



دائرة التعليم والمعرفة
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
AND KNOWLEDGE

Inspection
report of

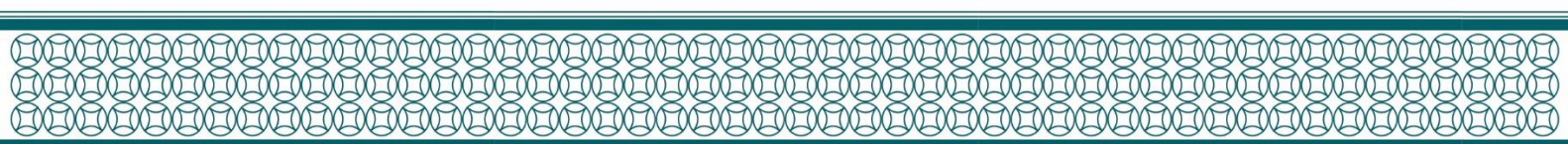
The Pearl Primary Private School

Overall
Effectiveness

Outstanding

Academic
Year

2019/20





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School Information

School Profile			
School Name:	The Pearl Primary Private School		
School ID:	9029	School phases:	KG to Primary
School curriculum:*	British	Fee range and category*	AED41,700 to AED43,150 (High)
Address:	Abu Dhabi island Abu Dhabi	Email:	9029@adek.abudhabi.ae
Telephone:	02-6418887	Website:	https://www.thepearlacademy.sch.ae/

*Relevant for Private schools only ** Relevant for Government schools only

Staff Information			
Total number of teachers	49	Turnover rate	18%
Number of teaching assistants	32	Teacher- student ratio	1:11

Students' Information				
Total number of students	645		Gender	Boys and girls
% of Emirati students	22 %		% of SEN students	9 %
% of largest nationality groups	UAE 22%, Egypt 10%, India 6%			
% of students per phase	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
	16 %	84 %	NA	NA

Inspection Details			
Inspection Hijri dates from:	14/03/1441	to	17/03/1441
Inspection Gregorian dates from:	11/11/2019	to	14/11/2019
Number of lessons observed:	94	Number of joint lessons observed:	11



The overall performance of the school:

- The school was opened in 2007 and is part of the Aldar group of schools. The school has a settled leadership team with the principal in post for five years and a low teacher turnover.
- The overall performance of the school is outstanding and has improved since the last inspection. This is due to consistently outstanding teaching across the school, the very clear direction from the leadership team and the highly effective monitoring of teaching and learning and their impact on students' achievement.

Key areas of strength and areas for improvements:

Key areas of strength

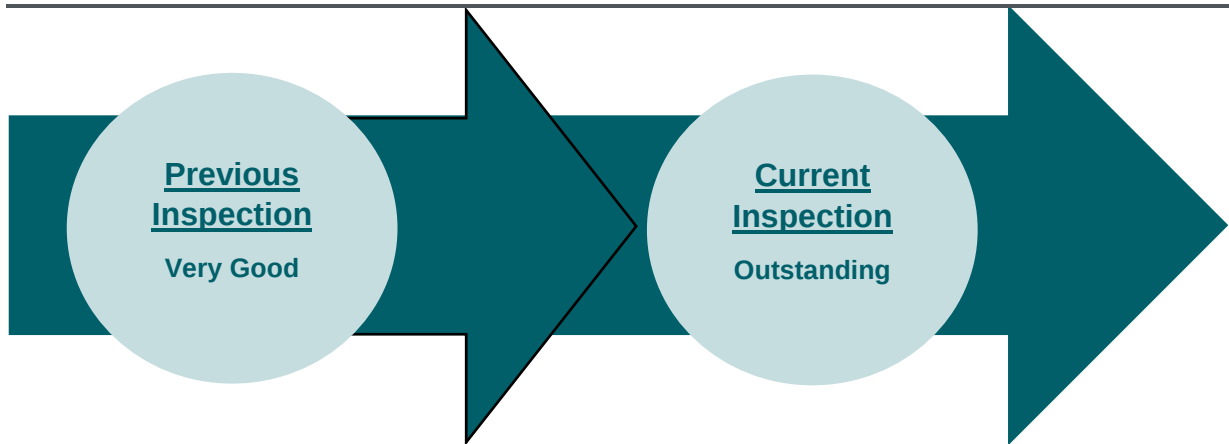
- Students' overall achievement in most subjects.
- The highly positive relationships across the school resulting in exemplary behaviour and happy students.
- Innovative teaching strategies which meet the needs of individuals and groups.
- An expansive curriculum which caters for the interests and needs of almost all students and which promotes their innovative and creative skills.
- The exemplary care and support for all students including those with special educational needs (SEN).
- The inspirational principal who has developed a culture of continuous improvement.

