



National Agenda



Early years



Special educational
needs and disabilities



Innovation

Inspection Report 2015-2016

German International School Dubai

Curriculum: German

Overall rating: Good

Read more about the school



www.khda.gov.ae

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



Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum

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School information

General information



Location	Dubai International Academic City
Type of school	Private
Opening year of school	2008
Website	www.germanschool.ae
Telephone	04-3386006
Address	PO Box 391162, DIAC, Dubai.
Principal	Gert Blach
Language of instruction	German
Inspection dates	14 to 16 December 2015

Students



Gender of students	Boys and girls
Age range	3-18
Grades or year groups	Pre-kindergarten to Year 12
Number of students on roll	674
Number of children in pre-kindergarten	37
Number of Emirati students	3
Number of students with SEND	14
Largest nationality group of students	German

Teachers / Support staff



Number of teachers	64
Largest nationality group of teachers	German
Number of teaching assistants	9
Teacher-student ratio	1:7
Number of guidance counsellors	1
Teacher turnover	31%

Curriculum



Educational permit / Licence	German
Main curriculum	German
External tests and examinations	Thüringen
Accreditation	Deutsche Internationale Abiturprüfung
National Agenda benchmark tests	Not applicable

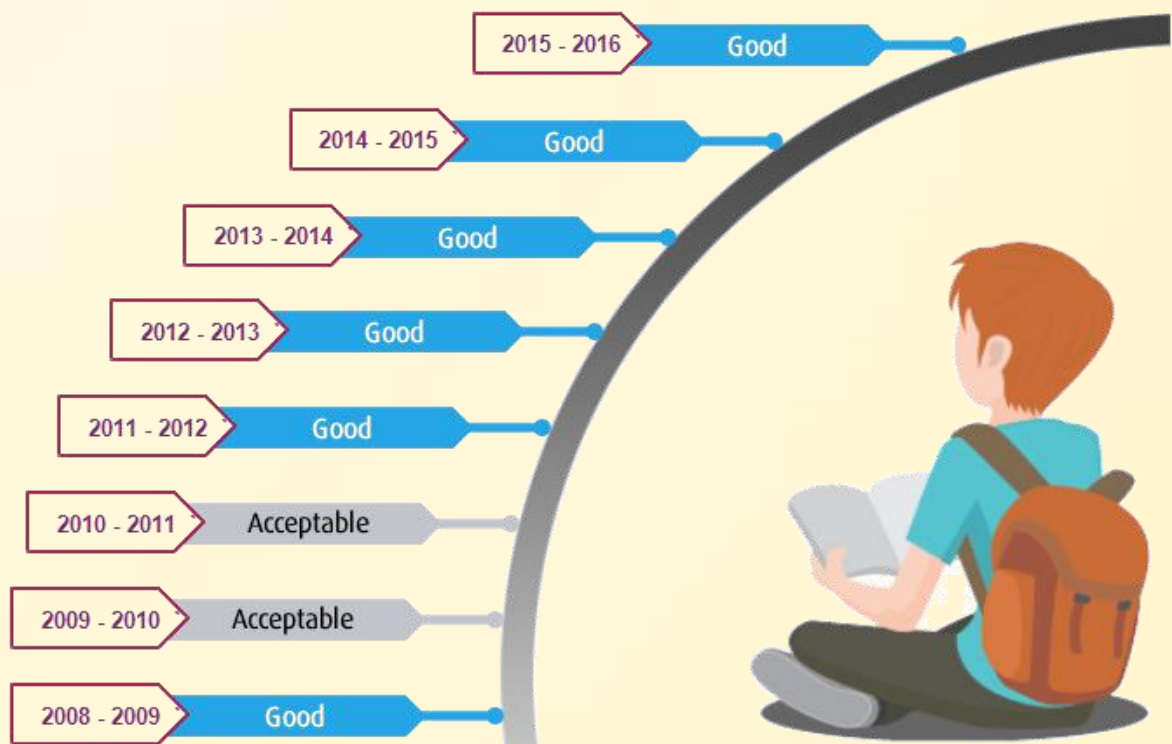


Summary for parents and the community

German International School Dubai was inspected by DSIB from 14 to 16 of December 2015. The overall quality of education provided by the school was found to be **good**.

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

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





How well did the school perform overall?

Overall, the German International School Dubai provided a **good** quality of education for its students

- Attainment and progress were at least good in almost phases in the school. The strongest subjects were English and mathematics. The strongest phase was secondary 2. Students' learning skills were very good in the secondary 2 phase and good in the other phases.
- Students demonstrated considerable skills in collaborating and sharing ideas. Across the school, students had outstanding attitudes to learning, were respectful and empathetic. Their behaviour and relationships with adults and classmates were positive. They enjoyed attending and caring for their school environment and demonstrated a good understanding of the UAE culture and Islamic values across the school.
- The quality of teaching was good overall. This was because almost all teachers had good subject knowledge and were secure in matching their teaching to students' needs. Most lesson planning was good, but the quality of teachers' questioning was variable. In some subjects, such as Islamic studies, effective questioning engaged students well.
- Assessment information was not used to compare the school's performance with other German international schools or other international schools in Dubai. The curriculum design and implementation was good. The curriculum adaptation was good except in the kindergarten (KG) where it was acceptable.
- The school protected and supported its students well. The support for students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) was very good and helpful guidance was available for parents.
- School leaders had taken account of recommendations in previous inspection reports and had adequately responded to bring about improvements. Leaders valued the partnership with parents. Members of the governing board were very supportive of the school, acting effectively as a critical friend. The principal was an outstanding teacher who cared for his staff and led by example.



