

# Inspection Report



## GEMS Wellington Primary School 2014-2015



إكسبو 2020  
دبي، الإمارات العربية المتحدة  
DUBAI, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

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## School information



### General information

Location	Al Satwa
Type of school	Private
Opening year of school	2008
Website	www.gemswps.com
Telephone	04-3433266
Address	PO Box 114652 Satwa Behind the Shangri La Hotel, Dubai, UAE
Principal	Stephen J. Chynoweth
Language of instruction	English
Inspection dates	3 <sup>rd</sup> – 6 <sup>th</sup> November 2014



### Students

Gender of students	Boys and Girls
Age range	3 - 11
Grades or year groups	Foundation Stage 1 – Year 6
Number of students on roll	1167
Number of children in FS1	89
Number of Emirati students	35
Number of students with SEN	85
Largest nationality group of students	Indian



### Teachers / Support staff

Number of teachers	90
Largest nationality group of teachers	British
Number of teacher assistants	51
Teacher-student ratio	1:13
Number of guidance counsellors	1
Teacher turnover	24%



### Curriculum

Educational Permit	UK
Main Curriculum / Other	UK
Standardised tests / board exams	SATs
Accreditation	CIS, COBIS



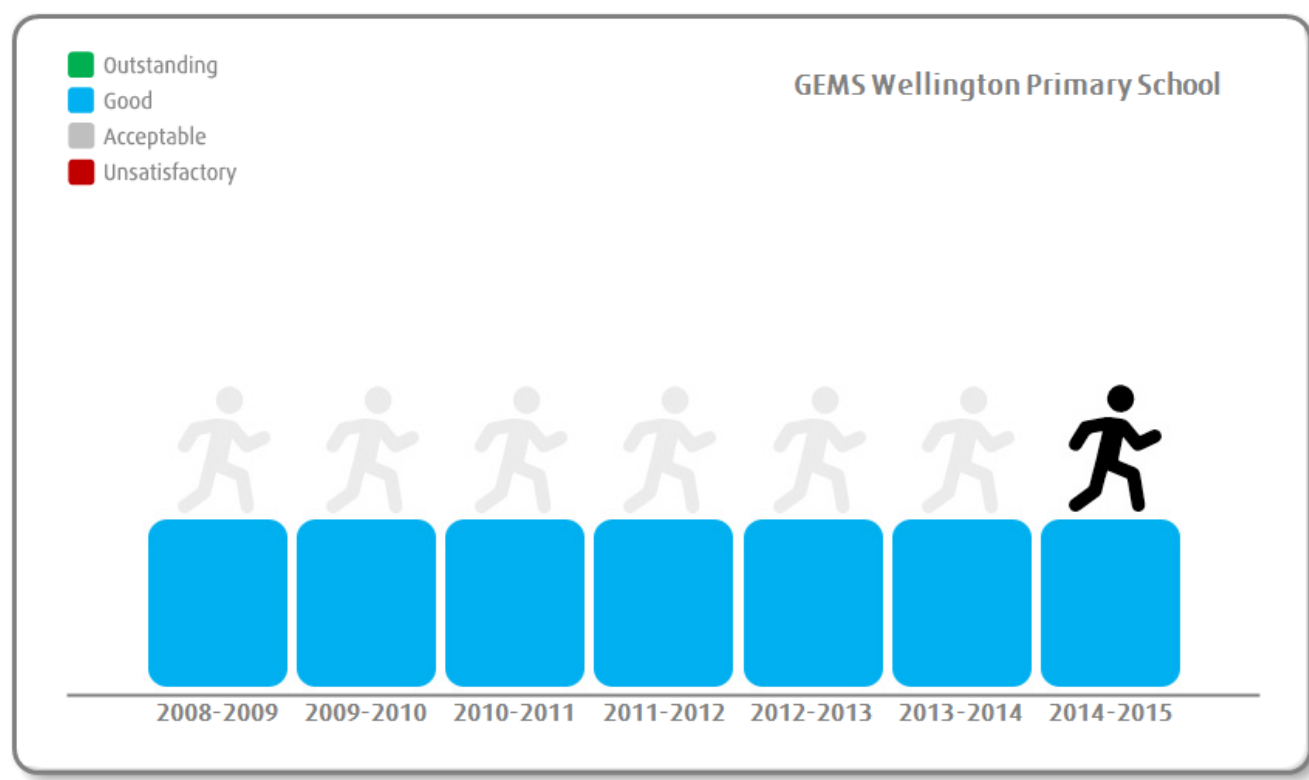




Dear Parents,

**GEMS Wellington Primary School** was inspected by DSIB from 3<sup>rd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> November 2014, and the overall quality of education provided by the school was found to be **Good**

In order to judge the overall quality of education provided by the school, inspectors considered six key aspects of the school's performance and standards. Inspectors looked at children's attainment and progress in five key subjects, their learning skills as well as their personal and social development. They judged how effective teaching was across the school. Inspectors considered how well the school's curriculum, including activities inside and outside the classroom, 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 a range of evidence gathered by the inspection team, including observing children learning in lessons, looking at their work, talking with children, meetings with staff, parents and governors, and reviewing the parents' and teachers' surveys.

The key strengths and areas for improvement to be made by the school leaders, governors and owners are:

### **Strengths**

- Students' made outstanding progress in science in the primary phase.
- There were excellent relationships between students and staff.
- The school's arrangements for ensuring students' health and safety were outstanding.
- The school had good systems and processes for identifying and supporting students with special educational needs.
- There were regular and effective communications between home and school which supported children's learning.

### **Areas for improvement**

- Ensure that all teachers in the Foundation Stage accurately assess children's attainment and progress.
- Improve the quality of teaching throughout the school to ensure it meets the needs of all students, and particularly students' with special educational needs and the most able.

