

# Inspection Report



## St. Mary's Catholic High School

2014-2015



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## School information



### General information

Location	Umm Hurair
Type of school	Private
Opening year of school	1968
Website	www.stmarysdubai.com
Telephone	04-3370252
Address	Oud Metha St. Dubai
Principal	Brother Joseph
Language of instruction	English
Inspection dates	16 <sup>th</sup> - 19 <sup>th</sup> March 2015



### Students

Gender of students	Boys and Girls
Age range	5 - 17
Grades or year groups	Grade 1 - Grade 12
Number of students on roll	1926
Number of children in Pre-K	0
Number of Emirati students	2
Number of students with SEN	52
Largest nationality group of students	Indian



### Teachers / Support staff

Number of teachers	136
Largest nationality group of teachers	Indian
Number of teacher assistants	6
Teacher-student ratio	1:14
Number of guidance counsellors	2
Teacher turnover	12%



### Curriculum

Educational Permit	UK
Main Curriculum / Other	UK
Standardised tests / board exams	IGCSE, AS, A2
Accreditation	Not applicable





# Parents' Report

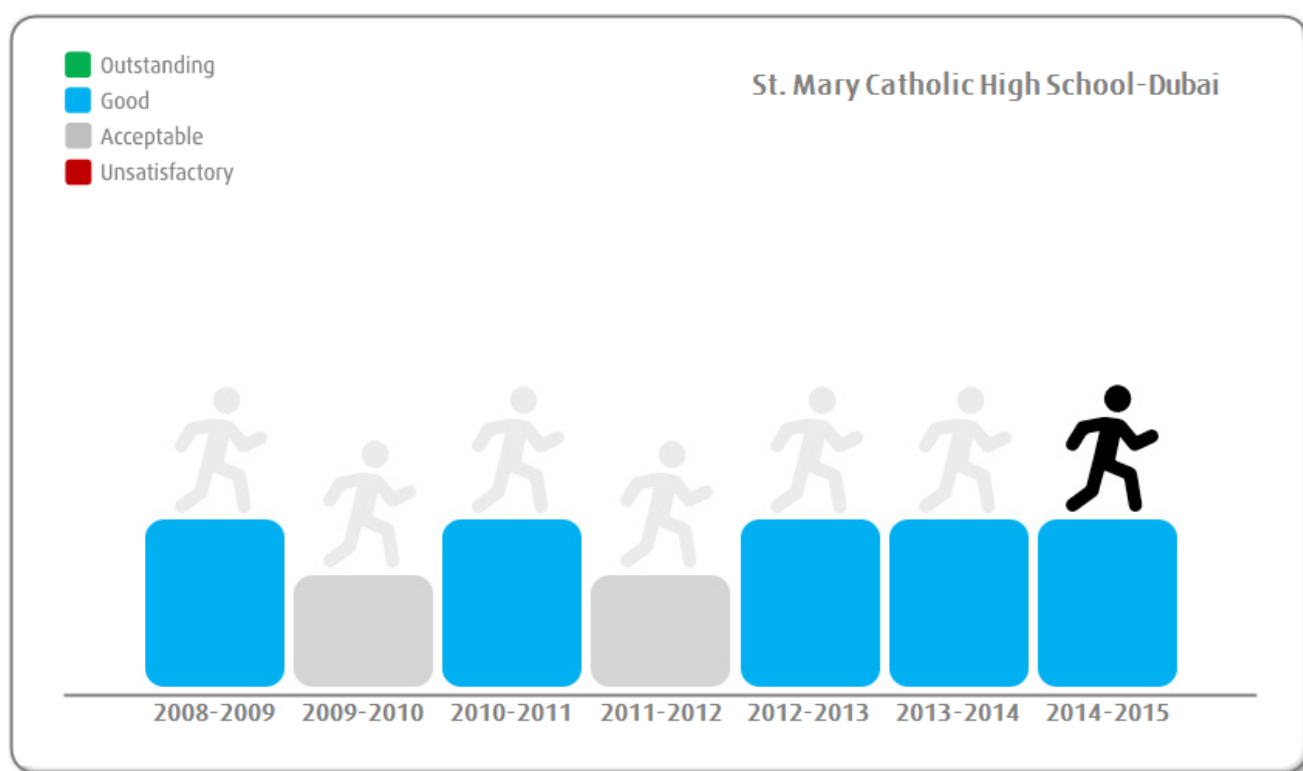




## Dear Parents,

St. Mary Catholic High School - Dubai was inspected by DSIB from 16<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> March 2015, 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' personal responsibility was outstanding in the secondary phase.
- Students' understanding of Islamic values and Emirati culture was outstanding.
- The students' understanding of their community and their environmental responsibilities was outstanding in the secondary and post-16 phases.
- Students' attainment and progress was good in most core subjects across all phases.
- The school's provision for keeping students healthy and safe, and the quality of support provided to students, was good.

### Areas for improvement

- Ensure the curriculum for Arabic and Islamic Education is fully compliant with the Ministry of Education regulations.
- Ensure all students enrolled in Arabic as a first language and Islamic Education in the post-16 phase attend all lessons and that quality of teaching and the curriculum in both subjects are improved.
- Improve leaders' and teachers' use of student assessment information to set appropriately challenging targets, and teachers to provide activities during lessons which match students' abilities and needs.
- Provide students with greater access to a range of modern learning technologies so they can develop their research and information technology skills.

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 St. Mary Catholic High School-Dubai



### How well does the school perform overall?

Overall, St. Mary Catholic High School provided a **Good** quality of education for its students.