What did the school do well?

- ensured students' attainment and progress were good or better in almost all subjects and in all phases
- developed students' positive behaviour, attitudes and enthusiasm for learning
- created a welcoming family atmosphere and positive relationships which permeated the whole school
- ensured consistently good or better teaching linked to quality care and support for students' personal, social, emotional and academic development
- cultivated positive partnership with parents
- received positive and constructive support from its governing board
- was making good use of the new building and facilities.



What does the school need to do next?

- Implement a rigorous system of assessment that:
 - closely monitors and record the progress of all learners, especially in the KG
 - provides students with constructive feedback on their work so that they know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve
 - enables teachers to provide opportunities for all students to develop higher order thinking skills, including critical thinking and the skills of innovation
 - leads to the provision of challenge in all lessons for the more able learners.
- Establish a timetable which:
 - provides a better balance of provision for Islamic education and for science in the elementary and secondary 1 phases
 - creates more opportunities for students to enhance and extend their learning through the use of technology.
- Improve school self-evaluation by:
 - ensuring school leaders and governors consistently use assessment information to monitor the progress of all groups of students and identify starting points in learning
 - evaluating the effectiveness of teaching and the curriculum
 - holding all leaders and teachers to account for consistently improving learning outcomes.



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

- The progress for students with SEND in elementary and secondary phases was never less than good. Students made better progress in the arts than in the core subjects. Progress in the KG was less consistent.
- The school's special educational needs team was well qualified. They shared a vision for improvement and attended conferences organised by the German government to improve their awareness of and provision for students with SEND.
- The identification of students with SEND had improved and was very good. The school had invested in an online diagnostic system to assist in providing a personalised support programme for students from Grades 2 to 11. There were difficulties for parents in finding a suitable German-speaking professional outside of school to accurately assess their children's needs.
- Parents of students with SEND were consulted at the outset. Most parents were generally positive about the provision for their children and commented that their children made good progress.
- Helpful and appropriate guidance was available for parents of students with SEND. These were responsive to challenges experienced by students and their families.

Innovation in education

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

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



Promoting a culture of innovation:

- School leaders had not developed a strategic response to the national innovation agenda. They believed innovation was intuitively aligned with German subjects. Key partnerships were promoted through parents and their companies. The school was equipped with the resources and structures to promote innovation capacity. Professional development opportunities primarily focused on pedagogy and methodology. The new facility was equipped with learning technologies that included on-line learning platforms to enrich student learning. The school's prolific enterprise and entrepreneurship programs were stimulated by the German apprenticeship programme. Students were provided with ample opportunities in the internship programmes for career preparation.

Overall school performance

Good

1. Students' achievement

		KG	Elementary	Secondary 1	Secondary 2
Islamic education 	Attainment	Not applicable	Good	Good	Good
	Progress	Not applicable	Good	Good	Good
Arabic as a first language 	Attainment	Not applicable	Good	Good	Good
	Progress	Not applicable	Good	Good	Good
Arabic as an additional language 	Attainment	Not applicable	Very good ↑	Good	Not applicable
	Progress	Not applicable	Outstanding	Good	Not applicable
Language of instruction 	Attainment	Good	Good	Good	Good
	Progress	Good	Good	Good	Good
English 	Attainment	Good ↓	Very good ↑	Very good	Outstanding
	Progress	Good	Very good ↑	Very good	Very good
Mathematics 	Attainment	Good	Very good ↑	Good	Very good
	Progress	Good	Very good ↑	Good	Very good
Science 	Attainment	Good	Acceptable	Good	Very good
	Progress	Good	Good ↑	Good	Very good

	KG	Elementary	Secondary 1	Secondary 2
Learning skills	Good	Good	Good	Very good

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

	KG	Elementary	Secondary 1	Secondary 2
Personal development	Outstanding	Very good	Very good	Very good
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Good	Very good	Very good	Very good
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Very good	Very good	Very good	Very good

3. Teaching and assessment

	KG	Elementary	Secondary 1	Secondary 2
Teaching for effective learning	Good	Good	Good	Good
Assessment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good	Very good

4. Curriculum

	KG	Elementary	Secondary 1	Secondary 2
Curriculum design and implementation	Good	Good	Good	Good
Curriculum adaptation	Acceptable	Good	Good	Good

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

	KG	Elementary	Secondary 1	Secondary 2
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding	Good	Good	Good	Good
Care and support	Good	Good	Good	Good

