Inspection Report
2016 - 2017

DUBAI
Knowledge المعرفة

Dubai Carmel School

Curriculum: UK

Overall Rating:

Acceptable

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

Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al-Maktoum

www.khda.gov.ae

Contents

School information 3
The DSIB inspection process 4
Summary of inspection findings 2016-2017 6
Main inspection report 12
1. Students' achievement 12
2. Students' personal and social development, and their innovation skills 16
3. Teaching and assessment 18
4. Curriculum 19
5. The protection, care, guidance and support of students 21
Inclusion 22
6. Leadership and management 23
The views of parents, teachers and senior students 26

School information

General information	
Location	Al Nahda
Type of school	Private
Opening year of school	1990
Website	www.dubaicarmelschool.com
Telephone	0097142675424
Address	Al Nahda, behind Sahara Center. P.O. Box 89212 Dubai U.A.E.
Principal	Alia Abu Younis
Language of instruction	English, Arabic
Inspection dates	9 to 12 January 2017

Students	
Gender of students	Boys and girls
Age range	4 - 17
Grades or year groups	FS 1 - Year 12
Number of students on roll	928
Number of children in pre-kindergarten	0
Number of Emirati students	90
Number of students with SEND	113
Largest nationality group of students	Arab

Teachers / Support staff	
Number of teachers	92
Largest nationality group of teachers	Egyptian
Number of teaching assistants	19
Teacher-student ratio	1:10
Number of guidance counsellors	6
Teacher turnover	27%

Curriculum	
Educational permit / Licence	UK
Main curriculum	UK / IGCSE
External tests and examinations	IBT
Accreditation	none
National Agenda benchmark tests	IBT

The DSIB inspection process

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

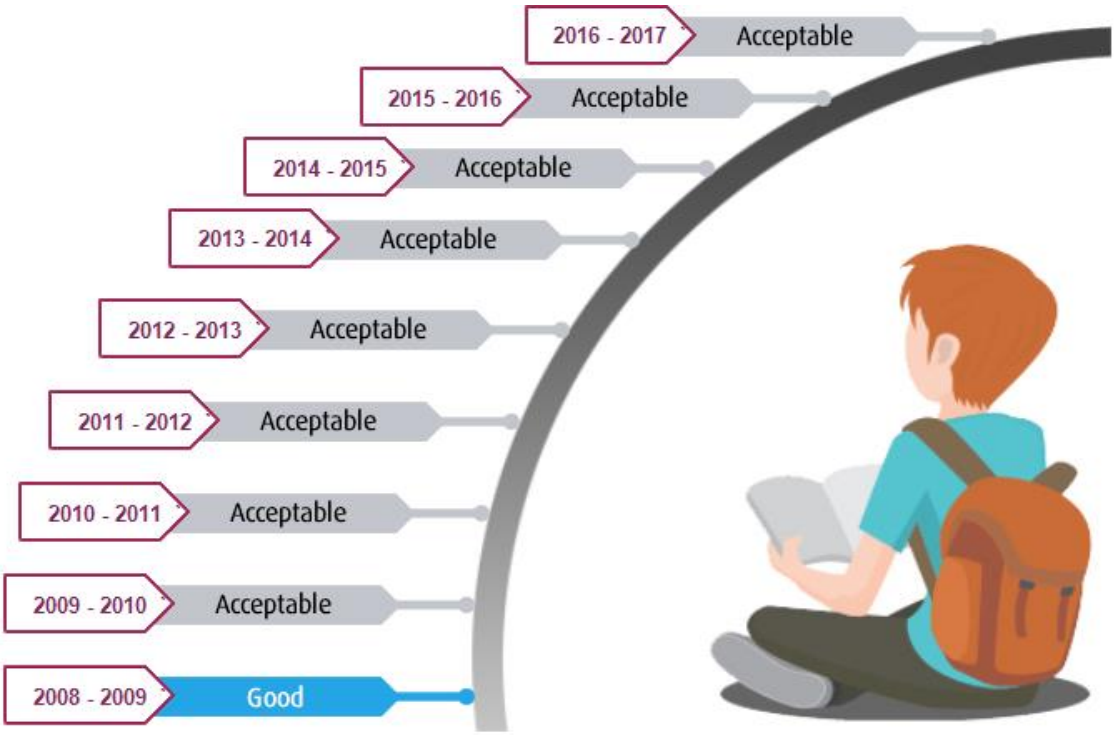
Inspection judgements are drawn from evidence gathered by the inspection team, including observation of students' learning in lessons, review of their work, discussions with students, meetings with the staff, parents and governors, and review of surveys completed by parents, teachers and students.