We warmly encourage you to read the full school inspection report.

The school is required to submit to DSIB an action plan identifying the steps they will take to address the areas for improvement. We have advised your school leaders to share this with you.

We trust that the information provided will help you understand, and encourages you to support, your child's school.

Yours sincerely,

**Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau**  
**Knowledge and Human Development Authority**

## A closer look at GEMS Wellington Primary School



### How well does the school perform overall?

Overall, the GEMS Wellington Primary School provided a **'Good'** quality of education for its students.


- Students' attainment and progress in mathematics and English were good across the school. In science, primary students made outstanding progress. Younger children were beginning to develop independent learning skills such as problem solving and older students were able to apply existing skills to new areas of learning.
- Students were well behaved and had positive attitudes to learning and school. Most had a clear understanding of Islamic values and appreciated the heritage and culture of the United Arab Emirates (UAE). They enjoyed their school work and willingly took on responsibilities.
- Teachers used their specialist knowledge to plan interesting lessons that engaged students and supported their learning. In a few lessons, the more able students were not sufficiently challenged which restricted their further improvement.
- Regular reviews ensured that the curriculum was up to date and responded to most students' learning needs. The quality of teaching in Islamic Education and Arabic was improving. The wide range of extra-curricular activities provided for most students' interests. The mathematics curriculum did not fully respond to the different learning needs of girls.
- The school was clean and well maintained and was a safe place for students to learn. Healthy living was regularly promoted throughout the curriculum. Teachers and students respected one another and students thrived in the supportive atmosphere.
- The Principal was well supported in the role by other senior leaders. The leadership team knew the school's strengths and weaknesses and had made good plans for improvement. The school's effective partnership with parents made a positive impact on their children's education. Governors knew the school well and challenged it to do even better. The school's staff, facilities and resources were all positive influences on students' attainment and progress.



### How well does the school provide for students with special educational needs?

- The school provided well for students with special educational needs which enabled them to make good progress towards their academic and personal development targets.
- Teachers modified the curriculum to meet the needs of individual students. They regularly communicated with parents to keep them updated on their children's progress.
- Leaders supported by teachers, had identified students' needs accurately and had put in place carefully planned programmes to help them learn.