- Students' attainment and progress in English, mathematics and science were good across all phases and their attainment and progress in Islamic Education were good in the primary and secondary phases. However, they were unsatisfactory at post-16 phase. However, these were unsatisfactory in post-16. In Arabic language lessons, students' attainment and progress were acceptable in the primary and secondary phases, but unsatisfactory in the post-16 phase. Students developed good learning skills, and showed a growing responsibility for their own learning as they progressed through the school.
- Relationships between students and staff were positive and purposeful. Students supported one another at all times and older students were excellent role models for younger students. Students had a good awareness of the traditions and heritage of the United Arab Emirates. They were proactive members of the school community. Post-16 students demonstrated outstanding aspects in their personal and social development.
- Teaching was good in all phases of the school and was more consistent in the secondary and post-16 phases. Most teachers demonstrated secure subject knowledge and planned well for lessons. However, their understanding of how best students' learn was weaker in the Arabic lessons. A minority of teachers were skilled in matching activities to students' individual needs and a few promoted the development of students' critical thinking skills. The school's assessment systems and processes provided clear measures of students' attainment which were validated in relation to external international benchmarks.
- The school provided a balanced curriculum for students in the primary phase and was well planned to ensure that they made good progress. The curriculum for older students was less well-balanced but was effective in developing students' critical thinking skills. The school strived to meet the individual needs of students and they scheduled a range of curriculum enrichment activities in the school day to ensure accessibility for all. The teaching of the Arabic curriculum was less successful in meeting the needs of learners.
- The school had effective arrangements in place to keep students safe and healthy while on the premises and on the school buses. Well-qualified specialist staff planned a range of effective support and kept parents well informed about their child's progress and development.
- The leadership team had a vision which was based on a providing a caring and community spirit. School leaders' evaluation of the school was accurate and priorities for improvement were strategically planned. Parents were active members of the school community and they enjoyed supporting their children through various activities. The school had failed to meet the Ministry of Education curriculum requirements for the teaching of Islamic Education and Arabic as a first language. The school managed its resources reasonably well. However, the science laboratories were underused and student's access and use of a learning technologies was limited.


