



National Agenda



Early years



Special educational
needs and disabilities



Innovation

Inspection Report 2016-2015

Dubai National School (Branch)

Curriculum: US

Overall rating: Good

Read more about the school



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



Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum

Contents

School information	2
Summary for parents and the community	3
Main inspection report	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	Al Twar
Type of school	Private
Opening year of school	1999
Website	www.Dnschool.net
Telephone	04-2988555
Address	PO Box: 20057
Principal	Malek Daradkeh
Language of instruction	English
Inspection dates	11 to 14 January 2016

Students



Gender of students	Boys and girls
Age range	4-18
Grades or year groups	Kindergarten 1 to Grade 12
Number of students on roll	1,783
Number of children in pre-kindergarten	0
Number of Emirati students	1,196
Number of students with SEND	93
Largest nationality group of students	Emirati

Teachers / Support staff



Number of teachers	206
Largest nationality group of teachers	Jordan
Number of teaching assistants	30
Teacher-student ratio	1:8
Number of guidance counsellors	5
Teacher turnover	25%

Curriculum



Educational permit / Licence	US
Main curriculum	US / Massachusetts
External tests and examinations	SAT, TOEFL iBT
Accreditation	NEASC
National Agenda benchmark tests	IOWA, MAP

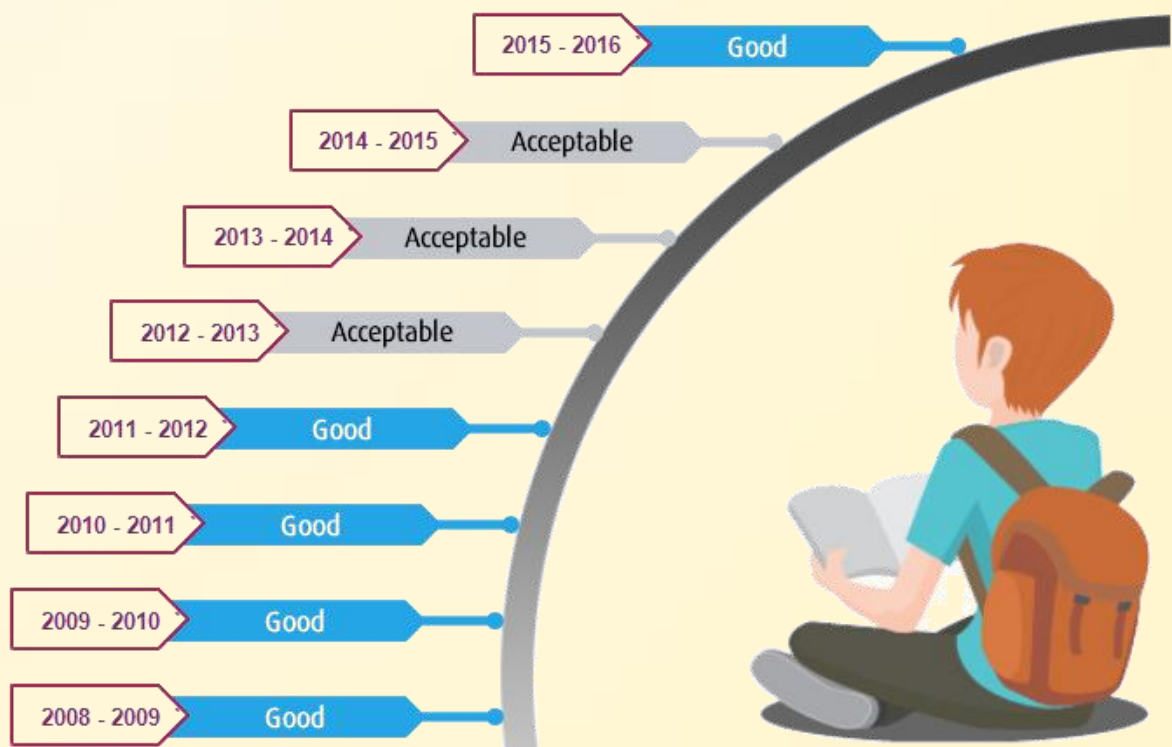


Summary for parents and the community

Dubai National School (Branch) was inspected by DSIB from 11 to 14 January 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, **Dubai National School (Branch)** provided a **good** quality of education for its students.