Key areas for improvement

- Access to learning technologies by:
 - appropriately resourcing learning technologies across the school
 - implementing the school plans such as; BYOD (bring your own device)
 - auditing staff training needs in using learning technology
 - providing quality training for staff in using learning technology to enhance learning.
- Support for Emirati students to attain as well as other groups by:
 - setting an individual attainment target and plan how to reach there
 - sharing this information with students and their parents
 - monitoring the progress of Emirati students both as a group and as individuals
 - identifying and sharing successful strategies
 - making learning meaningful and relevant to Emirati students
 - continuing to embed High Performance Learning (HPL) strategies.



Progress made since last inspection and capacity to improve



- School improvement over time is outstanding. The school has made outstanding progress in all areas recommended in the previous report. Achievement is now outstanding in most subjects.
- Emirati students are now making outstanding progress and is similar to that of other groups. However, the full impact on their attainment is not yet evident. Their attainment has improved significantly but is still not in line with other groups. Improved planning and teaching strategies, as well as the implementation of HPL, ensure the pace of learning and challenge for all students is appropriate.
- Teaching is now outstanding with teachers employing innovative strategies to meet the needs of all groups. High quality assessment techniques are complemented by written and verbal comments that empower students to improve their work.
- The school now offers an outstanding curriculum which develops students' creative and innovative skills. Cross-curricular planning and contextualised learning is making learning more relevant and meaningful for students.
- Leadership and management are outstanding. Leaders have developed an ethos of continuous improvement and have outstanding capacity to maintain and improve the school.



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Performance Standard 1	Students' Achievement		
Judgment	Outstanding	Change from previous inspection	Improved
Justifications	- Overall achievement across the school is outstanding. Achievement is very good in Islamic education and UAE social studies. - All groups make outstanding progress across the school. - Most students are reflective learners who work purposefully in paired and group activities. They are creative, innovative and think critically in solving problems.		

Performance Standard 2	Students' personal and social development, and their innovation skills		
Judgment	Outstanding	Change from previous inspection	No Change
Justifications	- Students display exemplary behaviour, have highly positive and responsible attitudes, and their attendance is very good. - Students show outstanding appreciation of Islamic values and UAE heritage. - Students are innovative, creative and have excellent entrepreneurial skills.		

Performance Standard 3	Teaching and Assessment		
Judgment	Outstanding	Change from previous inspection	Improved
Justifications	- Teaching is outstanding because of the innovative teaching strategies which meet the needs of individuals and groups of students. - Outstanding internal assessment processes are complemented by exemplary verbal and written feedback that empowers students to improve their work. - Teachers use technology across all subjects to optimise their learning.		

Performance Standard 4	Curriculum		
Judgment	Outstanding	Change from previous inspection	Improved
Justifications	- The school provides an expansive curriculum that caters for students' interests and needs and which promotes their innovative and creative skills. - Comprehensive cross-curricula links broaden and enhance learning in all subjects. - Full integration of technology in the school curriculum is at an early stage of development.		



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Performance Standard 5	The protection, care, guidance and support of students		
Judgment	Outstanding	Change from previous inspection	No Change
Justifications	• There are very robust procedures to ensure students are safe, and care and support for all students including SEN is exemplary. • The school's proactive and far-reaching promotion of health, including mental well-being, leads to healthy and happy students. • The school's systems for promoting and managing attendance are not yet meeting its target of 98% attendance.		

Performance Standard 6	Leadership and management		
Judgment	Outstanding	Change from previous inspection	No Change
Justifications	• The principal, supported by senior leaders, has established highly successful professional relationships leading to a culture of continuous school improvement. • The school has very robust self-evaluation systems to monitor and evaluate teaching, assessment and students' achievement. • There is scope to develop further parental involvement in the school's decision-making processes.		