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



- Students with special educational needs made acceptable progress in their learning and development across the school.
- In lessons, teachers provided additional support for students. However, they needed to develop the necessary skills to plan tasks which more closely matched what they knew about students' needs in order to help them to make better progress.
- Parents and students were encouraged to take an active part helping specialist staff set learning targets to promote students continued progress and development.





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

		Primary	Secondary	Post-16
 Islamic Education	Attainment	Good	Good	Unsatisfactory ↓
	Progress	Good	Good	Unsatisfactory
 Arabic as a First Language	Attainment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Unsatisfactory ↓
	Progress	Acceptable	Acceptable	Unsatisfactory
 Arabic as an Additional Language	Attainment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Not Applicable
	Progress	Acceptable	Acceptable	Not Applicable
 English	Attainment	Good ↑	Good ↓	Not Applicable
	Progress	Good	Good	Not Applicable
 Mathematics	Attainment	Good	Good ↓	Good
	Progress	Good	Good	Good
 Science	Attainment	Good	Good	Good
	Progress	Good	Good	Good
		Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Learning skills		Good	Good	Good

↑ Improved from last inspection

↓ Declined from last inspection



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

	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Personal responsibility	Good	Outstanding	Good 
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Good	Good	Outstanding
Community and environmental responsibility	Good	Outstanding 	Outstanding

## 3. How good are teaching and assessment?

	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Teaching for effective learning	Good	Good	Good
Assessment	Good	Good	Good


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

	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Curriculum quality	Good	Acceptable 	Good
Curriculum design to meet the individual needs of students	Good	Acceptable 	Good

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

	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Health and safety	Good	Good	Good
Quality of support	Good	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	Good
Governance	Acceptable 
Management, staffing, facilities and resources	Acceptable



# School Inspection Report

## Overall school judgement

Good

## Key strengths

- Students showed good levels of attainment and progress in English, mathematics and science across all phases of the school.
- Students' personal responsibility was good, and outstanding in the secondary phase.
- Students' understanding of Emirati culture and heritage in the post-16 phase were outstanding.
- Students' understanding of their community and their environmental responsibilities in the secondary and post-16 phases was outstanding.

## Changes since the last inspection


- Students' attainment in Islamic Education and Arabic as a first language had declined from acceptable to unsatisfactory in the post-16 phase.
- Students' attainment in English had improved from acceptable to good in primary, but had declined from outstanding to good in the secondary phase.
- Students' personal responsibility had declined from outstanding to good in the post-16 phase due to students' poor attendance in Islamic Education and Arabic as a first language lessons.
- Students' community and environmental responsibility had improved from good to outstanding in the secondary phase.
- The quality and design of the curriculum to meet the individual needs of students had declined to acceptable in the secondary phase.
- Governance had declined from good to acceptable. The school continued to be non-compliant with Ministry of Education regulations for the teaching of Islamic Education and Arabic as a first language. The school was still not fully compliant with Ministry of Education time allocation in Arabic as a first language in Grades 11 and 12, and in Islamic Education in Grades 1 to 3.




## Recommendations

- The governors must ensure the curriculum for Islamic Education in Grades 1 to 3 and Arabic as a first language in Grades 11 and 12 fully meet Ministry of Education requirements, and that students in post-16 attend all classes.
- Improve the quality of teaching and curriculum in Islamic Education and Arabic as a first language, so that it is at least good.
- Ensure leaders' and teachers' use assessment data more effectively to:
  - adapt the curriculum to better meet the range of students' needs, including those with special educational needs
  - plan lessons to effectively take account of the next steps in learning of all groups of students
  - provide appropriately challenging work to extend learning for all students and to further develop their critical thinking and independent learning skills.
- Improve students' development of e-learning skills by:
  - providing teachers and students with access to learning technology in classrooms
  - ensuring teachers model best practice and the effective use of learning technology in all lessons
  - encouraging students to use learning technology to enhance and support their independent learning skills.