6. Leadership and management

	All phases
The effectiveness of leadership	Good
School self-evaluation and improvement planning	Acceptable
Parents and the community	Good
Governance	Very 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
Language of instruction	Good	Good
English	Good ↓	Good
Mathematics	Good	Good
Science	Good	Good

- Attainment and progress in the language of instruction was no better than good. In the absence of assessment against generally accepted national and international expectations for children of this age, judgements were only possible using the knowledge, skills and understanding demonstrated by the children. In German, almost all KG children listened attentively and a majority managed to express their ideas and feelings in single words or short sentences. Most groups made similar progress in lessons and over time, with the children with SEND progressing particularly well.
- In English, similar to that in German, attainment and progress was not effectively assessed with reference to commonly accepted external expectations or benchmarks for children of this age. Children generally demonstrated good pronunciation skills, used a range of vocabulary linked to various themes and confidently named various related objects. Progress in lessons and over time was good. However, most children lacked confidence when constructing longer sentences. Most groups made similar progress, with the children with SEND progressing well.
- In the absence of clear assessment in mathematics, the majority of children were judged to attain well and made good progress in lessons and overtime. They counted and recognized numerals from 1 to 20 and differentiated between high and low, big and small and long and short. They solved easy addition and subtraction problems using dice as a learning tool. Most children knew geometrical symbols and during practical work made accurate shapes using dough. Progress over time was less secure for some groups of children, including children with SEND.
- Similar to other subjects, in science the standards of attainment were judged to be good due to good progress made by most groups of children, including those with SEND. The majority of children demonstrated an understanding of the sources of light and how reflections and shadows emerged from real and artificial light. Groups of children investigated floating and sinking and the properties of substances and water. The older children asked questions of a scientific nature and had begun to draw simple conclusions from hands-on experiments. Children's understanding of the world around them was underdeveloped.

Elementary

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

- In Islamic education, the majority of students attained above national curriculum expectations. Students demonstrated a good command of recitation and memorization skills. They made effective connections to the Prophet (PBUH) and his companions' journeys in spreading Islam's principles, virtues and morals. In Grade 1, students identified the Five Pillars of Islam. They knew why Muslims had to fast during Ramadan. They understood the concept of 'mercy' and could exemplify it with reference to their own lives. Progress in lessons and overtime was good for most groups of students. In Grade 3, their understandings of charity and table manners were well developed. In Grade 4, the majority had a deep understanding of the notion of care for humans, animals and nature with good reference to Hadeeth.
- In Arabic as a first language, the majority of students demonstrated above expected levels of listening, speaking and reading skills against national curriculum levels. Their writing skills were within the expected level. Against the expectations of the Ministry of Education (MoE), students consistently performed well. They demonstrated increasing ability to use standard Arabic to reflect their thoughts. In lessons and their most recent work, the majority of students made good progress in developing their comprehension and writing skills. By the end of the elementary phase, students were able to write short paragraphs describing their experiences. Different groups of students made similar progress.
- In Arabic as an additional language, national and international benchmarking of attainment and progress was not available. Nevertheless, a large majority of students displayed well developed language skills against the general expectations for non-native Arabic speakers. They could present meaningful information about a range of topics such as the geography of the UAE and the region using correct phrases. They listened well and could read familiar texts accurately despite their early introduction to Arabic. Most students made outstanding progress developing their listening and speaking skills. They responded to teachers' questions using well-constructed sentences. Generally boys and girls performed similarly well.
- Considering the large number of students who spoke German as a second language, most students made at least good progress from their starting points and attained well. Assessments of attainment across the language were not levelled across national or international expectations in the lower grades but reading skills in Grade 1 were above the age-related standard. The majority of students responded well in speaking and listening. Most students in Grade 2 could use a dictionary to improve their spelling. Students in Grade 3 could identify characteristics of fairy tales and by Grade 4, students had a good knowledge of grammar. Students with SEND made good progress.
- In English attainment was very good. The large majority of students were above national and international standards particularly in speaking, listening, understanding and reading. Most students spoke English at home which further secured their very good attainment. Progress was evidently very good in lessons and over time. This was particularly the case in the students' development of oracy and reading, which was rapidly enhanced in their project work and group discussions. However by contrast, writing skills were insufficiently developed. Progress was similarly very good for all groups.

- In mathematics, as in English, most students attained levels that were above the expected curriculum standard by the end of this phase and confirmed when compared with international benchmarks. Progress for most groups of students was very good because of the swift rate of building upon previous learning. Students enjoyed applying their understanding to the world in which they live and made meaningful connections. Students in Grade 2 for example were confident in their skills of calculation and able to manage simple money transactions. They used the correct combinations of notes and coins to buy toys and receive change. Older students in the upper elementary classes were able to solve problems and had a firm grasp of appropriate measuring concepts.
- In science, students' attainment was in line with curriculum expectations for their age, but there were few assessment measures to align attainment with national and international benchmarks. In classes, the students' wide range of factual knowledge of science was not matched by conceptual understanding. Most were able to apply scientific knowledge in a wider real world context. Good progress was made in developing skills of enquiry and students were able to make hypotheses and explain how to test them. Because of these developing skills in scientific method, progress was improving and was good for most groups of students, including those with SEND.