## 1. How good are the students' attainment, progress and learning skills?

		Foundation Stage	Primary
 Islamic Education	Attainment	Not Applicable	Acceptable
	Progress	Not Applicable	Good
 Arabic as a First Language	Attainment	Not Applicable	Acceptable
	Progress	Not Applicable	Good
 Arabic as an Additional Language	Attainment	Not Applicable	Acceptable
	Progress	Not Applicable	Good
 English	Attainment	Good	Good
	Progress	Good	Good
 Mathematics	Attainment	Good	Good
	Progress	Good	Good
 Science	Attainment	Acceptable ↓	Good
	Progress	Acceptable ↓	Outstanding
		Foundation Stage	Primary
Learning skills		Good	Good

↑ Improved from last inspection

↓ Declined from last inspection



## 2. How good is the students' personal and social development?

	Foundation Stage	Primary
Personal responsibility	Outstanding	Outstanding
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Good	Good
Community and environmental responsibility	Good	Good ↓

## 3. How good are teaching and assessment?

	Foundation Stage	Primary
Teaching for effective learning	Good	Good
Assessment	Acceptable ↓	Good

## 4. How well does the curriculum meet the educational needs of all students?

	Foundation Stage	Primary
Curriculum quality	Good ↓	Good ↓
Curriculum design to meet the individual needs of students	Good	Good

## 5. How well does the school protect and support students?

	Foundation Stage	Primary
Health and safety	Outstanding	Outstanding
Quality of support	Good ↓	Good ↓

## 6. How good are the leadership and management of the school?

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



# School **Inspection** Report

## Overall school judgement

Good

## Key strengths


- Primary students made outstanding progress in science.
- Students had excellent relationships with each other and their teachers, and showed self-confidence.
- The school had outstanding arrangements for the health and safety of its students and staff.
- There were highly effective systems for identifying students' special educational needs.
- There were effective partnership between home and school to support children's learning.


## Changes since the last inspection

- Although several judgements declined since the last inspection, the school had produced a more accurate self-evaluation of its performance and standards.
- There were improved communications between the school and parents. Nevertheless, it was difficult for the school to judge the impact of its actions because success criteria in improvement plans were not clear. Consequently it had declined in a number of other aspects.



## Recommendations

- Ensure that all teachers in the Foundation Stage accurately assess children's attainment and progress.
- Improve the quality of teaching throughout the school to ensure it meets the needs of all students, in particular students with special educational needs and the most able.

 Improved from last inspection

 Declined from last inspection

## 1. How good are the students' attainment, progress and learning skills?

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	Good
Mathematics	Good	Good
Science	Acceptable 	Acceptable 

- In English, most children listened carefully and responded accurately to instructions. They had started to develop positive attitudes to reading but were making slower progress in writing.
- The majority of children had a good understanding of basic mathematics. They could use numbers up to 20 and recognise two and three dimensional shapes. They identified and classified objects into given categories. The majority of children made good progress, particularly in the use of numbers.
- Children understood scientific concepts at a level appropriate for their age. However, they made slower progress in developing enquiry skills and use of scientific terminology.

Primary		
Subjects	Attainment	Progress
Islamic Education	Acceptable	Good
Arabic as a First Language	Acceptable	Good
Arabic as an Additional Language	Acceptable	Good
English	Good	Good
Mathematics	Good	Good
Science	Good	Outstanding

- In Islamic Education, most students understood the Prophet Mohammad's (PBUH) Seerah and the duties of Muslims towards each other. They made good progress in gaining knowledge of Islamic principles and in applying Islamic courtesies.
- In Arabic as a first language, students' listening skills and reading aloud had improved in all grades. Their comprehension and writing skills were weaker. Students made good progress in their use of grammar.
- In Arabic as an additional language, students made good progress in coding and decoding words but their comprehension and reading skills were weaker. Students made slow progress in creative writing as a result of limited opportunities in the lessons.
- In English, the reading skills of most students were good. The quality of writing had improved, with boys making the most progress. Students made good progress in the development of speaking and listening skills.
- Students' numeracy skills were good. Older students applied their mathematical knowledge to solve real life problems. Emirati students' mathematical knowledge and understanding were acceptable. Higher attaining students were not sufficiently challenged.
- Students made outstanding progress in the development of their scientific and critical thinking skills. Students extended their learning skills by designing experiments and testing hypotheses.




