



مجلس أبوظبي للتعليم
Abu Dhabi Education Council
Education First **التعليم أولاً**



Private School Inspection Report

GEMS Cambridge International School

Academic Year 2015 – 2016

lqraa

GEMS Cambridge International School

Inspection Date	January 18, 2016	to	January 21, 2016
Date of previous inspection	April 28, 2014	to	May 1, 2014
General Information		Students	
School ID	232	Total number of students	3,000
Opening year of school	September 2013	Number of children in KG	505
Principal	Rebecca Plaskitt	Number of students in other phases	Primary: 1,571 Middle: 766 High: 158
School telephone	+971 (0)2 510 4343	Age range	3 to 15 years
School Address	PO Box 56825, Baniyas, Abu Dhabi	Grades or Year Groups	Foundation Stage – Year 10
Official email (ADEC)	Gems-Cambridge.Int@adec.ac.ae	Gender	Mixed
School website	http://www.gemscambridgeinternationalschool-abudhabi.com	% of Emirati Students	33%
Fee ranges (per annum)	Medium range: AED 19,000 – AED 32,300	Largest nationality groups (%)	1. Pakistani 11% 2. Indian 11% 3. Egyptian 9%
Licensed Curriculum		Staff	
Main Curriculum	English National Curriculum	Number of teachers	176
Other Curriculum		Number of teaching assistants (TAs)	36
External Exams/ Standardised tests	CAT4 Cognitive Abilities Test – Years 3 to 10; Year 2 optional SATS; EMSA Arabic	Teacher-student ratio	FS 1:13 Other phases 1:16
Accreditation		Teacher turnover	19%

Introduction

Inspection activities	
Number of inspectors deployed	6
Number of inspection days	4
Number of lessons observed	137
Number of joint lesson observations	6
Number of parents' questionnaires	299 returned, (response rate: 15%)
Details of other inspection activities	The team completed observations, conducted several meetings with senior staff, leaders, teachers, support staff, students and parents. They analysed test and assessment results, scrutinised students' work across the school, and considered many of the school's policies, surveys and other documents. The leadership team was fully involved throughout the process and leaders conducted joint lesson observations with inspectors.

School	
School Aims	- To provide an inclusive, welcoming and safe environment in which every student is valued, cared for and supported - To offer a broad and creative curriculum that recognizes the uniqueness of every student and provides challenge and enjoyment through a personalised learning approach - To ensure that all students are able to realise their potential through high quality learning experiences that promote and value all achievement and raise self-esteem - To promote a culture of respect, inclusion and equality whilst celebrating the rich cultural diversity



	within our school, empowering all students to succeed • To inform and encourage all students to adopt a healthy lifestyle by promoting healthy eating, regular enjoyable exercise and physical and mental well-being • To develop an appreciation of our community, the world in which we live and an awareness of our environment to encourage students to be responsible citizens of the future
School vision and mission	‘GEMS Cambridge International School provides a world class, outstanding education whilst ensuring individual and collective excellence in learning, teaching and leadership. We empower lifelong learners for their future’.
Admission Policy	The admission policy is non-selective and fully inclusive; on-entry baseline assessments are used to provide information on students’ starting points.
Leadership structure (ownership, governance and management)	The school is owned by GEMS Education. Governance is provided by the parent company board. The CIA Connect Group consists of parents. It is chaired by a parent and also includes the principal and vice principal. The school executive committee includes the senior leadership team and senior leaders for curriculum, pastoral, inclusion, assessment and data for secondary and primary sections.

SEN Details (Refer to ADEC SEN Policy and Procedures)

SEN Category	Number of students identified through external assessments	Number of other students identified by the school
Intellectual disability	8	0
Specific Learning Disability	8	0
Emotional and Behaviour Disorders (ED/ BD)	0	0
Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)	7	0
Speech and Language Disorders	2	0
Physical and health related disabilities	3	0
Visually impaired	2	0
Hearing impaired	0	0
Multiple disabilities	1	0

G&T Details (Refer to ADEC SEN Policy and Procedures)