- Students' attainment and progress were good in most subjects, and very good in science in the High School. Their attainment and progress in Arabic as a first language remained acceptable in the middle and high Schools.
- The personal development and social responsibility of students, including their innovation skills, was very good, and students showed outstanding understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures.
- The quality of teaching to promote effective learning, and the use of assessment, were good across the school with the exception of teaching in Arabic as a first language which remained acceptable.
- The curriculum design was very good as a result of the improved range of electives for High School students, and the way in which the curriculum promoted internationalism. The adaptation of the curriculum for the majority of students was good.
- There had been marked improvements in the quality of health and safety procedures, and children were kept safe at all times. The care and support offered to all students was found to be very good across the school.
- The leadership and management of the school was good. Senior leaders, with the full support of governors, had taken determined actions to rapidly improve teaching, curriculum, learning, students' attendance and punctuality, and health and safety provision. This secured confidence from parents and the community. The school was very well managed and had provided better resources to secure improvements in achievement.



What did the school do well?

- The school welcomed students from all backgrounds and a wide range of abilities and invested in their education to ensure they achieved well, were well cared for and supported, and where every individual was valued.
- The visionary and ambitious leadership of the principal and vice principal, with the full support of the board and governors, had resulted in rapid and significant improvements in the quality of education in the school.
- Rigorous procedures for improving attendance and punctuality had led to a higher level of commitment from parents and students, as evidenced by the outstanding attendance.
- Improved provision for health and safety, together with improvements in resources and facilities, including the appointment of well trained staff and health professionals, had secured higher levels awareness of safety, health and wellbeing.
- Improved processes for the recruitment, training and development of teachers had ensured they are successful in their professional learning as they grow to become more proficient practitioners.
- The improved gathering and analysis of assessment data to support students' learning, had resulted in a positive impact on the curriculum and teachers' lesson plans.



What does the school need to do next?

- Raise students' attainment and accelerate the progress they make in relation to their starting points, particularly in Arabic as first language, by:
 - providing consistently high quality teaching and challenging activities that meet the needs of all students including the most able and those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)
 - giving students independence in leading their own learning routinely, as well as that of each other
 - ensuring students make full use of a range of digital learning technologies to support them in their research, inquiry and investigations in lessons.
- Hold middle leaders to account for the academic outcomes achieved by students in their subjects by ensuring that they evaluate the impact of teaching and curriculum provision on students' achievement.
- Provide leaders and teachers with further professional development and research opportunities to learn from the best practices found in the school and to innovate in their teaching and leadership practices.



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

- Strong SEND leadership had resulted in many improvements in the provision for students with SEND, resulting in an improvement in the overall progress of this cohort of students which was now good in most subjects.
- The school reported students' progress to parents through the report card and through daily communications.
- Many parents worked closely with teachers in planning the support and interventions for their children. Individual educational plans (IEP) meetings were held twice annually and parents used this opportunity to agree learning goals.
- As well as teachers, a range of other professionals including psychologists, speech and language therapists, behavior therapists, and counselors were available to support and guide students and parents.

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 as expected.
- The school has promoted the National Agenda well. Students were provided with counseling sessions on the significance of the various topics of the National Agenda and the National Agenda Parameter, and received training for TIMSS and PISA 2015 in the appropriate grades. Posters around the school highlighted the targets. Parents were made aware of the National Agenda through the parents' forum and circulars.
- The mathematics and science curricula were redesigned to be more focused on the content and cognitive domains of TIMSS and PISA. Greater emphasis was placed on reading and comprehension through the introduction of the North Star, Teachers of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) program and combining literature and language into a common syllabus. Iowa tests had recently been introduced as an international benchmarking strategy.
- The school had embedded critical thinking into its curriculum and lesson plans. However, the implementation of strategies to promote this in the classroom was variable across subjects and phases. The use of questioning and dialogue was also more evident in the middle and high phases than in the elementary phase.
- The students' use of portable learning technologies, such as tablet computers, was limited in most classrooms. Graphing calculators were used in the upper grades in mathematics. Projects requiring students to research and extract information were evident.

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:

- The owner and school board had understood the importance of the national innovation agenda and had begun to respond to this by reviewing the curriculum, leadership and strategic actions required to promote a culture of innovation. Leaders had planned to identify and review the professional development and training required to support teachers and support staff to begin to engage in action research about innovation in teaching and learning. The school buildings and environment had not yet been considered by leaders in terms of the way in which can be adapted to promote a culture of innovation, or innovative learning activities. Leaders had started to review the curriculum to identify where they were providing students with opportunities to learn about innovation, and they recognized the need to provide many more opportunities.

