



National Agenda



Early years



Special educational  
needs and disabilities



Innovation

## Inspection Report 2015-2016

GEMS Wellington Academy- Al Khail

Curriculum: UK

Overall rating: Good

[Read more about the school](#)



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“Don't look behind to see who is following you, but look forward to be ahead”



Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum

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## School information

School information		
<b>General information</b> 	Location	Al Quoz
	Type of school	Private
	Opening year of school	2013
	Website	<a href="http://www.gemswellingtonacademy-alkhail.com/">http://www.gemswellingtonacademy-alkhail.com/</a>
	Telephone	04 3396233
	Address	PO Box: 391922, Al Quoz, Dubai, UAE
	Principal	Keith Miller
	Language of instruction	English
	Inspection dates	22 to 25 February 2016
<b>Students</b> 	Gender of students	Boys and girls
	Age range	4-14
	Grades or year groups	Foundation Stage 1 to Year 9
	Number of students on roll	1,148
	Number of children in pre-kindergarten	100
	Number of Emirati students	27
	Number of students with SEND	58
	Largest nationality group of students	Arab
<b>Teachers / Support staff</b> 	Number of teachers	87
	Largest nationality group of teachers	British
	Number of teaching assistants	40
	Teacher-student ratio	1:13
	Number of guidance counsellors	1
	Teacher turnover	30%
<b>Curriculum</b> 	Educational permit / Licence	UK
	Main curriculum	UK
	External tests and examinations	CAT4, GLPTM, GLPTE, GLPTS, BASE
	Accreditation	None
	National Agenda benchmark tests	GL Assessments



## Summary for parents and the community

**GEMS Wellington Academy- Al Khail** was inspected by DSIB from 22 to 25 February, 2016. 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 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.



2015 - 2016 Good





### How well did the school perform overall?

Overall, **Gems Wellington Academy – Al Khail** provided a **good** quality of education for its students.

- Young children and students attained good standards in all core areas except Arabic and Islamic education. They made at least good progress from their starting points except in Islamic education, Arabic as an additional language and Arabic as a first language in the primary phase. Children and students, across all phases, were developing good learning skills. They were able to work cooperatively, share resources and solve problems.
- Students' personal development was very good and their understanding of Islamic values, Emirati heritage and world cultures was strong across all year groups.
- Teachers' interactions with students were good in most lessons. A good range of teaching strategies engaged students well in learning. Some inaccuracies in recording assessments provided inconsistent attainment and progress data. However, in most lessons, teachers' knowledge of student strengths and weaknesses was used very well to meet the range of learning needs.
- The design and quality of the curriculum was good. It was well planned and especially well reviewed. As a result, adaptations to the curriculum were good, enabling teachers to meet the needs of nearly all groups of students.
- The school provided good provision for the safety of students. Child protection training had been delivered to all staff and procedures were well known. Good levels of care and support complemented this security. Teachers were extremely effective in promoting positive behaviour.
- Strong leadership, at all levels, ensured that improvement planning was effective and built upon firm foundations of practice and performance. Day-to-day management was very good and students had the benefits of a well-qualified staff, and high quality buildings and resources.



### What did the school do well?

- The quality of teaching, the curriculum, teachers' knowledge of students' strengths and weaknesses and the development of students' learning skills were good across all phases, leading to good progress in English, mathematics, science and Arabic as a first language in the secondary phase.
- Young children and students' personal development was very good, and students' understanding of Islamic values, Emirati heritage and world cultures were strong, across the primary and secondary phases.
- The school modified the curriculum well in order to support and challenge most groups of students. Its support and care for all students, especially for students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), was good.
- Strong leadership at all levels enabled the school to improve further during a period of rapid change. The quality of the day-to-day management, the building, staffing and resources supported student learning very well.



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

- Improve students' attainment and progress in Islamic education by:
  - planning lessons based on students' prior knowledge and understanding
  - sharing teachers' expertise across phases and subjects
  - developing teachers' skills in using questions to deepen students' thinking
  - increasing the range of teaching strategies and use of technology so that there are more opportunities for students to further develop their learning skills.
- Improve students' attainment and progress in Arabic by:
  - ensuring teaching and activities provide appropriate challenge and support which meets the needs of all groups of students
  - increasing teachers' expectations of students' speaking and reading skills for native language speakers
  - placing a greater emphasis on reading and writing skill development for additional language learners.
- Moderate attainment and progress information realistically by regularly and systematically comparing it with standardised assessments which are aligned to the school's curriculum.



