



National Agenda



Early years



Special educational
needs and disabilities



Innovation

Inspection Report 2015-2016

Sharjah American International Private
School

Curriculum: US

Overall rating: Acceptable

Read more about the school



www.khda.gov.ae

“Without
challenges,
we won't feel
the taste of
success and
happiness”



Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum

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School information

General information



Location	Al Warqaa
Type of school	Private
Opening year of school	2005
Website	www.saisdubai.net
Telephone	04-280-1111
Address	Al Warqaa 1 PO Box: 47755
Principal	Mrs. Dianne Theresa Leverett
Language of instruction	English
Inspection dates	8 to 11 February 2016

Students



Gender of students	Boys and girls
Age range	4-17
Grades or year groups	Kindergarten 1 to Grade 12
Number of students on roll	1,568
Number of children in pre-kindergarten	0
Number of Emirati students	569
Number of students with SEND	27
Largest nationality group of students	Arab

Teachers / Support staff



Number of teachers	131
Largest nationality group of teachers	Lebanese
Number of teaching assistants	25
Teacher-student ratio	1:25
Number of guidance counsellors	1
Teacher turnover	14%

Curriculum



Educational permit / Licence	US
Main curriculum	US / MoE
External tests and examinations	IBT, SAT I, SAT II, TOEFL, IELTS
Accreditation	NEASC candidate
National Agenda benchmark tests	Yes

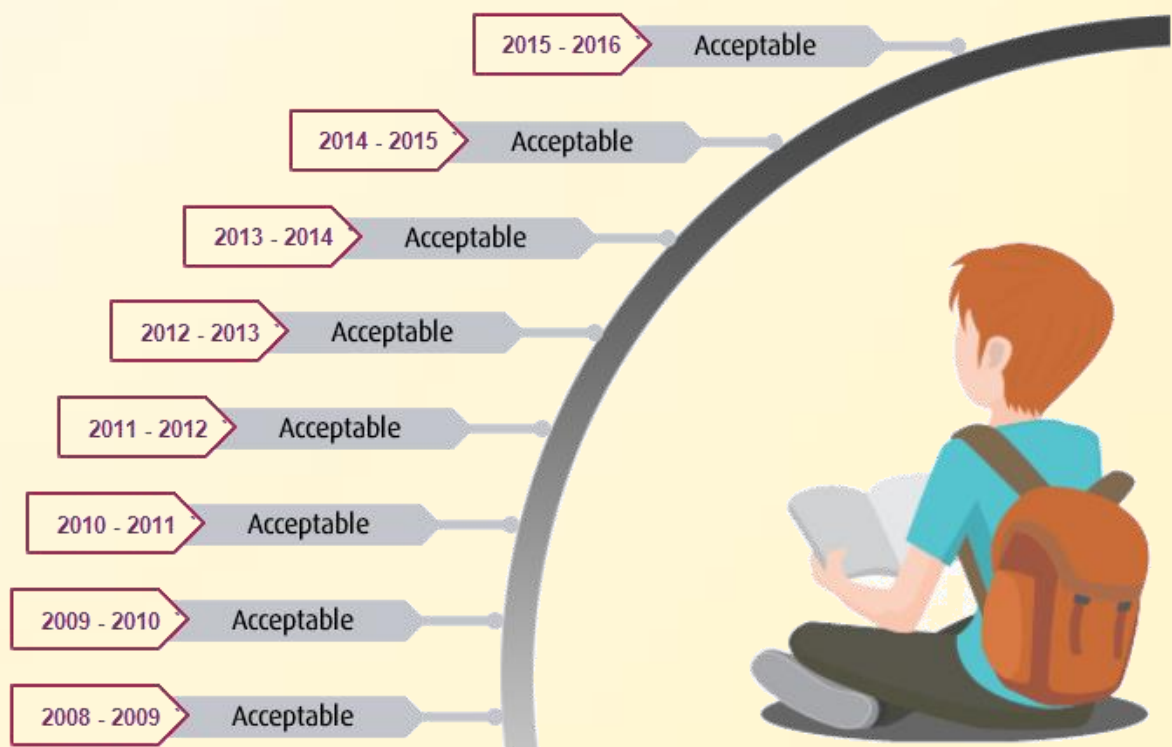


Summary for parents and the community

Sharjah American International Private School was inspected by DSIB from 8 to 11 of February 2016. The overall quality of education provided by the school was found to be **acceptable**.

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, **Sharjah American International Private School** provided an **acceptable** quality of education for its students.

- Attainment, progress and learning skills for children in the kindergarten (KG) were good in all subjects.
- Attainment, progress and learning skills in all subjects, for students in the other phase were mainly acceptable.
- The personal and social development of students was good across most phases of the school.
- Teaching in the KG was good, with inquiry based learning and skills development playing key roles. The quality of teaching in the rest of the school varied widely, with some examples of excellent teaching but many others of just acceptable quality. Many teachers knew their students well, and used that knowledge to make adjustments to their teaching. However, the systematic analysis of assessment information to show gaps in students' learning in a timely way were not strong.
- The curriculum was broad, balanced and well-designed. The enactment of the full curriculum, with enrichment, use of technology, research and student initiated investigation, was still developing.
- The care and support provided to students was of acceptable quality, as was the overall provision for their health and safety. While students were generally safe and cared for, there were a few areas to be addressed urgently.
- The school was generally well managed with visionary leadership at the senior level. There was room for greater development of that vision by the full leadership team, and a need for increased resources to enable more active approaches to learning.



What did the school do well?

- The good progress made by children in the KG in English, mathematics and science, which was a result of their good learning skills
- Students' good personal and social development across almost all phases of the school
- Good teaching and assessment of learning in the KG
- The good quality curriculum provided for all students
- The good links with parents and the local community.



What does the school need to do next?

- Replace the culture of low expectations prevalent amongst stakeholders and create positive learning environments where all students are challenged to achieve their personal best.
- Develop teachers so that their work reflects the school's curriculum and is supported by resources that enable active learning by the students.
- Improve the quality of curriculum adaptation in the middle and high school phases so that it is at least acceptable.
- Implement a behaviour strategy that involves parents, students and teachers in promoting the well-being of all students.
- Monitor classroom practices consistently and provide rigorous professional development to build an ethos of collective responsibility for students' outcomes across the school community.



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

- Students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) made good progress during withdrawal lessons and one-to-one sessions. Individual education plans were used effectively to teach the curriculum and the progress of students was recorded accurately. The expectations for students in regular classroom settings needed to be higher to ensure that they made better progress.
- The SEND team held regular meetings with parents. At the beginning of each term goals were discussed and the progress of children was reviewed. The students' individual education plans (IEPs) were outlined for the next term and written reports were provided to parents.
- The SEND team consulted with parents and provided workshops on 'Learning Differences' and 'Safety Touch.' Parents expressed very high levels of satisfaction on the quality of support provided by the team.
- Parents were involved in the planning processes for their children and welcomed to visit the school at any time to discuss their concerns. This level of participation had resulted in mutual trust and respect.
- Two guidance counselors worked in the school to support students' academic and social development. The academic guidance counselor met with graduating students on the SEND register to develop transition strategies, whereby they visited institutes and supported students in the registration process.

National Agenda Parameter



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

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

Main points:

- The school met the registration requirements of the National Agenda Parameter. No attainment data from the National Agenda Parameter was available to make a judgement on the school's progress towards meeting the Parameter targets.
- The school had promoted the National Agenda well. All stakeholders were aware of the imperatives and that achieving them was part of the school's journey. Posters were displayed around the school.
- Skills required by the National Agenda were being taught. In science lessons, reasoning, application and data analysis were built into curriculum planning. In mathematics, a term project was a vehicle for developing research skills, creativity and critical thinking. Geometry had been introduced to elementary mathematics with a greater focus upon problem solving. In English, the modifications included more text analysis and poetry.
- Teachers were aware of the National Agenda requirement for critical thinking and inquiry skills within lessons, but these were not consistently developed. However, children's critical thinking and inquiry skills were developing well in the KG. Many other teachers lacked the skills to encourage critical thinking and required focused training.
- Inquiry learning was built into science lessons, but often the practical work followed was prescribed, rather than using scientific methods to solve problems. In mathematics lessons, collaborative problem solving was one way critical thinking was developed. In English lessons, engaging and challenging tasks had been employed to develop students' thinking skills.
- The school had developed a sound platform for information technology use in classes. However, it was not being used consistently well to support students' research, largely due to the limits of the research questions set by teachers. Simplistic topics without depth often led to the downloading of information for student projects without analysis, synthesis or measurable student input.

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 and the governing board had recognized the importance of innovation. They had provided professional development opportunities for teachers on how to embed innovation in their teaching practices. 'Smart' boards had been installed in all KG to Grade 12 classrooms. Students in all grades had subscriptions to learning platforms; and a one-to-one tablet program had been initiated in Grades 5 to 12. The school's curriculum, which was aligned with the Michigan State standards, provided opportunities for the development of innovation skills.

Overall school performance

Acceptable

1. Students' achievement

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

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

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

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Personal development	Good	Good	Acceptable ↓	Good
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Good	Good	Good	Good
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Good	Good	Acceptable ↓	Good

3. Teaching and assessment

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

4. Curriculum

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Curriculum design and implementation	Good	Good	Good	Good
Curriculum adaptation	Good ↑	Acceptable	Weak ↓	Weak ↓

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

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable ↓
Care and support	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable ↓

6. Leadership and management

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



Main inspection report

The Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau (DSIB) is responsible for inspecting and reporting on the standards reached by students and the quality of education provided in Dubai's private schools.

Judgements are made on a six-point scale



Using this scale, the *Main inspection report* contains the judgements about the different aspects, phases and subjects that form the work of the school.

It provides the reasons for the answers to the questions in the *Summary for parents and the community*:

- How well did the school perform overall?
- What did the school do well?
- What does the school need to do next?

1. Students' achievement

KG

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

- In English, most children demonstrated good levels of knowledge and understanding in language development and emergent literacy. They were proficient in their literacy skills, which were in line with the Common Core Curriculum Standard (CCSS) and above international expectations for second language learners. They were able to speak and understand English at grade level and write words phonetically for a purpose. They showed good book knowledge and were able to sequence and retell stories. Their reading skills were developing appropriately.
- In mathematics a majority of the children demonstrated good understanding of mathematical concepts and skills that were attaining above the CCSS expectations. Children made good progress in relation to their assessed starting points and as measured against learning objectives. Their numeracy skills including counting to 30 and above, sorting, measuring and patterning were progressing well. Their mathematical operation skills were often above the expected levels.
- In science, children attained well and made good progress in their understanding of the world. They had improved their knowledge of the weather and healthy living. They also understood their relationship with the environment and how some of their needs were similar to those of plants and animals. Their investigative skills enabled them ask questions based upon they knew and wanted to learn. They were given daily opportunities for making predictions and were sometimes engaged in critical thinking and problem solving, with appropriate prompts from the teachers.

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

- In Islamic education, most elementary school students displayed knowledge and skills within the expected national levels as measured against the Ministry of Education (MoE) curriculum standards. Students knew the Five Pillars of Islam and could list them accurately, but only a minority could explain them. Most students had age-appropriate knowledge of the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH). By Grade 5, students made the expected amount of progress in memorizing short verses of the Holy Qur'an, but their progress in understanding them was slower. In lessons, students made acceptable progress linking the values and manners of Islam to their own lives.
- In learning Arabic as a first language, students had effective reading, comprehension and speaking skills, while their writing skills were developing. Students in the lower elementary grades demonstrated accurate pronunciation of letters and words. In the upper grades students sometimes supported their writing with relevant 'hadeeth' or famous quotes. Students' progress in lessons and over time was adequate. There was no particular difference in the attainment and progress of boys and girls in this phase.
- In learning Arabic as an additional language, the majority of students in the lower grades could speak using very short phrases and demonstrated good listening skills. Most students' speaking skills and knowledge of basic grammar were within the expected levels by Grade 5. Students' progress was better in the lower grades than in the upper grades. Overall, students made acceptable progress in acquiring key vocabulary and knew how to introduce themselves. Students' progress in writing Arabic was slow.
- Students' attainment in English was in line with the CCSS. Their progress in lessons and over time, from their starting points, was good. Speaking and listening skills had risen to around grade averages. Students confidently contributed interesting ideas to discussions. Their reading comprehension and writing skills were not as strong, throughout all elementary grades. Internal test results were higher than external, but below curriculum expectations. Test results showed that the girls' attainment and progress were better than boys and that Emirati students made slower progress than others. Students with SEND made acceptable progress.
- Attainment in mathematics was broadly in line with the CCSS and their progress was acceptable. The youngest students made rapid progress. This was because the curriculum had been adapted to provide hands-on experiences for them. Their understanding of number work was particularly well-established. The older students were catching up on important areas such as geometry, money and time which had previously been insufficiently learned. Internal test results were generous when compared to external tests. However, both showed that girls consistently made more rapid progress than boys and that the progress of Emirati students was generally slower than others. Students with SEND made acceptable progress. Few students reached the highest levels in mathematics.

- In science attainment and progress was in line with the expectations of the Next Generation Science Standards (NGGS). Internal test results were inflated when compared with external international testing standards. In lessons, most students demonstrated levels of scientific understanding that were age appropriate when linked to realistic learning objectives. Their ability to use scientific method was inconsistent and students were too dependent upon their teachers. In the better lessons students were involved in inquiry, investigation and meaningful practical work. When students were given opportunities to communicate their scientific knowledge, they demonstrated accurate use of complex vocabulary. Girls performed more strongly than boys; Emirati boys were the weakest group. Students with SEND made acceptable progress.

Middle

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

- In Islamic education, most middle school students demonstrated acceptable knowledge of Islamic concepts and practices. Students' attainment had been acceptable for the past few years. Students could recall key events from the lives of Prophets and Messengers (PBUT) accurately and could explain how Zakat would be calculated. However, they had difficulty in differentiating Zakat and Sadaqqa (optional and obligatory). They knew the Pillars of Islam, but a few had difficulty in differentiating the Pillars of Islam and the Pillars of Faith. In lessons, students made acceptable progress in acquiring knowledge of Islam's morals, values and manners, such as the importance of social contributions. Students' progress in memorizing, understanding or referring to the verses of the Holy Qur'an was slow. Girls outperformed boys in this subject.
- In Arabic as a first language, students developed their listening, speaking, and reading skills to levels in line with national curriculum expectations. They could comprehend and analyse texts well and respond to some challenging questions. Their writing skills were still developing below the level of their reading skills. Over time, students showed acceptable progress in applying grammatical rules in their writing and in their reading comprehension. Girls in this phase made slightly better progress than boys.
- In Arabic as an additional language, in the absence of external measures, most students demonstrated broadly acceptable language skills. Students' writing skills were developing slower than their listening, speaking and reading skills. In lessons, students acquired knowledge of words and learned to say them in short, correct sentences at a good rate. Students' progress over time was good in listening, speaking and reading simple texts. Generally, girls made better progress than boys.
- Most students' English work was broadly in line with age-appropriate CCSS expectations. Acceptable progress was made in relation to students' starting points. Their attainment and progress were below the levels indicated by the school's assessments and above those indicated by external tests. Internal and external tests showed a continuing trend of higher attainment and more rapid progress by girls and expatriates than boys and Emirati students. Their speaking and listening skills were a strength, especially as demonstrated by girls. On some occasions girls presented clear, well-articulated arguments which were well matched to their audiences. Reading skills, especially textual analysis, and writing, whilst improving, were not strong. Students with SEND made acceptable progress.

- Attainment against the CCSS for mathematics was broadly aligned with students' grade levels. Internal tests results provided an inflated view of their attainment when compared with external test results. Most students had sound knowledge and understanding of algebra, data display and polynomials and used mathematical terms appropriately. Their mental mathematical skills were improving. Many students found geometry, solving problems and applying skills to real life difficult. The development of higher level thinking and research skills was limited. This held back students' progress, especially that of the highest attainers. Progress in lessons and against starting points was acceptable, including that by students with SEND. Over time, boys and Emirati students made slower progress than others.
- In science attainment and progress were acceptable when measured against the NGSS expectations. In the better lessons opportunities were provided for students to use technology effectively to support learning. When lessons included inquiry, investigation or practical work their progress was enhanced as students were challenged to solve problems and think critically. Internal assessment data were shown to be inflated when compared with international test results. Most students achieved levels in line with international performance standards. Students were more engaged when topics were taught through the use of relevant and interesting real life contexts. Students enjoyed presenting their learning using complex and mostly accurate vocabulary. Girls made better progress than boys and Emirati boys made the least progress. Students with SEND made acceptable progress.

High

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

- In Islamic education, attainment levels were within the expectations of the national MoE curriculum expectations. Students had the expected knowledge of the main concepts and Islamic principles and the sources of laws and regulations in Islam (Fiqh). Students' answers to text book questions reflected a basic level of understanding; they gave simple and very short answers and were mostly recalling factual knowledge. In lessons, students made acceptable progress, for example in acquiring knowledge of marriage contracts. However, they made slower progress in acquiring a deep understanding of the Holy Qur'an. Their ability to link the Holy Qur'an, Hadeeth and other concepts was less developed. The progress made by girls was better than that of the boys.
- In learning Arabic as a first language, most students had acceptable listening and reading skills. Their skills in literature analysis were adequate. They had acceptable conversational and writing skills. Students' literature analysis skills were strong, but not consistently transferred into their classroom conversations or writing production. Girls progressed slightly better in their Arabic language skills than boys in this phase.
- In Arabic as an additional language, students acquired language skills broadly in line with expected levels for additional language speakers. Students' attainment levels had been acceptable for the past few years. In lessons, students displayed secure listening skills and had sufficient knowledge words and phrases. Students could decode and recognize simple texts. The majority of students' writing was limited to words and simple sentences. Students made acceptable progress in using their knowledge of words and basic grammar to speak about familiar situations, but made slower progress when applying that knowledge to unfamiliar situations. Girls made better progress than boys.

- Attainment in English was broadly aligned to the expectations of the CCSS and progress was acceptable, including that made by students with SEND. Many students, especially girls, attained above the curriculum expectations in all skills, including writing. In lessons, most students expressed complex ideas and arguments fluently when in discussions. A large proportion, especially those new to the school, struggled to express themselves as clearly in writing because they lacked basic skills. Their reading skills developed rapidly, but many found the analysis of literary texts to be taxing. Internal tests indicated that students exceeded the curriculum expectations, whilst external tests showed that their attainment was below the age-related benchmarks. Tests indicated consistently higher attainment and more rapid progress by girls than boys.
- In mathematics attainment and progress were broadly aligned with grade level expectations, as measured against the CCSS. Over time, students' attainment and progress varied between different groups. For example, girls' achievement was consistently higher than that of boys. Expatriate students generally achieved better than Emirati students. External benchmark tests showed students attainment to be below international standards and much lower than the school-based assessments. In lessons, work was broadly aligned to curriculum standards and students' progress was acceptable. Most students had sound knowledge and understanding of trigonometry, data analysis and polynomials. However, their application of mathematics to real life, probability, and higher order thinking skills were weaker. Students with SEND made acceptable progress from their starting points.
- In science, attainment and progresses broadly in line with expectations. Students usually worked co-operatively and efficiently to discuss science, solve problems and to research topics electronically. Practical investigations using the scientific method were not a common feature of most lessons, so students' predictive, investigative and analytical skills were underdeveloped. Attainment in physics was the strongest and chemistry the weakest. Results indicated that girls performed significantly better than the boys in all three sciences and Emirati boys were the weakest performers. Internal assessments were shown to be inflated against international test data. Students achieved levels broadly in line with the NGSS expectations. Students with SEND made acceptable progress. Overall, too little was expected of all students.

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

- Students were engaged in learning whenever they were given the appropriate opportunities and challenged at the right levels. In KG, children were active and involved most of the time. This was also true of students in a few middle and high school science lessons. Both girls and boys enjoyed their learning when they got enough feedback from their teachers to help them improve.
- There were generally limited opportunities for students to experience collaborative learning. In many lessons, students were seen working as a group on one shared worksheet, which did not promote true collaboration. Those activities were more successful in KG, when children asked each other questions and offered support when needed. In a few science classes, students communicated their science concepts using accurate vocabulary, yet, this collaboration was often held back by the attitudes of a few boys in the middle school.
- Students applied their learning and made real life connections in some lessons. For example, they reflected upon their knowledge of an Arabic literature text on 'family ties' and connected it to their lives. In the KG, this was true at a story time when the characters, setting and plot reminded them of their own experiences. Similar observations were made in some English literature, science and Islamic education lessons. The application of learning to the real world remained insufficiently implemented across the school.

- Students were given opportunities to respond to critical thinking questions. However, their abilities to conduct research inquiries and problem solve were done at basic levels. They made use of technology resources such as tablet computers and students were proficient users. However, those resources were not used to promote inquiry and research effectively, and were generally limited to basic application most of the time.

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

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Personal development	Good	Good	Acceptable ↓	Good

- Students' self-discipline and general behavior were often good features. However, a minority of students disrupted some lessons and elements of bullying existed in some grades. In classes that were orderly in most phases, students exercised good levels of self-control and maturity, resulting in good progress.
- The students' understanding of personal responsibility and social development were a positive feature in a majority of lessons. However, in the middle school, the skills of independence, self-reliance and a willingness to accept supportive feedback were less developed among boys.
- The quality of staff to student relationships was varied, and as a consequence, the effectiveness of a number of lessons was barely acceptable. Boys in the middle school were less supportive in their attitudes and willingness to cooperate with their peers or teachers. They missed opportunities to improve their school work and personal development.
- Only a minority of students demonstrated awareness of the school's advice on healthy lifestyles. Students contributed to a survey which was expected to influence the provision of healthier food options in the canteen. Physical education activities were a popular choice and viewed as important by students. They helped their development of life-long skills and expertise in a variety of sports.
- The students' attendance levels ranged from acceptable to good. In all phases, the majority of students were insufficiently aware of the importance or value of arriving for lessons on time and the positive effects these behaviours had on their own levels of achievement.

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

- Students across the school demonstrated clear understanding of the values of Islam and their influence upon the UAE. They indicated that these values were universal. They listed kindness and the acceptance of others as some of these common values.
- Most students had good knowledge of the UAE's history and heritage and how its development and advancement had evolved in recent years. Emirati and expatriate students were proud of the UAE; they talked about its achievements and landmarks enthusiastically.

- Students' knowledge and understanding of their cultures and backgrounds was generally good. Students were keen to share some of their features. However, students' knowledge of the wider world and other cultures was often only basic.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Good	Good	Acceptable ↓	Good

- Most students had clear understanding of their responsibilities towards the school and the community. Many represented their peers on the school council. Others campaigned for and designed 'Hero' badges which were awarded for acts that supported the school's values. Students contributed to the wider community through participation in competitions and raising money for charity.
- Most students had a positive work ethic, worked hard and collaborated well with their teachers, for example by taking it upon themselves to tidy their classrooms at recess. They showed initiative, such as deciding to produce videos of the national anthem and making a cookery programme. Older students were planning and running a business fair, selling products to their peers.
- Most students had good awareness of environmental issues. They made positive contributions, such as setting up the Agriculture Club to grow vegetables. The majority took great care of their environment. Some middle school boys, however, were less aware of their responsibilities towards others and showed less concern for their environment. They did not keep their classrooms clean and tidy and threw their litter on the floor.

3. Teaching and assessment

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

- Most teachers demonstrated secure knowledge of their subjects. Teachers' competencies in delivering their subjects were inconsistent across the phases and subjects. While these were strong in the KG, they varied elsewhere in the school. Some teachers lacked full understanding of how their subjects were learned by their students.
- Teachers in the KG planned imaginative lessons and often included hands-on activities that ensured progress in children's development. However, lesson planning was less effective in the upper phases of the school. The learning environment in the girls' section was more motivating and attractive than in the boys' section. In too many lessons, planning was mainly textbook based. Teachers in the KG had consistently high expectations of the children. Elsewhere in the school, teachers' expectations were too low. Consequently, students' progress was often restricted.
- Respectful relationships were evident in almost all lessons. Teachers and students interacted positively. However, teachers' questioning was not sufficiently skilful to elicit quality responses from their students. Too many teachers answered their own questions or had a single answer in mind at the start. Interactions and teachers' questions were more purposeful in the KG.

- Most teachers were aware of the need to use different strategies to meet the needs of students. In the best lessons, a range of strategies and activities were used. However, this was not a common feature in the majority of lessons, except in the KG where teachers used several developmentally appropriate strategies throughout their lessons.
- Teachers' abilities to promote and develop students' critical thinking skills were emerging. The teaching occasionally included some opportunities to develop these skills. In a few lessons, students were allowed to discuss, debate, analyze and evaluate ideas.
- Teachers generally modelled the use of the Arabic language appropriately; but effective student-centred teaching strategies, especially task differentiation, were rare. The teaching pace and the dominance by teachers in some lessons limited students' progress. The teaching quality in Arabic as an additional language was generally acceptable. Teaching was more engaging in lower elementary and the middle phase where teachers had appropriate expectations from their students.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Assessment	Good 	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

- The school performed regular assessments of students' attainment in the key subjects. These assessments were linked to the school's curriculum standards in most subjects. Internal assessments were shown to be unreliable when compared to external, international testing data. In the KG, processes for assessing the children's learning were clear and coherent. Their skills assessment reports were directly linked to the CCSS and provided adequate measures of the children's progress.
- The school benchmarked their internal test and examination data against broadly accepted international standards. Measures of Academic Progress had been used previously, but in 2015 International Benchmark Tests were conducted across Grades 4 to 10. External testing of the older high school students was not consistent and consequently the attainment of those students who were not tested was uncertain. For example, only 50 per cent of these students took the SAT reading test.
- The analysis of internal and external testing data was a weakness in the school. Individual subject data had been analysed but was not used to set students' or school-wide attainment goals. Detailed assessment information had been compiled on the main student groupings. The performances of boys, girls, expatriates and Emiratis had been extracted and areas of concern were identified. Although subject leaders and co-ordinators were in receipt of this data, only teachers in KG were using it properly.
- The school was beginning to use assessment data to inform planning. This was at an early stage, since all staff members did not use the assessment data consistently to adapt the curriculum or plan lessons effectively to meet students' needs. The use of assessment data in goal setting was not embedded, so the levels of challenge to students in lessons was frequently inappropriate.
- Most teachers knew their students very well. Students were frequently given helpful support, feedback and follow up in lessons. However, there was no consistency in the grading of students' work. Teachers' guidance to students on how to improve was rarely seen in their notebooks. Students' self or peer evaluation was not evident in the lesson plans, although reflections on learning did occur in some lessons. Students were learning how to assess their own strengths and weaknesses.

4. Curriculum

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Curriculum design and implementation	Good	Good	Good	Good

- The curriculum was aligned with the Michigan State Curriculum Standards which had incorporated the CCSS in English language, the arts and mathematics, as well the NGSS for science. The curricula for Arabic and Islamic education were based upon the MoE standards. There was breadth and balance between the relevant skills in all subjects. The curriculum for children in the KG used a project-based learning approach which was age appropriate and allowed the children to develop good understanding.
- The curriculum standards were used to guide planning. Annual reviews and assessment data were sometimes used to ensure that students were prepared for the next phases of their education, including after graduation.
- The curriculum included an adequate range of opportunities for the older students, which provided for their development in the arts, business and additional languages. The play based curriculum for the younger children allowed them to make choices and supported their independent learning across a range of stimulating and highly relevant activities.
- Few cross curricular links were evident in lessons in all subject areas. The opportunities for students to make connections to their personal and daily experiences were limited. There was some evidence of building cross curricular links with the new focus on 21st century learning skills. However, these still needed further development.
- The school conducted regular reviews of the curriculum, identified gaps in it and made the changes they deemed appropriate.
- The school taught UAE social studies as a discrete subject. The curriculum strictly followed the MoE curriculum for Grades 1 to 9. The curriculum was reviewed to establish some links with Arabic as a first language and Islamic education when this was relevant and appropriate.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Curriculum adaptation	Good 	Acceptable	Weak 	Weak 

- The curriculum was modified in parts to meet the needs of some groups of students, including those with SEND and the gifted and talented. The modified curriculum in the KG, which included a play based approach, took full account of the way young children learn. In Islamic education, there were limited modifications to address the needs of students with SEND.
- The extra-curricular activities and links with the local and wider communities were limited. There were not enough opportunities for students to participate in the activities of their choice, especially in the sports program. Curriculum design had yet to promote enterprise in social, cultural and scientific activities. In the KG children enjoyed some after school activities which included art and gymnastics.
- In the KG there were some planned programs to promote the children's understanding of the UAE's culture. However, in all other phases there were few opportunities for students to develop their knowledge, understanding and appreciation of the heritage, culture and values of the UAE.

- Arabic as a first language was taught to KG 1 and KG 2 children for four periods per week. The curriculum was based on a teacher compiled set of standards. It was delivered based through best pedagogical practices for this age group.

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

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable ↓

- The implementation of child protection and safeguarding procedures lacked rigour and was familiar to senior members of staff and administration rather than the whole school community. The training of the staff was inconsistent and the arrangements for an effective and secure school policy on cyber safety were not given sufficient priority.
- Transport policy was defined and practical measures that addressed safer traffic management were at the planning stage. The staff involved in supervision and evacuation drills required comprehensive training so that regulatory requirements were met. Regular risk assessments were required to improve safety and a shared sense of responsibility for a hygienic and healthier school environment.
- The school maintained medical records of all students and managed effectively the chemicals in the science laboratories. Medication was stored securely and school leaders well informed about how and by whom any medicine could be administered.
- The equipment and classrooms in the boys' section were not well suited to an inclusive or healthy environment. The poor furniture impeded learning in paired or group settings and lockers were not properly maintained to secure the personal items of students. There was no lift for students with a physical disability or injury.
- The promotion of healthy lifestyles, such as diet and physical exercise, were viewed by the staff as a particular challenge. The variety of food was under review, however, the school needed greater support from parents and students to embrace good practice and understand the value of healthier choices and lifestyles.

	KG	Elementary	Middle	High
Care and support	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable ↓	Acceptable ↓

- Behavior management was not fully understood by all students and the school's policy differed across the phases. Parents and students required comprehensive information about the school's expectations for appropriate behavior among all groups, especially the middle school aged boys. The implementation of a holistic and positive behavior strategy was not evident.
- The systems to manage attendance and punctuality required clarity and consistency in implementation. Prompt and decisive action was necessary to promote a culture of punctuality as a lifelong skill. The management of and procedures for unauthorized absences and lateness required coherence and a shared vision between the school and the parents.

- Appropriate systems were in place to identify students' needs. Those with behavioral needs were not prioritized and the early identification of KG children was still a work in progress. Teachers referred children to the coordinators and this information was passed on to the SEND team for consideration. This process slowed the identification of students' needs and the provision of support to them thereafter.
- The school was inclusive and provided support to a wide range of students. Teaching in one to one, withdrawal or whole-class settings resulted in good progress by students. Prioritising support for students with severe behavioral issues, especially boys, was developing. The support available for gifted and talented students was consistent and they accessed an enriched curriculum.
- School counselors supported students' personal, social and academic development. The guidance counselor helped graduating students with SEND and developed exit and transition strategies, whereby they visited institutes and colleges and were given support in the registration process. This strategy was highly valued by the students.

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

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

Acceptable ↓

- The SEND team was committed to developing an inclusive school. Parents valued highly the support that leaders gave to families and how the school community welcomed them. School leaders were less effective in assessing and monitoring the inappropriate behavior of a number of boys.
- The SEND identification process was slow and cumbersome. Students with behavioral needs were not prioritized and earlier identification of children in KG was required.
- The SEND team consulted with parents and provided advice and guidance, along with strategies to help parents deal with various challenges. Workshops were conducted on 'Learning Differences' and 'Safety Touch' and parents were given opportunities to express their opinions. During the formal meeting with parents during the inspection, high levels of satisfaction were expressed about the quality of support provided by the school.
- The SEND team modified the curriculum based on the psycho-educational assessment recommendations and teacher's feedback on student's strengths and needs. Despite all of this good work and support, during actual lessons, few teachers made consistent efforts to modify content or consistently support students with SEND.
- The majority of students with SEND made weak to acceptable progress in classroom settings. There was better progress made during withdrawal and one-to-one sessions. Learning support teachers in those classes used the IEPs as guides to teaching and learning outcomes and recorded the progress made by their students accurately.

6. Leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership

Acceptable ↓

- As part of a larger vision of growth, changes were initiated that led to improvements in the KG. These initiatives were strategic steps to improve the quality of teaching and presentation of the curriculum through active learning approaches. The school had made first steps to expand these changes to the other phases of the school. Leaders demonstrated a commitment to operating an inclusive school.
- Most leaders had secure knowledge of the curriculum. Their ability to establish the best teaching and assessment practices to promote a positive learning culture with high expectations for all students was less secure.
- Communication with all teachers, students and parents was consistently professional. The new initiatives were well communicated prior to their implementation. In most respects, roles and responsibilities were clear. The existing distributed management and leadership roles did not lead to shared accountability for good quality student outcomes.
- The analysis of the strengths and needs of the school for accreditation self- involved a wide cross section of the staff. This resulted in a very clear, detailed and accurate understanding of the school, which was shared. Actions taken on some of the weaker areas had not resulted in improvements.
- Significant improvements were made in many aspects of the KG over the past year. The capacity to make improvements was inconsistent across the school's different leaders.

School self-evaluation and improvement planning

Acceptable

- A wide cross section of the staff was involved in analysing the strengths and needs of the school as part of a year-long self-study process. Consequently, comprehensive information was gathered and analysed well to identify strengths and areas for improvement, which were known to the full staff. The priorities for growth were less clearly communicated.
- Performance management arrangements were inconsistent; therefore, there were insufficient effects upon students' attainment and progress. The evaluation of teaching and students' outcomes were not strong features of the school. As a result, the establishment of clear learning goals for students was not commonly done.
- School improvement plans were made to positively influence the three upper phases of the school, so as to gain significant improvements such as those found in the KG. Comprehensive plans which addressed the need for high expectations of all learners were not available.
- The significant changes to the KG fully met one of the recommendations of the last inspection report. In three other areas the school met or partially met recommendations. The exception was the recommendation for the improvement of Arabic and Islamic education, which was not met. Not all staff members were engaged in implementing changes within the school, but most showed commitment to improvement.

Partnerships with parents and the community	Good
- Parents showed pride that their views were considered by the school when decisions were made or improvements considered. The advisory board, in particular, was effective in conveying the views of parents. - Parents appreciated the different methods of communication used by the school. Social media as well as conventional means were used effectively as channels for communication about special events and students' interests. - School reports were offered at the end of each term, with progress reports at mid-term. These reports gave a fair and accurate representation of students' achievements. Parent conferences were attended by most parents. Parents were not always made aware of their children's next steps needed for better learning. - Productive links with the wider community took place occasionally, such as sporting events with other schools, or other intermural competitions. Students took part in projects and other activities outside the school. Activities to fund-raise or contribute charitably in the community involved students across each phase of the school.	

Governance	Acceptable ↓
- The governing board included the school's owner and a few closely connected individuals. It was informed by an advisory board representing parents and students, and through them the principal gained detailed knowledge about the school and its needs. - The governing board monitored the school's actions. To some extent it held senior leaders accountable for the school's performance, with particular emphasis on the personal development of all students. Senior leaders were not held fully accountable for low student outcomes, particularly their attainment and progress in learning the key subjects. - The governing board made positive contributions to the overall performance of the school and the development of 21st century learners, through the provision of technology to match the learning needs of students and the vision of the school. The recruitment of teachers with teaching qualifications strengthened the overall quality of staffing. These two factors had positive influences upon the school.	

Management, staffing, facilities and resources	Acceptable
• The daily management of school business, the organization of lessons and general planning of other curricular activities were adequately organized. Time was lost between lessons in the middle and high school phases and arrangements were less efficient in these places. Too little information was provided to the whole school community to enable quicker and streamlined responses to various incidents. • Most teachers were qualified and provided an appropriate curriculum and a range of support for students with SEND. Expertise varied and the deployment and effectiveness of the staff in some areas of middle management lacked clarity. The level of professional development was inadequate for all staff members to fully understand their students' development and behavior. • The facilities in the boys' section were inadequate and did not meet the requirements of a modern teaching and learning environment. The furniture, fixtures, lockers and fittings were untidy and in a poor state of repair. In the absence of an elevator, access for students with disabilities or injuries was limited. • The school invested and equipped all rooms with modern technology and consequently students developed their skills of independent learning. The breadth of materials for mathematics and science were not well matched to the needs of all groups of students.	

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	84
	2014-2015	209
 Teachers	104	
 Students	221	

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

- Most parents who responded to the survey were satisfied with the quality of the school's performance and their children's progress in English, mathematics and science.
- A smaller percentage of parents were satisfied with their children's progress in Arabic and Islamic education, and concerns were expressed regarding the quality of teaching in these subjects.
- More than a few parents disagreed that their children were being well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- A large minority of senior students expressed dissatisfaction with the quality of education provided.
- Most senior students agreed that they were making good progress in Islamic education and English.
- More than a third of senior students disagreed that they were making good progress in Arabic as a first language and science.
- About a quarter of senior students disagreed that they were making good progress in mathematics.
- About a quarter of the teachers and half of the senior students disagreed that students behaved well at school.
- More than a third of senior students disagreed that their teachers were skilled and qualified.
- A large majority of senior students expressed dissatisfaction with the range of extra-curricular options they were given.
- Almost half of the senior students believed that the school did not deal with bullying effectively.
- A large majority of the senior students believed that the school did not listen to their opinions and take action on them.
- Almost half of the students indicated that the reports they received were not helpful.

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