Overall school performance

Good ↑

1. Students' achievement

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

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Learning skills	Good	Good	Good ↑	Good ↑

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

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

3. Teaching and assessment

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

4. Curriculum

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

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

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding	Very good ↑	Very good ↑	Very good ↑	Very good ↑
Care and support	Very good ↑	Very good ↑	Very good ↑	Very 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	Good ↑
Management, staffing, facilities and resources	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	Good	Good
Mathematics	Good	Good
Science	Good	Good

- In English, children demonstrated an ability to recognize the names and the sounds of the letters in the alphabet. They could read high frequency words and short sentences, and most had good receptive language skills. Children in Kindergarten (KG) 2 were confident in their interactions with the teacher and their peers. All groups of children were able to write the letters of the alphabet and used their phonic skills to sound out high frequency words. Children engaged in the story reading process enthusiastically. Most had the ability to sequence events from stories. The literacy skills demonstrated by the children were at least in line with, and in many cases above the expectations of the Massachusetts Common Core Standards.
- In mathematics, the majority of the children had made better than expected progress in relation to their starting points. Children in KG 2 could represent one to twenty objects with number names and written numerals. They could also carry out simple number operations and represent these operations in algebraic format. Children were able to recognize two dimensional shapes, sort and classify shapes with different properties into groups, and they could count the number of objects in categories. An integrated approach to the teaching of mathematics was observed where different concepts were used to consolidate the children's learning in the different areas, for example, children could identify and count six white triangles.
- In science, the majority of the children made better than expected progress in relation to their starting points. They were provided with opportunities to investigate a range of science topics. A dedicated exploration room had been set up to facilitate children's exploration, particularly in KG 2 where children investigated properties of different rocks. Learning experiences were well structured and well organized so that children derived a good understanding of the scientific concepts and skills being taught. Most children engaged very well in these lessons and it was evident that a small number of children related these concepts to their prior knowledge and were able to construct new knowledge as a consequence of these learning experiences.

Elementary

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

- In Islamic education, the majority of students attained above national curriculum standards. They had an effective understanding of the Five Pillars of Islam and of what was expected from a Muslim before ablution and recitation. A majority could identify the Day of Judgment (Al Qiamah) and its various names as mentioned in the Holy Qur'an. A majority of students across the phase applied the acquired rules to their recitation with success and had a clear understanding of the messages and values taught through Prophet Mohammad's (PBUH) Hadeeth. However, some students were not making effective links between prior and new learning. Neither were they using critical thinking effectively. As a result, they were not able to attain the higher levels of success in their learning.
- Attainment in Arabic as a first language was above national curriculum standards. Most students demonstrated at least acceptable abilities in script decoding and pronunciation of cursive script. Students' learning of vocabulary, expressions and phrases from the texts in the books was good but their comprehension skills were adequate because of the limited texts available to them. Students demonstrated generally good listening skills and their use of the learnt language to respond to teacher's questions and to communicate their own ideas in correct Arabic form was strong for the majority of them. Overall, students made better progress in developing their Arabic vocabulary repertoire and their grammar but they were not extending them because they were not offered opportunities to interact with each other or to use the language creatively.
- In Arabic as an additional language, in the absence of external benchmarks, attainment and progress exceeded curriculum expectations. Students listened and responded well to audio text and to teachers' instructions. They spoke with good fluency and pace, and successfully used a range of vocabulary to express their feelings, likes and preferences about familiar and less familiar topics. In a Grade 3 lesson, students read a short text on peace. They demonstrated effective understanding of gist and details, and used the new vocabulary to express their feelings about people in distress and the horror of wars. However, in their written work there was more emphasis on the application of language structures and rules rather than challenging students to write extensively and creatively.
- In English, students made attainment and progress which were above curriculum expectations. This was the case for progress in lessons and over time. Students displayed good development in sentence structure, vocabulary, and early writing. They knew how to revise paragraphs. A large majority of older girls and boys displayed skills in analyzing textual information when reading and discussing folk tales. Communication skills were strong when students made presentations in class. This was particularly strong in a Grade 5 girls' class where students linked their projects in English with cross curricular learning. All groups of students made similarly good progress over time.
- In mathematics, the large majority of students in Grade 4 attained at levels that were at or above the international benchmark in the Iowa test, with the majority working above. In the lower primary phase, students used the 'Math Fact Family' to switch back and forth from addition to subtraction. They also exhibited basic knowledge of multiplication. Students in upper primary were able to visualize, draw and describe parallel, intersecting and perpendicular lines. Teachers used a variety of activities and strategies that allowed students to make better than expected progress during lessons and over time.

- Students' attainment and progress in science were above curriculum standards for the majority, because of the improvements in the quality of teaching in this phase. This was evident in teachers' use of questioning during lessons to extend and challenge groups of students in their understanding of scientific concepts. Teachers were particularly effective at putting the scientific concepts into real life. For example, in their understanding of mass, states and balance, liquids, solids and gases, students compared heavy, light, liquid and solid objects from the home. Over time, students' progress had slowly accelerated and their performance in tests had improved.

