

The Winchester School...



National Agenda



Early years



Special educational  
needs and disabilities



Innovation

## Inspection Report 2015-2016

The Winchester School

Curriculum: UK

Overall rating: Very good

Read more about the school



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“Great achievements remind us to be humble, but we should always be determined to do more”



Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum

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## School information

### General information



|                         |                             |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Location                | Jebel Ali                   |
| Type of school          | Private                     |
| Opening year of school  | 2003                        |
| Website                 | www.thewinchesterschool.com |
| Telephone               | 04 882 0444                 |
| Address                 | P.O. Box 38058              |
| Principal               | Ranju Anand                 |
| Language of instruction | English                     |
| Inspection dates        | 7 to 10 March 2016          |

### Students



|                                        |                               |
|----------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Gender of students                     | Boys and girls                |
| Age range                              | 3-18                          |
| Grades or year groups                  | Foundation Stage 1 to Year 13 |
| Number of students on roll             | 3,583                         |
| Number of children in pre-kindergarten | 0                             |
| Number of Emirati students             | 66                            |
| Number of students with SEND           | 74                            |
| Largest nationality group of students  | Indian                        |

### Teachers / Support staff



|                                       |        |
|---------------------------------------|--------|
| Number of teachers                    | 215    |
| Largest nationality group of teachers | Indian |
| Number of teaching assistants         | 50     |
| Teacher-student ratio                 | 1:30   |
| Number of guidance counsellors        | 2      |
| Teacher turnover                      | 19%    |

### Curriculum



|                                 |                        |
|---------------------------------|------------------------|
| Educational permit / Licence    | UK                     |
| Main curriculum                 | UK                     |
| External tests and examinations | IGCSE, AS and A levels |
| Accreditation                   | NA                     |
| National Agenda benchmark tests | TIMSS, PISA            |

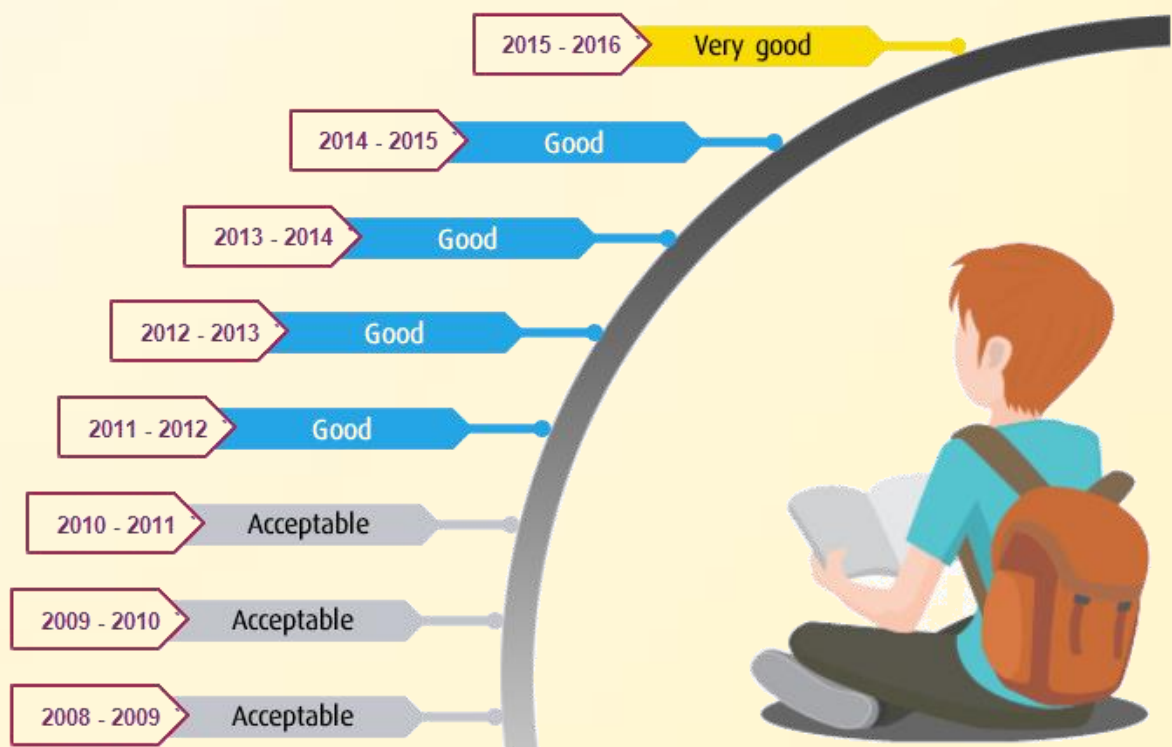


## Summary for parents and the community

The **Winchester School** was inspected by the DSIB from 7 to 10 March 2016. The overall quality of education provided by the school was found to be **very good**.

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

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





### How well did the school perform overall?

Overall, **The Winchester School** provided a **very good** quality of education for its students.