G&T Category	Number of students identified
Intellectual ability	128
Subject-specific aptitude (e.g. in science, mathematics, languages)	
Social maturity and leadership	
Mechanical/ technical/ technological ingenuity	(Included in intellectual ability)
Visual and performing arts (e.g. art, theatre, recitation)	16
Psychomotor ability (e.g. dance or sport)	11

The overall performance of the school

Inspectors considered the school in relation to 3 performance categories

Band A	High performing (Outstanding, Very Good or Good)
Band B	Satisfactory (Acceptable)
Band C	In need of significant improvement (Weak or Very Weak)

School was judged to be:	BAND (A)	Good
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	Band A High Performing			Band B Satisfactory	Band C In need of significant improvement	
Performance Standards	Outstanding	Very Good	Good	Acceptable	Weak	Very Weak
Performance Standard 1: Students' achievement						
Performance Standard 2: Students' personal and social development, and their innovation skills						
Performance Standard 3: Teaching and assessment						
Performance Standard 4: Curriculum						
Performance Standard 5: The protection, care, guidance and support of students						
Performance Standard 6: Leadership and management						
Summary Evaluation: The school's overall performance						

The Performance of the School

Evaluation of the school's overall performance

The overall performance of GEMS Cambridge International School is good. The school is in its third year of operation and the student population has more than doubled since the first year. The school has responded well to the challenges of a fast-growing student population from a wide range of nationalities and cultures and the corresponding increase in teachers across all year levels and subjects. The key strengths are the students' good academic progress and their very secure personal and social development, nurtured by the good quality of protection, care, guidance and support they receive.

Students demonstrate improving rates of progress: most students attain levels that are in line with curriculum standards. Attainment is highest in English where the majority of students achieve levels above curriculum standards. In science, the majority of primary and high school students attain levels that are above curriculum standards. Students make good progress in subjects taught in English throughout the school. In the subjects taught in Arabic, progress is generally acceptable; for students learning Arabic as a second language progress is good.

The quality of teaching and use of assessment are inconsistent. They are generally good and have positively impacted upon the rates of progress. The effectiveness of teaching in subjects taught in Arabic is weaker. Curriculum planning, implementation and adaptation meet the learning needs of most students.

Parents and staff are very supportive of the school's aims and the well-articulated vision and educational leadership provided by the principal. Self-evaluation is rigorous and realistic and closely aligned to well-prioritised and ambitious development planning. Performance management is comprehensive: it drives regular professional development opportunities and has had a positive impact on learning.

Progress made since last inspection and capacity to improve

The school has made good progress on the recommendations from the previous inspection. It has continued to develop and sustain high quality teaching and the effective use of assessment through continuous professional development tailored to meet the needs of different staff groups. Assessment data is benchmarked, thoroughly analysed and used at all levels. The Foundation Stage (FS) curriculum has been developed to ensure high expectations for what children can achieve in mathematics and other learning areas.

Provision for students with special educational needs (SEN) and for low achievers has been increased. Professional development for teachers has improved their

understanding of the responsibility they have to ensure high quality teaching, to contribute to the referral process and ensure meaningful differentiation in teaching, non-curricular activities and access to learning.

The principal, senior leaders and middle leadership teams have demonstrated very good capacity to sustain further improvement,

Development and promotion of innovation skills

The school promotes innovation throughout the school that focuses on improving students' learning opportunities and achievement. The principal has ensured a distributed leadership approach across the enlarged leadership team, which now includes a number of middle leaders. This has empowered all levels of management and created enthusiastic and collaborative teams who are committed to improvement. The professional development programme is effective in sharing teaching skills more widely among staff; peer observations and team teaching effectively enhance teaching skills. The curriculum includes many opportunities for students to extend their skills and interests and take advantage of joint initiatives with other organisations in the UAE. The school is developing a flexible learning space to use as an outdoor classroom that will provide a natural environment and enhance the real-life aspects of learning.

Students at all year levels demonstrate a keenness to learn and a genuine interest in being successful. Children in FS are encouraged to use teaching spaces as learning laboratories. The resources and varied teaching strategies provide them with direction and many opportunities to make choices, organise their own activities and use technology. When given the opportunity, students in all year levels demonstrate good collaborative skills and are willing to take risks to share original ideas, for example when students take the initiative to join the artist in residence and contribute to creating vibrant large displays around the school.