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

- The school was careful and accurate when recording students' achievement and, in the majority of lessons, good progress was observed. During team teaching sessions, withdrawal from class or one-to-one lessons, there was often very good progress for students with more challenging levels of learning needs.
- The SEND team developed excellent relationships with parents and informal communication took place on a daily basis. Parents appreciated the efforts the school made, both to enroll their children, and to provide ongoing support to improve their learning.
- From the Foundation Stage (FS) to Year 6, the learning support assistants (LSAs) completed home-school communication books. These informed parents of the achievements of the day and special events, such as field trips, where the student had needed extra attention or support.
- The inclusion team viewed the relationship between home and school as collaborative and two-way. Parents received feedback from class teachers, inclusion teachers and therapists on strategies to help their children at home. This process was highly valued by staff and parents and provision was often adapted when deemed to be in the best interest of the children.
- The counselor's role in the inclusion team was welcomed and valued. Parents were aware they could approach the school at any time to meet a member of the team and seek support and guidance appropriate to their children's needs. These discussions were conducted in a very sensitive, confidential and professional manner.

## 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 had introduced the National Agenda to teachers through workshops and whole staff presentations. Students were also informed through assemblies and tutor periods. Other stakeholders were less informed. For example, parents were not aware of the National Agenda targets or the school's decision to administer external benchmarked tests in May.
- School leaders were effective in the modifications that were made to the curriculum in order to prepare its students for PISA and TIMSS international assessments. There was a strong element of problem solving already in mathematics and enquiry skills were embedded in science.
- The development of critical thinking was given a high priority in the school. It was effectively promoted in the majority of lessons in English, mathematics and science. These skills were less developed in Arabic and Islamic education.
- Students had the opportunity to research from books and the well-stocked library. Although, the school was well resourced with technology, its use as an integral part of learning was variable across year groups and subjects.

## 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 were committed to using innovation as an approach to raising standards and contributing to the UAE's national priorities. Although, the school had not developed an innovation policy, school leaders had aspirational intentions to develop staff and students' innovation skills through teacher and student learner profiles. The on-going review of the curriculum design included the identification of opportunities to promote a culture of innovation. However, some additional systematic mapping of these skills and subsequent strategic planning was required. School leaders were considering adapting and reassigning internal learning space to promote innovative digital learning.

### Overall school performance

Good

### 1. Students' achievement

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

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
<b>Learning skills</b>	Good	Good	Good

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

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

## 3. Teaching and assessment

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

## 4. Curriculum

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

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

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

## 6. Leadership and management

	All phases
The effectiveness of leadership	Good
School self-evaluation and improvement planning	Good
Parents and the community	Good
Governance	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	Good	Good
Mathematics	Good	Good
Science	Good	Good

- Children made good progress in developing their listening, speaking, reading and writing skills. By the end of the phase, the majority of children reached above age-related expectations. Children learned to speak English confidently and clearly, using a wide vocabulary. They recognised common words and were beginning to read age appropriate text. Children had secure knowledge of single letters, sounds and blends. They were beginning to write words and simple sentences for a range of purposes. For example, FS2 children enjoyed making a 'get well' card for Little Red Riding Hood's grandmother.
- In mathematics, children made good progress against the curriculum expectations for number, shape, space and measure. The majority of children were able to describe differences in size, height and length. For example, FS2 children used big blocks to try to build a 'Burj Khalifa' that was taller than them. Most children confidently counted to twenty and recognised numerals. Their ability to combine two groups of objects and take some away was developing, as was their ability to solve problems. All groups of children were progressing at a similar rate.
- The majority of children was knowledgeable about living things and used their senses to explore the properties of materials. Younger children could identify the difference between farm and zoo animals and were developing an understanding of habitat. Older children could identify different weather conditions and were able to recognise the seasons. Children had regular opportunities to explore and investigate, and could talk about their discoveries. They were developing their observational skills. In lessons, all groups of children made similar progress although some children with SEND, found the richly resourced environment over stimulating.