- The students' attainment and progress were outstanding in English, mathematics and science in both the Foundation Stage (FS) and Post-16. In the primary and secondary phases, students' attainment in English, mathematics and science was generally very good. The attainment in Arabic languages and Islamic education in primary and secondary phases was mostly good, while students' progress in the primary phase in these subjects was mostly very good.
- Students' personal and social development was one of the strengths of the school. Their attitudes and behaviour were exemplary. They had excellent understanding of Islamic values and social responsibilities throughout the school.
- Teaching was outstanding in the Foundation Stage, very good in the primary and Post-16 phases, and good in the secondary phase. The use of assessment information to influence and support students' learning was well established across the school, but especially effective in the Foundation Stage.
- The curriculum was broad, balanced and very effective in developing students' knowledge, skills and understanding. Modifications made to the curriculum for different groups of students were also very effective, especially for those students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).
- The school was fully aware of the requirements for the health and safety of all within the school community. There were rigorous procedures in place for the care, welfare and support of students, including those with SEND. Mutual respect, trust and confidence characterised interactions between the teaching staff and the students.
- School leaders set a very clear vision for the school. Parents valued highly the family nature of the school. Systems of school self-evaluation provided the leaders and the governing board with a very clear understanding of areas that needed to improve further. The management, facilities and resources were of very good quality.



### What did the school do well?

- The senior leaders' commitment to achieving the vision and setting the direction for the school.
- The attainment and progress by students in English, mathematics and science remained outstanding in the Post-16 phase.
- The outstanding overall provision for children in the Foundation Stage.
- The outstanding personal and social development of students across the school.





### What does the school need to do next?

- Improve the quality of teaching in the secondary phase by planning activities that are consistently challenging and closely matched to the needs of all groups of students, particularly the most able students.



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

- Students with SEND were safe and secure in the school. They made friends with others of their own ages and were fully included. This encouraged them to do as well as they could in their lessons. In all phases, students made at least good progress from their starting points and often their progress was very good.
- The special needs team welcomed the views and wishes of parents. Information was shared regularly. Parents received school reports at the same time as others in school. In addition, they had meetings about their children's individual education plans (IEPs). As a result, parents were well informed and helped their children at home with their schoolwork.
- The school's leaders gave training to parents so they had a better understanding of the different barriers to learning. The training helped them to understand how the staff and parents are able to work together to overcome them.

### 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 at this stage to make a judgement on the progress towards meeting the National Agenda targets.
- The school promoted awareness and understanding of the UAE's National Agenda very successfully in a wide range of ways. Senior leaders explained the school's attainment targets and more general aspects of the National Agenda through meetings, information sheets, and presentations, and a video-clip which could be found online. Stakeholders were involved and were well briefed.
- Teachers of English, mathematics and science had carried out much successful work to realign the curriculum to the requirements of the new National Curriculum for England and to take into account the content of external tests such as TIMSS and PISA. There was a general, increased emphasis on problem solving skills, and on specific skills in each subject.
- Teachers were well aware of the need to improve the ways in which they developed students' skills for critical thinking and enquiry. They were working together to improve their questioning skills and observed their peers to see good practice. There were signs of improvement, although more work was needed to achieve consistency.
- Students had some opportunities to use learning technology and other resources to gather information and analyse it in the context of enquiry or problem-solving activities.

## Innovation in education

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

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



## Promoting a culture of innovation:

- School leaders had demonstrated good understanding of innovation as a national priority. A strategic plan promoting innovation had been implemented. Innovation was reflected in many areas throughout the school, across phases, and through 'student voice.' The leaders had created a culture of high expectations with a strong focus on performance development. Resources for all areas of learning supported students, including the use of information and communication technology (ICT) in all phases. Enrichment lessons developed students' entrepreneurial, critical thinking and independent learning skills.



Overall school performance

Very good ↑

1. Students' achievement

|                                                                                                                                |            | Foundation Stage | Primary     | Secondary   | Post-16        |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|------------------|-------------|-------------|----------------|
| <b>Islamic education</b><br>                  | Attainment | Not applicable   | Good        | Good        | Good ↑         |
|                                                                                                                                | Progress   | Not applicable   | Very good ↑ | Good        | Good ↑         |
| <b>Arabic as a first language</b><br>         | Attainment | Not applicable   | Very good ↑ | Good ↑      | Good           |
|                                                                                                                                | Progress   | Not applicable   | Very good ↑ | Good ↑      | Good           |
| <b>Arabic as an additional language</b><br> | Attainment | Not applicable   | Good        | Good        | Not applicable |
|                                                                                                                                | Progress   | Not applicable   | Good        | Good        | Not applicable |
| <b>English</b><br>                          | Attainment | Outstanding      | Good        | Very good ↑ | Outstanding    |
|                                                                                                                                | Progress   | Outstanding      | Very good ↑ | Very good ↑ | Outstanding    |
| <b>Mathematics</b><br>                      | Attainment | Outstanding      | Good        | Very good ↑ | Outstanding    |
|                                                                                                                                | Progress   | Outstanding      | Very good ↑ | Very good ↑ | Outstanding    |
| <b>Science</b><br>                          | Attainment | Outstanding      | Very good ↑ | Very good ↑ | Outstanding    |
|                                                                                                                                | Progress   | Outstanding      | Very good ↑ | Very good ↑ | Outstanding    |

|                        | Foundation Stage | Primary     | Secondary   | Post-16     |
|------------------------|------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| <b>Learning skills</b> | Outstanding      | Very good ↑ | Very good ↑ | Outstanding |

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

|                                                                             | Foundation Stage | Primary       | Secondary     | Post-16     |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|---------------|---------------|-------------|
| Personal development                                                        | Outstanding      | Outstanding ↑ | Outstanding ↑ | Outstanding |
| Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures | Outstanding      | Outstanding   | Outstanding   | Outstanding |
| Social responsibility and innovation skills                                 | Outstanding      | Outstanding   | Outstanding   | Outstanding |