 Improved from last inspection



 Declined from last inspection

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

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

- Most students had a good knowledge of the key principles of faith and worship in Islam. They could explain the Pillars of Islam very well and they provided details about how daily prayers are performed. They made good progress in recitation of the Holy Qur'an.
- In Arabic as a first language, most students' listening skills were stronger than their other language skills. They understood and responded to teachers' instructions appropriately. They were able to understand the main idea of a short text or a poem. However, their speaking and writing skills were developing at a slower pace.
- In Arabic as an additional language, most students in Grade 1 could identify letters and familiar words. They could give a brief introduction about themselves as a result of daily routine drilling. By Grade 3, most students could analyse letters of familiar words and synthesise them. They could list items inside a classroom. However they found it difficult to converse about them confidently. Progress in their spelling was developing adequately. However, progress in writing was less well developed and few could write even short sentences correctly. Older students had adequate skills in their reading and they made appropriate progress in their basic grammar, knowledge and speaking skills. However, they struggled to match the right verbs to the right gender and pronoun.
- Students made good progress overall in developing most strands in English. Overall, they attained standards a little above expected levels. Their competence in speaking, reading and comprehension were better than their writing. However, their handwriting was very well formed and well presented. Progress in lessons was teacher dependent and variable overall.
- In mathematics, students' progress was variable between classes and becoming stronger at the end of the primary phase. Students' ability to use their mathematical skills to solve simple problems was developing. Students in a Grade 2 used every day examples, such as shopping for food, to support their addition and subtraction skills and they could pay for and receive change for goods. They made good progress as their mathematical skills developed.
- In science, students developed a broad knowledge of science coupled with a good level of understanding. They made good progress in applying their understanding to the real world. They applied their knowledge of food types and vitamins to explain healthy eating.

## Secondary

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

- The majority of students had a good knowledge of Islamic concepts which they could explain in depth. They could discuss the Pillars of Islam, the importance of modesty and Islamic dress code. They had a good knowledge of Seerah and they could relate stories of some of the prophets.
- In Arabic as a first language, most students could read short texts. The older students were able to present their views confidently about issues using power point presentations. However, they were not always successful in putting the new language items they learnt to use. Most students made acceptable progress in their reading skills. However, they made slower progress in their writing skills.
- In Arabic as an additional language, most students had adequate listening and reading skills. They responded well to teachers' instructions and could read short paragraphs. However, their speaking and writing skills were developing at a slower rate.
- In English, the quality and quantity of extended writing closely matched other English skills. By the end of the secondary phase, students were competent and mature speakers, they were able to present their viewpoints with clarity and empathy. Their comprehension of texts, particularly poetry, was strong and they used their good higher order thinking skills to analyse text in depth. Their writing was of a high standard, and reflected the skills of their spoken word. Students' attainment improved dramatically for those who were taking examinations, but their attainment was not consistently outstanding.
- In mathematics, progress was good in the lessons and as evidenced in students' books. Students gained good results in external examinations. They covered an appropriate range of topics and extended their skills in calculations, understanding of area and volume, and algebra. Students were encouraged to develop their mental mathematical skills with a continued focus on improving areas of study in geometry. However, students had insufficient opportunities to develop their critical thinking skills or to carry out their own research.
- In science, a majority of students developed a good understanding of scientific concepts with good skills of investigation. They achieved outstanding results in external examinations. However, around a third of students did not study science after Grade 8. As a result, they did not progress in acquiring additional scientific knowledge or skills.