Students show interest and commitment to the school community; they initiated the 'playground friends' group and received training in mediation in order to more skilfully support other students at break-times. Year 5 students work with Year 2 students during break-times, and Year 10 students act as reading buddies in FS classes. In physical education, Year 10 students enjoy working with younger students as part of their Sports Leaders training. The school provides opportunities for students to develop and showcase their talents; students with notable confidence and musical flair perform skilfully during the school day to appreciative visitors and younger students in the reception/café area.

The inspection identified the following as key areas of strength:

- students' confident understanding and speaking of English
- students' positive attitudes to learning and enjoyment of school
- respectful and positive classroom relationships supported by effective behaviour management strategies
- students' strong personal development nurtured by highly effective procedures for protection, care, guidance and support
- the calm, caring atmosphere in a cohesive community that gives priority to students' welfare, safety and security
- staff commitment to continuous improvement
- highly efficient organisation and management
- the effective distributive leadership and teamwork at all levels fostered by senior leaders.

The inspection identified the following as key areas for improvement:

- consistency in teaching for effective learning in all year levels
- quality of teaching, student attainment and progress in the subjects taught in Arabic, in order to consistently match achievement in other subjects
- effective support and wider opportunities for students with gifts and talents
- establishment of a representative governing body.



Performance Standard 1: Students' Achievement

Students' achievement Indicators		KG	Primary	Middle	High
Islamic Education	Attainment	N/A	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
	Progress	N/A	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Arabic (as a First Language)	Attainment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
	Progress	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Arabic (as a Second Language)	Attainment	Acceptable	Good	Good	Good
	Progress	Acceptable	Good	Good	Good
Social Studies	Attainment	N/A	Acceptable	Acceptable	N/A
	Progress	N/A	Acceptable	Acceptable	N/A
English	Attainment	Good	Good	Good	Good
	Progress	Good	Good	Good	Good
Mathematics	Attainment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good
	Progress	Good	Good	Acceptable	Good
Science	Attainment	Acceptable	Good	Acceptable	Very Good
	Progress	Good	Good	Good	Very Good
Language of instruction (if other than English and Arabic as First Language)	Attainment	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Progress	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Other subjects (Art, Music, PE)	Attainment	Good	Good	Good	Good
	Progress	Good	Good	Good	Good
Learning Skills (including innovation, creativity, critical thinking, communication, problem-solving and collaboration)		Good	Good	Good	Good

Student achievement is good. In the FS, children make very good progress in all areas of learning. This is confirmed by baseline and monitoring assessments that demonstrate they begin from significantly below expected age related starting points. In the subjects taught in English, the majority of students attain levels above expected curriculum standards and progress is good. Attainment at all year levels is highest in English, mathematics in the high school, science in primary and particularly high school, and across other subjects outside the core offer. Attainment is lower in mathematics in the FS, primary and middle phases where most students attain levels in line with curriculum standards. Progress overall, and in all subjects, is good and sometimes very good.

In the subjects taught in Arabic, most students attain levels in line with curriculum standards and a few reach standards above that, particularly in Arabic itself. In these subjects, most students make expected progress; progress is stronger in primary levels. Attainment and progress for the majority of students speaking Arabic as a second language is better than expected in relation to their starting points. Students with identified SEN make good progress as a result of thorough planning and focused support to meet their specific needs.

In Arabic reading and writing assessments in Years 5, 7 and 9, students perform in line with the range achieved by other private schools. In CAT4 cognitive abilities assessments, at each year level, students' performance is below UK levels. Rigorous data analysis by the school demonstrates that students who have been with the school for two years make significantly better progress than students who have been with the school for a shorter period. The first cohort of students will take IGCSEs at the end of the next school year; well-moderated assessment tracking suggests good and above performance.

In English, students understand and speak English with confidence. In the FS, children's progress in acquiring language skills is rapid; they listen attentively, most respond confidently and the majority are able to write simple sentences. Progress in spoken English continues to accelerate as students move through the years. By Year 7, students grasp key ideas well and use a wide vocabulary to justify their viewpoints when discussing, for instance, how advertising can promote a product for a target audience. Reading skills develop well and students read in a range of contexts with fluency and comprehension. Progress in writing is steady; in Year 2, a majority can write a paragraph with clarity and accuracy and in Year 9 students made good use of alliteration and personification during a descriptive writing activity.