Secondary 1

Subjects	Attainment	Progress
Islamic education	Good	Good
Arabic as a first language	Good	Good
Arabic as an additional language	Good	Good
Language of instruction	Good	Good
English	Very good	Very good
Mathematics	Good	Good
Science	Good	Good

- In Islamic education in the secondary 1 phase, the majority of students attained above national curriculum expectations. Groups demonstrated a strong knowledge of the Holy Qur'an and of the miracles brought by prophets and messengers of Allah. Their understanding of key Islamic principles and values such as Zakaah, Sadaqah, Halal, modesty and moderation was also well developed. In lessons and over time, all groups made good progress. In Grade 8 for example, they were able to draw from Sunnah, Hadeeth and the Holy Qur'an to support their understanding of children's rights and animal rights. In Grade 10, students developed a strong appreciation of the miracles of the Holy Qur'an especially those that were proven by scientific research in modern times.
- In Arabic as a first language, the majority of students demonstrated good language skills. Over the past three years, students' attainment levels were above the expected level as measured against the MoE standards. Students' reading skills were generally good. Their ability to analyse texts was underdeveloped. Students were often reflective and could share their points of view clearly. Against appropriate lesson objectives, the majority of students made good progress. Students' writing skills were developing well. In Grade 6, students were learning to write narrative and descriptive text. A minority of students made a few grammatical errors and their use of relevant vocabulary was insecure. Boys and girls made similar progress. More able students were not challenged enough to extend their language skills.

- In Arabic as an additional language, the majority of students demonstrated good language skills as measured against the generally accepted expectations for non-native speakers. Students listening and speaking skills were good. They could understand spoken Arabic in familiar contexts and had a secure ability to follow a pattern in order to write several lines of text. Their knowledge of basic grammar such as verbs, nouns and pronouns was also good. In lessons, students made good progress developing their skills to conduct presentations about interesting topics such as the solar system. Progress remained good when developing speaking and reading skills, but it was slower in learning to write independently. Students with SEND also made good progress.
- Attainment in German was good because the majority of students exceeded curriculum expectations in the four key skills of German. They could express themselves well orally and in writing. Their knowledge of grammar was growing and they were developing specialist vocabulary in history, geography and in other subjects. In Grade 8, students were able to write creatively and some could produce extended texts of a good standard. Rates of progress matched above average attainment. Most groups made similarly good progress including those with SEND.
- The large majority of students attained levels well above curriculum standards in English in speaking, listening and understanding. Standards in reading were above those generally expected internationally and were confirmed by well above average test results. Students' knowledge of language and their skills of application were generally well balanced when reading for understanding. Most groups of students made very good progress from their starting points and maintained this progress over time. Writing skills were improving but lagged behind the progress in reading and comprehension.
- By the end of this phase in Grade 10, attainment levels were above the regional German curriculum standard for the majority of students, according to external examination results. Most students demonstrated a range of mathematical and problem-solving skills appropriate for this phase and generally displayed competencies at least in line with usual international expectations. From their starting points, most students, including those with SEND, made at least good progress in mathematics although there was too much variability in different grades for attainment and progress to be judged as very good.
- Attainment in science was good. Students developed a wide range of knowledge and understanding, which led to good results in examinations and national and international comparators. Grade 7 students had a good understanding of cell structure and could compare features of plant and animal cells. Grade 10 could explain the causes of mutation and their role in evolution. In Grade 8, students could explain changes in mass during simple chemical reactions. Grade 9 students effectively investigated the relationship between voltage and current in physics. Students enjoyed science and made good progress overall in lessons. However, progress made across the three sciences was uneven, as it was for different groups of students.

Secondary 2

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

- Attainment in Islamic education was good because national curriculum standards were exceeded. The majority of students effectively drew from Hadeeth and Seerah to support their strong understanding of the concept of peace in Islam. They could compare and analyse current views about modern issues and constructed arguments with solid reference to the Holy Qur'an and to Sunnah. In lessons, the majority of students demonstrated good progress by building on their prior learning. They were able to make relevant connections, for example in the context of peace in Islam, they successfully gathered explanations to describe the true sense of mercy in Islam. Memorization and recitation of the Holy Qur'an were not well developed across all groups in the secondary 2 classes.
- In Arabic as a first language, the majority of students demonstrated good language skills in listening, speaking and reading. Against the MoE standards, the attainment level of a majority of students was good. In lessons, students reflected well on their views with increasing use of standard Arabic and relevant vocabulary. Most students' skills in writing were at the appropriate levels. Students' ability to analyse literature was not so well developed, as was the rate of progress of the most able students. This was restricted due to the lack of challenge. Most other groups made similar rates of progress including those with SEND.
- In German, the majority of students achieved standards in the four key language skills which were above expectations. Building on the sound foundation provided in earlier years, the majority of students made rapid progress and exceeded expectations. Their oral skills had developed well and they could express themselves with fluency. They could use a wide range of expressions to communicate effectively. Their reading skills were strong and they could accurately analyse texts of different genres. Most groups of students could write to an above average standard and applied the rules of grammar appropriately.
- In English, the large majority of students achieved standards in the four key language skills which were well above international expectations. Examination results confirmed high attainment. By Grade 12, students were able to edit and redraft their work to sophisticated standards. Most students continued to make excellent progress in conversational English through verbally analysing, debating and putting forward their points of views. The progress of different groups of students varied slightly more than they should, but for most, including those with SEND, it was very good.
- In mathematics, the consistently high level of challenge provided for all groups of learners ensured that most, including the most able, made rapid progress and attained levels above the German curriculum expectations. Students confidently used learning technology create 3D models related to analytical geometry. They extended their knowledge and skills in complex problem-solving and prepared students well for final examinations.