Post-16		
Subjects	Attainment	Progress
Islamic Education	Unsatisfactory ↓	Unsatisfactory
Arabic as a First Language	Unsatisfactory ↓	Unsatisfactory
Arabic as an Additional Language	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
English	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Mathematics	Good	Good
Science	Good	Good

- In Islamic Education, only a minority of students could recite short chapters of the Holy Qur'an and demonstrated limited ability to use recitation rules. Only a few students were able to understand the meanings conveyed in the Qur'anic verses, they had a basic knowledge about the Seerah. Attendance to classes was poor, hindering students' progress.
- Students had negative attitudes towards learning Arabic as an additional language and attendance to classes was poor. These two factors resulted in students' attainment and progress being below curriculum expectations. Only a few students were able to understand the main ideas from a written text and as a result they made very slow progress in their reading comprehension, grammar and writing.
- Students following the post-16 course showed real enjoyment of their work in mathematics and achieved good external examination results. They especially enjoyed solving complex differential equations and shared ideas about the best routes to a solution. The smaller class sizes allowed them to work independently, in a seminar approach. Teachers monitored their progress closely. Students' problem solving skills were well-developed, especially in geometry, and students enjoyed the challenges they were provided.
- Across the three sciences, students developed a deep conceptual understanding and they were able to answer questions requiring analysis and evaluation of data. A majority of students made very good progress and attained good results at the end of a one year programme of study. About a third of students returned to repeat the programme.


	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Learning skills	Good	Good	Good

- Almost all students had very positive attitudes to learning. They enjoyed their lessons and they were keen to respond and worked hard. Many older students were very responsible learners, aware of their strengths and weaknesses and conscientious about their presentation and work rate.
- Collaborative work was a frequent aspect of students' learning. It was always harmonious and students' had a strong ethos of respect and support for each other. Collaborative group work was at its most effective when it positively enhanced students' thinking, listening and speaking. These skills were a consistent feature of science lessons and the better lessons in other subjects. It was a weak aspect of Arabic lessons because students were rarely given the opportunity to collaborate.
- Students frequently related their learning to the real world and teachers often planned opportunities for them to do so.
- Students' use of critical thinking skills was a common feature of many lessons in the secondary and post-16 phases and in the best lessons in the primary phase. There was limited development of these skills in Arabic or Islamic Education.



- Students were keen to find things out for themselves. However, the lack of access to computers in classrooms was a barrier to the development of students' information technology skills as well as their independent research skills.


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

	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Personal responsibility	Good	Outstanding	Good 

- Older students were excellent ambassadors for their school. They demonstrated their readiness to excel in their work and they displayed great fortitude and willingness to learn from each other and their teachers.
- The behaviour of both girls and boys, particularly in the secondary phase, was excellent and reflected great maturity and self-discipline. All students showed respect and courtesy to their teachers and other adults in the school.
- Relationships between students and staff were positive and purposeful. Students supported one another at all times and older students were excellent role models for younger students; they led assemblies where they reinforced the school's values.
- Students were knowledgeable about how to maintain their fitness. Many chose healthy diets and were active participants in sport whether at school or in leisure time.
- Attendance in school was variable, in particular to Islamic Education and Arabic classes. It was a particular concern in the post-16 phase. However, elsewhere, students were almost always punctual to lessons and arrived ready to learn.

	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Good	Good	Outstanding

- Students had a good appreciation of Islamic values and their influence on modern society in Dubai. Post-16 students showed an excellent understanding of the impact and importance of these values on the school community.
- Students had a good awareness of the traditions and heritage of the UAE. They could explain the growing importance of tourism on the Dubai economy and identify the traditional types of work and leisure pursuits.
- Students were aware of the global community in which they lived and could cite examples of other cultures. Post-16 students, in particular, could identify differences between the wider world cultures.

	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Community and environmental responsibility	Good	Outstanding 	Outstanding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students were proactive members of their school community. They held democratic elections to vote for a class monitor and school council representative. They shared ideas discussed at school council meetings to represent their class and used them to make improvements in the school. For example, they suggested increasing the range of educational visits to other countries.</li> <li>Older students including those in the secondary phase, had taken the initiative and shown both creativity and compassion for families who were struggling to pay school fees. They planned and produced a highly successful school performance. All money raised was donated to the school fee fund.</li> <li>Students participated in the 'Green Hope' inter-school environmental group. This led to projects being developed in the school such as tree planting and beach cleaning campaigns. All classes in the school participated in the charity jumble sale to support recycling and raise money for good causes.</li> </ul>			