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Performance Standard 1: Students' Achievement

Indicators:		KG	Primary	Middle	High
Islamic Education	Attainment	Very Good	Very Good	N/A	N/A
	Progress	Outstanding	Very Good	N/A	N/A
Arabic (as a First Language)	Attainment	Very Good	Very Good	N/A	N/A
	Progress	Outstanding	Outstanding	N/A	N/A
* Arabic (as additional Language)	Attainment	Very Good	Very Good	N/A	N/A
	Progress	Outstanding	Outstanding	N/A	N/A
Social Studies	Attainment	N/A	Very Good	N/A	N/A
	Progress	N/A	Very Good	N/A	N/A
English	Attainment	Very Good	Very Good	N/A	N/A
	Progress	Outstanding	Outstanding	N/A	N/A
Mathematics	Attainment	Outstanding	Outstanding	N/A	N/A
	Progress	Outstanding	Outstanding	N/A	N/A
Science	Attainment	Outstanding	Outstanding	N/A	N/A
	Progress	Outstanding	Outstanding	N/A	N/A
Other subjects (Art, Music, PE)	Attainment	Outstanding	Outstanding	N/A	N/A
	Progress	Outstanding	Outstanding	N/A	N/A
Learning Skills		Outstanding	Outstanding	N/A	N/A



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Islamic Education	- Students' achievement in Islamic education is very good overall and outstanding in KG. In lessons and their work, the large majority of students make above expected progress. - Students' attainment is very good. Internal data shows outstanding attainment in Primary and very good in KG, in line with what is seen in lessons and children's work for KG but not for Primary where attainment is very good. - Most children gain very good knowledge and understanding about the basic concepts and values in Islam. They can explain their learning clearly and make links to their lives. They recite short Surah confidently. Primary students make very good progress in gaining knowledge and understanding of pillars of Islam and pillars of Faith and can link it to Hadeeth and verses of the Holy Quran. They recite prescribed Surah, but their recitation skills are not as well developed as other skills. - All groups of students make above expected progress.	
	Relative Strengths - Children's understanding of basic Islamic concepts and values. - Students' ability to link their learning to Hadeeth and Quran.	Areas of Improvement Students' recitation skills.

Arabic	- Students' achievement in Arabic as a first language (AFL) and Arabic as a second language (ASL) is outstanding. Reliable progress data shows most students make above expected progress. - Students' attainment is very good in both sections. Internal data shows outstanding attainment, while in lessons and in students' work, attainment is very good. - In both AFL and ASL, most students make above expected progress in listening, reading, writing and communications. Their fluency in speaking using standard Arabic is less strong than other skills in both AFL and ASL. In KG most children can recognise different writing shapes of letters and its phonic sound. They can blend letters together to make new words and use them in constructing meaningful sentences. Most Primary students follow guidance and produce high quality written work. They have a secure understanding of grammar rules and apply them in writing and reading. - All different group of students make above expected progress.	
	Relative Strengths - Students' reading and writing following appropriate grammar rules. - Children's ability to blend letters to make new words.	Areas of Improvement Students' fluency in speaking standard Arabic.



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Social Studies	- Students' achievement in social studies is very good. In lessons and in their work, the large majority of students make above expected progress. - Students' attainment is very good. Internal data shows outstanding attainment however, in lessons and students' work attainment is very good.. - Primary students are knowledgeable about the landmarks in each of the seven Emirates and can explain the importance of the union confidently. They develop strong skills in applying map elements to locate different natural features on the UAE map. They gain very good understanding of the national economic activities, for example, for people living near coasts. A minority do not show the same depth of understanding as others. - All groups of students make above expected progress.	
	Relative Strengths - Students' knowledge of the importance of the union. - Students' skills in using maps.	Areas of Improvement The depth of knowledge for a minority of students in national economic activities.

English	- Students' achievement is outstanding overall. Reliable progress data and lessons observations show that most students make better than expected progress. - Attainment is very good. Internal and external data shows very good attainment which is in line with lessons and students' work. - Most students in both phases make outstanding progress in their listening, speaking, reading and writing skills. Skills of inference are developed systematically as children and students listen and respond to stories. Children in KG hear and say initial sounds and blend them together. In both phases, children and students write often, and for different purposes, using ambitious vocabulary, literary devices and creative ideas. Students' use of phonic skills and accurate spelling is less strong. Students ask relevant questions, articulate and justify their opinions. In both phases, they hypothesise and explore ideas before they write. - All groups make better than expected progress.	
	Relative Strengths - Skills of inference in reading. - Exploring ideas to develop imaginative and creative writing.	Areas of Improvement Students' consistent use of phonics skills and accurate spelling.