### Primary

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

- In Islamic education, attainment and progress were acceptable. Most students demonstrated age-appropriate knowledge and understanding of Islamic concepts. Students in Year 3, could explain the importance of supplication (Du'aa) and the best time for Du'aa. In Year 6, the majority of students were able to describe the importance of voluntary prayers and the prescribed times they should not pray. In lessons, students made steady progress in relation to the learning objectives. Linking what they had learnt to their daily life and Holy Qur'an recitation skills was limited.
- Most students' attainment was in line with curriculum expectations in Arabic as a first language. Students' listening and speaking skills were developing appropriately. They were able to understand and respond to the stories, rhymes and plays that they had heard. They could read appropriate texts for both a broader meaning and for detail, although their fluency in reading aloud was less developed. Most students made appropriate progress in lessons and over time. Their range of vocabulary was increasingly developing, but they did not make full use of it when speaking. The quality of writing was adequate, but was limited in length and variety.
- In Arabic as an additional language, most students' attainment was in line with curriculum expectations and most students made appropriate progress in lessons and over time. Their listening and speaking skills were developed to a satisfactory level. They were able to follow and respond to teachers' directions, and understand meaning from short pieces of text. Their range and use of vocabulary was developing; they could introduce themselves and provide simple descriptions of familiar contexts around them. Their progress in developing their reading and writing skills was slower.
- Students made good progress and reached acceptable standards of attainment in English. Attainment on entry was variable. Students arrived from a variety of different school curricula and experiences and with differing levels of competence in English. The majority listened with a good degree of understanding and speaking skills developed well. Progress in phonics skills was rapid and students' reading skills consequently improved quickly, particularly those of the girls'. Writing was the least developed language skill. The majority of groups, including the most able and those with SEND, made good progress.
- In mathematics, the attainment of most students was in line with curriculum expectations. School data indicated that attainment currently and over the past two years had been in line with national standards. For example, in Year 6 most students had a well-developed understanding of angles and could measure them fairly accurately using protractors. Progress over time was similarly good for all groups of students. In lessons, students were making good progress to fill the gaps in their knowledge and understanding.
- Attainment and progress in science were above age-related expectations. Students were confidently developing appropriate enquiry and investigation skills. Students were able to clearly express their understanding and ideas, often using correct scientific vocabulary. Application of scientific methods and skill development were a feature of many lessons although they were stronger in upper year groups. For example, in a Year 4 lesson, students planned and carried out investigations in groups. They used their knowledge and understanding to discuss, analyse and report their findings.

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

- In Islamic education, most students demonstrated age-appropriate knowledge of Islamic concepts and history. Students understood the importance of Tafakur “Deep thinking” as a type of worship, which led to belief in the oneness of the creator. They made acceptable progress in lessons; the majority had improved their ability to link what they learned to their daily life. Improvement in the understanding and recitation of the Holy Qur’an were limited for the large majority of students.
- Most students attained levels that were in line with curriculum expectations in Arabic as a first language. Their listening and reading comprehension skills were developing well. In lessons and in their recent work, a majority of students made good progress. Their reasoning and debating skills were improving at a good pace and this was impacting well on the quality of their writing. However, student's speaking skills were less developed. They lacked accuracy in using a wide range of vocabulary.
- In Arabic as an additional language, attainment for most students was in line with curriculum expectations. Most beginners responded appropriately to basic questions about themselves. They could formulate simple to compound sentences about their favorite food and sports and could describe people and familiar places around them. Most students, in advanced groups, had well developed writing skills but were limited in the accuracy and fluency of their speaking. In lessons and over time, progress for most individuals and for the different groups of students was acceptable. However, those students at an early language stage were not fully challenged to further develop reading and writing.
- In English, from highly variable starting points, students’ attainment was acceptable. During lessons the majority of students were articulate and communicated their knowledge and understanding coherently. Target vocabulary and concepts developed swiftly. Students made rapid progress in lessons, particularly in reading and using their critical thinking skills to analyse texts. This was reflected in their increasingly insightful written work. All groups, including the most able and those with SEND, made at least good progress.
- Most students made good progress from their various starting points in mathematics to reach a standard that was in line with curriculum expectations. Higher attaining students in Year 9 had developed good investigation and problem solving skills. They could use their knowledge of units of measure to prepare scaled drawings for garden designs. The progress of other students was not so rapid. The quick growth of the school made overall evaluations of attainment and progress over time less reliable. However, school data indicated that students who had been at the school for several years had made good progress.
- Attainment and progress in science, as measured against the school's curriculum standards, indicated that the majority of students were above age-related standards. In lessons, students were often actively engaged in their learning and were developing effective enquiry and investigation skills. For example, most students in Year 7 understood the terms genes, chromosomes and DNA in their studies of genetics. Whilst in Year 9, students studying biology, were confident in describing bacterial cells and students beginning chemistry could recall and describe elements from the periodic table. All groups of students made similar progress.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Learning skills	Good	Good	Good