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


	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Teaching for effective learning	Good	Good	Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The quality of teaching was good in all phases. Teachers demonstrated secure subject knowledge but their understanding of how students' learn best was varied. The best teaching ensured that students were excited by their work and were highly motivated to learn and think for themselves.</li> <li>In the best lessons, almost all teachers planned carefully and used resources effectively and imaginatively. However, students had almost no opportunity to use learning technologies to enhance their learning. Learning resources in Arabic language lessons were limited and this impacted on students' progress.</li> <li>Interactions between students and teachers were consistently good in most classes. In the secondary and post-16 phases, there was some excellent use of dialogue and skilful questioning, and discussions were promoted which deepened students' learning. Lower-level questioning, requiring minimal student answers, was found in lower primary classes.</li> <li>There was a range of teaching strategies in most lessons which helped students engage well in their learning. Teaching strategies, including effective group work and student presentations, were particularly good in Islamic Education lessons. In the best lessons, teachers were skilled at differentiating tasks and as a result the individual needs of all students were met with challenging work planned to extend students' learning. However, this was a rare feature in many lessons and was particularly weak in many Arabic language lessons.</li> <li>The development of the skills of enquiry, reflection, critical thinking and independent learning was evident in some classes and subjects but it was not consistently found across the school. It was less frequent in the lower primary phase where teachers talked for too long in some lessons and where there were few chances for students to develop their own thinking or independence in their learning.</li> </ul>			

- Teaching in Arabic as a first language was acceptable. Teachers' planned lessons using a variety of resources, including visual aids. However, the needs of all students were not met which resulted in most making very little progress. In the best lessons, interactions between teachers and students were positive. However, students struggled when lessons were too challenging.

	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Assessment	Good	Good	Good

- The school had a good range of internal assessments. These were effectively linked to the National Curriculum of England, to Edexcel assessment rubrics and to the IBCSE and A level criteria. They provided clear measures of students' academic attainment, although teachers' marking was insufficiently rigorous in Arabic language lessons.
- The school's data was externally validated by Edexcel international benchmarks for almost all subjects, and also by international tests. The school had analysed the attainment of students in these tests. Modifications to the curriculum and to teaching were made to ensure the school would meet the ambitious targets of Dubai's national agenda.
- Assessment information was accurate and analysed thoroughly to inform students about their strengths and gaps in their learning. The school had formulated a new system which tracked each student's progress over time. In Arabic, teachers analysed data but this was inconsistent, impacting on the way they planned students' learning.
- Teachers' planning usually linked assessment criteria with lesson objectives. However, the use of assessment to enable teachers to refine their planning to meet the individual learning needs of all students, was inconsistent throughout the school.
- Most teachers knew their students well and they were aware of their academic strengths and weaknesses. However, this knowledge failed to translate into provision that was appropriately challenging and supportive for the range of students' abilities in lessons. Teachers usually gave good verbal feedback but the marking of books rarely provided enough feedback for students.

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

	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Curriculum quality	Good	Acceptable 	Good

- The curriculum in primary and lower secondary was closely aligned to the National Curriculum of England. In secondary, there was some subject choice for students but for a significant minority, important areas of knowledge such as science, technology and physical education were not available. In the post-16 phase the choice of 'A' level subjects was narrow but it met the needs of the majority of students.
- Effective and coherent schemes of work spanning all phases ensured systematic progression. The school prepared students well for university. The curriculum motivated students to achieve good standards of learning.
- There were some innovative cross-curricular links between science and English, where the focus was on science fiction writing and poetry. However, overall, these curricular links were at an early stage of development. Good opportunities for students to develop their critical thinking skills were found in secondary and post-16, particularly in mathematics and science. These were less frequent in

primary where opportunities for students to initiate independent research or investigations were fewer.