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Mathematics	- Students' achievement in mathematics is outstanding. Reliable school attainment and progress data and lesson observations show that most students' attainment and progress is outstanding. - In KG most students have secure number skills and in Primary students can apply these successfully using the four operations. In both phases, students have an extensive mathematical vocabulary. Students' skills to explain their mathematical learning and describe how they reached solutions is a strength across the school. Students' skills in information handling develop throughout the school. By Year 6, students can collate data effectively, display, analyse and interpret data successfully. Across the school most students' problem-solving skills are secure and most can solve word and reasoning problems. Students' ability to solve multi-step problems is less well developed. - All groups of students make better than expected progress, although Emirati students attain less well than other groups.	
	Relative Strengths - Application of the four mathematical operations. - High quality information handling and ability to analyse and interpret data.	Areas of Improvement Application of mathematical skills to solve multi-step problems.

Science	- Students' achievement in science is outstanding. Reliable data and lesson observations show that students make outstanding attainment and progress over time. - Internal and external data shows attainment is outstanding. This is reflected in lessons and in students' work. - Children make outstanding progress in KG and gain broad knowledge in physical and life processes. They develop strong skills in predicting and working in a scientific way. Students build rapidly on these skills across primary so that by Year 6, they confidently plan their own investigations. All students gain good practical skills and very competently draw conclusions and communicate their ideas. - Overall, all groups of students make better than expected progress. However, a few more-able students in Year 2 and 6 do not achieve as well as they could in developing their high-level investigative skills.	
	Relative Strengths - Students' understanding of scientific processes and methods. - Students' ability to articulate and discuss their scientific understanding.	Areas of Improvement Progress of a few more-able students in developing high-level investigative skills.



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Other subjects	- Students' achievement in other subjects is outstanding overall. Reliable school progress data and lesson observations indicate that most students make better than expected progress. - Attainment is outstanding overall. Internal assessment indicates outstanding attainment which reflects what is seen in most lessons. In physical education (PE), the large majority of students acquire technical skills in their sports but do not consolidate their skills sufficiently through more competition. - In art, students make progress in developing insightful evaluations about the work of artists around the world. Students' progress well in making choices to develop their own creativity and imagination. Students develop their skills of rhythm and tempo in music and use them well in performing songs. In computing, students acquire comprehensive knowledge and use a wide range of computer applications. - All groups make better than expected progress in most other subjects.	
	Relative Strengths - Students' awareness and evaluations of artists' work from around the world. - Students' computing skills and use of wide range of applications.	Areas of Improvement Students' competitive skills in PE.

Learning Skills	- Learning skills are outstanding overall. Most students are reflective learners and work purposely in paired and group activities which help them know their strengths and what they need to do to improve. As a result, students choose the level of demand for tasks in line with HPL strategies. - Students regularly apply their learning to the real world and make meaningful connections between subjects. This is a regular feature of learning within the school. - Older students become increasingly confident in guiding their own learning. They learn to think critically in solving problems. Challenges in class frequently ensure they use their innovative and creative skills very well to find solutions. - In a very few lessons, more-able students do not develop higher innovation and creativity skills.	
	Relative Strengths - Students' engagement in their work including co-operative group and paired activities and choosing the level of challenge in tasks. - Students' creative, innovative and critical thinking skills.	Areas of Improvement Higher innovation and creativity skills for the more able in a very few lessons.



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

Indicators:	KG	Primary	Middle	High
Personal development	Outstanding	Outstanding	N/A	N/A
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Outstanding	Outstanding	N/A	N/A
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Outstanding	Outstanding	N/A	N/A
- Students' personal and social development is outstanding. - Students display fully positive and responsible attitudes and are very supportive of each other as they progress through the school. They always display exemplary behaviour. High quality relationships between students and teachers helps all individuals to develop confidently and happily. The attendance of students at 96% is very good. Students are punctual in arriving at school and to lessons. - Students have a comprehensive understanding of safe and healthy living and respond positively to school initiatives, for example, the 'Health Act' passed by the school's student parliament. - Students demonstrate an outstanding understanding of Islamic values. They articulate how this affects their daily life such as choosing to behave properly. They are very knowledgeable and respectful of the traditions and heritage of the UAE. Most students have an extensive understanding of other world cultures and recognise similarities and differences between a range of cultures. - Students are fully aware of their responsibilities in the school community and participate actively in volunteering within school and the local community; for example, participating in a 'Tolerance' project with two government schools, collating educational resources to send to refugees and raising money for a range of charities. - Students show a fully positive work ethic and are innovative and creative in lessons and in school-wide projects. Examples include older students' outstanding entrepreneurial skills in establishing, marketing and designing a telephone application. - Students care for their school environment and actively participate in projects to improve it. They demonstrate strong awareness of wider environmental issues and sustainability Areas of Relative Strength: - Highly positive behaviour and relationships across the school. - Students' understanding of Islamic values, UAE culture and other world cultures. - Students' innovation, creativity and entrepreneurial skills. Areas for Improvement: - Attendance to an outstanding level.				