- Across the school, students enjoyed learning. This was evident from the FS, where they explored the effects of torchlight in a darkened tent to Year 9, where students were highly engaged in finding ways to describe Lady Macbeth’s feelings. As they moved through the school, students took increasing responsibility for their own learning. Older students decided when to move on to their next challenge.
- Students routinely collaborated with one another. In the FS, purposeful group interactions were a daily feature of learning. In the primary phase, students were confident that their views would be respected, even when challenged, by their classmates. Discussions, particularly in the secondary phase, revealed students’ high level independent thinking and communication skills. In Islamic education and Arabic lessons students communicated their thoughts with confidence.
- Students readily make good connections between learning and their everyday lives. For example, students in Year 2 identified phonic graphemes in menus. Increasingly they made connections in their learning across subjects. In a Year 4 Arabic lesson about heritage and traditions, they also learned about Islamic values related to table etiquette. Year 5 students used their mathematical knowledge and understanding of volume to design buildings for EXPO 2020.
- Across all phases students demonstrated their ability to think deeply and critically. The youngest children found different ways to rescue Little Red Riding Hood from the wolf. Problem solving was central to mathematics lessons. In Year 6, for example, students used their knowledge and understanding of geometry to calculate missing angles. Students had secure skills in using modern technology but opportunities to develop them were not a regular feature of all lessons.

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

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

- Young children and students across the school demonstrated excellent attitudes to learning. They had developed personal resilience and were prepared to take risks. Students were able to give and receive constructive feedback and express their opinions. For example, Year 6 students confidently expressed their opinions about the benefits of being part of a culturally diverse community.
- Students, including the youngest children, understood the school’s expectations about behaviour and personal conduct. Students were self-disciplined and polite. They felt valued as individuals and were motivated to be members of the cohesive school community. Incidents of bullying were very rare and any issues were handled sensitively through a resolution process.
- Students were consistently considerate, respectful and tolerant of cultural differences. Relationships with staff and other students were based on kindness and a genuine interest in the well-being of others. Interactions between members of the school community were positive and focused on the needs of students.
- Students had a secure understanding of the importance of maintaining a healthy life style. They made nutritious food choices and participated in a range of sporting and physical activities. Students understood the importance of keeping themselves safe and knew how to access help if necessary. For example they were aware of strategies for Internet safety and knew how to access and use social media responsibly.

- Attendance during the inspection week was approximately 95 percent, which reflected a similar average to attendance over the past academic year. Students generally arrived at school in time for the start of the school day and once on campus they were punctual to all lessons.

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

- Students across the school, except in the FS, displayed secure knowledge of the impact of Islamic values on the culture of the UAE. All students demonstrated tolerance, friendship, fairness, and respect for all people.
- Students' understanding of and appreciation for Emirati heritage and culture were strong. They were able to provide insightful examples of how Dubai had developed over time. Students were aware of the UAE 2021 vision and recognised the importance of future plans for the economy and society. Younger children were still developing an awareness of Emirati culture.
- Students demonstrated appreciation of world cultures, acquired through a range of activities such as International day, integrated enrichment curriculum, and making several charitable contributions to disaster areas around the globe. Students benefited from belonging to a multi-cultural and diverse school community.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Good	Good	Good