## 3. Teaching and assessment

|                                 | Foundation Stage | Primary     | Secondary   | Post-16     |
|---------------------------------|------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Teaching for effective learning | Outstanding      | Very good ↑ | Good        | Very good ↑ |
| Assessment                      | Outstanding      | Very good ↑ | Very good ↑ | Very good ↑ |

## 4. Curriculum

|                                      | Foundation Stage | Primary     | Secondary   | Post-16     |
|--------------------------------------|------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Curriculum design and implementation | Outstanding      | Very good ↑ | Very good ↑ | Outstanding |
| Curriculum adaptation                | Very good ↑      | Very good ↑ | Very good ↑ | Outstanding |

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

|                                                                               | Foundation Stage | Primary     | Secondary   | Post-16     |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding | Outstanding      | Outstanding | Outstanding | Outstanding |
| Care and support                                                              | Outstanding ↑    | Very good ↑ | Very good ↑ | Outstanding |

## 6. Leadership and management

|                                                 | All phases  |
|-------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| The effectiveness of leadership                 | Very good ↑ |
| School self-evaluation and improvement planning | Very good ↑ |
| Parents and the community                       | Outstanding |
| Governance                                      | Very good ↑ |
| Management, staffing, facilities and resources  | Very good ↑ |



## Main inspection report

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

### Judgements are made on a six-point scale



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

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

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

## 1. Students' achievement

### 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                          | Outstanding    | Outstanding    |
| Mathematics                      | Outstanding    | Outstanding    |
| Science                          | Outstanding    | Outstanding    |

- Most children had consistently demonstrated high levels of knowledge and understanding in language development and emergent literacy that were above the Foundation Stage (FS) curriculum standards and early learning goals. In lessons, and over the previous two years, all groups of children demonstrated and maintained excellent communication and writing skills. Assessment information from the FS trackers indicated that most groups of children made better than expected progress in their acquisition and application of English language and emergent literacy.
- Most children demonstrated strong understanding of fundamental mathematics. They worked with, counted, read and wrote numbers up to 30. They used quantities and objects, to solve addition and subtraction numbers equations and applied mathematical reasoning by comparing quantity relationships with concrete materials. Most children composed and built two and three-dimensional shapes and classified objects into given categories thus demonstrating knowledge and skills above the FS curriculum standards. In lessons and over time, most groups of children made better than expected progress in understanding and applying their mathematical knowledge and skills in meaningful contexts against learning objectives and in relation to appropriate starting points.
- Most children demonstrated levels of scientific concepts and inquiry skills that were above the FS curriculum standards. Most groups of children consistently responded to first hand experiences in an exploratory way and demonstrated natural curiosity. Critical thinking and problem solving were an integral feature of learning during focused play. Evidence collected from children's workbooks, progress records and trackers indicated that most groups of children made better than expected progress in their scientific knowledge and skills in relation to their starting points and as measured against the learning objectives in lessons.

| Primary                          |             |             |
|----------------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Subjects                         | Attainment  | Progress    |
| Islamic education                | Good        | Very good ↑ |
| Arabic as a first language       | Very good ↑ | Very good ↑ |
| Arabic as an additional language | Good        | Good        |
| English                          | Good        | Very good ↑ |
| Mathematics                      | Good        | Very good ↑ |
| Science                          | Very good ↑ | Very good ↑ |

- In Islamic education, most students had attainment levels that were above the expectations of the Ministry of Education (MoE) curriculum. They displayed good knowledge of the main concepts of Islam such as the Pillars of Islam. Their recitation skills were very secure and they were able to refer to events by using simple verses from the Holy Qur'an and Hadeeth. In the majority of lessons, students made very good progress against the objectives, as for example in Year 2 when they could explain the value behind ablution before prayers. Progress over time was improving. Students with special SEND made good progress and the girls and boys made similar progress.
- In Arabic as a first language, the large majority of students attained standards that were above the national expectations of the MoE curriculum and the teaching objectives. When listening, students clearly understood what teachers said and the large majority of students could speak in sentences clearly. They used a range of vocabulary and they were able to form long meaningful sentences as observed in Year 3 when students made a presentation about the zoo. When reading, students could read by sight and out aloud and they understood and summarised the main ideas of what they were reading. In writing, all students wrote freely and with mostly correct spelling. The majority of students made very good progress in lessons, in their books and over time.
- In Arabic as an additional language, without external test results being available, attainment and progress were good. Listening was the strongest skill because students understood what teachers said, but their responses were not as strong. When speaking, the majority of students could say sentences clearly. They were able to express their ideas about what they were learning in the lesson and they presented different topics in assembly. In reading, students were able to sight read and read out aloud and they understood the meaning of many words. In writing, all groups could copy clearly and write words with the correct spelling, but the quality of free writing varied from class to class.
- In English, the majority of students had good attainment and very good progress. Their strongest skills were in speaking and listening. Most students spoke with fluency using an extensive vocabulary. The strong phonics program for younger students ensured that most students were successful in developing their reading skills as they progressed through the year groups. Reading skills were further enhanced by the guided reading programme. Reading comprehension focusing on analysis of information was underdeveloped. Students had strong writing skills and they could write for a variety of purposes. The very good progress was a result of the use of age appropriate resources, additional support teachers and the use of effective teaching strategies. Overall progress and progress by identified groups of students showed positive three-year trends.