- Leaders reviewed the curriculum on a regular basis and appropriate revisions and modifications resulted in students' needs being met.
- The time allocation for the teaching of Arabic as a first language in Grades 11 and 12 and for Islamic Education in the primary phase did not comply with Ministry of Education requirements. Students' progression in Arabic languages through the phases was acceptable. However, the school did not develop students' understanding of the importance of the Arabic language to their future careers in Dubai.

	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Curriculum design to meet the individual needs of students	Good	Acceptable ↓	Good

- The curriculum provided broad, balanced opportunities for most students. Teachers effectively modified lessons to meet the needs of students with physical issues. However, they were inconsistent in providing appropriate support for those with learning difficulties. The needs of Arabic speaking students were rarely met. Students were inappropriately taught Islamic Education in the English language and they had no access to sport and other enrichment activities.
- The curriculum for post-16 students provided well for those wishing to follow science and commerce. However, the curriculum in secondary was less effective. It did however offer some choice to those wanting to follow subjects of interest or linked to career aspirations.
- Enrichment activities scheduled in the school day ensured access for all. Primary phase activities such as aerobics, art, preparation for special events and integrated work on personal hygiene and healthy life style, enhanced academic and personal development. Links with local businesses enriched learning for business students. However, the range of opportunities remained limited.

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

	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Health and safety	Good	Good	Good

- The health and safety of students were good throughout the school. A child protection policy and reporting system was in place and most staff were aware of reporting requirements to keep students safe.
- Staff supervised students well as they moved around school and at break times. Security staff were sufficiently deployed around the main entrances. However, they did not always routinely check the identity of visitors to the site.
- The clinic had well-organised systems in place to monitor the frequency of students' visits. Staff carried out routine medical checks and maintained detailed and secure health records for students.
- The school ensured that buildings were well maintained and repaired swiftly by the maintenance team. The school buildings and the available resources were suitable for the purposes of an educational institution. Nevertheless the absence of protective goggles or eyewash facilities in science laboratories was a deficiency that needed addressing.
- Transportation was orderly and well supervised. However, a minority of students did not always use their seat belts. The school held regular fire drills.



- There was good promotion of healthy lifestyles. Canteen food and snacks adhered to healthy eating guidelines and promoted healthy eating habits.

	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Quality of support	Good	Good	Good

- Relationships between students and staff were respectful and positive and students felt supported and were able to seek guidance from adults.
- Not all matters relating to attendance and punctuality were followed up efficiently by school leaders.
- The school was quick to identify students with special educational needs. Two specialist staff were available to advise and guide colleagues and often recommended additional external assessments of students' needs.
- Support for students with special educational needs was variable. It was of better quality in the special educational needs unit, than in classes. Only a minority of teachers were skilled in planning lessons to provide tasks that met the full range of needs of these students.
- The school planned appropriate guidance about future career routes; they encouraged students to consider their abilities when selecting a career path. All staff were willing to respond to students; and provided appropriate help and advice when needed.

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

	Overall
The overall effectiveness of provision for students with special educational needs	Acceptable


- Leaders at all levels showed a commitment to the development and progress of students with special educational needs. The staff were enthusiastic in their roles and responsibilities.
- The systems for the identification of students with a special educational needs continued to develop in the school. Specialist staff improved their diagnostic approaches and teachers became more skilled in identifying students' individual learning needs. The guidance and support of students with special educational needs were developing.
- Some curriculum modifications were effective, including the use of visual clues, amended worksheets and specific vocabulary linked to specific needs. However, lesson plans did not always indicate the support or challenge necessary for identified students, which slowed their progress.
- Partnerships with parents was strong and parents were frequently informed and closely involved in their child's development.
- Progress made by students with special educational needs was acceptable overall. Good progress was made when students met the targets set in their individual educational plans, however this was the case for too few students.