In Arabic, most students listen attentively and with understanding; their skills in speaking, reading and writing are less secure. Progress is at expected levels; in Year 3 students are able to identify and classify pronouns and Year 5 students read texts



confidently. Students' skill in copy writing, particularly for second language learners, is good, and writing is well formed, legible and neat. Most students do not consistently speak standard Arabic, and the quality of creative writing and accuracy of spelling are below expected levels. In Islamic education, students are aware of Islamic concepts and values; they integrate these well into their behaviour, for example, showing appreciation of neighbours' and understanding how to cooperate with them. Students' skill in reading the Holy Qur'an is not well developed throughout the school. In Year 3 they have difficulty understanding the 'Hadeeth'. In social studies, students show a satisfactory understanding of UAE values and heritage and can apply these in their daily life. In Year 9 they more confidently understand governance and are able to discuss characteristics of the UAE Federal Union. They understand and appreciate the diversity within UAE society. They are also proud of their nationality.

In mathematics, mental skills are well developed in primary, and students throughout the school are able to apply strategies in different situations. Students In the FS, primary and high school demonstrate secure skills, knowledge and understanding; middle school students demonstrate acceptable levels. In Year 10, students make clear cross-curricular connections and show a secure understanding of mathematical vocabulary. In sciences, students demonstrate a secure understanding of scientific concepts and investigative skills, including the importance of fair testing. In Year 10, students showed a mature understanding of enzymes and their connection to genetics.

In non-core subjects, including physical education (PE), creative arts, information and communication technology (ICT), humanities and French, attainment and progress are good. Progress in PE is significantly higher in all phases. Students skilfully use digital technology in most subjects; this is particularly notable in the FS.

Learning skills develop well throughout the school: students are keen to learn and enjoy activities in and outside the classroom. They take increasing responsibility for their learning, and understand their targets. In the older year levels, students are particularly confident when describing what they need to do to improve their performance. They collaborate well and communicate effectively with each other. The large majority make clear connections between different areas of learning and relate their learning to real life.

Performance Standard 2: Students' personal and social development, and their innovation skills

Students' personal and social development, and their innovation skills Indicators	KG	Primary	Middle	High
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Personal development	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Good	Good	Good	Good
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Good	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good

Students' personal and social development and their innovation skills are very good. They demonstrate positive attitudes to learning and enjoy school; they show self-discipline and a developing self-reliance, particularly in older year levels. Their attendance rates are good at 94%. Students are punctual at the start of the day and most are punctual to lessons, encouraged by a range of appropriate strategies. Students are well behaved during lessons and break times. It is a notable strength that students interact very positively in and outside of lessons, with sensitive consideration for the many different nationalities, cultures and abilities of others. They sustain respectful, courteous and frequently friendly interactions with teachers and visitors. Students' personal choices and explanations in meetings demonstrate their awareness of healthy eating habits and life styles; they are particularly keen to develop fitness and are very active participants in PE lessons.

Students have a sincere appreciation of Islamic values; this is reflected in their behaviour. At all levels, students talk with appropriate knowledge about, and sincere respect for, the heritage and culture of the UAE. This is enhanced by a wide range of extracurricular activities enjoyed by students, for example respecting the National Anthem, and celebrating flag and national days. Within the international context of the school, students are interested and knowledgeable about their own and different cultures and enjoy the opportunities presented to engage with each other.

Students enthusiastically participate in different voluntary activities at school and the wider community, as when older students support the learning of younger students, and are involved in Pink Day and the Shoe Box Project. When given the opportunity, students are innovative; this is particularly evident in more effective lessons and in whole-phase or whole-school initiatives. For example, students took the initiative to

develop their own charity project to help the people in Nepal following the earthquake. Their strong awareness of environmental concerns and actions necessary to protect the environment is evident in FS where children responsibly keep classrooms clean and tidy, in the ecology club that focuses the school on successful recycling, and in discussions in lessons. Students take advantage of many opportunities to develop leadership skills, in representing peers on the student council, as house leaders, and in the meaningful leadership of group work during lessons.