- Across the three sciences, attainment was very good. Students developed strong conceptual understanding of key principles and phenomena in chemistry, physics and biology. Their firm grasp of scientific knowledge and in-depth understanding of how to apply it, coupled with their awareness of the scientific process secured very good achievements overall. Students' rapid progress in lessons and over time led to very good results in the Deutsche Internationales Arbitur. Different groups of students made similarly good progress but a few variations in their rates of progress caused minor limitations.

	KG	Elementary	Secondary 1	Secondary 2
Learning skills	Good	Good	Good	Very good

- Most students demonstrated positive attitudes to learning. On the occasions when they were given feedback, they acted on it and knew what they had to do to improve. Younger students usually relied too much on their teachers for direction. As they moved through the school, students increasingly took more responsibility for their own learning and were able to sustain concentration.
- Students demonstrated considerable skills in collaborating and sharing ideas, even amongst the youngest children the KG. They were respectful of each other and showed empathy. They spoke fluently and usually used language accurately to express their thoughts. During lessons and assemblies, students took pride in presenting the work that they had produced in a team or independently.
- Students offered a range of answers drawing from different areas of the curriculum. In discussions they made appropriate connections and expressed these with confidence. For example, learning in Islamic education was further strengthened through connections with the students' real life experiences. They used examples from 'Seerah' to account for what virtues and morals looked like in terms of attitudes and behaviour.
- Students were able to solve increasingly challenging problems especially in the upper grades. Resources for research such as technology and library books were underused to support independent learning, especially in the secondary phases. When they were given the opportunity, for example in Islamic education and in mathematics, students demonstrated effective use of learning technology to further enhance and showcase their learning.

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

	KG	Elementary	Secondary 1	Secondary 2
Personal development	Outstanding	Very good ↑	Very good	Very good

- Students in all phases enjoyed coming to school. They had outstanding attitudes to learning almost all of the time, evident in their hard work, their determination to do well and their perseverance when faced with difficult challenges.
- Almost all students were very well-behaved most of the time. Even the youngest children had settled into school routines and followed expectations for behaviour particularly well.
- Students throughout the school returned the respect their teachers had for them. Students' relationships with their classmates and others around the school were generally very positive and constructive.

- Almost all students had a clear understanding of how to lead healthy lives. They were physically fit as a result of their participation in a range of physical activities. Most students chose healthy options at lunchtime whether they brought their own lunch or chose from the menus provided by the school's caterers.
- Attendance was good and students arrived to lessons on time. This supported positive attitudes to learning and enabled teachers to maximize learning time.

	KG	Elementary	Secondary 1	Secondary 2
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Good	Very good ↓	Very good	Very good

- Students' understanding of Islamic values was secure. They knew the importance of Islam to the people of the UAE and its impact on their daily lives. They knew that Muslims attended mosques and faced the Ka'abah as their Qiblah in prayers. They could explain why the Emirati society had certain expectations for men and women in public places such as dress codes and refraining from eating in Ramadan.
- Students were knowledgeable about the UAE and about Dubai in particular. Many were familiar with local dishes and traditions. They celebrated events like the UAE National Day, where friends and parents took active parts. They said they would recommend Dubai as a tourist attraction and gave reasons. Older students recognised the UAE's aspirations to become a knowledge economy, no longer dependent on oil.
- Students were proud of their German culture. The youngest children recognised the flags of Germany and of the UAE. Grade 3 students talked enthusiastically about special occasions. Older students made friends from different countries and cultures and enjoyed their links with other schools. A few students across phases did not show due reverence to the National Anthems of the UAE and Germany during assembly.