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

	Overall
<b>The effectiveness of leadership</b>	Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Senior leaders shared a common vision and direction focused on students' well-being, growth and development.</li> <li>• A clear leadership structure and a commitment to improvement was evident. Roles and responsibilities were clearly defined and the roles of the deputy Principals were determined according to key priorities and phases in the school.</li> <li>• Relationships between staff were good and communication was effective. Staff and students had a clear sense of what was expected of them from the leadership team.</li> <li>• The school had sustained most of its good and outstanding grades from the previous inspection. However, there had been a decline of some judgments. Leadership demonstrated the capacity to improve the school further. However, the school's inability to comply with the requirements of the curriculum for Islamic Education and Arabic had yet to be tackled.</li> </ul>	

	Overall
<b>Self-evaluation and improvement planning</b>	Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school had well-established processes for self-evaluation resulting in the production of accurate school improvement plans.</li> <li>• The school set appropriate targets to monitor the effectiveness of their improvement strategies. Plans were used in relation to internal and external data to measure students' progress and measure success of the improvements made.</li> <li>• A good reporting system ensured the Principal remained well informed about the school's performance and standards, and key strengths and weaknesses of the school were clearly understood by all staff.</li> <li>• Policies were in place and lesson observations were frequent. However, only a minority of teachers reflected on their own practice, or shared their best practice with colleagues.</li> </ul>	




	Overall
Parents and the community	Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parental involvement was regular with various initiatives such as charity work and sponsorship were led by parents. However, a minority of parents failed to support the school's mission to raise standards in Islamic Education and Arabic as an additional language by their reluctance to ensure their children attended lessons in the post-16 phase.</li> <li>• The school had implemented new forms of communication as a result of parent feedback.</li> <li>• Reporting processes were effective and parents were clear about their children's progress. Meetings took place at regular intervals and reports were informative and included next steps in learning.</li> <li>• Community links were purposeful and enhanced some areas of the curriculum. They included business sponsors to enable students to organise outstanding school performances. This raised money for families of needy students.</li> </ul>	

	Overall
Governance	Acceptable 
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The governing board was effectively structured. It had a sufficiently broad representation including educational experts and parents. This benefited the school in gaining broader insight into its evaluation and improvement processes. It also ensured productive two-way communications between school staff and parents.</li> <li>• Governors had a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and duly held the school leaders to account through regular meetings.</li> <li>• Access for students to learning technologies, such as the Internet, remained limited which impacted on students' progress and skills development.</li> <li>• The non-compliance with the Ministry of Education requirements for the teaching of Islamic Education and Arabic had not been addressed and remained an issue to be addressed.</li> </ul>	

	Overall
Management, staffing, facilities and resources	Acceptable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The management of the school's day-to-day procedures and routines was effective.</li> <li>• Members of staff were qualified and appropriately deployed.</li> <li>• The premises were adequate. There were specialist rooms such as for art and music. There were some ramps. However, there was no access to upper floors for those students who had a physical disability.</li> <li>• Overall, resources were well managed. However, in the science laboratories, there was insufficient use of existing resources. Access to technology was inadequate across the school and the two libraries had insufficient range and quality of Arabic language books.</li> </ul>	

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

Before the inspection, the views of the Principal, 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		Percentage
 <b>Parents*</b>	<b>This year</b>	592	43%
	<b>Last year</b>	502	49%
 <b>Teachers</b>	86		59%
 <b>Students</b>	389		73%

- A minority of parents and a majority of teachers and students had completed their surveys.
- Parents had very positive views about the work of the school.
- Both parents and staff expressed a high degree of confidence in the school's leadership and management.
- Parents valued the opportunity to express their views; they were confident that their concerns were addressed.
- Most parents were satisfied with the quality of education and they believed that their children made good progress in most core subjects.
- Many comments were made about the slow progress in both Arabic and Islamic Education. Some teachers thought that the provision of resources was inadequate. A few parents had concerns about the level of communication with the Principal. A minority agreed that there was some bullying between students. However, the parents who met the inspectors presented a more harmonious picture of care and respect; they suggested that there were limited instances of bullying.

\*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)

Knowledge and Human Development Authority

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