Performance Standard 3: Teaching and assessment

Indicators:	KG	Primary	Middle	High
Teaching for effective learning	Outstanding	Outstanding	N/A	N/A
Assessment	Outstanding	Outstanding	N/A	N/A
- The overall quality of teaching and assessment is outstanding. - Most teachers use innovative pedagogy to engage students in their learning. They plan engaging and relevant lessons and use time and resources creatively, although students' use of technology is less prevalent in some subjects. - Skilful questioning engages students in dialogue and fosters meaningful discussions, insightful responses, reflections and evaluations from students. - Teachers have high expectations of students of all abilities and groups, including SEN students, those with English as an additional language (EAL) and Emirate students, however the impact on Emirate students' attainment is not yet evident. They use strategies to meet the needs of individual students in lessons. They provide a choice of challenging work and support students in focus groups. - Creative and imaginative lessons ensure that students think critically, solve problems, contribute innovative ideas and grow as individual learners. - Internal and external assessments, linked to the English National curriculum, provide teachers with reliable measures of students' progress. Processes for comparing this data with international benchmarks, particularly in writing, are not yet very efficient. - Data is analysed and is expertly used to move students' learning forward. As a result, teachers have in-depth knowledge of what students do well and what they need to do to improve. This has not yet led to improved attainment for the Emirati students - Assessment in lessons is exemplary. Teachers offer immediate, verbal and written feedback that students respond to. Students routinely assess their own learning against a set of criteria and can suggest ways to improve their own work. Areas of Relative Strength: - Innovative teaching strategies to meet the needs of individuals as well as groups of students. - Reliable measures of students' progress. - Exemplary verbal and written feedback that empowers students to improve their work. Areas for Improvement: - Using learning technologies regularly, across all subjects, to optimise students' learning. - Adaptation of teachers' planning and effective use of assessment data to raise Emirate students' attainment.				



Performance Standard 4: Curriculum

Indicators:	KG	Primary	Middle	High
Curriculum design and implementation	Outstanding	Outstanding	N/A	N/A
Curriculum adaptation	Outstanding	Outstanding	N/A	N/A
- The overall quality of the curriculum is outstanding and has a clear rationale. - Curriculum planning very effectively provides balance and promotes innovation and challenge. It has an excellent focus on enquiry-led and practical-based work. The Arabic curriculum caters fully for first and additional language speakers. A stimulating KG curriculum ensures children make rapid progress in developing a wide range of skills. - The school has established interactive cross-curricula links between areas of learning in different subjects. This fully promotes students' speaking, listening and reading skills. Staff are working very well to ensure that the latest learning technologies are incorporated into curriculum planning. However, aspects of this development have not yet been fully rolled out across the school. - Teachers modify the curriculum successfully to match the needs of all groups of students including SEN, EAL gifted and talented (G&T). Modifications to ensure Emirate students' attainment is improving over time, are not yet showing the full impact. A wide range of choices is available for students to extend their learning through an extensive programme of extra-curricular and enhancement activities. This includes an excellent range of innovative and creative opportunities for all students outside classrooms and in lessons. The curriculum is very regularly reviewed to ensure the incorporation of any current UAE national projects and new educational initiatives linked to staff action-research projects. - High quality links to Emirati culture and UAE society are very well embedded throughout the curriculum. - Moral Education is successfully delivered through thought-provoking and motivational lessons. This impacts strongly on supporting students' well-being and understanding of important moral values. Themes considered within this programme are also fully incorporated into all lesson planning and in school assemblies. Areas of Relative Strength: - An expansive curriculum that caters for the interests and needs of almost all students and which promotes their innovative and creative skills. - Planning of cross-curricula links to broaden and enhance learning in all subjects. Areas for Improvement: - Full implementation of the school's curriculum planning in relation to the use of learning technology.				