- In mathematics, the progress made by students in individual lessons was good. Over time, from the beginning to the end of the phase, most students made better than expected progress through the levels of the English National Curriculum. In some lessons, lower-attaining students made slower progress than their peers. Boys and girls made similar progress. Progress would have been better with more development of critical thinking skills. Overall, progress was very good. The proportions of students achieving the various levels of attainment in the National Curriculum were better than the average levels achieved in England. Almost all students were at or ahead of expectations, and a majority achieved levels ahead of expectation. By Year 6, students could solve problems involving areas of compound shapes. Over the previous three years, attainment levels had improved steadily.
- A large majority of students demonstrated scientific knowledge and skills above the curriculum standards. Students were eager to learn and took responsibility for their learning. Hands on experiments were performed in many classes. The scientific method of inquiry was a main feature in lessons in Years 1 to 6. Students designed questions, made predictions, experimented and drew conclusions. As a result, a large majority of students in primary science made better than expected progress when measured against lesson objectives and over successive grade levels.

| Secondary                        |             |             |
|----------------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Subjects                         | Attainment  | Progress    |
| Islamic education                | Good        | Good        |
| Arabic as a first language       | Good ↑      | Good ↑      |
| Arabic as an additional language | Good        | Good        |
| English                          | Very good ↑ | Very good ↑ |
| Mathematics                      | Very good ↑ | Very good ↑ |
| Science                          | Very good ↑ | Very good ↑ |

- In Islamic education, most students had attainment levels that were above the national expectations of the MoE curriculum. Students' knowledge of the main concepts, beliefs and values was good. Their recitation skills were very good due to the many opportunities for practising the skills. In most of the lessons, students made very good progress. For example, Year 8 students showed good understanding and knowledge of the concept of "good deeds and bad deeds" through debate. Over the past three years, progress had shown improvement. Students with special education needs made good progress, and girls made slightly better progress than boys.
- In Arabic as a first language, the majority of students achieved levels that were above the expectation of the MoE and the teaching objectives. When speaking, the majority of students understood the teacher and they were able to discuss things amongst themselves. Students could speak in short sentence and express their opinions and their ideas successfully. Students read different texts and they understood and explained the meanings including those in poems. All students wrote freely and creatively with a variety of ideas and used long sentences. Students' work and data showed that the majority of students made good progress in all the skills and knowledge. Students who did extra activities showed progress that was above the curriculum standards.
- In Arabic as an additional language in primary, external test results were not available. Listening was the strongest skill because students understood what was said in lessons and their responses were good. The majority of students could speak in sentences clearly. They were able to express their ideas and take active part in discussions in lessons. They presented well topics on different subjects in

assembly. Generally, they could read by sight and aloud with adequate fluency. In Year 8 for example, students understood the main ideas when they learned about 'keeping the sea clean'. In writing, they could copy clearly and spell correctly. The level of free writing was in line with curriculum expectations. Different groups of students made similarly good progress in lessons as well as on books and worksheets.

- Students made very good attainment and progress in English against national and international benchmarks. Most students had strong oral language skills expressing themselves with fluency and a highly developed vocabulary. They used effective debating skills in class presentations. When reading, students understood the setting, plot, and characters, and the effects of these on the literary work. They wrote for a variety of purposes and audiences using correct grammar. The very good progress in English was a result of linking lessons to real life and providing opportunities for students to think for themselves, debate, develop responsibility and guide their own learning. Progress by identified groups of students showed very positive and improving three-year trends.
- Over time, students made better than expected progress in mathematics through the upper levels of the English National Curriculum and in work leading to the IGCSE examination. Girls made better progress than boys, which resulted in more success for them at the various levels in IGCSE. As in other phases, skills of critical thinking were limited, but problem solving was a positive feature at this phase. Most students achieved A\*-C awards in IGCSE, and a large majority achieved levels A\*-B, above expectations. Students showed well-developed skills in using scientific calculators to carry out calculations. For example, those in Year 9 tackled problems involving compound appreciation and depreciation effectively. Over the previous three years, the proportions of students achieving the various levels of IGCSE had improved steadily.
- Students demonstrated knowledge, understanding and skills above international curriculum standards in science. These students had clearly integrated the scientific method of investigation into their classes and used these methods extensively for exploration and inquiry. This process was evident in a Year 10 lesson where conclusions were being drawn from a data set gathered in a previous laboratory period on electrolysis of molten compounds. In Year 8, the process was also evident in the building of a model of the respiratory system to demonstrate the function of the lungs and diaphragm. Students were developing problem solving and critical thinking skills and as a result were making better than expected progress.