- Students were responsible members of the school and community, who understood that their ideas, opinions and voice were an important part of school development. The Student Council represented students' views and organised various school activities. They initiated fundraising events for charities, thoughtfully deciding events and destinations for the funds raised.
- Students demonstrated positive attitudes to their learning and were determined to do their best. They initiated projects to generate creative and business ideas. They raised funds by organising events such as 'Dragons Den' for Iftar meals for workers during Eid. A focus on developing students' creativity and entrepreneur skills had started to emerge.
- Students were increasingly aware of local and global environment issues. They enthusiastically explained how recycling contributed to the school's green environment. Curriculum topics and themes, delivered often through project work, supported their increasing understanding of pollution and Fairtrade issues. Students were not yet proactive in leading these initiatives.

### 3. Teaching and assessment

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Teaching for effective learning	Good	Good	Good

- Most teachers demonstrated very good subject knowledge and used this effectively to develop an enthusiasm for learning in students. Teachers had a deep knowledge of how students of different ages and abilities learned best. This contributed very well to students' interest and motivation in lessons.
- Lesson planning was of a consistent format and gave careful consideration to the needs of different groups of learners. However, planning in the FS did not always make the learning intentions clear. Lessons generally moved at a brisk pace and provided students with the valuable time to work in groups or on independent tasks. This was not always as successful in Islamic education.
- Teachers' interactions with students were good in most lessons. Questions challenged students to think deeply about their learning. 'Why and how' questions were common features of most lessons. The exception being in some lessons in Islamic education, where students were rarely challenged to extend their answers. In the FS, teachers were skilled at questioning and used this well to extend and develop children's thinking.
- In the best lessons, a range of strategies was closely matched to students' different learning needs. 'Hot seating' was used very effectively in Arabic as first language for students to share their thoughts and ideas. When this element was less successful, there was not enough consideration given to different student ability levels and teachers often structured the activities too rigidly.
- Opportunities for students to think critically and solve problems were regular features in most English and mathematics lessons. In Year 9 mathematics, for example, innovative teaching methods provided tasks beginning with the knowledge and skills required of an intern rising through a variety of stages to those of a chief executive office. Students responded well to the challenges and worked diligently to reach the top position.
- Teaching for effective learning in Arabic as a first language was adequate overall. Teachers' knowledge of how students learned best was generally secure. In the secondary phase effective lesson planning and high quality delivery was well supported with a wide range of teaching strategies and ample opportunities for students to develop their thinking and language competencies.
- In Arabic as an additional language, most teachers had secure knowledge of their subject. Their lesson planning and delivery was adequate. Their use of the resources and the range of strategies they employed did not fully meet the individual needs of the students.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Assessment	Good	Good	Good

- Internal assessment systems were mostly linked to the schools licensed curriculum. Adaptations to take account of curriculum changes were more advanced in the primary phase. Whilst systems were well established, the collected assessment information varied in accuracy and often provided inconsistent analysis. For example, information generated by an on-line tracking system did not always match that seen on teachers' plans.

- The assessment information gathered in school was compared regularly to national benchmarks. No international comparisons were available at the time of the inspection. Standardised external assessments were not yet used regularly to moderate teachers' assessments.
- Regular analysis of assessment information was carried out and used to plan intervention support aimed at improving student outcomes. Students' progress was tracked over time. Inaccurate baseline testing in Year 1 had resulted in an overly generous view of the rate of these students' progress.
- Assessment information was used skillfully and effectively to influence teaching and the curriculum in the majority of subjects. The exceptions being Islamic education and Arabic, where inflated historical assessment data did not support effective lesson planning. In the FS, most teachers used assessment information to provide personalised learning opportunities for children to enable them to meet and exceed their targets.
- Teachers had at least good and, at times, outstanding knowledge of students' strengths and weaknesses. Very effective verbal feedback, together with opportunities for peer and self-assessment, contributed to good progress in most subjects. Marking was consistently of a high quality in English and science, but was less effective in the Arabic languages and Islamic education, where students were not provided with regular written guidance towards their next steps in learning.