Performance Standard 3: Teaching and Assessment

Teaching and Assessment Indicators	KG	Primary	Middle	High
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Teaching for effective learning	Good	Good	Good	Good
Assessment	Good	Good	Good	Good

Teaching and assessment are good. The quality of teaching observed by inspectors ranged from outstanding to weak. The majority of lessons were deemed to be good or better. Examples of effective teaching were seen in all subjects and phases. More consistently effective teaching was observed in the subjects taught in English. All teachers have secure subject knowledge, and confident pedagogical understanding in the subjects taught in English at all year levels. These aspects of teaching are developing in the subjects taught in Arabic as a result of regular lesson observations and targeted professional development at individual and departmental levels.

Teachers create positive learning environments, particularly in the FS and primary. All teachers use a standard planning format, and this requires that different learning levels and strategies are taken into account. The effectiveness of planning varies, for example it is generally of an acceptable level in the subjects taught in Arabic, and of high quality in the large majority of all other subjects. The needs of all groups are planned for and learning objectives are generally clearly stated and understood by students. Planning for high achievers is often less effective and restricted to focused challenges or extra work. In a few less effective lessons, teaching did not always follow the careful planning. The majority of teachers design differentiated activities using a range of strategies and resources and expectations are appropriately high for most groups; teaching and learning is engaging and purposeful. Well-focused attention is given to students with SEN and those who find learning difficult. For

example, in a Year 3 science lesson about food chains, high expectations and well-designed activities allowed all groups of students to achieve with confidence. In less successful lessons, the effectiveness of differentiated activities in challenging students identified with gifts and talents and high achievers is more limited.

Most teachers have developed respectful relationships with students; interactions are positive and show a rapport that supports learning. In the more effective lessons, teachers confidently use a wide range of teaching strategies to engage students and accelerate progress. These lessons are appropriately paced and organised, and transitions between activities and groups are smooth. For example, in a Year 10 geography lesson, the range of activities built interest, understanding and confidence in preparation for fieldwork. Students' different learning needs and interests are met less effectively in the subjects taught in Arabic, particularly Islamic Education. In these subjects, lessons are mostly whole-class and use a teacher-centred approach, and planning does not ensure that strategies and activities are well focused to engage students' interest. Behaviour management is secure in most lessons, and the self-disciplined students respond well to teachers.

In the most effective lessons, teacher questioning skilfully assesses learning by probing students' deeper understanding and prompting them to justify their answers. Additionally, as a result of strong modelling, students develop the confidence to pose their own questions. This was exemplified in a Year 10 science lesson on enzymes and genetics in which students led the discussion through a dialogue where they posed thoughtful questions to each other and the teacher. Questioning strategies are inconsistently effective through subjects and grades and in less effective lessons require only factual responses, for example in a middle school Islamic education lesson, closed questions were used to assess learning. Teaching in less effective lessons does not provide sufficient opportunities for students to ask questions.

Opportunities for students to develop critical and creative thinking are more limited in a majority of lessons where there is too much guidance from teachers, especially in the subjects taught in Arabic. In the older grades, more such opportunities are provided. Where problem solving is integrated into learning, students develop confidence, as for example in a Year 1 mathematic lesson, students investigated the attributes of 2D shapes and enthusiastically suggested creative real-life examples.

Rigorous internal assessment processes are in place and linked closely to the curriculum. The school makes good use of English National Curriculum (ENC) levels and FS goals to provide baseline and ongoing assessments to track progress. Teachers use them effectively to direct planning for individuals and groups, to set individual targets together with students, and to monitor the progress of all students

against their targets. Continuous assessment during more effective Arabic lessons helps teachers and students achieve learning objectives.

Most teachers have a good knowledge of students' strengths and weaknesses. Additional adults are deployed well to support learning. Marking is regular and most teachers give appropriate feedback by using constructive comments to encourage students to reflect on how to improve their work. In the secondary phases, there are more opportunities for students to respond to feedback by correcting their work. Students are generally aware of their current performance levels and targets and these drive learning well.