## Post-16

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

- In Islamic education, most students had attainment levels that were above the expectations of the MoE curriculum. Students' knowledge of main concepts, beliefs and values was good. They provided citations from many sources such as Hadeeth, the Holy Qur'an and religious rituals. Their research skills were good due to the many opportunities offered to practice them. In lessons, students made good progress. This was observed in Year 12 where students' understanding of Sunnah was extended to considering it as an important source guiding one's personal life. High achievers were making more progress in writing research than low achievers due to the high expectations of teaching. Girls made slightly better progress than boys.
- Students' attainment and progress were above the national expectations of the MoE curriculum and the teaching objectives in Arabic as a first language. When listening, most students understood poems and they answered questions about the poet's life and the meaning of the poem. When speaking, students used standard Arabic very well and were able to express their ideas. They were able to discuss amongst themselves using a wide range of vocabulary. When reading, most students could sight read with good understanding. When writing, students could write essays that were above the school's curriculum expectations. Students' work and data showed that the different groups of students made progress that was above the curriculum standards and learning objectives.
- The attainment and progress of Post-16 students in English was outstanding. Students demonstrated exceptionally well developed skills of written expression. Their command of language allowed them to engage in high-level discussion at a very mature level. Reading was extremely well developed. They read and appreciated a wide range of demanding literary texts with a sensitive understanding of poetry. They demonstrated a keen appreciation of the poetry of the Romantic era, and related the themes of the poems of Keats and his contemporaries to the issues of today. Their literary studies enabled them to engage with deeper understanding in debate and discussion on matters of relevance to young people. They made outstanding progress due to the skill of the teachers and their keen interest in the subject.
- The numbers of students following AS-level and A-level courses in mathematics were relatively small. Over time, most students made better than expected progress. There was some evidence that boys made better progress than girls and achieved better results overall. All of the small numbers of students presented for the A-level examinations in 2015 had achieved A\* to C awards, and most achieved levels A\* to B, ahead of expectations. The pass rates in the AS and A-level examinations had shown steady increases over the previous three years. These pass rates were usually above the world averages. Students' workbooks showed evidence of high attainment and progress in a wide range of advanced mathematical topics, including calculus and mechanics.

- In science, most students demonstrated scientific knowledge and skills above the curriculum standards. Classes were primarily facilitated by teachers and conducted by students on specific topics. In Year 12 biology, students built models representative of the semi-conservative nature of DNA replication. In Year 13 physics, computed tomography was presented by a student, who incorporated the internet with the use of classroom tablets. In this manner independent learning was clearly developed. This significantly contributed to most students making better than expected progress in relation to appropriate learning objectives, aligned with the curriculum standards.

|                 | Foundation Stage | Primary     | Secondary   | Post-16     |
|-----------------|------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Learning skills | Outstanding      | Very good ↑ | Very good ↑ | Outstanding |

- Students were eager to learn and took responsibility for their learning. They responded well to feedback from their peers and other students, and worked effectively in pairs and small groups. Students were well aware of the assessment rubrics and used them to evaluate themselves in order to improve.
- Students communicated effectively in groups and as individuals. They were able to interact with purpose and work towards common goals. Examples of this were when students in Years 4, 9, and 10 science lessons were able to work collaboratively and develop plans for experiments.
- In lessons, meaningful connections were made between subject topics and the real world. For example, in a Grade 9 physics lesson, students were able to make connections between learning about fluid pressure and their understanding of marine mechanics and boat design.
- Students were innovative in projects and could apply research skills by searching the internet and gathering information to solve problems. Information technology was used effectively by integrating the internet with classroom tablet computers.

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

|                      | Foundation Stage | Primary       | Secondary     | Post-16     |
|----------------------|------------------|---------------|---------------|-------------|
| Personal development | Outstanding      | Outstanding ↑ | Outstanding ↑ | Outstanding |

- Students demonstrated a strong sense of personal responsibility and commitment to the school ethos. They were passionate about their beliefs and were articulate in presenting their own ideas. Older students were good role models to younger children. They helped them with their work and adopted 'buddy' roles at break times.
- Almost all students displayed very positive attitudes towards school and others. They maintained caring and respectful relationships with both peers and the staff, despite the few classrooms where the students' numbers were quite large. They demonstrated genuine concern and sensitivity to the needs of their friends and people in the community.
- Respectful relationships between students themselves and adults were routinely maintained. Students took pride in each other's achievements. Most took the lead in relating to others, both socially and in classroom activities. They showed genuine concern for, empathy with and tolerance of others. Younger children enjoyed particular nurturing relationships with their teachers.



- Healthy living was embedded into the curriculum and therefore almost all students had a strong commitment to following a safe and healthy lifestyle. This was evident in the many celebrations of achievements in sports, music, arts and drama.
- Students were punctual in arriving to school and for lessons throughout the school day. They were very aware of how good attendance influenced their academic achievement. The rates of attendance were very good.

|                                                                             | Foundation Stage | Primary     | Secondary   | Post-16     |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures | Outstanding      | Outstanding | Outstanding | Outstanding |

- Students had an excellent appreciation of Islamic values. They could give examples of how it influenced contemporary life in the UAE. Students across all phases were able to link to their own lives what they had learned, for example, by using Dua'a in their daily routines and celebrating a simulation of the Hajj for all the school.
- Students fully respected and appreciated the culture of the UAE. They were fully aware of the traditional and old landmarks after visiting the Heritage Village. Students enjoyed their 'UAE awareness' trips twice a month as part of their social studies curriculum. They showed interest when understanding the Arabic language poems, and presented shows and plays in the morning assemblies.
- Students demonstrated an excellent understanding, awareness and appreciation of their own cultures. Even though the school represented more than 85 different cultures, students believed that they were one community. They knew about the cultures of different countries and celebrated International Day as well as the 'Lingo Fest' when they taught their own languages to others.

|                                             | Foundation Stage | Primary     | Secondary   | Post-16     |
|---------------------------------------------|------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Social responsibility and innovation skills | Outstanding      | Outstanding | Outstanding | Outstanding |

- Students were responsible and contributed actively to the life of the school and wider communities. Their activities included voluntary efforts to raise funds for the poor in collaboration with Dubai Cares. Students showed care and consideration for others and their school. They were developing excellent citizenship skills.
- Students had an excellent work ethic. Well-planned projects and enterprise activities helped students to acquire the key skills necessary to be innovative. For example, they made mobile phone applications and created a film for the Qatar Film Festival.
- Students showed an excellent understanding of environmental sustainability. They actively looked for ways to improve their school environment. Year 4 students introduced a project for the collection of used batteries. They had created a kitchen garden. They were very successful in their efforts and were awarded the Conservator Award.