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

- In Islamic education, the majority of students attained above national curriculum expectations. In the best lessons, students could effectively apply their proficiency in Quranic recitation to new verses acquired. Individually and collectively, they could build well on their prior knowledge to identify, explain and justify reciting rules such as those related to the silent 'M', and model their application in other verses from the Holy Qur'an. In a Grade 8 lesson, the majority of students were confident and fluent in explaining the divine causes behind natural disasters mentioned in the Holy Qur'an. Most groups of students attained more and made better progress in lessons and over time when they were had consistent opportunities to maximize collective research in the subject.
- In Arabic as a first language, the attainment and progress of the majority of students were broadly in line with national curriculum standards. Most students could read different forms of written language with ease, and the majority could understand longer and more complex factual and literary texts. However, analyzing literary features was the weakest aspect. Listening was the strongest skill as most students had good listening skills. They understood standard language and knew how to respond accordingly. Most students communicated in Arabic to answer questions, narrate events and give opinions. Most students demonstrated an acceptable command of standard Arabic conventions in grammar when speaking, writing, reading and listening, and made acceptable progress when presenting their complete sentences.
- In Arabic as an additional language, without external measures, the attainment and progress of the majority of students were better than expected. In Grade 7, students read short descriptive texts expressively, fluently and with good pace. They could adequately describe parts of the human body in simple written form. Their speaking was still developing and needed further consolidation. In Grade 8, students were able to read texts of varying difficulty about familiar contexts, such as school and daily routines. However, the most able students were not challenged enough to write independently or extensively to confirm a better mastery than good of Arabic as an additional language.

- In English, the majority of students, particularly girls, performed at higher than expected when compared to national and international benchmarks. They made good progress either in line with or above Common Core Standards. Most groups were able to express themselves in writing and orally, using extensive vocabulary and standard grammar. In Grade 7, almost all girls were able to make inferences, and critique literature while evaluating the effectiveness of storytelling. They were able to relate the stories to real life and make connections to the environment. Most students were able to give positive feedback to peers when making class presentations using the smart board. Although most groups of students were able to use good literacy skills, the most able were not often challenged to write extensive research reports.
- In mathematics, the majority of students attained at higher levels and made better progress than average national and international benchmarks. They made good progress and attained well in lessons and over time. They demonstrated strong understanding of algebraic expressions, inequalities, identifying and representing functions through ordered pairs, mapping and graphing. They were able to discuss various strategies to solve mathematical applications. The progress of different groups of students in lessons could have been enhanced had their teachers set higher expectations for them through the effective use of questioning, reflections and discussions.
- In science, the majority of students attained levels above curriculum standards. This was the trend over time. Students made accelerated progress in lessons because skilled teachers extended their learning and understanding through sophisticated and well targeted questioning to challenge most students to apply the science theory to real life. For example, in Grade 6 students understood the cellular respiration process when considering the absorption and reflection properties of solids and liquids. Students understood the importance of the reflective and absorption properties of high sun protection factor when protecting themselves from sun rays. However, the most able students did not receive sufficient challenge or higher level activities to stretch them in their learning.

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

- In Islamic education, the majority of students exceeded national curriculum expectations in their attainment and progress. They made effective connections between Prophet Mohammed's (PBUH) Seerah (biography), Hadeeth and the Holy Qur'an to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of a range of values in Islam. In a lesson about the manner of communication in Islam, students could effectively identify and explain the key principles of effective communication. Students differentiated well between the various types of 'Sunnah' and its related conditions. In some lessons, students needed to further develop the quality of their written work with a particular focus on extended elaboration, analysis and evaluation. Otherwise, different groups of students made similar rates of progress.

- In Arabic as a first language, attainment and progress were in line with national curriculum expectations. Students' speaking and listening skills were well developed for most students who could determine author's point of view and central idea. Their ability to understand and analyze challenging texts and provide an objective summary of text was underdeveloped. A minority of students knew rhetoric and linked ideas to understand challenging texts. Students' extended writing skills, for a range of purposes, were less developed as a result of the fewer opportunities they are given to write at length. In lessons most students' demonstrated good basic skills in literacy. By Grade 12, most students write coherently with few mistakes, and make acceptable progress in reading with expression, applying grammar rules and appreciating figurative language.
- In English, the majority of students demonstrated attainment and progress above the Common Core Standards. From their starting points, they made good or better progress and were in line with international standards for reading, speaking, and listening skills. In Grade 12, a large majority were able to use technology effectively, particularly when they debated historical events which changed the direction of our world. Students were challenged to think analytically and discuss essential questions. They made good progress in evaluation techniques, writing for persuasion, and reading for research and for personal pleasure. Different groups achieved good writing skills focusing on editing, revision, and organization.
- In mathematics, the large majority of students in Grade 9 attained at levels that were at or above the international benchmark in the IOWA test. They attained and made progress above the Common Core Standards. They demonstrated strong understanding of functions and their notations and were able to interpret functions that arose in applications in different contexts. They analyzed functions using different representations and reasoned with equations and inequalities. Their progress in lessons was at times slow because not all teachers had developed their repertoire of using open-ended questioning, reflections and discussions to promote higher levels of students' engagement. Nevertheless, progress by different groups was good in most lessons and over time.
- The large majority of students, in science, attained levels that were well above curriculum standards according to Iowa average test results. Most groups of students demonstrated higher level thinking that led to deeper understanding of scientific principles, for example in the application of the periodic table in relation to elements found in the body. Collaborative group work resulted in rapid progress being made in students' knowledge, skills, and understanding. Over time students' achievement increased to very good levels due to improved teaching strategies.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Learning skills	Good	Good	Good ↑	Good ↑