#### 4. Curriculum

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Curriculum design and implementation	Good	Good	Good

- The curriculum closely followed the requirements of the revised English National Curriculum. Arabic and Islamic studies complied with the Ministry of Education (MOE) regulations. The FS was suitably aligned to the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum. There was a clear rationale and appropriate balance between the development of knowledge, skills and understanding.
- The curriculum was successfully planned to build progressively on what students already knew and could do. There were a few exceptions to this in the mathematics, especially between FS and Year 1. The curriculum met the needs of students effectively. The extension of the curriculum into Key Stage 4 had been carefully considered, planned in detail and meticulously prepared.
- A good range of curricular options provided students in the secondary phase with ample choices to realise their potential and develop their interests and talents. At this stage in the school's development and given the number of students in the first cohort, the breadth of options on offer was impressive.
- Cross-curricular links were effectively planned and incorporated into schemes of work to enable students to transfer learning between different subjects. Themed "Connected Learning" skillfully combined history and geography as well as incorporating the deliberate reinforcement and development of English, mathematics, science and technology skills, wherever relevant. UAE social studies was successfully integrated across the curriculum, positively influencing student performance.
- The school conducted frequent and rigorous reviews of the curriculum. This process took into account the views of teachers and students. Additionally, the outcomes of students' learning was scrutinised and analysis of assessment data was taken into account. Together, this information was carefully considered and adjustments to the curriculum made accordingly. A highly effective, skills based and integrated curriculum was continuing to evolve.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Curriculum adaptation	Good	Good	Good

- The curriculum was successfully adapted for students during withdrawal or in-class support lessons. Students were clearly identified from the data analysis and attended a range of intervention programmes that were personalised to meet their learning needs. When deemed appropriate by teachers, setting occurred throughout the school that maximised the challenge and progress of learners.
- The curriculum was diverse and ensured that the majority of students experienced a range of different learning opportunities, which motivated them to think critically and work creatively as individuals or in groups. Every teacher delivered weekly extra-curricular and enrichment activities and the programme provided a wide range of physical, creative and curriculum based activities, such as music, languages, information technology and sport.
- Students followed an integrated social studies programme, which was designed to foster cultural understanding of the economic growth, traditions and values of the UAE. There were regular displays of the local traditions, in highly visible areas of the school, which celebrated cultural identity. The Emirati community was actively involved in the planning of local and national celebrations and parents were personally invited to discuss the promotion of Emirati culture.
- The school provided two Arabic lessons, each of twenty-five minutes duration, for all children in FS2.

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

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

- The school provided a caring and protective environment for all students. Policies and procedures to ensure child protection, including those related to cyber safety, were well promoted and understood among the school community. Students demonstrated a clear grasp of the implications of misusing the internet and social media.
- There were comprehensive systems in place to maintain a safe and hygienic environment. However, monitoring of these systems was, on occasion, not sufficiently rigorous. Deployment of staff to ensure proper supervision was effective. Arrangements for school transport were detailed and thorough; staff escorting students were well briefed and followed detailed procedures.
- Buildings and resources were maintained to a high standard. Maintenance records, including those on fire extinguishers and hose reels, were also up to date. All medical records were secure. There were clear procedures to record, track and follow up on all health related incidents. There were effective procedures for medical referrals and interventions.
- Exit routes such as corridors, stairways, doorways, outdoor routes and assembly areas were clear and free from obstructions. Emergency evacuation plans and appropriate warning signs were visible. The school had developed effective systems to facilitate access for all students, including evacuation plans for those with special educational needs and disabilities.

- The school actively engaged and involved students, staff and parents in making effective decisions about the quality of the food provided in the school's canteen. As a result, students made informed decisions about their food choices. The school successfully promoted healthy living through a wide range of sporting and fitness activities.

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Care and support	Good	Good	Good

- There was a caring ethos in the school that promoted positive and respectful relationships between staff and students. The school implemented a supportive and effective policy on behavior, valuing and rewarding the very good standards of student' conduct across all phases.
- The school was committed to achieving better attendance and punctuality and recognised the vital role that parents played in establishing good habits among their children. Students were expected to attend on time and, if late, inform a member of the pastoral care team about any problem they were experiencing. The school was discrete in its efforts to improve the punctuality patterns of a minority of students.
- The school published an informative policy for identifying students with SEND and those more able, gifted and talented. The school's inclusion team had an excellent understanding of behavioural, sensory and learning needs. The early identification process was prioritised; children were screened on entry, or referred for further assessment when parental approval was given.
- Support for students with SEND was personalised in their individual education plans and included the views and targets of students, teachers, parents and therapists, where appropriate. The student-friendly plans informed teachers of the modifications necessary to create rich, learning experiences in a consistent manner and thus ensured good progress for all students.
- Leaders and heads of department closely monitored students' well-being. Counseling support was consistent and included advice from medical staff. Circle time sessions were evident across the primary phase. Regular health checks were carried out and information shared with the pastoral care team in order to address any potential concerns.