Judgements are made on a six-point scale

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

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

Inspection journey for Dubai Carmel School



- The principal founded the school in 1990 and has led the school through all nine years of inspection. Numbers of students have fluctuated a little over recent years and are at their highest level of 928 in the current school year. Teacher turnover in most years has been approximately 18 per cent but has risen to 27 per cent this school year.
- The school has remained acceptable in its overall effectiveness for a number of years. Over time improvements have been made in provision for children in the foundation stage (FS). The teaching of Islamic education, especially in the primary phase, students' personal development and how well the school provides for students with complex special educational needs have been recurring strengths of the school's provision.
- Recommendations of previous inspections have focused on improving the school's understanding and expertise in the delivery of a UK curriculum and how well the school carries out assessment of students' attainment and progress. Additionally, the previous inspection recommendations focused on the need for a clear focus on improving students' attainment in English, which in several phases was judged to be weak.

Summary of inspection findings 2016-2017

Dubai Carmel School was inspected by DSIB from 9 to 12 January 2017. The overall quality of education provided by the school is **acceptable.** The section below summarises the inspection findings for each of the six performance indicators described in the framework.

- Students' attainment and progress are variable across subjects and phases. Attainment is stronger in Islamic education and Arabic than in English, mathematics and science. Whilst students generally enjoy learning, weaknesses in the skills of critical thinking and the use of learning technologies, contribute to weak attainment in several subjects and phases. In the FS, children generally make good progress to reach acceptable standards in English, mathematics and science.

- Most aspects of students' personal development are at least good and often very good. Students have an exceptionally well-developed understanding of Islamic values. They have positive attitudes to learning, caring for the environment and for each other. Occasionally, the behaviour and attitudes of a few boys limits their learning.

- Teaching is good in the FS and acceptable in the other phases. Strengths are most often seen in the teaching of Arabic as a first language. In these lessons, teachers use questioning well to challenge and deepen knowledge, understanding and skill. These strengths are not commonly seen in lessons in other subjects. Systems of assessment are improving but lack accuracy.

- The school provides an acceptable range of curriculum subjects that are broadly linked to its licenced curriculum. Modifications to meet the needs of students of different ability are not well enough embedded into lesson planning or delivery, especially for those students of higher ability.

- Systems for the protection, care and guidance of students are good. Students, including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), are well cared for within this inclusive school.

- Leaders, including the governing board, are committed to providing education opportunities for students within a caring family ethos. Leaders have not developed the expertise to ensure that provision consistently leads to good learning for all students. Inaccuracies in data relating to the quality of teaching and student attainment are providing an over optimistic evaluation of the school's work. This is slowing the rate of improvement.

What the school does best

- The highly inclusive culture created within a family ethos that results in students having very good understanding of Islamic values, social responsibility and environmental awareness.
- The good attainment and progress in Arabic as a first language in the primary and secondary phases.
- Good teaching and curriculum provision in the FS that results in children's good progress in English and mathematics.
- Good provision for students with SEND, leading to good progress.

Recommendations

- Improve the effectiveness and impact of school self-evaluation by:
  - improving and increasing the number of methods for measuring the impact of teaching on student performance
  - ensuring the accuracy of the assessments that teachers make of students' attainment
  - analysing, comparing and drawing accurate conclusions from all available data.
- Raise standards of attainment especially in English, mathematics and science by:
  - continuing to improve teachers' knowledge of age related curriculum expectations and ensuring that these are included fully in teachers' planning
  - using external and accurate internal assessments to identify students' potential and taking these fully into account when planning and delivering lessons to meet the needs of students of differing ability
  - consistently including opportunities for students to develop the skills of research, critical thinking, investigation and problem solving.
- Improve the impact of governance on school performance and ensure that the school meets National Agenda targets by:
  - using all available external data to rigorously hold senior leaders to account for school performance
  - increasing the expertise and effectiveness of the senior leaders in leading and managing a UK curriculum school and the required assessment processes.

National Agenda Parameter

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

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

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

- No attainment data from the National Agenda Parameter was available. The school meets the registration requirements for the National Agenda Parameter.
- The school has GL CAT4 (Cognitive Ability Tests) data for four targeted year groups, which it shares with students, parents and the relevant teachers. Middle leaders request bespoke training for both CAT4 and IBT assessments. A tracking system is being developed to begin to use the results from CAT4 tests alongside results from attainment tests. Use of CAT4 data by teachers in planning is rare.
- The school is undertaking a curriculum review. Leaders are aware of the importance of the development of the skills needed for independent learning, critically thinking, research and debating. However, overall the curriculum does not yet prepare students to be successful in international benchmark tests.
- The development of critical thinking and the application of learning to real life contexts is included in planning by a few teachers. For example, in science students have the opportunity to discuss the moral issues and benefits of nuclear reactions. Occasionally, skilful questioning to promote critical thinking is seen in some secondary mathematics lessons, but neither are regular features in all subjects.
- GL CAT4 reports are shared with students but their understanding of how this information can be used is limited. Students rarely carry out research and present their findings, although there are examples where students have used technology to further research topics. For example, Year 10 students conduct a brief research of GM crops.