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

Indicators:	KG	Primary	Middle	High
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection/ safeguarding	Outstanding	Outstanding	N/A	N/A
Care and support	Outstanding	Outstanding	N/A	N/A
- The overall quality of protection, care, guidance and support of students is outstanding. - Procedures for safeguarding are rigorous. The child protection policy is shared with students, parents, school staff, bus drivers and supervisors, and fully understood. Students are fully aware of who to go to but also have devolved responsibility to take care of themselves and each other. - The school is proactive in maintaining the building as well as making structural changes, for example to ensure quick access from the pool to the clinic. - Classrooms are moved to accommodate staff or students who require special access. The prayer room has been relocated to the centre of the school to raise the profile of the importance of prayer in Islam. - Safe and healthy lifestyles are promoted in innovative ways, including road safety and mental wellbeing. - A pastoral care team works with students, staff and parents to promote good behaviour and resolve any issues. - Attendance has improved to 96% due to stringent rules, class rewards and raising awareness of students and parents about the impact on learning, but is not yet at the highest level. - Effective school procedures for identifying SEN and G&T students, including with external agencies, ensure that prompt action can be taken. A team of well-qualified teachers and an SEN specialist provides exemplary support for these students, and their teachers, so students can make their best personal and academic progress. G&T students are part of the academy of excellence and attend masterclasses to nurture their talents. Students are prepared for transitions within the school as well as to secondary school. Early morning clubs nurture students' academic and personal development. The well-being of students is central to every school initiative. Areas of Relative Strength: - Exemplary care and support for all students, including SEN and G&T. - Proactive and far-reaching promotion of health, including mental well-being. Areas for Improvement: - Systems for promoting and managing attendance to meet the target of 98% or more .				



Performance Standard 6: Leadership and management

Indicators:	
The effectiveness of leadership	Outstanding
Self-evaluation and improvement planning	Outstanding
Partnerships with parents and the community	Outstanding
Governance	Outstanding
Management, staffing, facilities and resources	Outstanding
- The inspirational principal, supported by the leadership team, has established a dynamic vision which is understood by all. The team has developed exemplary practice in teaching. Morale is very high within this inclusive school. - School leaders' and teachers' approaches to self-evaluation are systematic and rigorous. The School Development Plan (SDP) drives improvement highly successfully within the school. The comprehensive monitoring of teaching and learning by the extended leadership team leads to the identification and development of consistent best practice in teaching, learning and assessment. All recommendations from the previous report are being addressed. - Partnerships with parents and the community are outstanding. School leaders survey parental opinion regularly and act upon their views. Parents receive accurate and informative reports which identify what their children need to do to improve. - Very positive national and international links with sports and arts groups, including links with Paraguay as a Champion School for the Special Olympics, enrich students' learning experiences. - The Board of Governors has a comprehensive and accurate view of the school. They have a sound understanding of the school's performance. The Board is both supportive and appropriately challenging to ensure the continued very high performance of the school. There is scope to develop parental involvement even more in the decision-making processes. - The school is managed very efficiently on a day-to-day basis. The premises are used very well by staff to provide a high-quality learning environment. Learning technology is used very well by teachers but there is scope for students to access and use it more in lessons. The school is very well resourced to meet the needs of its curriculum. - The school strongly promotes international assessment such as TIMSS and PISA. Challenges and assessments within the school match closely to international assessments.	
Areas of Relative Strength:	
- Inspirational principal who has established a culture of continuous school improvement. - High quality self-evaluation school improvement planning.	
Areas for Improvement:	
Further parental involvement in decision-making processes.	



Provision for Reading

Provision for Reading

- The school library is an attractive space, with an extensive range of books, used by students, staff and parents. Adult and student librarians organise books, so they are easy for children and students to choose independently. There are a few iPads in the library for research.
- Teachers and librarians frequently read aloud to students. Librarians track patterns in students' reading and help to expand their choices. They arrange author visits, including Arab and local authors. Competitions, clubs and assemblies encourage reading.
- The school has implemented a number of initiatives to improve reading, as most students have EAL. The day begins with phonics or guided reading sessions and story time for KG at the end of each day.
- Lists of books, movies, websites and apps are sent to parents. Online reading programmes, including cross-curricular reading, are provided for use at home, in English and Arabic.
- Staff are well-trained to teach reading and introduce current initiatives such as Book-talk. Students' reading is tracked, and specific targets identified to accelerate progress. Topics and themes and Talk for Writing are centred around a book. Reading clubs support reluctant readers or students new to the English language, engaging them in reading through interactive programmes.