educational needs and disabilities was good in KG and the elementary phase. The range of progress information available for middle and high school students varied in quality and accuracy. Monitoring of students' progress tended to be based on academic testing and marking without reference to the students' individual needs or targets.

6. Leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership

Good

- School leaders achieved a good morale amongst the school community. Communication was well-managed and all members of the school were in clearly defined roles which they undertook effectively.
- Leaders and teachers knew the areas for further growth and improvement from regular discussions about the long-term goals for the school, and the concomitant student and managerial strengths needed to reach those goals.
- The schools' performance had improved in many subjects since the previous inspection, and half of students' attainment and progress results in subjects were good or very good. The consolidation of the schools' previous improvement, and the further growth since that time, were indicators of strong leadership.
- School leaders shared a proud and loyal commitment to the school, and to its journey through continuous improvement. An effective senior leadership team was in place to best address the needs of an expanding school. School leaders worked well together to build and strengthen aspects of the school guided by their shared vision.
- School leaders worked with vision and determination as they developed the size and quality of the teaching staff, keeping in mind the school's adopted curriculum and the impact needed for improving students' academic and personal development. Improvement activities within the school, to build the data skills of teachers, and enable them to use that analysis, were beginning to show some good results.

School self-evaluation and improvement planning

Good

- School leaders reflected deeply about the school's strengths and needs, through the accreditation self-study along with the inspection review. Overall, they had identified the needs and areas for improvement very well. External benchmark and formative testing was used and data analysed. However, these needed to be more fully developed within subject domains, and used for improvement planning.
- Senior leaders realistically evaluated the school's current strengths. The emphases on reading across the school, showed an approach to development that embraced the diverse language base of the student population, which supplemented by student use of learning technologies reflected the school's forward planning.
- The areas for improvement identified in the previous inspection report were used to create an action plan. However, the plan was not sufficiently detailed and did not show measurable targets or success indicators. Feedback from students and parents to inform the self-evaluation process were sometimes used, but not yet in a fully effective way.

- Some of recommendations of the previous inspection report were addressed, however, some aspects were not given the level of urgency needed to bring about some improvements. Students' outcomes in Islamic education and Arabic remained generally acceptable.

Partnerships with parents and the community

Very good ↑

- Parents felt they were an integral part of their child's school community, and gave many examples of ways where their involvement was welcomed and appreciated. This included activities, as well as more informal opportunities to discuss ideas and learn of school planning. The presence in the school of the Collegiate American School Parents' Association (CASPA) was a very positive aspect that strengthened parents' involvement and support.
- Parents said the communication from the school, and their communication opportunities with the school, were very positive and that these had improved in the last year. They felt welcome in the school, their ideas were appreciated and some parents expressed their appreciation of the opportunities to speak with teachers and their openness.
- Regular report cards, progress information and access to the online portal gave parents a good sense of how well their children were achieving. There were mixed opinions from parents about the online portal, but many felt it gave them a good sense of what was expected of their children, and the work they did.
- Some community partnerships existed, but needed expanding to have a greater impact on improving students' outcomes, as well as benefitting the community. Students enjoyed inter-school activities and the unique opportunities offered by organizations such as the Model United Nations (MUN).

Governance

Outstanding

- The duties of the Board of Directors, Executive Council and Advisory Council, within the matrix of school governance, were more clearly defined. This helped ensure clearer responsibilities and greater support for all aspects of school development. The participation of students in the advisory board was regular, ensuring these essential voices were added to those of parents and other stakeholders.
- The Governing Board held the school leaders accountable for their actions, and for the pace of school improvement. It provided the resources and funding for the learning tools needed to enhance teaching and learning, and the training and support to use these tools effectively.
- Improving the school's performance remained a high priority for school leaders and governors. Staffing choices included a teaching faculty of whom half were American, with a broad range of first-hand teaching experiences in the US. This supported the high quality delivery of the US curriculum standards. Specialist teachers were well chosen, and school leaders at all levels were recruited with purpose.

Management, staffing, facilities and resources

Very good 

- Teachers, parents and students were fully informed of the careful organization of lessons and other extra-curricular activities. Information was well managed on the school's portal, website, information boards and through weekly newsletters. Overall, the curriculum was delivered very effectively in all phases.
- The level of staff turnover was lower than in previous years. New teachers and support staff were appointed to key positions in leadership and in the special educational needs and disabilities provision. Teachers in the lower grades were very knowledgeable about the processes of early childhood education and personal development. The effective deployment of guidance and counseling staff was a strength of the school.
- The premises were bright, decorative and accessible for almost all learners. The addition of extra rooms such as a discovery room in the Kindergarten, and a sensory room, added value to the quality of provision for a wider range of students with specific needs. The library spaces were very successful points of interaction and allowed students to enjoy reading and research.
- The school had continued to build on its range of resources. Improved digital learning resources were found, with improved connectivity as a result of greater wireless access points, extra projectors, iPads, desktop computers, interactive boards and 3D printing facilities, were added this year. These resources were not yet used to full effect in some of the key subjects.

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	67
	2014-2015	188
 Teachers	58	
 Students	30	

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

- In total 12% of the parents replied to the questionnaire. Almost all were satisfied with the progress made in English mathematics and science. Fewer parents were positive in their views on progress in Arabic and Islamic Education.
- They valued the social development of their children and their appreciation of other cultures. Parents were also pleased with the good extra-curricular activities for students and the good resources in the school.
- Students were positive about the progress they made in English and also in mathematics and science but, like their parents, felt that progress in Arabic and Islamic Education was a concern.
- They felt that they were helped to develop good learning skills. The School Council was a valued student voice and students felt this to be an important input into school life.
- Most students felt that they were well taught and valued the help and support that teachers gave them and how well their work was assessed.
- More than half the teachers responded to the survey. Most teachers were of the view that they received a good range of information to help with their teaching role including briefing on assessment results in school and in external tests.
- The majority of teachers noted the good progress students with SEND made in their classes but a few wished to have specialist support and advice more readily available.

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