- Students' demonstrated enthusiasm, interest, engagement and focus on their learning. Students took responsibility for their own learning in most lessons observed. They listened well and responded effectively to their teachers' instructions. They were keen to show inspectors about their, for example a project where they created a beautiful collage on the topic of eating healthily.
- Positive interaction, good collaboration and effective communication were strong features of many lessons, particularly during circle time and around the learning centers. Such opportunities to share learning and communicate it, however, were hindered in some Arabic lessons across all phases, as well as in some elementary science lessons where students seemed unfamiliar with such practices.
- Children in KG were able to make effective connections between the different areas of their learning. They linked shapes and colors to carry out counting and simple calculations. In English, students effectively quoted from a classical Shakespearean tragedy to discuss a present day issue. Quality debate and dialogue were strong features of many application projects in middle and high school science lessons.

- Research skills, problem solving and critical thinking were particularly strong in many mathematics and science lessons. There was some developing use of technology for communication between teachers and students to follow up on assignments in mathematics, particularly, and other subjects. However, the development of more effective access to technology as a learning tool across all other subjects remained a priority.

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

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

- Behavior was consistently managed well in class by most teachers and for all students around school. Students' movement in and around the school premises was monitored intensively and a surveillance system was installed to ensure a bullying-free environment. The circle time in the KG helped to establish and nurture good manners at an early age.
- Students had mature attitudes towards their learning and each other. Most students in the higher grades were proactive and resilient learners, who were ambitious to achieve high levels of success. The school conducted continuous guidance lectures and had initiated a project which aimed to promote students' independence and self-reliance.
- Students behaved courteously towards each other and enjoyed positive relationships with staff. In lessons, students engaged in cooperative learning with their peers which promoted their very good social skills and habits.
- Adoption of healthy lifestyles and good eating habits were prevalent across the phases. The school canteen promoted healthy eating effectively.
- Levels of attendance were outstanding. Almost all students were punctual to their lessons, which indicated a significant improvement in their attitudes to learning and their commitment to school since the previous inspection.

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

- Students demonstrated excellent understanding and appreciation of the role of Islam in UAE society. They were proud of being Muslims and appreciated the real values of Islam. Many of them talked about how they should be respectful and tolerant with other people regardless of their religion, race or culture.
- Students, across the school, were very well aware of Emirati heritage and culture. They were able to talk in detail about activities, celebrations and important events in the history of the country, such as the National Day, the Flag Day and Martyrs' Day.
- Students showed great understanding of cultural diversity in the UAE and talked about the interesting things they had learned about different cultures, such as food, music and dress. They were still proud of their own heritage and celebrated their cultures.

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

- Students were responsible and contributed actively and extensively to school life. Voluntary activities and community outreach were part of their curriculum. Students were involved in a number of charitable activities. For example, elementary students exhibited discerning awareness of the community's solidarity by launching a campaign targeting support for centers which worked with disabled people.
- Very good work ethics prevailed. Sharing was promoted from an early age. Introducing business subjects as elective choices for the upper phase encouraged students to undertake learning activities linked to entrepreneurship. Careers promotion day and business investment lectures were offered to high school students. Outreach relationships offered students internship and scholarship opportunities. Students participated in the 'Young Entrepreneur Competition' and held a successful business day.
- Students demonstrated very strong environmental awareness and contributed responsibly to the wider community. Locally they have participated in a number of campaigns like, 'Clean the World Campaign' and 'Recycle Campaign'. Students were caring about their school and the wider world. They conveyed brilliant ideas about the conservation of nature, saving resources and utilizing the renewable resources to generate energy.