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

The overall effectiveness of provision for students with special educational needs and disabilities	Good
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- School policy was inclusive in content and provided guidelines to support students with wide ranging needs. The school appointed an expert inclusion team. They were diligent and contributed to building good levels of personal and academic supports for students. Parents provided finance to engage twenty-eight LSAs to offer one-to-one support to their children.
- Children were screened on entry to the FS and any concerns were then referred to the Head of Inclusion, if further assessment was required. Applications outside of FS were passed directly to the principal for consideration. Existing students were identified as a result of CAT scores, teacher' observation and parent referrals and the school identified more able, gifted and talented students.

- The SEND team established excellent relationships with parents and informal communication took place on a daily basis. Formal interactions occurred at planning and review meetings and during discussions with external support agencies. A minority of parents were unsure as to how long their children required a learning support assistant and suggested that a plan for phased withdrawal should be included in the individual education plan.
- Across all phases, modifications to learning were supported with appropriate resources on a needs basis. Inclusion teachers met at least fortnightly and discussed a range of strategies on how the curriculum could be modified. FS children, when supported by LSAs, had a range of personalised interventions that were modified on a regular basis.
- Whole school tracking, monitoring and evaluation tools captured information regarding the progress of students. In the key subjects, progress was good overall and parents were informed of their children's achievement in a style of reporting that was specific and clear. In order to consistently measure progress, half termly class targets were set, tracked and monitored by teachers.

## 6. Leadership and management

### The effectiveness of leadership

Good

- The school vision was currently under review by the school community. Senior leaders recognised that the existing vision was insufficiently explicit with regard to the school's ambitions. Although the vision was being revised, the school leadership team had set a clear direction on developing the personal and academic skills that students would need for the 21st century.
- Most leaders in the school were highly competent and effective and their expectations were high. They had a good understanding of best educational practice in an all-through school and how they would contribute to the school's improvements. Effective teams had been formed to develop and monitor plans but these did not overtly express the school's evident commitment to the UAE and Emirati priorities.
- Relationships between school leaders were enabling and supportive of development. Roles, responsibilities and lines of accountability were clear and meeting schedules supported efficient communication. Leaders were becoming empowered to take initiative and develop effective strategies through which the school would progress. Leaders were increasingly working across phases when planning developments.
- Most leaders demonstrated leadership skills and had clear understanding of the school's needs and the action plans that were in place to improve performance. The majority were involved in leadership training, which was developing their capacity. The school, supported by the governing body, had a strong commitment to leadership training and succession planning.
- School leaders had effectively managed a period of rapid growth, during which they had successfully laid the foundations for a community that put students at the centre of the learning. They clearly recognised the potential barriers to future improvement and had lessened some of their effects. They had ensured that the school was compliant with all statutory requirements.

School self-evaluation and improvement planning	Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school involved all the school community in order to determine how well it is doing. It made good use of student data, moderated by the outcomes from strong systems of measuring learning in the classroom. Due emphasis was given to the information from external review. The extensive evidence was summarised and synthesised into a small number of key improvement targets and these formed the basis of the school’s action plans.</li> <li>• The targets in the plans were linked to school leaders who had responsibilities in those specific areas. Leaders monitored these targets regularly in light of evaluations from the regular programme of assessment. Additional monitoring came from specially formed parent groups who, following discussions with others in the school community, added their perspective of how well the school was performing.</li> <li>• The plans focused precisely on those areas that were central to the school in its current stage of growth; improving the known areas for development whilst trying to ensure consistency of policy and practice in a rapidly expanding school. Plans were well written with measureable success criteria, which were often linked to student progress. Timescales, detailed actions, resourcing and responsibilities were appropriately identified.</li> <li>• As a result, the school had successfully met the challenge of improving its high quality practice through a period of great change and growth. A good example of improvement was the progress that the school was making with the empowerment of its middle leaders. This had been a recommendation from a previous external review.</li> </ul>	