### 3. Teaching and assessment

|                                 | Foundation Stage | Primary     | Secondary | Post-16     |
|---------------------------------|------------------|-------------|-----------|-------------|
| Teaching for effective learning | Outstanding      | Very good ↑ | Good      | Very good ↑ |

- Teachers had secure subject knowledge and knew how students learned best. Teachers in the FS and primary years included a wide variety of activities to meet the needs of younger learners. In secondary and Post-16 lessons, teachers addressed the learning needs of older students by creating activities that allowed for frequent interactions and opportunities for students to think for themselves.
- Thoughtful and comprehensive planning ensured that teaching was targeted and students understood the learning expectations for each lesson. Teachers' planning followed a sequence of effective learning steps, leading to successful outcomes for all groups of learners. Very good use of varied resources and inviting learning environments motivated students. In the FS, classrooms were multi-sensory and rich with print, which enhanced the learning of younger children.
- In lessons, especially the Post-16 classes, teachers' very effective questioning inspired students' curiosity, promoted critical thinking and deepened students' understanding. Teachers successfully targeted questions so as to make assessments and adjusted their lessons accordingly. Frequent opportunities for extended dialogue between students in whole class settings engaged and motivated students, resulting in very good progress in most lessons.
- Most teachers understood that students had different learning needs and so lessons were planned accordingly. Learning tasks were carefully planned to ensure that students worked at the correct levels of challenge in relation to their abilities. This planning was not as strong in secondary. Most students were highly engaged and appropriately challenged. Additional support and good use of the resources ensured that there was very good progress by most groups of students.
- Very good teaching strategies promoted critical thinking, problem solving and innovation. Frequent individual and small group learning projects effectively developed students' independence and collaboration skills. Teachers helped students to participate well in theme week classes, engaging them in enterprise activities that promoted innovation and creativity. Students successfully applied their problem solving and critical thinking skills during lessons to these more extensive learning opportunities.
- The teaching of Arabic was at least good and in the primary years it was very good for students learning it as a first language. Teachers communicated clearly to their students what was expected of them and why. Activities were relevant and engaged students in their learning. In some lessons, opportunities were provided for students to develop critical thinking skills.



|            | Foundation Stage | Primary     | Secondary   | Post-16     |
|------------|------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Assessment | Outstanding      | Very good ↑ | Very good ↑ | Very good ↑ |

- Internal assessment procedures were well aligned to the National Curriculum for England requirements at all phases, including the Foundation Stage, and to the MoE requirements for Islamic education and Arabic. As a result, the school was able to track students' progress accurately in a wide range of aspects.
- Teachers took account of the assessment standards on external international tests such as TIMSS and PISA, and were improving their own assessments of students' progress to reflect those standards. The school's assessment procedures were well aligned to the requirements of external examinations including the IGCSE, AS-level and A-level examinations. Teachers were well aware of comparisons between the school's pass rates and world or national pass rates in those examinations. Senior students of Arabic took external examinations.
- The analysis of data was a strength of the school's procedures. Leaders and other staff members had very good understanding of the performances of different groups including classes, year groups, higher-attaining and lower-attaining students, boys and girls, and various national groups. They monitored students' progress closely and regularly.
- Staff members were working well together and were successful in using their analyses of students' progress and attainment to amend the curriculum and improve teaching approaches. Teachers took account of assessment data and planned their lessons well, though there was some inconsistency in the implementation of their plans to meet the learning needs of all groups.
- Teachers had very good knowledge of the strengths and developmental needs of their students. Students were involved in assessing their own progress and attainment at various times. Feedback to students from teachers was constructive. Written feedback was generally helpful, although teachers sometimes had difficulty in checking the progress of all students in large classes and giving extensive written feedback.

#### 4. Curriculum

|                                      | Foundation Stage | Primary     | Secondary   | Post-16     |
|--------------------------------------|------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Curriculum design and implementation | Outstanding      | Very good ↑ | Very good ↑ | Outstanding |

- The school successfully followed the National Curriculum for England and the early years Foundation Stage curriculum. Both had a clear rationale, which was shared by all teachers. Teachers very effectively planned a broad range of activities that promoted knowledge, skills and understanding across all phases. English, mathematics and science subjects were being aligned to the National Agenda requirements.
- Teachers planned the curriculum thoroughly to ensure continuity in students' learning. The learning programmes in all phases gave students a very good start and prepared them for the next stages of their education, training or employment. The transition arrangements across the school included aspects of social development to ensure that students were confident when moving on to the next year group or phase.