3. Teaching and assessment

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

- Teachers' subject knowledge was a strong feature in most lessons, as was teachers' understanding of how students learned. The best practice was evident when teachers understood that their students learned the most when engaged in meaningful and engaging activities both independently and collaboratively. In the KG, the learning center approach effectively encouraged the development of collaborative learning skills.
- There was a consistent approach to lesson planning based on clear learning objectives. Planning facilitated good teaching and provided a structure for learning. Teachers provided positive environments that were conducive to learning and used the available lesson time and resources effectively. Attractive displays of curriculum material and students' work featured in some classrooms, but this good practice was not replicated throughout the school.
- Most teachers fostered positive interactions with their students to engage and motivate them. Almost all students displayed a degree of confidence in themselves as learners. Questioning was used skillfully to include, to challenge and to assess student progress. Students in all phases of the school were actively encouraged to take some responsibility for their own learning.
- Many teachers employed a range of strategies to promote effective individualized learning. While group work featured in many classrooms, true collaborative learning amongst students was not common and this effected learning progress. Some lessons lacked challenged and appropriate scaffolding for those students with SEND who had significant barriers to their learning.
- Teachers often engaged their students in dialogues in which they asked questions and listened to students' answers. The promotion of students' critical and independent thinking, and reasoning skills was inconsistent across subjects. However, the development of these skills was especially effective in almost all of the high school science and English lessons.

- In Arabic as a first language, teachers had sufficient subject knowledge but too often they did not provide sufficient opportunities for students' dialogue. Lessons were planned adequately although not always creatively. Teachers often taught to the whole class using one methodology to try to meet the various needs of different groups of students. In this subject, differentiation was not evident in most lessons across the phases.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Assessment	Good	Good	Good ↑	Good ↑

- The school had consistent and well established internal assessment processes in place that were linked directly to the Common Core State Standards in English, arts and mathematics, and Massachusetts standards in science and other subjects, allowing the measurement of students' academic progress.
- The school demonstrated a clear commitment to international benchmarking by participating in a variety of assessments, including MAP and Iowa for all students in Grades 4, 8 and 9 and SAT and TOEFL for Grades 11 and 12. Graduation requirements now include the taking of the SAT and TOEFL examinations. This action was instituted at the expense of students' attrition.
- The data analyzed by the school was intensive. It was done at multiple layers of filtering and assimilations in order to track students' progress at an individual level and cohort level. Due to this, teachers were able to create differentiated objectives for different groups of abilities within classes. This resulted in a more successful learning experience for students, and gave a more accurate picture of each students' progress.
- The results obtained from MAP and Iowa tests were used to adapt the curriculum, resulting in modified lesson plans catering to different ability groups. The scores were used to break down every student's performance during each of the last three terms. Students who were gifted and talented were given higher levels of content. Further improvements had begun in this area to ensure this is fully embedded.
- The introduction of a new 'skills information sheet' presented a detailed report of each student's academic profile in terms of strengths and weaknesses. It had given teachers, students and parents a complete picture of how the student was progressing in each subject. The information sheet gave students the chance to correct, learn, and reinforce their learning.

4. Curriculum

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

- The curriculum had a clear rationale, and was broad and balanced. Its programs, courses, and activities promote challenge, enjoyment, innovation, enterprise, and choice in learning for all students. This was as a result of the actions taken by senior leaders to provide a richer learning experience for students, particularly in line with its aspirations to promote science, technology, engineering and mathematics based careers.
- The curriculum was effectively planned to ensure that students learn smoothly and progressively through the carefully arranged scope and sequence of programs. Planning across the phases of curriculum ensured students made successful transitions from one grade to the next.
- The curriculum offered a wide range of curricular choices that provides older students with very good choices and opportunities to benefit from learning experiences that encouraged their individual talents, interests, and aspirations for future careers.
- Cross-curricular links are meaningful and planned carefully. Links enhance students' transfer of learning between subjects especially in science, math, and English. Cross-curricular links are provided in daily lesson plans.
- The school conducts regular reviews of its curriculum taking into consideration students' achievements, and Emirate and national priorities. The curriculum is updated as part of the school's self-evaluation process and the views of students and parents. It is modified, based on a formal analysis of internal and external test data to meet the academic and personal development needs of students including those with SEND.
- The UAE social studies curriculum was taught in the school as a discrete subject. The curriculum was broad, balanced and age appropriate. It provided links with a range of subjects that included national identity, geography, history, Islamic education, English, mathematics and science.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Curriculum adaptation	Good ↑	Good ↑	Good ↑	Good ↑

- The curriculum was effectively planned to provide stimulating learning opportunities for most groups of students. Teachers modified the curriculum as necessary to ensure engagement and challenge for students of most abilities, including students with SEND. However, the school recognized it needed to do more to provide higher levels of challenge for the most able students.
- The curriculum offered a wide range of opportunities designed to motivate students. Opportunities for enterprise, innovation, creativity and social contribution were provided through almost all curricular areas. A wide program of extra-curricular activities within and outside the school enhanced students' academic and personal development.
- Arabic students demonstrated a clear sense of pride and identity in their culture, values and beliefs which contributed to creating a harmonious and tranquil learning environment. Learning experiences to enable students to develop a broader understanding of Emirati traditions, culture, and the values which influence UAE society were fully embedded through most of the curriculum.