	Foundation Stage	Primary
<b>Learning skills</b>	Good	Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children were keen to help each other learn and they worked well with adults. They demonstrated independence in their learning skills and could apply their learning across the subjects.</li> <li>In science, primary students were encouraged to develop their independent enquiry skills. They could plan, investigate and record their work with accuracy.</li> <li>Students made good use of previous knowledge to attempt new challenges with confidence.</li> <li>In Arabic as an additional language, students had fewer opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning and, as a result, skills of enquiry and research were limited.</li> </ul>		

## 2. How good is the students' personal and social development?


	Foundation Stage	Primary
<b>Personal responsibility</b>	Outstanding	Outstanding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students behaved with courtesy and mutual respect. Almost all students enjoyed positive relationships with each other and school staff.</li> <li>Most students had an excellent understanding of healthy eating and chose an active, healthy life style.</li> <li>Students' attendance and punctuality were exemplary.</li> </ul>		

	Foundation Stage	Primary
<b>Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures</b>	Good	Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Most students had a clear understanding of Islamic values and their impact on today's society.</li> <li>They appreciated the culture of the UAE and had a basic knowledge of its heritage.</li> <li>Students had an excellent awareness of their own culture but a limited appreciation of cultures from around the world.</li> </ul>		



	Foundation Stage	Primary
<b>Community and environmental responsibility</b>	Good	Good 
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students were proactive members of the school community and readily accepted positions of responsibility.</li> <li>Most students had a positive work ethic. Older students showed initiative and demonstrated a good level of organisational skills when developing their own fund raising projects.</li> <li>Students took good care of their school and sought ways to improve the environment. They had led local conservation projects. Their understanding of environmental issues in a wider context was developing.</li> </ul>		

### 3. How good are teaching and assessment?

	Foundation Stage	Primary
Teaching for effective learning	Good	Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The majority of teachers had a good subject knowledge that supported students' learning well. In primary science, teachers developed students' investigative skills and critical thinking to a good level.</li> <li>Teachers planned activities which engaged and motivated most learners. Students were given opportunities to develop higher order thinking skills and take active parts in lessons. The learning environment was stimulating and time was used effectively.</li> <li>Teacher-student interactions were mostly positive. These enhanced the learning environment. In a few lessons, lower order questioning limited opportunities to extend learning and challenge thinking, especially in the Foundation Stage.</li> <li>A minority of lessons used a limited range of teaching strategies which did not meet the needs of all students. In particular, tasks lacked challenge for the more able students.</li> <li>The promotion of critical thinking and reflection skills was good across most subjects.</li> <li>Arabic teachers had a secure subject knowledge and used clear learning objectives in their lessons. Students demonstrated good relationships with their teachers. However, a few lessons offered limited challenge and some teachers' expectations of what their students could achieve were too low. The range of activities offered was variable and sometimes too limited.</li> </ul>		

	Foundation Stage	Primary
Assessment	Acceptable 	Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Internal assessments were aligned to the National Curriculum for England and the data collected provided valid measures of students' academic development. In the Foundation Stage, assessment information was not always accurate which led to incorrect judgements being made on children's progress.</li> <li>Results from international tests had been satisfactorily analysed and used to improve the curriculum in the primary phase. This modification had supported students' progress in recent years towards international targets in mathematics and science.</li> <li>Information from internal assessments was used effectively to plan interventions for primary students. Assessment information in the Foundation Stage was not sufficiently accurate to be used successfully.</li> <li>The majority of teachers used assessment data to plan lessons effectively and influence curriculum provision. However, a few lessons lacked sufficient challenge for more able students.</li> <li>The majority of teachers had a good knowledge of individual students' strengths and areas for development. Most teachers used this knowledge successfully to provide constructive feedback and improve students' learning.</li> </ul>		