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

Innovation in Education

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

Promoting a culture of innovation:

- School leaders understand the importance of innovation as a national priority but are in the early stages of developing strategies through which to embed innovative practice throughout the school community. Whilst the curriculum for environmental education has provided a number of opportunities for students to develop the skills of enterprise and social awareness, opportunities are regularly missed in many other lessons. Teachers do not sufficiently modify plans in order to develop innovation skills. Although there are examples of a few students taking the initiative to research and produce innovative suggestions, this is not yet widespread among all students.

Overall school performance

Acceptable

1 Students' achievement

		Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Islamic education	Attainment	Not applicable	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable
	Progress	Not applicable	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable
Arabic as a first language	Attainment	Not applicable	Good	Good ↑	Acceptable
	Progress	Not applicable	Good	Good	Acceptable
Arabic as an additional language	Attainment	Not applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Not applicable
	Progress	Not applicable	Good	Good	Not applicable
English	Attainment	Acceptable	Weak	Weak	Not applicable
	Progress	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable	Not applicable
Mathematics	Attainment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Weak ↓	Weak ↓
	Progress	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Science	Attainment	Acceptable	Weak ↓	Weak ↓	Acceptable ↑
	Progress	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Learning skills	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

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

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Personal development	Good	Good	Good	Good
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Outstanding	Very good	Very good	Very good
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Very good	Very good	Very good	Very good

3. Teaching and assessment

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Teaching for effective learning	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Assessment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

4. Curriculum

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Curriculum design and implementation	Good ↑	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Curriculum adaptation	Good ↑	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

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

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding	Good	Good	Good	Good
Care and support	Good	Good	Good	Good

6. Leadership and management

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

1. Students' achievement

Foundation Stage		
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	Acceptable	Good
Mathematics	Acceptable	Good
Science	Acceptable	Acceptable ↓

- Most children make good progress to reach age related standards in listening, speaking, reading and writing and are adequately prepared for entry into Year 1. All children learn English as a second language and have well developed speaking skills by FS2. They have a broad vocabulary base in all areas of the curriculum, which enables them to talk about their learning. In FS2 children are beginning to copy sentences. However, their independent writing is less developed as they have insufficient opportunities to practise their skills.

- In mathematics most children attain in line with curriculum standards. By FS2 children make better than expected progress from their starting points in numeracy. They use numbers confidently with understanding. They begin to use their skills in real life situations such as adding money to buy articles in a class shop. Children know the names of shapes and can use this vocabulary confidently to describe their models and pictures. They have made a start to use their skills in problem solving but this is not a strong feature of their learning.

- Most children's attainment in science is in line with curriculum expectations of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). They know the names of fruit and vegetables and that these are healthy foods. From FS1 to FS2 children make acceptable progress as they learn and begin to use scientific vocabulary. Scientific skills are not well developed. Children are often over directed in their play and do not have enough opportunities to make observations, investigate independently and experience things at an appropriate level.

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

- In Islamic education, the majority of students display attainment levels above the expectations of the Ministry of Education (MoE) curriculum standards. These levels of attainment are consistent with previous years. Students demonstrate good knowledge of the Pillars of Islam and age-appropriate Islamic practices. In lessons, students make good progress in acquiring knowledge of prayers and values. However, Year 6 students make slower progress in developing their understanding of the Holy Qur'an.

- In lessons, the majority of students are learning Arabic as a first language. They make good progress and demonstrate levels of knowledge and understanding, which are above curriculum standards. School data and students' work confirms this level of attainment and progress. Students understand what the teacher is saying and respond well. They are able to speak using long sentences with a variety of vocabulary. Students can read texts and demonstrate good comprehension skills. In Grades 1 to 3 students can copy text and by Year 6 they can independently write at length.

- In Arabic as an additional language, the attainment of most students is in line with curriculum expectations. Students listening skills are secure, and are able to understand basic classroom questions. Their speaking skill is acceptable. By Year 6, they can respond using correct short sentences. However, the writing skill of students is less developed. In lessons and most recent work, students make accelerated progress in word and expression acquisition. They make slower progress in learning to apply their knowledge to unfamiliar situations.

- Most students make acceptable progress in English lessons but insufficient data is available to measure progress over time. Internal data, evidence from lessons and students' work indicate that the majority of students attain below curriculum standards. This attainment is confirmed by external Cambridge Checkpoint examinations in Year 6. Attainment is not better because the good progress made by students in lower primary classes is not sustained. In particular, students have insufficient opportunities to develop their extended writing skills. There are no discernible trends over time. Students with SEND also make acceptable progress.