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

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

- Many improvements had been made in the health and safety and care provision. The school premises provided a safe and inclusive environment for the whole school community and was accessible to all through the provision of ramps at the points of entry and exit. Elevators were available to meet the needs of students and teachers with restricted mobility.
- There were effective procedures for safeguarding students against cyber bullying. Only educationally relevant websites were accessible. Appropriate child protection were implemented very effectively and all staff were aware of these policies. Anti-bullying posters, designed and produced by the students in line with policy, were displayed prominently. A traffic management plan had been enforced by the school to ensure the safe transportation of students.
- The school provided a safe, hygienic and secure environment. Children were only released from the supervision of a teacher to their parents or to another adult when written authorization had been provided. Supervision of students during breaks and when they were travelling on school transport was carefully monitored and supervised.
- The premises and equipment were very well maintained. A regular inspection of the premises and grounds was carried out. The school's clinic was effective and promoted oral and visual health very well. Health awareness was also promoted through the distribution of brochures regarding obesity, nutrition and healthy lifestyles. The school promoted healthy living by implementing programs to help students to improve their fitness.
- Safe and healthy living was integrated into the curriculum. The school had adopted a policy of healthy eating. The school's food technologist provided advice to the management of the canteen in relation to the menu, and collaborated with the school and medical staff in devising a healthy eating policy.

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

- Most students across the school had very good relationships with their teachers who, in turn, were well aware of their individual needs and supported them accordingly. They were respectful to one another and showed good concern for others.
- The school had an inclusive policy of admitting all students including those with SEND. There were very good systems in place to identify students with SEND as well as gifted and talented students.
- The school supported talented and gifted students and, to a great extent, those with SEND. Talented and gifted students support was recognized by a number of awards the school had received such as the Hamdan Award, the Martyrs' Day drawing competition, a photography award, and success in the swimming championships.
- The school had open channels of communication for all students and supported them very well. The quality of support enabled most students to make strong personal and academic progress.

- Career guidance was effective and this was evidenced by the number of students going on to universities and higher education institutes in the country and all over the world.

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

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

Good

- A skilled and competent team, led effectively by the vice-principal, had been responsible for a wide range of positive developments in the school's SEND provision. The capable supervisor of the 'Easy Learning Section' had facilitated the development of a caring, supportive and safe environment for students and had created an annual plan to guide the development of special provision.
- The efficient identification of students with SEND was ensured through a range of actions. These included gathering each student's profile, professional reports provided by the parents on application to the school, tests results administered by the school and the referrals from classroom teachers. The system of placement and support was reviewed regularly. Good record-keeping and access to students' files facilitated effective monitoring of progress.
- Parents acknowledged and appreciated the school's renewed focus on the development of the provision. The school's relationship with parents had improved due to improvements in communications and opportunities for parents to visit the school to discuss, approve and review their child's IEP. Parents could also attend the school weekly to discuss their child with the teaching staff.
- Members of the SEND team worked with teachers and the heads of subject departments to modify the curriculum to ensure it was fully accessible. Teachers provided a range of support within the classroom with the guidance of each student's IEP. However, not all teachers were effective in using the IEP to plan appropriately challenging lessons or to plan appropriate learning outcomes for students with SEND.
- Overall, students' progress was good in most subjects. Their progress was monitored through teacher observations, classwork, and the results of academic testing. If needed, students with SEND were provided with modifications or accommodations during assessment and screening, and the effectiveness of this was monitored by the SEND leadership team.

6. Leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership

Good ↑

- The principal and vice-principal, supported by the school board, had been ambitious and relentless in their drive to rapidly improve the school. They had a clear and shared vision for improving the school. Collectively, leaders had been effective over the past 12 months in driving up standards in teaching, learning and the curriculum as well as addressing the health and safety recommendations of the previous inspection report.
- Most leaders were able to articulate precisely the areas for improvement within their areas of responsibility, particularly most subject leaders who could state precisely the impact of their leadership over the past 12 months to improve the quality of teaching and learning. They were all fully committed to promoting a culture of high expectations, ambition and aspiration for students and staff.
- As a result of improvements made in the communications between senior and middle leaders, together with the improved professional learning and development programme offered to staff, relationships were very positive, there was high morale, and staff were fully accepting of the new leadership accountability procedures.
- Many actions taken by most leaders and the improvements in the school demonstrated strong leadership capacity. Leaders were clear in their understanding of their improvement priorities and were highly committed to continuously improving the quality of education on offer.
- Most leaders had been successful, particularly within English and science, in improving the quality of teaching and learning in their areas. They were knowledgeable, insightful and committed to the demands of the National Agenda and had already adjusted curriculum and assessment processes to ensure students' progress was more effectively monitored in line with the higher expectations set by the senior leaders.