	KG	Elementary	Secondary 1	Secondary 2
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Very good ↑	Very good ↑	Very good	Very good

- From a very early age, children were encouraged to carry out their responsibilities without teachers' directions, for example, by helping to keep their school clean and tidy. Older students took an active part in welcoming and inducting their new peers before the start of the academic year. They increasingly developed their leadership skills and took the initiative in support of local and national communities.
- Resilience and cooperation were very much part of the daily routines of most students. They had a very positive attitude to work and when they faced difficulties students knew where to seek support. They were increasingly self-reliant and aware of a range of independent approaches to tackling challenging tasks and situations.
- Students cared for their school and for its environment. Younger children discarded garbage responsibly. Older students were aware of the efforts and measures the government made to keep the city clean and tidy. Some took part in projects and competitions to promote sustainable energy. They knew the merits of solar power and its role in caring for the environment.

3. Teaching and assessment

	KG	Elementary	Secondary 1	Secondary 2
Teaching for effective learning	Good	Good	Good	Good

- Almost all teachers in all phases had good subject knowledge and taught effectively using varied and age-appropriate activities, which motivated students to learn. Most teachers had a good knowledge of how different groups of students learned and were generally able to match their teaching accordingly.
- Most teachers in elementary and secondary phases planned lessons well. Objectives were usually explicit and an interesting and varied range of learning activities engaged the students well. In Grade 1 mathematics for example, well-structured and vibrant learning resources were used to teach simple addition and subtraction and in Arabic in Grade 5, effective planning led to skillful use of descriptive writing.
- Students interacted very well with their teachers and they felt secure in answering questions freely. However the quality of questioning was too variable. In some subjects, such as Islamic education, questions prompted thinking students in meaningful discussions. Students were asked to express their thoughts and reflect on their own and others' work. By contrast, critical thinking was not consistently promoted in other subjects.
- Most teachers planned work to suit the different learning needs of their students. In secondary science for example, work sheets were produced to suit two levels of ability with modifications matched to the needs of those with SEND and sometimes with more challenging work for the most able. In the less effective lessons, the most able groups were not sufficiently challenged.
- Most teachers offered group work and opportunities for independent research. For example, teachers of German helped students to become independent learners by offering them opportunities to choose different materials and approaches to completing a task. However, students were not routinely given enough opportunities to develop the art of asking meaningful questions in order to develop their higher order and critical thinking skills.
- Overall, the quality of teaching Arabic as a first language was good. Teachers planned engaging lessons, and often purposeful activities were often provided to enhance students' learning. In the less effective lessons, the higher ability groups were not sufficiently challenged.
- Teaching in Arabic as an additional language was particularly effective in the elementary phase enabling most students to make outstanding progress. In the lessons, work was well planned and matched to the students' needs and provided a level of challenge appropriate to their ability.

	KG	Elementary	Secondary 1	Secondary 2
Assessment	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable ↓	Good	Very good

- There was a regular cycle of internal and external assessment in a range of subjects from Grade 3 to Grade 12. These assessments were used to compare students' outcomes against the expected curriculum standards of the Thuringia region of Germany. Information arising from these assessments was generally used to inform next steps in learning.
- Assessment data was not used effectively to compare the school's performance with other German international schools or other international schools in Dubai. Comparative performance was drawn from impressions and awareness of national and international standards, which did not provide sufficient reliability.
- Subject leaders analysed assessment information and had a clear picture of how well individual students had achieved, but only at the time of the assessment. Regular checks on daily learning tasks by teachers to track students' progress were inadequate, especially in the KG and in the elementary phase. Subject leaders did not analyse assessment information to compare the achievements of different groups.
- Teachers had general awareness of students' knowledge, skills and understanding. They did not always use this information appropriately in their planning to ensure that activities were matched to the needs of different groups of learners. This was usually managed well for students with SEND and for the most able students in the secondary 2 phase.
- Students were involved to some extent in assessing their own work but this varied across subjects. In elementary, students rarely received written feedback on their classwork because their work was scarcely marked and they were not aware about how to improve. By contrast, students in the secondary 2 phase were very well informed about their next steps in learning and examination preparation.

4. Curriculum

	KG	Elementary	Secondary 1	Secondary 2
Curriculum design and implementation	Good	Good	Good	Good

- The curriculum was based on the state of Thuringia used by almost all German International Schools. Its aim was to promote independence and self-reliance. In secondary, core subjects were planned to comply with the standards for the Internationale Abitprufung to prepare students should they return to Germany. In Islamic education, Arabic and UAE social studies the school followed the MOE programme.
- Teachers collaborated each year to ensure the curriculum plan provided continuity of content from one year to the next. In most cases students were prepared for the next stage of education, for their lives as citizens and for the world of work. The school had identified some inconsistency in continuity between the elementary and secondary 1 phases and was working to address this.
- A variety of extra-curricular choices were offered including computer programming, robotics, sports and the arts. There were two 45-minute sessions per week for Arabic native speakers students in the KG. Some aspects of the UAE social studies programme were integrated throughout the phases.

- Cross-curricular links were planned to facilitate the transfer of learning across subjects. The best examples were in the KG and the elementary phases when subjects were integrated within a theme or topic enabling students to deepen their understanding of what they had learned.
- The curriculum was kept under review to ensure its suitability. Assessment information to inform this review was not consistently considered in ensuring its effectiveness in meeting the needs of all students.
- The school did not formally offer the UAE social studies programme, however some aspects of it were integrated throughout the phases and particularly in ethics, history and geography.