- In the external Cambridge benchmark tests in mathematics, only one half of students attain age expected levels. According to internal assessments, the understanding of numeracy by a large majority of students is below curriculum standards. The attainment of most students in lessons is in line with curriculum standards in Years 1 to 3. This level of attainment is not evident by Year 6, with students having difficulty using formal methods to solve multi-step problems. Girls make better progress than boys.

- In science students' progress is acceptable over time; students make the least progress in lower primary. Internal tests indicate acceptable attainment. However, these results do not align with those of the external curriculum test in Year 6 where the majority of students did not reach curriculum expectations. In lessons and students' work, attainment is below curriculum expectations. Students' scientific recall of facts is secure but their skills in investigation, discussion and extended writing are weak. The level of attainment fluctuates over time.

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

- In Islamic education, the attainment level of most students is in line with the expectations of the curriculum standards. Students' attainment is similar to previous years' levels. Students display a secure understanding of values and manners. However, their understanding of verses of the Holy Qur'an is less secure. In lessons, students make adequate progress in acquiring knowledge but slower progress in developing deeper understanding. The girls' progress is slightly better than that of the boys. Overall, the progress of boys and girls is inconsistent.

- In lessons, and in their work over time, the majority of students make good progress to attain above the curriculum standards for learning Arabic as a first language. They have good comprehension skills and understand elements of stories such as characters and actions. In speaking, they talk confidently when making presentations. They express their ideas and opinions well using a comprehensive range of vocabulary. In free writing, all students write long passages about a variety of topics.

- In Arabic as an additional language, the attainment of most students is in line with the expectations. The skills of listening, speaking and recognition of basic familiar words are acceptable, especially for those who have studied Arabic for a few years. Students make accelerated progress in developing their knowledge of words, basic expressions and grammar. However, students' skills in applying this knowledge to speak and write independently about different contexts are weaker.

- Less than 75% attained in line or above the minimum curriculum standards for English in the IGCSE tests at the end of Year 11 and in Cambridge Checkpoint results for Year 9. Evidence from lessons and students' work indicates that progress is better for girls but acceptable overall. Progress data has only recently been collected. The promotion of comprehension skills and the use of language to debate issues is now developing but students have limited opportunities to develop writing skills in a variety of genres, including poetry. Attainment over time fluctuates. Progress for students with SEND is acceptable.

- In mathematics, less than three quarters of students attained in line or above the minimum curriculum standards in IGCSE. In Cambridge external benchmark tests three fifths of students do not attain age related expectations. In internal assessments most Year 11 students are attaining expected curriculum standards, though in Year 9 they are not. By the end of the phase, students can calculate the volume and surface area of a cylinder. Most can solve logical problems using Venn diagrams and find an unknown angle using circle theorems. Girls make better progress than boys.
- In science only a minority of students meet curriculum standards in the external assessment for Year 9. In IGCSE, a large minority of results are below international standards. Internal test results indicate weak attainment. In lessons and students' work attainment is below curriculum standards. Students have secure scientific knowledge and understanding. Their skills in investigation, thinking critically and using technology are weak. Progress is acceptable but slower for the most able as they are not sufficiently challenged. Attainment fluctuates over time.

Post-16		
Subjects	Attainment	Progress
Islamic education	Acceptable	Acceptable
Arabic as a first language	Acceptable	Acceptable
Arabic as an additional language	Not applicable	Not applicable
English	Not applicable	Not applicable
Mathematics	Weak ↓	Acceptable
Science	Acceptable ↑	Acceptable

- In Islamic education, the attainment of most students is in line with curriculum expectations. Students' attainment levels are consistent with previous years. Students show a secure knowledge of Islamic law (Fiqh) and key concepts, such as justice in Islam. In lessons, students make sufficient progress, developing their knowledge of a range of topics such as Islamic view on social justice. However, their skills in interpretation and justification of concepts with reference to Holy Qur'an and Sunnah are less well developed.
- In Arabic as a first language lessons, most students attain levels in line with curriculum expectations. They understand presentations and participate in dialogue with the teacher. When speaking, students use familiar vocabulary but their ability to speak about unfamiliar situations is more limited. Students' ability to understand complex texts is limited. Their free writing is in line with expectation. Students' work indicates that they make acceptable progress over time.
- In the small post-16 cohort entered for AS level examinations in mathematics in 2016, no student attained results at curriculum standards. Internal assessments also show that most students are not attaining the expected curriculum standards. In lessons students can apply the power rule for differentiation. They can discuss and explain how differentiation might be applied in a real life context but lack the skills of investigation and problem solving. Progress is acceptable overall but boys are making better progress than girls.