#### 4. How well does the curriculum meet the educational needs of all students?

	Foundation Stage	Primary
<b>Curriculum quality</b>	Good 	Good 
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The curriculum was broad, balanced and met statutory requirements. It was reviewed annually to ensure the learning needs of most students were met.</li> <li>The Foundation Stage curriculum was being developed to support the progression of students to the next phase of learning. A greater focus was being placed upon the development of students' spoken language skills.</li> <li>The high quality resources and specialist teachers' strong subject knowledge enabled students to make good progress.</li> <li>A cross-curricular approach was often used to enrich and add relevance to students' learning. In Islamic Education cross-curricular links were limited.</li> </ul>		

	Foundation Stage	Primary
<b>Curriculum design to meet the individual needs of students</b>	Good	Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The curriculum had not been adapted to address the gender gap in mathematics or modified to meet the needs of the higher attaining students. The curriculum in Islamic Education and Arabic was in the process of being modified to meet the needs of the more able and those with special educational needs.</li> <li>The curriculum was broad and taught in themes or integrated topics across each year group to enrich and enhance the learning experience.</li> <li>The school ensured that extra-curricular activities were based around students' interests to extend their learning.</li> <li>There was a good curriculum program for teaching Arabic for 31 Arab children and 149 non-Arab children in the Foundation Stage, who had two weekly lessons of 30 minutes in duration each.</li> </ul>		

#### 5. How well does the school protect and support students?


	Foundation Stage	Primary
<b>Health and safety</b>	Outstanding	Outstanding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Child protection arrangements were defined clearly and understood by all students, staff and parents. Cyber safety was high on the school's agenda and helpful guidance was shared with the school community.</li> <li>The school had efficient systems in place to ensure premises and facilities were safe and hygienic for all members of the school community.</li> <li>The school site and buildings were well maintained. Robust systems and processes ensured the health and safety of students, including efficient evacuation procedures and transport arrangements.</li> <li>Medical staff were vigilant in the care of students. Routine checks were carried out and detailed records were kept.</li> <li>Healthy living was embedded within the curriculum and promoted throughout the school by staff.</li> </ul>		

	Foundation Stage	Primary
Quality of support	Good 	Good 
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Relationships between students and teachers were excellent. They were characterised by mutual respect. Polite and considerate behaviour was encouraged.</li> <li>Excellent systems promoted high levels of attendance and punctuality. Information provided to parents and students set out clearly the school's expectations.</li> <li>The school admitted students with a wide range of special educational needs. Students' needs were identified using information from a wide range of sources including parents and teachers.</li> <li>Effective communication between teachers and parents ensured that a continuing dialogue took place on individual students' needs and progress.</li> <li>Individual students had detailed personalised targets in their individual education plans which supported their generally good progress in key focus areas. The students' emotional well-being was supported by the very caring pastoral system in the school.</li> </ul>		

### How well does the school provide for students with special educational needs?


	Overall
The overall effectiveness of provision for students with special educational needs	Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leadership at all levels ensured that the school had a strongly inclusive approach within its provision.</li> <li>A well-qualified team of specialists led by a proactive coordinator had ensured that there were effective arrangements in place to identify students with special educational needs.</li> <li>Students received a good level of academic and personal support from learning support assistants which resulted in their overall good progress.</li> <li>Parents were well supported with guidance and regular updates from the special educational needs team on students' progress. There was effective, regular communication between middle and senior leaders to ensure high quality specialist provision.</li> <li>The academic development and progress in lessons of students with special educational needs were inconsistent because guidance in the individual learning plans was not followed.</li> </ul>	