School self-evaluation and improvement planning

Good ↑

- Senior leaders had improved the way in which school self-evaluation processes were embedded across the school. There was a more accurate view, by most leaders, about the quality and standards, particularly of teaching and the impact of this on students' learning. They knew precisely the areas for improvement and the key priorities.
- Rigorous monitoring procedures had been put in place over the past year, in line with new recruitment, training and development practices. These ensured that all teachers were fully supported, mentored, trained and monitored in their development. The result of this was a significant improvement in the quality of teaching, particularly in the high school, increasingly so in the middle phase and in English and science.
- Improvement priorities were accurately identified by leaders as a result of better monitoring procedures and more accurate assessment of the impact of provision on students' performance. This resulted in leaders now owning their improvement agendas with a degree of autonomy to enable them to lead the necessary next improvements.
- There had been significant improvements found in the school over the past 12 months, particularly in response to the recommendations of the previous inspection report. This was as a result of the concerted and determined actions of the school board and governors.

Partnerships with parents and the community

Very good ↑

- The school encouraged parents to play a greater role in the pursuit of their children's education. An open door policy had been adopted... The school provided parents with orientation material about external examinations. Parents held health awareness sessions at the school. The school took parents' concerns very seriously and held feedback sessions to ensure swift resolutions.
- There were multiple communication channels for parents to take advantage of, including an online system that provided them with daily updates on their children's grades, assignments, requirements and behavior. Circulars and SMS were also regular features of communication between the school and the parents. Parents of students with SEND sat as members on the parents' council.
- The school's reporting on students' academic progress and their personal and social development was regularly updated through the online parent information system. The information included both formative and summative assessments. Parents received direct phone calls and messages to help support their children's success. There were also communal meetings to discuss the students' achievements.
- The school had an extensive list of community affiliations and visits ranging from the judiciary to government departments, local and international universities and others. The school was active in its philanthropic role, making regular contributions to the local, national and international communities, such as 'Help Yemen' and support for the refugee camps in Syria. The school also hosted events at other schools and built alliances with external agencies

Governance

Good ↑

- Governors had been effective in continuing to secure the engagement and confidence of parents and stakeholders in driving up standards in the school. As a result, parents were highly committed and confident in helping the school to improve standards, and particularly demonstrated this through the improved attendance of their children to the school.
- The governing board had been kept well informed by the school board about the performance and standards found in the school, and were knowledgeable about the impact of leaders and their roles over the past year in improving the quality of teaching and learning.
- Governors were highly committed and influential in supporting the school board and leaders to drive up standards and quality, and had provided increased resources and financial support to help them to address the recommendations from the previous inspection report. The governing board, in close partnership with the school board, had a direct impact on the overall improved performance of the school.

Management, staffing, facilities and resources	Good
• The school was now well organized and managed, with much improved systems and processes for ensuring the safety, well-being and development of students and staff. Attendance management was much improved and this had a positive impact on the improvements found in students' attainment and progress. • Senior leaders, through improved training, development and monitoring systems now in place, had ensured the subjects and phases had suitably qualified and experienced leaders and teachers. New teachers benefitted from rigorous induction and mentoring from experienced and trained colleagues which meant they were able to be successful early on in developing their teaching practices. • The school premises, facilities and resources had been much improved as a result of increased investment from the governing board. Increased amounts of teaching technologies were found across the school, but the school had yet to provide students with regular access to a range of learning technologies in order support them in their research and investigations in lessons. • A wealth of teaching and learning resources were provided and matched the needs of the curriculum, particularly in the KG and High School. However, further resources were needed to help students learn better from a range of sources other than those provided by teachers. This would enable them to become even more independent in their choice of learning resources to support their ideas and investigations.	

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	153
	2014-2015	203
Teachers 	163	
Students 	262	

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

- Most parents, who responded to the survey, were happy with the quality of education their children were receiving.
- Most parents, who responded to the survey, stated the school listened to them and took their concerns seriously.
- A large majority of parents, who responded to the survey, believed the school offered an appropriate range of resources.
- Most teachers were very positive about the students, management and the working conditions.
- Most parents and teachers, who responded to the survey, agreed that the school was well led.
- Most parents, who responded to the survey, believed the students were making good progress in key subjects. This view was shared by teachers and students alike.
- Most parents, who responded to the survey, felt strongly their children were safe at school. Teachers and students were in agreement.

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