- Most students' attainment in science is in line with curriculum and international standards in lessons and students' work. Students are able to use previous knowledge to solve unknown problems, design simple experiments and articulate their ideas using scientific vocabulary. End of term test results and the school's predicted grades for this year's AS examinations indicate that attainment overall is in line with expected standards. Students make acceptable progress over time, considering their starting points.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Learning skills	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

- Most students, especially in primary and the FS, are keen to learn. They remain on task well in lessons that engage and interest them. Older boys are easily distracted and learning opportunities are lost in a few lessons because of this. Students do not routinely show independence or initiative in most lessons and rely strongly on their teachers.
- Students mostly show respect to teachers and to each other and this adds to the good learning ethos in a large majority of classes. They are able to collaborate well and share ideas in pairs and small groups. Communication skills are more securely developed for older students and, in English, debates and discussions are enjoyed.
- In a few lessons students readily make links between their learning and real world application. This is most common in lessons when students are learning Arabic as a first language but is inconsistent in other subjects. Students' lack of English language skills is often a barrier to learning in other subjects.
- Whilst students demonstrate acceptable skills in using technology in IT lessons they do not routinely use these skills to support learning in other subjects. When engaged in project work at home, older students are able to use technology to find out things for themselves and prepare presentations to demonstrate their knowledge. Problem solving and investigation skills are weak and this limits attainment in subjects such as mathematics and science.

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

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Personal development	Good	Good	Good	Good

- Students display a positive attitude towards learning and their school in general. Children in the FS enjoy being in school and take very good care of their classrooms.
- Students are well behaved, especially the girls. Generally, students act responsibly and exercise self-discipline. However, in a few instances the behaviour of a few boys is less orderly and they need reminders to follow the school's guidelines.

- Relationships amongst students and staff are respectful and contribute to the family and caring ethos of the school. Students' support and accommodation of their peers with SEND is impressive.
- Students benefit from the school's programme for fitness and promotion of healthy living. Most students have a good understanding of the importance and impact of following a healthy lifestyle. However, a few students do not always make wise food choices.
- In the most recent reports, students' attendance is very good. Most students are generally on time for lessons. However, some students are not always on time to join the daily morning assembly.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Outstanding	Very good	Very good	Very good

- Students have a clear appreciation and understanding of how Islamic values influence contemporary UAE society. For example, students listen to the Holy Qur'an in assembly and they enact values of Islam during lessons and breaks such as cooperation, respect and protection of the environment. Students participate very enthusiastically, particularly in FS, in holy occasions such as the birthday of the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH).
- Students are very knowledgeable, particularly in FS considering their age, and appreciative of the heritage and culture that underpin and influence contemporary life in the UAE. They participate in a range of cultural activities. For example, all students sing the UAE national anthem, respect traditions and participate in national occasions such as Flag Day. Students care about UAE cultural aspects such as traditional sports, food and clothing.
- Students have a wide knowledge and appreciation of their own heritage and the culture of their countries such as Indian national day and the history of Egypt. Students participate in International Day and they exchange food and gifts, which enrich their knowledge about other cultures.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Very good	Very good	Very good	Very good

- Students participate willingly in activities that have a positive effect on the school such as the students' conference. They clean the playground and plan assemblies. As volunteers they initiate and lead activities to make worthwhile social contributions.
- Students show a very positive work ethic. Older students help younger students to understand how to be enterprising and use these skills to benefit others. For example, through projects such as 'think local, buy local', they use locally grown organic fruit and vegetables to create platters for sale in school, with the proceeds going to charity.

- The contributions that students make towards the environment are very good, such as their participation in 'Green Corner' a scheme to grow vegetables. They use their environmental awareness to plan projects related to sustainable irrigation using recycled water to keep plants alive during school holidays. Older students are actively involved in conservation projects relating to maintaining the ecological balance within Dubai.

3. Teaching and assessment

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Teaching for effective learning	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

- Most teachers use their secure subject knowledge to explain new concepts and procedures clearly to students. They do not routinely take into account that students learn in different ways. In the FS, teachers use their good knowledge of early education to provide activities that capture children's imagination. They do not always encourage children to explore and show independence in class activities and play.
- Lessons are planned effectively to meet curriculum requirements but the delivery of interesting, well-paced lessons is variable across phases and subjects. Resources, especially IT, are not used efficiently to enhance learning except for some older students. A wide range of displays, including students' class and project work, is used well in corridors and some classrooms to enhance the learning environment.
- Good relationships between staff and students, especially in FS and primary, ensure that students are productively engaged and keen to work hard. In Arabic as a first language, teachers help generate high quality meaningful discussions through careful use of questioning. Students have a gradually improving range of opportunities to discuss and explore new ideas together in a few subjects such as English.
- Teachers know students well but most do not provide a range of activities to fully engage all students and support a range of learning needs within the class. Able students across all subject areas do not receive sufficient challenge to ensure they make appropriate progress.
- There is a whole school focus on developing students' critical thinking skills and encouraging them to think in depth to explore and develop their ideas. This is not a feature of most lessons and is only slowly developing in all subjects. In science there are few practical activities to help nurture the skills of recording and analysing scientific results.
- Teaching in the majority of Arabic lessons is effective, especially in the Arabic as a first language classes. Teachers plan and deliver engaging lessons. However, the quality of teaching in a few lessons is less effective due to the lack of understanding of the expectations of the curriculum standards, especially in Arabic as an additional language lessons.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Assessment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