Partnerships with parents and the community	Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents were involved in their children’s life at school in a variety of ways. The school provided opportunities for parents to meet and hear about educational initiatives. The Parent Association played an important function in supporting a programme of events, which brought the school community together.</li> <li>• There were a variety of effective channels for parents to learn about what was happening in the school and to receive feedback on their children’s academic and personal development. They valued the termly overviews of areas of study and the weekly forecasts of learning. These helped parents understand the progress that their children were making. Parents reported that teachers were readily accessible to them.</li> <li>• Students’ performance in assessment was reported to parents six times a year. In addition, there were three parent/teacher consultative meetings, to which students were invited. End of year reports were detailed and made comments of students’ academic achievements and personal and social development. Students and parents contributed to the reports and there was helpful guidance on how students might improve their learning.</li> <li>• Links with the community were mainly related to sporting competitions with other schools and fundraising for charitable causes, such as collecting food and clothing for earthquake victims. In line with its growth, the school was extending out into the community, for example, by established a small number of links with local businesses, which benefited student learning.</li> </ul>	

<b>Governance</b>	<b>Good</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The governance was performed by the corporate body, which included another school principal from within the group of schools. The governors used a combination of student and parent surveys as well as special focus groups of parents in order to inform its decision-making. A Parents’ Council of volunteers had recently been established, whose function was to influence strategic direction and help evaluate school performance.</li> <li>Accountability for senior leaders was exercised through the governors’ strong knowledge of the school and the rolling action plan for the school’s development. Weekly conversations, monthly reports and visits allowed effective discussions of progress to take place. In this way, the school benefited from the relevant, practical, educational experiences of the partner principal. The school governors systematically reported progress back to the Director of Education at the corporate body.</li> <li>The governing body exerted both influence on and was responsible for school performance through the experience that it held and the corporate resources that it could bring to bear on the school’s improvement journey. The governing board ensured that staffing levels for students with SEND was generous.</li> </ul>	

<b>Management, staffing, facilities and resources</b>	<b>Very good</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The organisation of the school ran very smoothly. Timetabling was effective; little time was lost to students and allowed teachers additional time for planning in their teams. Scheduling of duties, for example, supervision at the beginning and end of each day, was thorough. Planned or unexpected cover for absent teachers was efficient.</li> <li>Recruitment and induction procedures ensured that new teachers quickly and effectively undertook their responsibilities. Leaders gave training a high priority. All teachers had an appropriate teaching qualification. There was a generous number of trained classroom and support assistants, who made valuable contributions to student learning. All Arabic and Islamic education teachers had been approved by KHDA.</li> <li>The school’s design was visionary, with generous breakout spaces, which gave valuable opportunities for creating virtual learning spaces for student independent research and performance. All learning areas were accessible and of a good size and contained a wide range of specialist accommodation. These included multi-purpose halls, broadcasting spaces with green screen facilities, a theatre, design technology workshops, science laboratories and excellent sporting facilities.</li> <li>The school was very well resourced for learning, often equipped in anticipation of future growth. There was a wide range of appropriate, high quality equipment, which supported good teaching and learning. However, resources were not always utilised fully, particularly in Islamic education. The school was well stocked with a range of technology and the infrastructure had been prepared for the imminent introduction of the students’ own devices.</li> </ul>	

## 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> 	2015-2016	246
	2014-2015	0
<b>Teachers</b> 	49	
<b>Students</b> 	0	

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

- Students were not yet involved in the survey because of their ages.
- Parents and teachers who responded to the survey were very positive about all aspects of the school, believing the school to be well led.
- Most parents and the majority of teachers responded that the school listened to their views.
- Nearly all parents confirmed that their children were happy at school.
- Nearly all parents and teacher felt that students had a good understanding of Islamic values and world cultures.
- And nearly all parents and teachers believed that students were safe in the school and whilst traveling on school transport.

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)