- Across all phases, teachers planned a variety of outdoor activities to meet the interests and talents of learners. Secondary and Post-16 students chose from a greater range of curricular options than in previous years. The school had introduced a travel and tourism programme after local people from the business community spoke to students about career choices.
- The high quality displays around school indicated that learning was linked effectively across most subjects. In the FS, children wrote notes to The Very Hungry Caterpillar about healthy eating. The oldest students, including those with special needs, used ICT to create books and helped young readers to develop literacy skills. There were opportunities for research and independent learning in projects and homework assignments across many subjects.
- School leaders and teachers regularly reviewed the curriculum and made changes to meet the needs of students. Discussions between Year 1 and FS teachers resulted in more age appropriate activities for young learners. Drama lessons were introduced into the secondary and Post-16 classes, enabling students to have a better understanding of Shakespeare's plays.

|                       | Foundation Stage | Primary     | Secondary   | Post-16     |
|-----------------------|------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Curriculum adaptation | Very good ↑      | Very good ↑ | Very good ↑ | Outstanding |

- The curriculum was very effectively modified by teachers to meet the learning needs for almost all groups of students. Lesson plans identified effective modifications for each group, highlighting questioning, tasks and supports. In the best lessons curriculum adaptations provided open ended and challenging opportunities for the gifted and talented students. In Year 1, the curriculum was adapted with specific learning areas enabling FS children to more easily move into Year 1.
- Extensive opportunities existed for enhancing students' learning. Assemblies and field trips made learning meaningful. Students participated in a wide array of after school activities. Innovation and enterprise were encouraged in leadership activities such as the Model United Nations and World Scholars. One innovative project included older students in reviewing the TIMMS and PISA data in order to make recommendations for changes to the curriculum.
- Exposure to Emirati culture and the UAE's values were fully integrated into both school and classroom activities. Students enthusiastically participated in Flag Day and National Day celebrations and took field trips to the Dubai Heritage Village, mosques and local businesses. Students developed a deep appreciation for Dubai by contributing to local charitable causes. A simulation of the Hajj helped students increase their understanding of the UAE's culture. The FS curriculum closely linked activities to the Emirati culture and UAE society.
- Arabic was taught in the FS1 for 40 minutes per week and in FS2 for 120 minutes per week. It was based on an appropriate set of standards for teaching Arabic to emergent learners. All teachers were qualified to teach Arabic.

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

|                                                                               | Foundation Stage | Primary     | Secondary   | Post-16     |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding | Outstanding      | Outstanding | Outstanding | Outstanding |

- The school was hygienic and the environment was very secure. A safe environment was provided for all. Bus monitoring and gate security were excellent and the supervision of students was exceptionally effective throughout the day. The school met all legal and regulatory requirements.
- The maintenance of equipment and facilities was excellent and all records were detailed and secure. Regular drills were conducted for fire and evacuation. The clinics were well staffed and the nurses cared well for all students. Medication was kept in a locked cabinet and all medicines were regularly checked for expiration dates.
- The school environment met the holistic needs of students. The school was very inclusive and nurturing for students and the staff. Ramps were in place and the facility was friendly to those with disabilities. Students were safe at all times in the school day.
- The school rigorously pursued students' safety and child protection. All staff members, including all support staff, were regularly updated about child protection and understood emergency procedures. Effective programmes were in place to protect students from cyber bullying and social media. The safeguarding of all students was a prominent feature of the school.
- Healthy living was promoted through a variety of programmes, assemblies and initiatives. Healthy options were available in the canteen and the menu was changed every six weeks, guided by students' opinions. A body-mass index was completed for all students and a programme was in place for any who needed support. Students were protected from the sun and water was readily available.

|                  | Foundation Stage                                                                                | Primary                                                                                       | Secondary                                                                                       | Post-16     |
|------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| Care and support | Outstanding  | Very good  | Very good  | Outstanding |

- Relationships between all members of the school community were positive. In all areas of the school, adults were good role models and helped students to develop respect for others, to manage feelings and understand appropriate behaviour. Systems for managing behaviour were understood.
- The school was very successful in promoting very good attendance and punctuality. The very efficient systems for tracking attendance and following up absentees made certain that high levels of attendance were maintained throughout the school. Parents supported the school very well in this aspect.
- The school had a comprehensive system for early identification of students with SEND and those who were gifted and talented. Parents were fully involved and worked in partnership with school leaders and teachers to plan appropriate educational programmes. The school had a fully inclusive admissions policy.

- The special needs leadership team had created an Achievement Centre and students attended for targeted support with their academic work. During these sessions, they made very good progress from their starting points. Students with SEND in mainstream classes were actively involved in group work and discussions.
- The Counsellor and teachers designed an excellent programme throughout the school to support students' well-being and academic achievements. Staff members planned appropriate lessons to teach citizenship, safety and aspects of personal development such as having aspirations. The school provided high quality support in making career choices.

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

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

Very good ↑

- The special needs coordinators were well qualified and experienced. They promoted their vision of a fully inclusive school. They made a valuable contribution to the personal and social development of students generally and increased teachers' understanding of how to promote achievement by various groups. The department was well run. Mainstream teachers were supported by 'shadow' teachers in well-organised programmes.
- There were well managed systems in place to identify, assess and plan to meet students' needs. The views and information from different professionals were taken into account. The individual education plans (IEPs) supported all aspects of learning and development for students. Leaders supported teachers with planning, and monitored lessons. As a result, students made at least good progress from their individual starting points.
- Parents were seen as partners in educating students with SEND. They had strong relationships with the school and worked well in partnership with the staff. They exchanged information regularly and were able to support students with their schoolwork at home.
- The Achievement Centre offered high quality provision. Students received individual support targeted very specifically to their needs. During these sessions, they made very good progress on appropriately challenging work. In mainstream lessons, dedicated 'shadow' teachers supported students when required to help them make at least good progress. However, some IEPs were not detailed enough to give teachers suitable advice for lesson planning.
- Students in all phases achieved well. The leaders were aspirational and believed in encouraging them to reach their full potential. Future careers and skills for life had been considered and there were organized programmes such as 'childcare studies' and 'functional skills.' An increasing number of older students were successful in these. Some of those who made good progress had already become interns for a short time in local businesses.