- Internal assessment processes are steadily developing. A school tracking system has been recently introduced for Years 1 to 10 and teachers have submitted their first batch of formative data. This tracking system is aligned to the Cambridge curriculum objectives with some school variation. Teacher assessment often appears more generous than that of internal and external test outcomes; no moderation has taken place.
- The school benchmarks students' academic outcomes against Cambridge Checkpoint tests at Years 6 and 9. Results for CAT4 testing have been received for a few but not all year groups. The school is awaiting the results of recent IBT testing for Years 5, 7 and 9.
- Assessment data are analysed but information about students' progress, as individuals and as groups, is not undertaken. A few teachers are making use of cognitive ability test data to identify and make provision for their students but this is inconsistent. When carried out this helps to ensure that lesson plans are suited to students' needs and accelerates their progress.
- Assessment information is not used consistently to inform teaching or curriculum planning. Consequently, the needs of all groups of students are not adequately met. Higher ability students have yet to be consistently identified through external benchmarking and cognitive ability tests. This is limiting student progress and attainment.
- Teachers do not consistently use their knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of students when planning and delivering lessons. In too many lessons, students are not given enough challenge, support, feedback or follow-up. Workbooks are checked regularly but teacher comments to help students improve are infrequent. Students rarely assess their own learning. The use of rubrics is not consistent across all phases.

4. Curriculum

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Curriculum design and implementation	Good ↑	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

- FS closely follows the UK Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) curriculum. This is broad and effective in developing a range of learning skills. Teachers plan sufficient opportunities for children to learn speaking skills. The primary and secondary phases follow the MoE curriculum for Islamic education and Arabic and the Cambridge curriculum, broadly linked to the English National Curriculum, leading towards IGCSE.
- The children's experiences in the FS prepare them well for the primary phase, where the curriculum is planned progressively. However, in other phases the planned curriculum in some subjects is below the level expected. This often leads to a lack of challenge particularly for the higher attaining students.

- The curriculum offers choices throughout the school. For example, children in FS have free choice activity sessions and students in secondary can choose additional options from a range of 12 subjects, in addition to the core subjects of mathematics, English and science. However, in post-16, the AS courses are few in number and full A-levels are not offered.
- Few curricular links exist. They are not fully integrated across the curriculum to provide transfer of learning from one subject to another. Nevertheless, some teachers use subjects, such as art in the FS, to develop speaking skills and vocabulary.
- The school carries out periodic curriculum reviews, for example, to try to introduce opportunities for critical thinking and independent work. A start has been made on this but it needs to be more closely monitored to ensure that opportunities are consistently provided.
- The school's UAE social studies curriculum is interesting and promotes an enjoyment of learning. It is based on the MoE programme and taught in English and Arabic. It provides relevant links with different subjects. It is carefully planned to extend students' understanding of the culture and development of the UAE, and its position and importance in the wider world. The curriculum is planned effectively so that students develop a wide knowledge base and are able to develop their abilities to collaborate with each other, develop language skills and self-confidence in discussions, and independence in learning.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Curriculum adaptation	Good ↑	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

- Appropriate modification enables curriculum access for students who are placed in special classes or who attend for specialist support. FS teachers who teach special classes and Arabic as a first language are adept at varying instruction to suit the individual needs of their students. However, the ability of many teachers to plan effectively to meet the needs of students of differing ability is limited.
- The curriculum provides a few opportunities to engage students in activities promoting enterprise and innovation. However, these are not consistently present across the school. Additional subjects including art, PE, enterprise and IT enhance the curriculum and support personal, creative and social development.
- Arabic and social studies classes develop appreciation of UAE heritage and many aspects of UAE life is celebrated in assemblies and school events. Learning experiences are embedded in the curriculum to foster a broad understanding of Emirati culture and values. Trips to important cultural and historical sites, classroom-based projects and national celebrations help students develop an appreciation of UAE culture.
- Arabic in the FS features approximately four hours of instruction per week and is in line with the MoE expectations.