Performance Standard 4: Curriculum

Curriculum Indicators	KG	Primary	Middle	High
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Curriculum design and implementation	Good	Good	Good	Good
Curriculum adaptation	Good	Good	Good	Good

The quality of curriculum design, implementation and adaptation is good. The core curriculum is broad and balanced and enhanced by a range of other subjects including PE, creative arts, French and ICT. GCSE classes have been added for older students with a broader range of options, such as further mathematics, humanities and business studies. The curriculum has a clear rationale based on the ENC. In addition, the content is adapted to take into account the context of the UAE and the particular learning of additional language English learners.

In the FS, children enjoy a curriculum that provides individual choice and investigative play-based activities. Regular review and planning meetings between leaders and teams at the different school phases ensure continuity and progression throughout the year levels. Cross-curricular links are planned to support coherence in learning and the reinforcement of skills and knowledge. As an example, across art, science, PE and health education, students study the role of a healthy heart and construct heart models in multi-media. Planning and implementation provide opportunities for students to develop stimulating critical and creative thinking and drive independent and collaborative student-guided learning. The potential for promotion of innovation skills in the curriculum has yet to be exploited in all classes and subjects across the school. The curriculum is enhanced by well-planned extra-curricular activities that

extend students' interests and talents and promote opportunities for creativity, innovation and community involvement.

Curriculum review and development is ongoing in response to changes in the ENC, further enhancements to make progress towards the UAE's Vision 2020 and adjustments based on the analysis of student assessment data. Care is taken to maintain a pace of review that can be matched by professional development provision in order to achieve a quality curriculum whose delivery is firmly founded on good practice. Recent initiatives include the use of Rising Star assessments in primary classes.

The curriculum has effective modifications, in particular to support acceleration of language proficiency. These include a support class for Emirati students where science is taught in Arabic and a booster English class is provided for high school English. The curriculum implementation lacks sufficient modification to fully meet the needs of those students identified as gifted and talented. There are well-planned links with Emirati culture, society and identity integrated across subjects and promoting knowledge and understanding of the heritage of the UAE, for example when Grade 5 students study desalination during a unit on water and middle and high school students study UAE history.

Performance Standard 5: The protection, care, guidance and support of students

The protection, care, guidance and support of students Indicators	KG	Primary	Middle	High
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Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection/safeguarding	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
Care and support	Good	Good	Good	Good

The school makes very good provision for the health, safety and protection of students, and good provision for their support and guidance.

The procedures for the safeguarding of students are robust, and systems are clearly articulated in the school policy. The pastoral system is strong and the school involves parents appropriately; students indicate that they can confidently approach identified teachers and leaders for support. The safety and security of students on site is a priority, and arrangements for visitor entry to the school and oversight

throughout the day are rigorous. Record keeping is well organised and efficient. The central register for adults working in the school is accurate and up to date. Risk assessments and emergency evacuation practices are regular.

The learning environment supports curriculum implementation well. Premises and facilities are successfully adapted for all needs. Senior leaders efficiently manage systems for school transport and access to it by students. The behaviour of students when they are waiting for a bus and during their journey is monitored, and sanctions applied for poor behaviour; bus drivers attend assemblies when safety issues are discussed. A range of activities promotes healthy life styles during assemblies, within the curriculum and by the use of external speakers on issues such as road safety. Students are given opportunities to discuss obesity and diabetes, and teachers monitor healthy eating in the canteen. There are weekly emails to parents about health and wellbeing issues. The clinic is well resourced and staffed, students receive prompt medical care and records are well organised and maintained.

Staff at all levels cultivate a calm, caring and inclusive approach that is appreciated by students and parents. Staff-student relationships are almost always respectful and supportive. In most lessons observed, behaviour was at least good and staff use a variety of effective behaviour management strategies to enhance learning. The behaviour management policy is explicit and shared with parents; a variety of sanctions and rewards are used to reinforce and promote positive behaviour, including house points, conduct points, smiley faces, 'gem of the week' and term awards. There are appropriate systems in place to reward and promote good attendance, and classes compete for awards.