## 6. Leadership and management

### The effectiveness of leadership

Very good ↑

- Leaders at all levels were highly effective and had set a clear strategic direction for the school. They promoted a strong sense of direction that was shared by the whole school community. They identified key priorities for the school including commitment to the UAE national and Emirate priorities. All leaders promoted a fully inclusive ethos.
- Leaders had a thorough knowledge of their curriculum, which was rich and varied, and they understood best practices in teaching, learning and assessment. The whole school worked together as a team to ensure the best outcomes for students.
- Communication was effective and the principal delegated roles and responsibilities strategically. Senior and middle leaders all had the capacity to improve their areas and there were high levels of competence and commitment to do so.
- Leaders throughout the school knew their strengths and areas for development well. They were reflective and focused on identifying solutions to overcome any barriers to the raising of achievement. They had created a culture of high expectations.
- The leaders had sustained the strengths from the previous inspection. They had raised attainment and progress in some subjects in different phases and improved the quality of other areas of provision. They ensured that the school was compliant with statutory and regulatory requirements.

### School self-evaluation and improvement planning

Very good ↑

- A wide range of information from within school as well as data from external sources, including international assessments, were the basis of the school's improvement planning. The leaders knew the school's strengths and areas for improvement and was very effective in prioritising, planning and taking action.
- Monitoring and evaluation were systematic and rigorous at every level. All aspects of learning, teaching and assessment were observed and evaluated for their effects upon students' achievements across the year. The evaluation of teaching and learning guided continuous professional development activities and curriculum modifications.
- The school's improvement plans included targets that were linked to the school's main priorities and the previous inspection report's recommendations. They contained strategic and operational actions, including creative solutions to address the school's and the UAE's priorities. This resulted in sustained, positive effects upon students' achievements.
- All recommendations from the previous inspection report had been implemented well.



| Partnerships with parents and the community                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Outstanding |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The school was highly successful in enjoying positive partnership with parents and valued them as the first educators of their children. Members of the Extended Development Group assisted school leaders in the growth and progress of the school. They offered critical and constructive feedback on proposed changes and their views were fully considered when developing school improvement priorities.</li> <li>Various communication channels ensured that parents were kept very well informed about their children's achievements, learning and development. These included planning diaries, phone calls, circulars, SMS messages, e-mails, blogs and video messaging. This was particularly the case for the parents of children with SEND, who felt very well supported by the school with the information communication notebook.</li> <li>Parents were kept well informed about the progress of their children. Reports were comprehensive and sent home four times a year. They explained and celebrated students' strengths, but also identified areas that they needed to improve.</li> <li>The school enjoyed a strong partnership with various stakeholders and the local community. These partnerships were very productive in enhancing and improving learning experiences for most students. Intelligent Optimism was a global movement founded by the school to highlight the benefits of science and technology for people's lives.</li> </ul> |             |

| Governance                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Very good  |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Governance included representation from many stakeholders. A structured parent representative body met once each month and made suggestions for school improvements. Governors focused on securing the best outcomes for students and was successful in its attempts.</li> <li>The governing board held leaders accountable for the quality of the school's performance. Strategies at all levels were reassessed and modified when necessary. The Extended Development Group including parents, prefects, teachers and members of the senior leadership team, who met monthly to discuss improvement issues and acted as a very effective constructive critic for the school.</li> <li>The governing board provided an objective and independent view of the school and strategic guidance to its leaders. It ensured that good staffing and resources were readily available to address weaknesses and that all statutory requirements were met. Governors provided expertise that was influential in shaping the school's further development.</li> </ul> |                                                                                                 |

**Management, staffing, facilities and resources**

Very good ↑

- All aspects of the daily management were effective and very well organised. Lessons and activities were well planned to maximise the use of time. The school's procedures and routines were very effective and information boards and displays provided ample information regarding daily events.
- Staff members were well qualified and experienced and fulfilled the vision and mission of the school. They benefitted from professional development that was matched to the school's priorities and the current trends in education. There were a few examples of shortages in the teaching team, but when they did occur there were systems in place to ensure continuity in learning for students.
- The premises provided a very safe, pleasant and stimulating environment to meet the needs of students. Access was suitable for the needs of all. Indoor and outdoor areas were well maintained, clean and well resourced. The environment generally supported teaching and learning well.
- The school was well equipped with resources matched to the needs of students and relevant to the curriculum's requirements. Senior leaders worked together to ensure the effective use and development of resources and the staff across the school.

## 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    |     |
| <b>Parents*</b><br>  | 2015-2016 | 62  |
|                                                                                                       | 2014-2015 | 458 |
| <b>Teachers</b><br>  | 147       |     |
| <b>Students</b><br> | 255       |     |

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

- Almost all parents and teachers who responded to the survey were satisfied with the quality of education provided by the school.
- Most parents believed that their children were making good progress in all subjects and senior students agreed. They agreed that their children enjoyed school and this belief was supported by students and teachers.
- Almost all senior students thought that most of their teachers were skilled and were well qualified.
- Almost all parents, students and teachers thought that the school was well led.

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