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

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding	Good	Good	Good	Good

- The school has effective arrangements for the safeguarding of students. Staff and parents are aware of the policy and procedures. Students know whom to turn to if they have concerns. Any issues are dealt with sensitively and effectively. The staff and older pupils successfully promote the importance of keeping safe, especially from cyber-bullying and when using social media.
- The school ensures that the students are safe and secure. The buildings are clean and hygienic and staff conduct regular checks of the premises and equipment. Students are well supervised, especially on school transport. Termly emergency evacuations drills are carried out and staff are trained in fire safety. Comprehensive risk assessments are not in place.
- The school clinic is adequately equipped but has no adjacent washroom. There are comprehensive records of first aid treatment and medication is stored securely. The nurse and part-time doctor regularly check students' health and undertake vaccination programmes. The buildings are maintained to an acceptable level of repair.
- The premises are generally well suited to meet the needs of all students. The FS outdoor area provides good learning opportunities and is easily accessible from the FS classrooms. Access for students with mobility difficulties is limited as there is no lift and few ramps. There is no fume cupboard in the laboratory.
- The school successfully promotes healthy living and wellbeing. Through the curriculum and special events, staff ensure that students have a good awareness of the importance of healthy eating and exercise, as well as the dangers of smoking. Students choose from a range of healthy snacks from the canteen. There is effective shading of outdoor areas and plenty of access to drinking water.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Care and support	Good	Good	Good	Good

- The classroom management skills of teachers and the cooperation of the majority of students result in good behaviour throughout the school. All students subscribe to the school's code of conduct, which details the sanctions for poor behaviour.
- Students and their parents are encouraged to make regular school attendance a priority. The school's deployment of an effective reporting and recording system, careful monitoring and follow up, promote good student attendance and punctuality. The student handbook outlines school policy and a hierarchy of sanctions for absenteeism and tardiness.

- A well-developed system of practices and procedures is in place to ensure early identification of students' special educational needs. The school collaborates with students, their parents and external professionals to inform the development of appropriate interventions and accommodations to support learning.

- The school offers a continuum of provision from full inclusion to special class enrolment for students with SEND. An Individual Education Plan (IEP) to guide academic instruction is developed for each students. However, IEPs do not include targets for identified non-academic needs such as social or communication skills. A formal system to support gifted and talented students is lacking.

- Student welfare is monitored closely and personal guidance is provided to promote student wellbeing. A careers guidance programme provides advice and support in areas including subject choice, choosing an appropriate career path to suit their interests and abilities and applying to colleges. Students with SEND do not receive sufficient advice or support regarding their post-school future.

Inclusion

Provision and outcomes for students with SEND	Good

- The school is inclusive in its enrolment practices and the continuum of provision for students with SEND. Senior management actively support inclusion through the deployment of competent staff and the provision of resources. Together the principal and the co-ordinator of the provision deliver strong leadership and on-going support to all of the specialist staff.
- Established school procedures, in tandem with parent and external professional consultations, support the timely and accurate identification of students. All available information from assessments and structured observations is used to design IEPs, which guide academic instruction. However, IEP goals to target other domains such as social and communication skills, and behaviour are not recorded.
- The school fosters good working relationships with parents. They are consulted about each aspect of the provision proposed by the school for their children. Parents take a dynamic role in the development and review of their children's IEPs. They receive daily updates as well as monthly reports of academic progress and can access their children's work online.
- The modification of the English, mathematics and science curricula facilitates teachers' planning, instruction and assessment based on achievable learning objectives and ensures curriculum access for students. In mainstream lessons some teachers effectively vary questions, instructions and tasks for students of different ability but this is not consistent throughout the school.
- A range of processes are in place to measure student progress. These include the periodic collection and comparison of work samples, formal and informal observations of students and the attainment of academic targets in the IEP. Overall, progress for most students with SEND is good in relation to their learning difficulties but not fully consistent in all subjects.

6. Leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership	Acceptable

- Senior leaders are fully committed to the school's vision and belief that all children can learn, whatever their background or ability. This belief is at the heart of the direction set for staff and results in a fully inclusive school.
- Leaders have a basic knowledge of the requirements of the school's curriculum. Some leaders demonstrate in their own teaching, examples of good practice but this is not provided across all subjects. Leaders are successful in maintaining students' good, and often very good, personal development. This is achieved through a culture and ethos that encourages every student to care for each other and respect differences.
- Morale in school is generally positive. Staff work well as a team and systems of communication ensure that agreed procedures are consistently followed. Those with delegated leadership roles are dedicated to bringing about improvement. They do not always have the knowledge needed to be fully successful or to ensure that change is brought about quickly enough to move the school forward.
- Leaders are aware that further improvement is needed. They have taken some steps to remove potential barriers to improvement but these are at an early stage of development. Leaders have not fully appreciated the scale of the task to ensure that students reach higher standards and contribute to National Agenda targets.
- Despite a number of actions to improve the quality of provision, only limited success is evident. Adequate school performance has been maintained but this has not been sufficient to substantially increase the rate of students' progress or prevent a decline in attainment in some subjects.