The procedures for the identification and support of students with SEN are secure and consistently applied. Parents are consulted and informed of progress on a weekly basis and meet with the inclusion team termly to discuss next steps. There are satisfactory Arabic resources, a dedicated area for Arabic support within the inclusion room, and a teacher of Arabic has been trained to support SEN students. The identification and provision for students with G&T is in the early stages of development and not as well developed as that for SEN. Guidance and support for students to help them choose options and careers is also in the early stage of development. Year 9 students and parents have attended an options evening and links have been made with higher education institutes in preparation for the establishment of a Sixth Form.

Performance Standard 6: Leadership and management

Leadership and management Indicators	
The effectiveness of leadership	Very Good
Self-evaluation and improvement planning	Very Good
Partnerships with parents and the community	Very Good
Governance	Very Good
Management, staffing, facilities and resources	Good

The quality of leadership and management is very good. The principal provides high quality leadership and her well-articulated vision guides a cohesive senior leadership team. Leaders at all levels are committed to equally high quality education and an ambitious strategic direction; they communicate this effectively to staff, students and parents. Senior leaders, very effectively guided by the principal, demonstrate knowledgeable and enthusiastic educational leadership and a full understanding of successful practice. There is a strong commitment to distributive leadership and this leads to effective teamwork at all levels. Together these are making a significant and positive impact on the quality of teaching and student outcomes as the school meets the challenge of quickly expanding student numbers. Leaders encourage and support innovations such as the setting up of online access to homework by parents, and the provision of work experience overseas for a Year 9 student. The school is eager to participate in local programmes, and development planning prioritises national initiatives, such as participation in the pilot for the 'My Identity' programme.

Rigorous and realistic self-evaluation includes input from all staff and parents. This involves close analysis and use of internal and external data to inform school development planning. Self-evaluation is carefully aligned to well-focused development planning and leads to the establishment of action plans in all subjects and at all year levels. Performance management is systematic and comprehensive, and effectively holds staff accountable for improving the quality of teaching and learning. Individual and group needs identified through performance management procedures drive provision of, and access to, professional development opportunities designed to enhance teaching skills.

Professionally supportive and respectful relationships are fostered among staff, students and parents and contribute to the maintenance of a purposeful learning environment. Parents in the survey and in formal and informal meetings show themselves to be very supportive of the school. Parental engagement is strong and



parents are active on their council and in the CIS Connect group. The school successfully communicates with parents, and involves them in their children's education and in school developments, by means of regular information workshops and meetings, online homework access, the parent volunteer programme and invitations to participate in special events.

Rigorous systems and regular contact ensure the Governing Board remains well informed about the school's achievements and development, and representatives provide knowledgeable strategic guidance and support. This ensures that the principal is held fully accountable for achieving high quality provision and outcomes. The school regularly seeks the views of parents, staff and students as part of their decision making process. Governance does not include representation by parents; a representative school board is planned for later in the 2015-16 school year.

The school is very well organised and procedures and routines support students' learning very effectively. There are sufficient well-qualified and experienced staff members, including classroom assistants and a growing number of learning support assistants, and they are appropriately deployed to support curriculum delivery within the context of increasing student numbers. The premises, facilities and access to resources provide a superior learning environment. ICT hardware and software are used well by teachers to support learning. Teaching in all subjects and year levels does not make sufficiently effective use of the excellent library provision.

What the school should do to improve further:

1. Increase the consistency of highly effective teaching in order to raise student attainment and accelerate progress further by:
 - i. ensuring that successful teaching approaches are shared widely among staff
 - ii. continuing to enable highly effective teachers to influence and help develop colleagues' practice through, for example, modelling successful strategies, team teaching and peer observations
 - iii. continuing to monitor and evaluate the work of teachers through a process of regular observation, developmental feedback and target-setting.
2. Develop the effectiveness of teaching in the subjects taught in Arabic, so that students' attainment and progress match achievement in other subjects by:
 - i. sharing the good practices in other core subjects
 - ii. ensuring that teachers make effective use of engaging strategies and activities to provide support and challenge for all students
 - iii. ensuring teachers make more effective use of assessment for learning to inform planning and teaching
 - iv. continuing to closely monitor and evaluate the impact of teaching to identify priority professional development needs and provide continuing support.
3. Develop effective support and ensure wider opportunities for students who are gifted and talented by building leadership capacity at all staffing levels.
4. As a priority, establish a governing board to include representation as per the Organising Regulations of Private Schools in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi.