



Star International
School

🇬🇧 Curriculum: UK

Overall Rating:

Good



"We are keen to prepare the new generation that is ready to be creative and innovative to help us achieve our ambitions for even greater prosperity"

Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al-Maktoum



Contents

School information.....	3
The DSIB inspection process.....	4
Summary of inspection findings 2016-2017	6
Main inspection report	12
1. Students' achievement.....	12
2. Students' personal and social development, and their innovation skills.....	15
3. Teaching and assessment	17
4. Curriculum	18
5. The protection, care, guidance and support of students.....	20
Inclusion	21
6. Leadership and management	22
The views of parents, teachers and senior students	25



School information



General information

Location	Al Twar
Type of school	Private
Opening year of school	2005
Website	www.starintlschoolaltwar.com
Telephone	00971-4-2638999
Address	Al Twar 2-P.O.BOX:51008
Principal	Durriya Goriawala
Language of instruction	English
Inspection dates	14 to 16 November 2016

Teachers / Support staff

Number of teachers	44
Largest nationality group of teachers	British
Number of teaching assistants	19
Teacher-student ratio	1:13
Number of guidance counsellors	1
Teacher turnover	24%

Students

Gender of students	Boys and girls
Age range	3-14
Grades or year groups	FS1-Year 9
Number of students on roll	550
Number of children in pre-kindergarten	71
Number of Emirati students	59
Number of students with SEND	12
Largest nationality group of students	Arab

Curriculum

Educational permit / Licence	UK
Main curriculum	UK / Cambridge International
External tests and examinations	Cambridge International
Accreditation	BSO
National Agenda benchmark tests	IBT



The DSIB inspection process



In order to judge the overall quality of education provided by schools, inspectors consider the six standards of performance that form the basis of the UAE School Inspection Framework (the framework). They look at children's attainment and progress in key subjects, their learning skills and their personal and social development. They judge how effective teaching and the assessment of learning are across the school. Inspectors consider how well the school's curriculum, including activities inside and outside classrooms, meet the educational needs of all students. They judge how well schools protect and support children. In addition, inspectors judge the effectiveness of leadership, which incorporates governance, management, staffing and facilities.

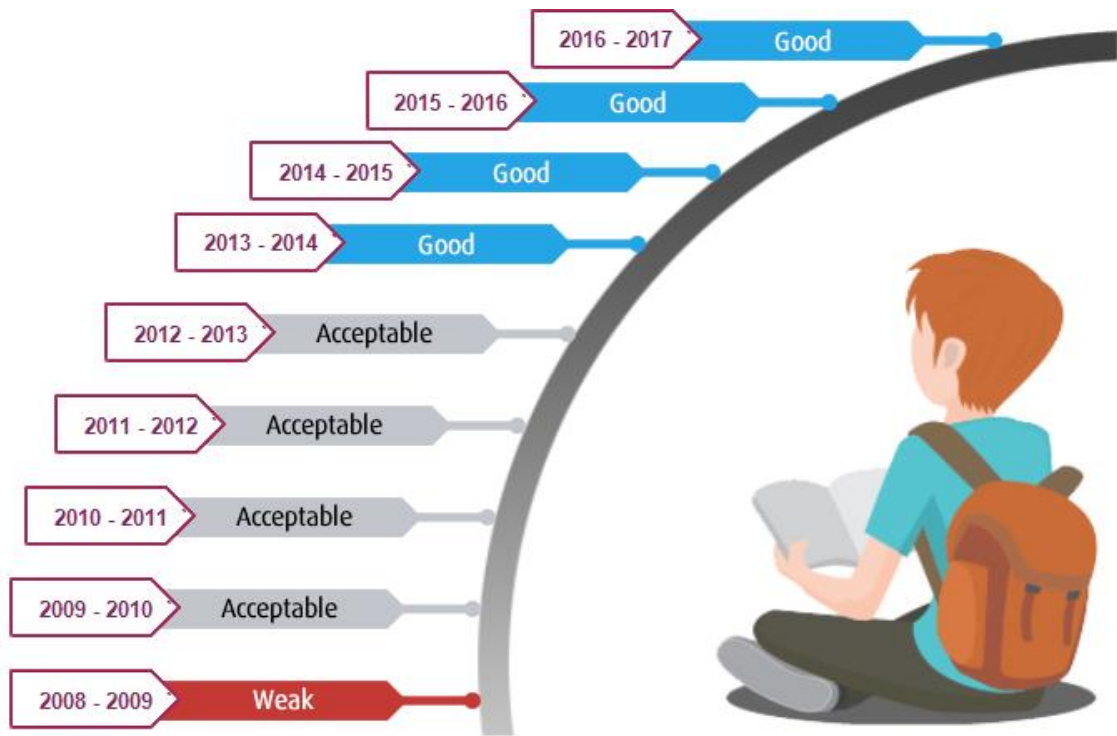
Inspection judgements are drawn from evidence gathered by the inspection team, including observation of students' learning in lessons, review of their work, discussions with students, meetings with the staff, parents and governors, and review of surveys completed by parents, teachers and students.

Judgements are made on a six-point scale

DSIB inspection teams make judgements about different aspects, phases and subjects that form the work of the school, using the scale below, which is consistent with the framework.

Outstanding	Quality of performance substantially exceeds the expectation of the UAE
Very good	Quality of performance exceeds the expectation of the UAE
Good	Quality of performance meets the expectation of the UAE (This is the expected level for every school in the UAE)
Acceptable	Quality of performance meets the minimum level of quality required in the UAE (This is the minimum level for every school in the UAE)
Weak	Quality of performance is below the expectation of the UAE
Very weak	Quality of performance is significantly below the expectation of the UAE

Inspection journey for Star International School



- The current principal took up post in 2007, two years after the school opened in 2005. The student roll is 550, a slight drop from 573 last year. There are 44 teachers, 11 of whom joined the school in the current session. The governors have permission to extend the year groups from Y9 by the addition of Year 10 and Year 11.
- The school has seen steady improvement in inspection results from 2008, when it was judged to be weak. After four years of being rated as acceptable, it then moved to good and has been so for the last three inspections. Strengths of the school which tend to be mentioned regularly over the years are students' personal and social development, attainment and progress in English, mathematics and science, and arrangements for health and safety.
- A recurring theme in the inspection recommendations over the last three years has been the need to improve progress and attainment in Arabic and, in two of the three years, Islamic education. Last year's report also recommended that the process of school improvement planning be improved and that the governors exercise accountability more effectively.

Summary of inspection findings 2016-2017



Star International School was inspected by DSIB from 14 to 16 November 2016 . The overall quality of education provided by the school is **good**. The section below summarises the inspection findings for each of the six performance indicators described in the framework.

- Progress and attainment in English, mathematics and science are good overall, and Foundation Stage children are making very good progress in English. Students' progress and attainment in Islamic education and Arabic are mainly acceptable. Students have well-developed learning skills in Foundation Stage and the primary and secondary phases.
- Students' personal and social attributes are developing very well. At all phases, students show very good attitudes and behaviour. Their understanding of Islamic values and Emirati culture is well developed, particularly at the secondary phase. Students of all ages show age-appropriate understanding of environmental issues. Older ones take practical steps to help in the local and wider community, while children at Foundation Stage can work independently and help to keep their classrooms tidy.
- Teachers explain concepts and assess students' understanding effectively. At times, the quality of lessons is very good or even outstanding, but this is not consistently the case. Written feedback to students to help them improve the quality of their work is a positive feature.
- The curriculum is well designed, offering continuity and progression in students' learning. It is adapted effectively to meet the needs of most groups of students. The curriculum in Foundation Stage, and the way in which it is adapted to meet the learning needs of different groups, is of very good quality.
- The school's attention to promoting healthy lifestyles and ensuring that all students, staff and visitors are safe is outstanding. Yoga and meditation sessions contribute to students' wellbeing. Students benefit from good levels of care and support, and this aspect is very good at the Foundation Stage.
- The school is well led. It has a good supply of resources and staff, and the premises are well maintained. Governance is good. Improvement planning is done systematically, as is self-evaluation, although the school's view of its own performance in a range of aspects is often too high. Partnerships with parents are of very good quality.

What the school does best

- The curriculum is well-planned and implemented, particularly at the Foundation Stage. Teaching and assessment feedback in English, mathematics and science, with some very good or outstanding practice, result in overall good attainment and progress in those subjects, and some very good outcomes.
- Students' personal and social development is good or very good and, in some respects, outstanding.
- Staff implement the school's high-quality arrangements for promoting healthy lifestyles and ensuring that all are safe and protected in the school very well.
- There is mutual benefit to parents and the school from the very good partnerships between them.

Recommendations

- Improve the quality of school self-evaluation by:
 - aligning assessment methods more closely with the relevant curriculum standards and ensuring that assessment data are analysed correctly to give an accurate picture of student progress and attainment
 - further developing the shared knowledge and understanding among staff of what constitutes high quality learning, so that evaluations of lessons are fully accurate and professional development activities can be more closely focused on the development needs of different staff groups.
- Build on recent improvements and share the best teaching practice which exists in all phases so that lessons are consistently of high quality, particularly in relation to the development of students' critical thinking skills
- With the aim of accelerating progress and improving attainment in Islamic education and Arabic:
 - ensure that tests for assessing students' progress and attainment are set at the correct level of difficulty and cover the required range of curriculum knowledge, understanding and skills
 - use assessment data to differentiate tasks, activities and resources for different groups, and ensure that lesson objectives cover skills in a sufficient balance with knowledge
 - avoid over-use of English language in lessons in Arabic as an additional language at the primary and secondary phases.

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 intention 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. In 2015, KHDA launched 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.

The following section focuses on the impact of the National Agenda Parameter in meeting their targets:

- Attainment based on the National Agenda Parameter is meeting expectations in mathematics and English; it is below expectations for science.
- In mathematics and English, the school meets expectations on the National Agenda Parameter (NAP), but attainment in science is not secure.
- The school meets the registration requirements for the National Agenda Parameter 2016-2017
- The school analyses the data from the National Agenda benchmark tests. Senior leaders align the results of all assessments to ensure the reliability of data for each year group. Subject leaders produce a detailed action plan which focuses closely on any changes they may wish to make. Training is given to all staff in how to use and interpret IBT and CAT4 data to help them inform their planning and meet the needs of all students. Staff in Arabic as an additional language make effective use of the CAT4 potential indicators when they are planning lessons.
- The school aligns its curriculum to give the appropriate attention to those skills that are important in order to raise attainment. Staff are making these changes and re-alignments based on their analysis of the NAP tests.
- The school is prioritising the use of open-ended questioning in order to promote critical thinking in lessons. It is a feature in lesson plans and is beginning to have a real impact in the classroom. There is also a strong focus on problem-solving and, in mathematics in particular, the students are applying the skills to solving problems related to the real world.
- Students understand their results on the NAP and they also understand why modifications are made in the curriculum in order to address any gaps in their knowledge or to further enhance their skills. Teachers use resources effectively to support students' learning, and the students make good use of ICT to research information or extend their understanding of a topic.

Overall, the school's progress towards meeting the National Agenda target meets expectations.

Innovation in Education

The UAE Vision 2021 sets the aspiration 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' and provides a basis for evaluating schools in order to deliver a world-class education for all children in the UAE.



Promoting a culture of innovation:

- Students' skills and expertise in critical thinking, using technology to help with enquiry and research, and enterprise activities are beginning to develop. Various events are organised throughout the year in order to promote students' innovation and entrepreneurial skills, including Inventors Day, Science Fair, Math Challenge and a healthy market in which students create their own healthy food which they sell to raise funds for charity. Teachers are increasingly planning lessons which develop students' critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Similarly, the curriculum is reviewed regularly and is increasingly developing higher-order skills and enterprise activities, for example through class projects, Year 9 work experience and business studies classes for older students. A culture of innovation is emerging in the school that could be developed into a coherent innovation action plan.

Overall school performance

Good

1 Students' achievement

		Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Islamic education 	Attainment	Not applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable
	Progress	Not applicable	Good	Acceptable ↓
Arabic as a first language 	Attainment	Not applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable
	Progress	Not applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Arabic as an additional language 	Attainment	Not applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable
	Progress	Not applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable
English 	Attainment	Good	Good	Good
	Progress	Very good ↓	Good	Good ↓
Mathematics 	Attainment	Good	Good	Good
	Progress	Good	Good	Good
Science 	Attainment	Good	Good	Good
	Progress	Good	Good	Good

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Learning skills	Good	Good	Good

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

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Personal development	Very good	Very good	Very good
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Good	Good	Very good
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Very good ↑	Very good ↑	Outstanding

3. Teaching and assessment

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Teaching for effective learning	Good	Good	Good
Assessment	Good	Good	Good

4. Curriculum

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Curriculum design and implementation	Very good	Good	Good
Curriculum adaptation	Very good	Good	Good

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

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Care and support	Very good ↑	Good	Good

6. Leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership	Good
School self-evaluation and improvement planning	Good
Parents and the community	Very good
Governance	Good
Management, staffing, facilities and resources	Good

Main inspection report



1. Students' achievement

 Foundation Stage		
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	Very good ↓
Mathematics	Good	Good
Science	Good	Good

- Most children meet and a majority exceed curriculum standards in literacy measured against the Early Years Foundation Stage learning goals. They listen well and respond to questions, in full sentences. Most children can sound letters of the alphabet and can write their names. By Foundation Stage 2, the majority are increasingly able to read common words and also try to work out unfamiliar words by using their knowledge of matching sounds to letters. They make very good progress in lessons against the planned learning outcomes.
- Children in Foundation Stage 1 can recite numbers accurately to 10 and beyond and use number language in their play. They realise that anything can be counted, such as counting children at registration. They are less confident in using positional language such as 'in' and 'under'. By Foundation Stage 2, children are confident in naming more complex shapes, such as heptagons, and can carry out simple calculations. They make good progress from their starting points.
- The majority of children are developing early scientific skills that are above the levels expected for their age. They are curious about the world around them and are keen to experiment and investigate. Foundation Stage 2 children make predictions such as what would be the best material to make a parachute and the majority can give reasons for their answers. They make comparisons and observations about different types of air transport and can link them to their lives in Dubai. Children progress well against expected outcomes and from their starting points in school.

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

- In Islamic education, most students demonstrate levels of understanding, knowledge and skills that are in line with expectations, including Jumaa Prayer, Islamic etiquette and Allah's Angels. Students are able to explain the role of the mosque in Muslims' lives and etiquettes required when entering mosques. Students' progress overall is good. Students apply what they learn in lessons to their own lives. Skills in recitation of the Holy Qur'an are developing.
- In Arabic as a first language, the attainment of most students is in line with curriculum standards. Students' listening skills are secure and their reading skills are in line with expectations. Students in Year 4 can write a few sentences in Arabic, for example about the importance of appropriate disposal of environmental waste such as old electronic devices. When speaking, students are not confident and frequently use different dialects. Most students make the expected progress. Language skills improve over time, particularly in the upper year groups.
- Most students make the expected progress in Arabic as an additional language in relation to individual starting points and to appropriate learning objectives. Most students can communicate clearly in the language, although their speaking skills are not extended because teachers over-use English language in lessons. Generally, girls attain better than boys. Students' knowledge of vocabulary is better than their skills in using it in speaking or writing.
- In English, students' progress is good in lessons and over time from their starting points. More able students generally make good progress but at times this slows when learning tasks do not fully challenge them. Internal tests measuring attainment against curriculum standards indicate less positive attainment than external international tests. The latter show that students are currently attaining the good standards typical of recent years, despite some variations across year groups in reading and writing.
- In mathematics, a majority of students make better than expected progress against the curriculum standards and attain above expectations. International benchmark test results are variable across year groups but, on the whole, show good attainment. Students demonstrate knowledge about shapes and skills in calculation and they are able to communicate their understanding very clearly in discussions. Over time, attainment has been consistent.
- Most students make expected progress against curriculum expectations for science, and a majority make better than expected progress. Internal assessment data is not accurate but external benchmarking data indicate good attainment. Progress accelerates from Year 3 onwards. The majority of students ask intelligent scientific questions, research responses and develop good and occasionally better enquiry skills. Students learn scientific vocabulary well but have difficulty expressing themselves at times. Lower-attaining and more able students occasionally make slower progress than others when tasks are not matched to their needs.



Secondary

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

- In Islamic education, most students have age-appropriate knowledge, skills and understanding of the concepts and history of Islam. They understand the main role of the Angel Jibreel (A.S). Their understanding of the prescribed Hadeeths and how they link with verses from the Holy Qur'an is underdeveloped. Students make acceptable progress against their lesson objectives. A few students are involved in advanced and high-level thinking topics.
- Students' listening and speaking skills in Arabic as a first language are in line with curriculum expectations. When speaking, the majority of students use dialects rather than standard Arabic most of the time. Reading with understanding of extended texts is secure but the majority of students are dependent on support. In the school's internal assessments, most students attain levels that are at the curriculum standard. Progress is acceptable overall. Students demonstrate some independence in writing but their work often contains spelling and grammar mistakes.
- In Arabic as an additional language, most students make the expected progress in relation to their starting points and to appropriate learning objectives. Speaking skills are at an acceptable level. As at the primary phase, on average girls attain better than boys and students' knowledge of the language is better than their skills in using it in speaking or writing. The school's internal tests show that only a minority of students exceed expectations.
- In English, the majority of students make better than expected progress, with examples of some very good progress in lessons. They become increasingly adept at interpreting challenging texts and expressing their understanding of poems in articulate ways. Written work often shows very good understanding, although not always good handwriting. Data from international tests indicate that, despite some conflicting data from internal tests, for a majority of students attain above expected levels. This has been the case in recent years.
- A majority of students attain levels in mathematics that are above curriculum standards. Attainment measured against international benchmark standards is good. In lessons, students build on prior knowledge to develop the necessary skills in order to cope with the demands of the subject. For example, those in Year 8 were adept at converting between fractions, decimals and percentages. Progress data indicate that the majority make better than expected progress in relation to curriculum standards.

- International benchmarking data demonstrate that students' attainment and progress in science are good. Internal assessment is not accurate. Occasionally, higher and lower-attaining students do not make as much progress as others. Students make rapid progress when responding to challenging questioning which develops their critical thinking skills effectively. They have a good understanding and knowledge of scientific concepts. They develop good, and occasionally very good, levels of skills in research, enquiry and practical work. Although students use scientific vocabulary well, a few find it difficult to communicate complex ideas clearly.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Learning skills	Good	Good	Good

- Students are enthusiastic learners. They are keen to improve and respond to teachers' advice. They frequently evaluate their work and try to improve it. Students do their homework conscientiously and particularly enjoy research. In Arabic as a first language and in Islamic education, students are frequently not fully engaged and do not take responsibility for improving their work.
- Students collaborate well, listening with attention, responding to questions and sharing ideas with their peers and teachers. When working in a group, they support each other and work hard to complete the tasks set. Children in Foundation Stage are able to share and take turns. In a large minority of lessons students ask challenging and interesting questions of themselves and others, linked to their learning.
- Most students connect their learning well to the real world and make links between different areas of learning, thereby gaining a holistic overview of concepts. They develop enterprise skills well in topics, for example in learning how to set up a successful business, but this is not typical of all lessons.
- Students enjoy enquiring, researching and finding things out for themselves. In many lessons, they like solving complex problems and explain how they arrive at their solutions. Students use their critical thinking, investigative and problem solving skills frequently in science. In science and social studies students use ICT in innovative ways.

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

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Personal development	Very good	Very good	Very good

- Across the school, students have positive and responsible attitudes, especially in the secondary phase where they demonstrate strong self-reliance and thrive on critical feedback when provided.
- Students demonstrate self-discipline and respond very well to others. They follow school rules, and students in secondary phase are able to resolve difficulties in mature ways. As a result, school life proceeds in a harmonious manner.
- Staff are respected by the students, who also understand the needs and differences of other students and help each other when required. Relationships among students and with staff are based on care and consideration.

- Students have a well-developed understanding of safe and healthy living. They generally make wise choices, for example in the food they bring for lunch. They participate enthusiastically in activities which promote safe and healthy lifestyles. Older students benefit from yoga and meditation sessions.
- Students almost always arrive at school and to lessons on time, especially students in secondary phase who are punctual to school, lessons and assemblies. Attendance is high.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Good	Good	Very good

- Children at Foundation Stage show a good, age-appropriate knowledge of facts about Islam. Non-Muslim students have a well-developed understanding of key aspects of the religion and how they affect life in the UAE. Most are aware of the five pillars of Islam. Students put these values into effect in their everyday lives.
- Most students, particularly those at the secondary phase, are knowledgeable about Emirati heritage and culture. They have a clear idea of the timeline of development of Dubai, and appreciate the history of nomadic life in the desert and the economics of the country, from pearl-fishing to oil.
- Respect for their own and other cultures is evident in the everyday life of students in the school. Staff successfully promote this aspect through social studies, projects and events such as International Day, when students benefit from opportunities to come together to share features of life in their home countries.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Very good ↑	Very good ↑	Outstanding

- Students have very responsible attitudes to school life and to the wider community. Students visit a home for senior citizens and raise funds and make collections for local and national charities. They are very eager to take on numerous responsibilities in school, particularly those that support their peers such as acting as 'Frentors' and serving on the very active school council. This has a very positive impact on the school community. They know their views are valued by the school.
- There is a highly positive work ethic among the student body. They are very clear about the benefits of working hard. Even the youngest children can remain focused on their tasks for lengthy periods. Students in the secondary phase are highly confident, innovative and responsible leaders of others.
- Students discuss environmental issues in an insightful and in-depth manner. They are very active in the school through the Envirolights project to support protecting the environment. Particularly at the secondary phase, they are very clear about the major issues affecting the wider environment such as the greenhouse effect, global warming and the need to conserve water, and actively put this into practice in the school.

3. Teaching and assessment

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Teaching for effective learning	Good	Good	Good

- Most teachers know their subjects well and have a clear understanding of how students learn. Foundation Stage teachers create an environment in which children learn through play and practical activities. In the best lessons in the primary and secondary phases, teachers facilitate learning.
- Lesson plans generally make clear what is to be learned and the strategies and resources to be used to meet the needs of students' different learning styles and abilities. In the best lessons, teachers make very good use of time and resources, including technology. A few teachers leave insufficient time for students to discuss, apply and reflect on what they have learned.
- The acquisition of language for learning is a key priority across the school. In the FS, every opportunity is taken to practise speaking and listening and to extend children's vocabulary. In other phases, teachers use questioning effectively to engage students in discussion and debate. Students often have the opportunity to share their ideas with each other. On occasion, teachers miss this invaluable opportunity.
- Teachers know their students well. In most cases their expectations are matched to the range of students' abilities within the class. As a result, most students make good progress. In a few lessons, when the level of challenge is either too low or too high, or when teachers are not clear about how to overcome barriers to learning, students' progress is hindered.
- Most teachers are skilled in asking searching questions to promote students' critical and higher-order thinking skills and to help them solve problems. In science, for example, they often answer a question with another question. In the Foundation Stage, children routinely learn independently and students throughout the school increasingly take ownership of their learning. On occasion, students are encouraged to devise their own lesson plans.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Assessment	Good	Good	Good

- Internal assessment processes are mainly consistent. They are not fully linked to curriculum standards and therefore do not always provide clear measures of students' progress or attainment. In the Foundation Stage, tracking and assessment of the progress and attainment of individual children is used effectively to plan for different children's abilities.
- The school uses benchmark tests well in order to assess students' attainment against appropriate national and international expectations. Staff have recently started to use tests of students' cognitive abilities as a predictor of potential future student attainment and to match learning approaches to students' preferred styles.
- The school analyses assessment data to identify any significant inconsistencies between actual and potential attainment. Where best practice is happening, inconsistencies are found and individual teachers investigate the cause of these problems to ensure that the students concerned fulfil their potential and make the best possible progress.

- Staff are proactive in utilising assessment data to identify the strengths and weaknesses in student performance in different subjects. They then make use of this information in order to make appropriate adaptations to the curriculum and to influence teaching style.

Teachers have a very good knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of their students. Assessment for learning is a major strength. The quality of feedback to the students is of a high standard. Students' books chronicle an ongoing dialogue between the teacher and the student with the students being constantly referred back to their work to make improvements. This involves them more in their own learning.

4. Curriculum

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Curriculum design and implementation	Very good	Good	Good

- The curriculum is broad and balanced and effectively meets the relevant requirements. An increasing focus on skills ensures that students have opportunities to develop higher-order thinking. The curriculum is planned well to promote students' enjoyment of learning. The Islamic education curriculum provides limited opportunities for independent learning, research or critical thinking. The topic element at Foundation Stage ensures that all necessary aspects of the Early Years curriculum are covered very effectively.
- Planning across all phases is well structured, particularly in science. In ICT there is clear and appropriate progress in the programme so that students generally learn systematically and build on previous learning. The sequence of activities means that the learning of most students extends their previous understanding, skills and knowledge. Planning for progression and continuity in Arabic is at an acceptable level.
- Weekly 'Golden Time' provides students in the primary phase with a range of curricular choices to cater for their interests and needs and helps them to discover their talents in subjects, including arts and crafts and aspects such as sign language. Older students benefit from choices at break-time, including Spanish. Homework projects complement these choices, as do topics that the students initiate.
- Links between subjects are meaningful and incorporated into planning. Increased cross-curricular links in the Foundation Stage enrich the curriculum for young learners, where Arabic and other subjects are linked effectively in topics.
- Staff are reflective in their regular reviews of the curriculum and keen to ensure it meets students' academic needs. For example, after an analysis of assessment data staff introduced guided reading into the Foundation Stage. The school responds to the information gathered about students' achievements across the school to modify the curriculum. For example, lesson observations identified a need for fractions to be taught better and the curriculum was modified accordingly.

- The school's social studies curriculum meets local requirements and takes account of the National Agenda. The coordinator has enhanced it by adding learning opportunities that engage students and make learning meaningful and fun. There are discrete social studies lessons as well as important links with other subjects. Teaching is delivered in Arabic or English, depending on the students' first language. The school is reviewing the effectiveness of this arrangement. The teaching in English is particularly good, ensuring that students think deeply about UAE history and culture. Students generally learn well because they are engaged by the teaching strategies that promote good levels of understanding. Older students develop good abilities to empathise with Muslim leaders past and present. Assessments are carried out on a day-to-day basis and the coordinator carefully monitors the progress of individual students.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Curriculum adaptation	Very good	Good	Good

- The majority of teachers modify the curriculum to meet the needs of students of all backgrounds and abilities. This is a particular strength in the Foundation Stage. Planning to meet the needs of all students is less consistent at the other phases. Benchmarking information is used well to identify shortcomings and make adjustments to the curriculum.
- The school provides a narrow range of extra-curricular activities but these are enhanced by opportunities for students to follow their interests during the day in “golden time”. Enterprise is developed well in some subjects, for example in business studies, and in special events like the healthy eating market. In social studies and science, teachers use technology innovatively to develop students’ critical thinking but this is less embedded elsewhere.
- Teachers integrate Emirati culture in the curriculum from Foundation Stage onwards. For example, the youngest children enjoy studying a unit based on transport in the UAE. Throughout the curriculum, teachers include references to Emirati culture in all subjects. A club for Emirati students provides the opportunity to develop their specific interests in school.
- In Foundation Stage 1, children receive one-and-a-half fifty-minute lessons of Arabic. This increases to two lessons in Foundation Stage 2. The content is at a simple level and is increasingly linked to the topics students study.

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

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding

- The school's child protection and safeguarding policies and procedures are rigorous and regularly updated to reflect the latest guidance. All staff receive regular training in how to safeguard students. The school has very effective means to protect children from all forms of bullying, including cyber-bullying. This is reinforced very well through whole-school anti-bullying focus days such as the Blue Day. Staff deal very sensitively with students' concerns and needs.
- Procedures to check site safety and security are very thorough and frequently undertaken. Any potential risks are recorded and dealt with immediately. The school meets all its regulatory requirements such as carrying out emergency fire drills. The system to ensure the safe transport of children by bus is very well-rehearsed and highly effective.
- Comprehensive records are kept of routine emergency evacuation drills as well as the regular checks on the swimming pool and water systems. Medical staff are very vigilant. They keep detailed records of all accidents, however minor, and what action is taken. There are very clear procedures for administering medicines and for obtaining parents' consent as well as communicating any treatment given.
- The school premises, equipment and resources are very well suited to the educational needs of all students including those with special needs and children in the Foundation Stage. Students are kept safe and secure at all times, and adults are alert and vigilant to the particular needs of young children.
- The school provides very clear guidance to students and parents on safe and healthy lifestyles, and the school nurse is proactive in supporting and advising students. Colourful displays such as 'superfood of the week' promote tips on how to stay healthy. Foundation Stage children are awarded 'Healthy Star of the Week' certificates. Yoga and meditation classes support the well-being of older students. There are extensive outdoor shaded areas and students have ready access to fresh drinking water.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Care and support	Very good ↑	Good	Good

- Relationships are very positive in almost all cases. In the Foundation Stage, the caring and supportive ethos enables children to settle quickly into school and enjoy learning. In the other phases, most teachers create a calm and purposeful environment which is conducive to learning. On the occasions when teaching is less effective, a few students behave inappropriately.
- The school's proactive approach to promoting attendance and punctuality is very effective. Parents and students appreciate the rewards for excellent attendance and take seriously any warnings given for persistent absence and lateness.

- The school welcomes students of all abilities insofar as it can meet their needs within the available expertise and resources. Teachers get to know the students quickly. They monitor their progress and identify potential barriers to learning. Parents of students with more complex needs are advised to arrange for an assessment from an external professional. Gifted and talented students are also assessed to ensure that teachers' expectations match their ability.
- Teachers, including those who are new to the school, contribute to creating a caring and supportive ethos. As a result, most students with special educational needs (SEND) make very good progress in their personal, social and emotional development. The support for their academic progress is variable because a minority of teachers are inexperienced in helping them to overcome the difficulties they have in learning.
- The very good support for students' personal, social and emotional development enables them to grow in confidence and self-belief. They welcome feedback about how well they are doing and routinely respond to guidance on how to improve their work. This is leading to an increase in the rate of progress in their academic studies. Older students welcome the opportunity to experience a week of work in the world beyond school.

Inclusion

Provision and outcomes for students with SEND

Good

- The school welcomes students of all abilities insofar as it can meet their needs within the available expertise and resources. The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) is effective and liaises well with the Foundation Stage Leader, and the SENCO for Arabic. They share a vision for inclusion and hold teachers and Learning Support Assistants to account for their work.
- Teachers get to know the students as soon as they enter school by monitoring their progress and identifying potential barriers to learning. Where students are experiencing difficulties in which the school has limited expertise, their parents are advised to arrange for an assessment from an external professional. Gifted and talented students are also assessed to ensure teachers' expectations match the students' abilities.
- Most parents of students with SEND are pleased with the inclusive nature of the school and its effectiveness in identifying, integrating and supporting their children. A few are not sufficiently briefed by the school about the nature of their children's needs. They appreciate the verbal and written reports about progress. They are not routinely involved from the outset in setting targets for students' individual education plans (IEPs), and so some perceive that their contributions in support of their children are not fully valued.
- Teachers, including those who are new to the school, contribute to creating a caring and supportive ethos. Although teachers are developing their confidence and effectiveness in their support for students, academic progress is variable because a minority of teachers are inexperienced in modifying their expectations and the curriculum to help students to overcome the difficulties they have in learning.

- The impact of the school's work is clearly evident in the personal, social and emotional development and the wellbeing of students throughout the school. Progress in their academic studies is often good or better but it is variable. Students' progress in Arabic is acceptable.

6. Leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership

Good

- The vision of senior leaders and governors is clearly set out and involves developing an all-through provision of high quality from Foundation Stage to Year 13. They are working together and with staff effectively to develop coherence between the curriculum offered and assessment methods. They are strongly committed to implementing the UAE National Agenda and are increasingly successful in that regard.
- Senior leaders have a good knowledge and understanding of best practice in academic aspects. They have helped to establish a positive learning environment in the school. The quality of drive and leadership is variable at middle level but generally good. Improving the quality of students' progress and attainment in Islamic education and Arabic is proving difficult for leaders.
- Morale among staff is positive. Senior leaders communicate well with others and all staff feel involved. The ethos of the school is increasingly one of improvement and accountability in a professional, purposeful manner. Staff work well in teams.
- Leaders are aware that further improvements can be made. While they have been successful in implementing some improvements, other areas remain stubbornly at an acceptable level. Together, leaders and staff have a good potential to improve the school.
- The principal has been in post for nine years and in that time has been instrumental in driving the school's performance steadily upwards. Along with other senior staff she is increasingly innovative to develop aspects of the school. Staff ensure that the school is compliant with statutory and regulatory requirements.

School self-evaluation and improvement planning

Good

- Staff employ a wide range of processes, including lesson observations, analysis of internal and external assessment data, and surveys of stakeholder views to gather information and evaluate the work of the school. In some respects, leaders' judgements about the school's effectiveness, for example in attainment and progress, are too generous.
- Senior and other staff have a good first-hand knowledge of the quality of teaching by observing lessons. Observations appropriately include an evaluation of the progress and attainment of students as seen in the lesson.

- Working with governors, senior staff have improved the quality of improvement planning in the school. Staff now work to implement plans, which include detailed actions and criteria by which success will be judged, for a wide range of aspects of the school's work.
- Staff have made good progress in addressing recommendations, including ensuring that governors hold the school to account more effectively, and that school improvement planning is more systematic. Improving attainment and progress in Arabic remains a work in progress. While a few individual performance indicators have improved, a few others have declined since the last inspection.

Partnerships with parents and the community

Very good

- Parents have opportunities to be involved as volunteers, for example by reading to younger children, or to be a part of the governing board. The school surveys their views and takes them into account when drawing up improvement plans. Overall, they feel part of the school.
- Staff employ a wide range of suitable methods to communicate with parents. They can look online to see snapshots of what their children's classes are learning and to be informed about school events. They can easily communicate with school staff.
- Parents are regularly informed about how well their children are progressing. They can attend parents' evenings and they receive high-quality, comprehensive, written reports which set out next steps in learning and comment on a wide range of academic and social development aspects.
- The school benefits from a range of partnerships locally and more widely. There are links with the sister school, and some teachers video-link with schools in England and elsewhere.

Governance

Good

- The governing board has wide representation from the owners, school staff, parents and community figures. The board obtains parents' views and gathers information from students by direct meetings and surveys. Senior leaders and governors take the views into account when drawing up improvement plans.
- From the start of the current school year, many governors have been involved in a range of activities to monitor the quality of a good number of key aspects of the school's work. These activities have included interviews with staff about the quality of lessons and assessment results, direct observation of the school's work and discussions with students. As a result, the governors now have a more detailed knowledge of the school's performance than they had previously.
- The influence of the governing body on the school's work is increasingly positive. Governors ensure that there is a good supply of staff and resources and are becoming more involved in recruitment. However, together with senior leaders, they have not yet managed to bring about consistent improvement in progress and attainment in Arabic and Islamic education.

Management, staffing, facilities and resources

Good

- The school's routines and practices for starting and finishing the school day, organising timetables and resources for teaching and other activities, and caring for and supporting students, are effective and are implemented well. The school runs smoothly.
- Teachers are generally well educated in their subjects, with suitable teaching qualifications, and most are able to deliver good or better lessons. They are deployed effectively and benefit from internal and external professional development activities, some of which they are required to part-fund themselves. The school has a suitable supply of ancillary staff.
- The premises are well maintained and offer a safe and secure environment for the school's work. There are ramps for easy wheelchair access but no lifts. The library space is small.
- The school is well-resourced with materials relevant to the various curriculum standards and appropriate to the needs of staff and students. There is a small stock of tablet computers which are used well by students.

The views of parents, teachers and senior students

The views of parents, teachers and senior 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*	2016-2017	136
	2015-2016	176
 Teachers	24	
 Students	0	

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

- Around one-third of parents and just over half of the teachers have responded to the survey. The school has no students in Year 10 or above, and so no questionnaires were issued to students.
- Almost all parents who responded are satisfied with the quality of education at the school. They feel that their children enjoy school and are safe there.
- A high proportion of parents think that the school is led well. They see school leaders and staff as approachable and open to discussions and solutions. They think that senior leaders and staff are willing to listen to parents and act on their views.
- Concerns felt by around one-third of parent respondents include the school's promotion of reading in Arabic, the quality of counselling to help students with social or emotional needs, and promotion of internet and social media safety.
- All teachers who responded said that they enjoy working in the school and it is led well. Most feel that professional development activities have helped them to become better teachers.
- Most teachers think that the school provides a good range of resources, including technology, to support students' learning.

What happens next?

The school has been asked to prepare and submit an action plan to DSIB within two months of receiving the inspection report. This should address:

- recommendations from DSIB
- areas identified by the school as requiring improvement
- other external reports or sources of information that comment on the work of the school
- priorities arising from the school's unique characteristics.

The next school inspection will report on changes made by the school.

Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau

Knowledge and Human Development Authority

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