### 6. How good are the leadership and management of the school?

	Overall
The effectiveness of leadership	Good 
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The newly appointed Principal provided clear direction and leadership to the school, and demonstrated a sharp understanding on how to improve the school as well as the priorities for improving educational outcomes for students.</li> <li>The strong leadership team ensured the effective implementation of the school's new vision and direction.</li> <li>Staff relationships were enhanced by clear communication between leaders and other staff. This ensured everyone's full awareness and involvement in the process of change.</li> </ul>	



- Leadership was devolved well. Middle leaders were becoming increasingly effective in their role. This recent development ensured the school's good capacity to improve. However, greater consistency was required to ensure there was a more positive impact on students' standards and teaching quality.
- Leaders had sustained good performance at the same time as prioritising important changes such as staff accountability.

	Overall
Self-evaluation and improvement planning	Good 
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Principal had strengthened the school self-evaluation process to make it more rigorous and give a more robust view of the school's performance. This provided a solid benchmark on which to base school improvement planning.</li> <li>• Teacher performance was regularly monitored but not systematically enough to result in a sharp increase in quality.</li> <li>• The school made good use of data to inform its accurate improvement planning. This fed directly into action plans at a variety of levels. However, success criteria were not clear and it was difficult for the school to judge the impact of the actions.</li> <li>• The school had made progress on the previous report's recommendations but more was required to reduce the inconsistencies in teaching quality.</li> </ul>	




	Overall
Parents and the community	Outstanding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There was a very close and productive partnership with parents which fostered students' learning and personal development.</li> <li>• The school used innovative ways to communicate with parents to keep them up to date with school developments and their children's progress.</li> <li>• Through regular communications, parents were updated on their children's learning and given guidance on how they could help at home.</li> <li>• The school had developed strong links with its local community. These provided opportunities for students to gain a wide social and cultural experience.</li> </ul>	

	Overall
Governance	Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The governors had increased the representation of stakeholders in their work. Governors valued the view of parents and acted promptly on their concerns.</li> <li>• There was close monitoring of all aspects of the school's performance, which included assessing the work of senior staff especially in relation to students' achievement.</li> <li>• Through regular reports, visits to the school and the allocation of funds, governors ensured that the school met statutory requirements and they exerted a positive strategic influence on the school's development.</li> </ul>	

	Overall
Management, staffing, facilities and resources	Outstanding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Day-to-day running of the school was highly efficient with all necessary procedures in place.</li> <li>• Staff were very well qualified and received regular training to keep them up to date. They were appropriately deployed according to their specialisms and experience.</li> <li>• The premises offered an outstanding range of specialist areas and a well maintained outdoor learning environment to support the school's wide curriculum.</li> <li>• All subjects accessed an extensive set of up-to-date resources which enhanced teaching quality and supported children's learning skills. Of particular note, was the wide range of books and equipment devoted to Islamic Education and Arabic language learning.</li> </ul>	

## What are the views of the Principal, parents, teachers and students?

Before the inspection, the views of the Principal, parents and teachers 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		Percentage
 Parents*	This year	375	42%
	Last year	208	26%
 Teachers	52		55%
 Students	There are no upper secondary-aged students in the school		

- A minority of parents and a majority teachers responded to the survey. The student group was not represented.
- Of those who responded to the surveys, parents and teachers indicated a good level of satisfaction with the school. They agreed that students enjoyed the school and that it was a safe place for them to learn.
- Parents agreed that leadership was good and they received detailed reports on children’s progress.
- Parents and teachers agreed that the school helped students to make good progress in the development of learning skills.
- Teachers felt that the school offered a good subject range.
- A few parents expressed concerns that the recent fee increase had not led directly to improvements in school provision.
- A few parents were concerned with students' lack of progress in Arabic as a first language and a similar proportion of teachers commented on the shortage of time for marking and preparation.

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

## 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

## How to contact us

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)