	KG	Elementary	Secondary 1	Secondary 2
Curriculum adaptation	Acceptable	Good ↑	Good	Good

- The school was successful in ensuring that teachers modified the curriculum to meet the needs of almost all groups of students. This was less effectively managed in the KG especially considering the age range of the mixed groups. Opportunities for students who were gifted and talented to demonstrate their abilities were adequate. The school's provision for the oldest students was very effective, in particular in English and mathematics.
- Most students were motivated by the curriculum which offered a sufficient range of interesting opportunities for creativity and skills development. Opportunities for enterprise and innovation were increasing. There were sufficient opportunities for students to make a social contribution. Students benefited from a range of extra-curricular activities and links with the community to enhance their personal as well as their academic development.
- There was a good range of opportunities for students to develop their understanding of the UAE's values, culture and society. Many examples included students' understanding and participation in celebrations for National Day and through the respect shown for Muslims as they fasted during Ramadan.
- In the KG, Arabic was offered twice per week for all children of native Arabic speakers. The programme was developed by teachers and it focused adequately on letters, words and phonics.

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

	KG	Elementary	Secondary 1	Secondary 2
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding	Good	Good	Good	Good

- The school developed clearly defined and rigorous procedures for safeguarding and child protection. Staff and students were well informed of the risks posed to personal safety by usage of social media and other communication. Students had been advised about all forms of bullying including cyber bullying.
- Procedures to ensure the safety and security of students, staff and visitors were not developed as these were being designed for the new school building. Improvement plans included better traffic management, provision of trained and visible security personnel, identity badges and an intercom system.

- The new school building was very well maintained. The medical staff ensured that detailed records were kept, incidents logged and information shared with relevant personnel. Medication was stored safely and staff were vigilant to any potential risks that arose for students in their care.
- New equipment and modern educational resources were added on a phased basis. Some areas of the school had not yet benefitted from such provision. The excellent sports facilities and play areas presented good opportunities for students to be active and healthy. KG had bright open spaces that provided a welcoming environment for children and adults to socialize and take breaks.
- The school regarded the promotion and implementation of a healthy living programme as a very important aspect of school life. Students had been provided with an information leaflet on 'the four pillars of a healthy snack' and understood the importance of protein and vitamins. The school's policy on the benefits of a healthy lifestyle was consistently encouraged and supported by a very committed medical team.

	KG	Elementary	Secondary 1	Secondary 2
Care and support	Good	Good	Good	Good

- Relationships throughout the school were positive and led to a largely harmonious community. Students' behaviour was very good because of the very effective pastoral system. In the KG, behaviour was particularly good because children enjoyed school and expectations were clear. They also had excellent role models in the older students who welcomed them before the start of the school year.
- Attendance and punctuality were very good because of the close partnership the school had established with parents and because parents knew that every day in school mattered.
- The systems for identifying students with SEND were very effective in most cases. There were difficulties for parents in finding an appropriate professional outside of school to make a diagnosis for their children. The school was aware of students who were gifted and talented and provided some special opportunities for them to further develop their abilities.
- The school provided very effective support for students who were identified with SEND. As a result, most students, but not all, made at least good academic and personal progress.
- Although, the guidance and support for students' personal development was very effective, guidance for their academic progress was less so because teachers did not routinely give feedback on their work and suggest ways in which they could improve. From Grade 9, students were very well supported in making choices about their future careers and further education.

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

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

Very good ↑

- The school's SEND team consisted of well qualified and experienced professionals. The team shared a vision for improvement. They were aware of the need for additional resources to further enhance provision for gifted and talented students.
- The identification of students with SEND was good. The school had invested in an online diagnostic system to assist in providing a personalised support programme for students from Grades 2 to 11. There were difficulties for parents in finding a suitable German-speaking professional outside of school to assess their children's needs. Consequently, some children with SEND went undiagnosed.
- Parents of students with SEND were consulted at the outset. They appreciated their children being included and the fact that they were involved in agreeing targets in individual educational plans (IEPs) so they could support their children's learning at home. Concerns were raised about the attitude of some other students' and the pressure their children felt in the build up to examinations.
- The work of the SEND team was increasingly effective in ensuring planning was aligned with the targets in students' IEPs. The special educational needs coordinator acted as counsellor for supporting students' social and emotional well-being. This, coupled with the effective pastoral system, had brought improvement in students' behaviour. The SEND support teacher focused on helping teachers in improving their effectiveness in raising students' rates of progress.
- Progress for students in the elementary and secondary phases was never less than good because most teachers matched their expectations to students' specific needs. Progress in the arts was better than progress in the core subjects. Provision in the KG was less effective because teachers lacked the confidence, expertise and human resources to support students with complex learning needs and assessed syndromes.

6. Leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership

Good

- The principal was a dedicated and very effective teacher who led by example. He maintained a high profile around school and had the respect of his staff. He had a clear vision for improvement in the new building which was shared by almost all members of the school community. He allowed no room for complacency and took swift and decisive action to reduce barriers to learning.
- School leaders were generally committed to the UAE national priorities and to providing well for all students. The senior leadership team had a good knowledge of the German curriculum and effectively promoted best practices in teaching and learning.
- Following the principal's lead, senior leaders cared for their staff and supported them in proportion to need. This had been especially important during a period of significant change with the move into the new building. Through regular meetings and clear communication, teachers were growing in confidence. Morale was generally high and the quality of teaching was rarely less, and often better, than good.

- Most of the recommendations from the previous inspection report had been adequately addressed. Senior leaders had high expectations for the teachers and for students' academic and personal development. They were increasingly effective in leading their teams and in holding them to account for their work. Consequently, progress in almost all subjects and phases was at least good.
- In light of recent improvements, increased teacher confidence and the potential offered by the new premises, the school had a good capacity to make further improvements. In the KG, leadership prioritised children's personal development and wellbeing and created a positive and relaxed climate for learning. Insufficient attention was given to security and safety and to assessing children's progress over time.
- Recently felt impact from leadership had led to significant improvements, for example in the provision for SEND and in English, mathematics and science in some phases. Leaders ensured that the school was compliant and met all statutory requirements.

School self-evaluation and improvement planning

Acceptable ↓

- School leaders had adequately responded to the recommendations in previous inspection reports. There were systems in place for gathering information about the school's performance such as the use of assessment data and from consultation with parents and students. However assessment data were not rigorously analysed, nor were they used to gauge the school's performance against similar schools or internationally.
- School leaders regularly monitored teaching and discussed the components of effective lessons. There was too little reference to the progress made by students in lessons and no effective system for tracking students' progress over time. Consequently, evaluations about the effectiveness of teaching were flawed.
- Progress was often good in lessons. Very good progress was restricted by a lack of consistent leadership focus on students' outcomes rather than on the teachers' actions. Improvement plans were not based on reliable and secure information with clear success criteria to measure and so drive progress.

Partnerships with parents and the community

Good

- The school valued the partnership with parents in supporting their children's learning. This was especially so for parents of students with SEND. Parents' views and concerns were usually taken into account when considering priorities for improvement.
- Whilst there were ample channels of communication to inform parents about school events and to consult with them on school developments, some parents were unaware of them.
- Reports to parents about their children's academic personal and social development were regular. They included summative judgements about students' achievements and comments on their attitudes to learning and their behaviour. They did not sufficiently identify what students needed to do to improve.
- The school had a variety of links with local and international communities and external partners. For example, Grade 9 students spent two weeks on work experience with local businesses. Older students also received excellent guidance about their future careers and further education opportunities.

Governance

Very good ↓

- The constitution of the governing board was determined by the German Ministry of Education. All board members were parents elected by their peers to represent their views. They met regularly to consider the school's performance and to listen to the views of other parent representatives for each class. Students were also consulted. Where possible, the board responded appropriately to suggestions and concerns.
- The board was very supportive of the school. It was not officially delegated with responsibility for holding school leaders to account for their performance but it did act as a very effective critical friend. Ultimately, they delegated responsibility to the principal for monitoring staff performance and supported him in the best interests of the school.
- The board had supported the school well in responding to the recommendations of the previous inspection report. They were committed to increasing the school population and were determined to raise standards in order to achieve this.

Management, staffing, facilities and resources

Good ↑

- Most aspects of the daily school routine were efficiently managed. The school planned to provide more information boards and displays on students' achievements to inform teachers and parents in a personal and regular manner about these. Timetabling was a challenge in this expanding school and required closer scrutiny so that options might enable more students to pursue careers of their choice, especially in science.
- The majority of staff were well qualified and expert in their specialist area. This included teachers working in the KG and those supporting students with SEND. Teaching assistants were not always qualified. Staff had benefitted from professional training relevant to their subject area or leadership responsibilities.
- The outstanding premises and facilities provided a safe and secure learning environment. Excellent classroom and outdoor spaces along with very modern sports facilities supported the delivery of a broad and varied curriculum. Access to all areas of the building was appropriate to the needs of the whole school community. The KG area was a bright, spacious and welcoming learning environment.
- The school was in the process of investing in a comprehensive plan to equip all classrooms with modern technology and appropriate educational resources.

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	186
	2014-2015	153
Teachers 	50	
Students 	135	

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

- A minority of parents responded to the survey. The majority of parents who responded were satisfied with the quality of teaching. Some of the parents had concerns about security and safety in the new building, the quality of leadership, communication, the quality of Arabic teaching, the inclusion of students with SEND and the appropriateness of certain topics in the biology text books.
- A minority of students responded to the survey. A small minority of these students had concerns about the lack of provision for Arabic and Islamic education after Grade 10, the quality of teaching in some English lessons, and the limited range of extra-curricular activities.
- Most teachers responded to the survey. They were mainly positive about the school in all respects.

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