School self-evaluation and improvement planning	Weak

- The school has begun to extend the systems it has in place to measure student outcomes. The data gathered from internal and external assessments is not checked or analysed in sufficient depth. As a result, it does not provide an accurate evaluation of the schools strengths and weaknesses.
- Checks on the quality of teaching are mainly through observations in lessons and lack rigour. Insufficient attention is given to the impact of teaching on the rate of student progress. Too often weaknesses such as a lack of challenge or slow pace are ignored when making evaluations. Data is not used to help leaders plan systematic evaluation activities.
- The school improvement plan includes actions to address weaknesses identified in the previous inspection. Identified priorities to ensure the school meets National Agenda targets are limited. Links between the actions to be taken and improvement in student outcomes are vague. This hinders systematic and accurate evaluation of the rate of improvement and leads to an inflated evaluation of the school's overall effectiveness.

- The actions taken by the school have led to limited improvement since the last inspection. Whilst the school has built on some previously identified strengths, significant weaknesses have not been successfully tackled. This has contributed to a decline in some subject areas.

Partnerships with parents and the community	Good

- Parents confirm the school's expectation that they become engaged in supporting their children's education. Through a variety of methods the school seeks the view of parents and takes these into account when shaping school improvement priorities.
- Communication strategies have improved through the use of the school's online portal. Parents of students with SEND are strongly engaged as partners in the education of their children and receive regular and detailed communication from teachers. The same level of information is not always available to all parents. A few expressed the desire to have clearer detailed guidance to help them support learning at home.
- Most parents are happy with the information they receive verbally through parent consultation meetings where their children's strengths and weaknesses are discussed. Written reports to parents are neither frequent nor detailed. They do not ensure that parents understand what test results represent or what their children need to do next to improve.
- Effective partnerships have been extended and are contributing to students' strong personal development. For example, with Dubai Municipality and the 'clean-up project'. Partnerships with other schools are beginning to develop in order to enhance school provision and extend students' learning opportunities.

Governance	Acceptable

- Governance includes representation from the majority of stakeholders. The views of all those involved with the school are sought and, when appropriate, acted upon. This provides the board with an overview of the school. However, at times too much emphasis is placed on what staff have done rather than the impact of actions when measuring school effectiveness.
- Governors have acted to improve the quality of teaching in the school and, when needed, have taken decisive action against poor performance. They have not, however, sufficiently held senior leaders to account for the quality of the school's performance. Questions have been asked regarding differences in school predictions and actual outcomes but these have not been followed through with enough rigour.
- The board has helped set the strategic direction for school improvement and been instrumental in a change of policy regarding staff recruitment. Whilst this has met with some success at middle leadership level, governors have not ensured that the senior leadership team has gained the breadth of knowledge needed to be fully pro-active in moving the school forward quickly enough.

Management, staffing, facilities and resources	Acceptable

- The school runs effectively on a day-to-day basis. Deployment of staff and timetabling ensure that little time is lost during the school day. All members of the school community are well aware of the school routines.
- There is a suitable number of qualified staff, a minority of whom have a teaching qualification. Support staff often work very effectively alongside teachers. New teaching recruits must be experienced in working in the UK curriculum. The school's senior leaders have little first-hand experience of working in other settings using the UK curriculum.
- The premises are generally adequate. The school has invested in refurbishing the physics laboratory. The stimulating FS environment celebrates children's achievements and promotes learning. A few classrooms are too small to enable students to fully participate in practical activities and this limits their learning.
- Resources are adequate. Teachers often make their own resources. There is a suitable range of equipment to support learning for students with SEND. The library is adequate but limited use is made of this resource. Younger students rarely use technology in the classroom, although older students benefit from bringing their own devices into lessons.

The views of parents, teachers and senior students

The views of parents, teachers and senior students

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

Responses to the surveys		
Responses received	Number	
Parents*	2016-2017	154
	2015-2016	313
Teachers	62	
Students	67	

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

- Almost all parents and students that responded to the survey are happy with the quality of education provided by the school. All teachers and students are completely confident that the school welcomes and cares for students with special educational needs and disabilities.
- Almost all teachers and students responding have positive views of all aspects of the school provision. They all agree that the teachers know students' strengths and weaknesses well and that students have gained a good understanding of the importance of Islamic values in Dubai.
- All students agree that they are safe in school, including on school transport. Almost all parents agree with the views of students. However, a few parents making additional comments raise concerns regarding bullying and attacks on their children both in school and on school buses. These few parents are not happy with the way the school deals with these incidents.
- Almost all parents agree that a family member reads with their children on a regular basis. However, a minority do not agree that their children read regularly at home for pleasure.
- Almost a quarter of parents responding do not agree that the school offers a good range of extra-curricular activities or that the school provides a good range of resources to support their children's learning.

What happens next?

The school has been asked to prepare and submit an action plan to DSIB within two months of receiving the inspection report. This should address:

- recommendations from DSIB
- areas identified by the school as requiring improvement
- other external reports or sources of information that comment on the work of the school
- priorities arising from the school's unique characteristics.

The next school inspection will report on changes made by the school.

Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau

Knowledge and Human Development Authority

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