Inspection Report
2016 - 2017

DUBAI
Knowledge المعرفة

St. Mary's Catholic High School - Dubai

🇬🇧 Curriculum: UK

Overall Rating:

Good

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

Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al-Maktoum

Contents

School information

General information

Location	Umm Hurair
Type of school	Private
Opening year of school	1968
Website	www.stmarysdubai.com
Telephone	043370252
Address	Oud Metha, Dubai
Principal	Paul Asir Joseph
Language of instruction	English
Inspection dates	9 to 12 January 2017

Teachers / Support staff

Number of teachers	137
Largest nationality group of teachers	Indian
Number of teaching assistants	5
Teacher-student ratio	1:14
Number of guidance counsellors	5
Teacher turnover	1%

Students

Gender of students	Boys and girls
Age range	5-18
Grades or year groups	Year 1 - Year 13
Number of students on roll	1894
Number of children in pre-kindergarten	N/A
Number of Emirati students	2
Number of students with SEND	47
Largest nationality group of students	Indian

Curriculum

Educational permit / Licence	UK
Main curriculum	UK
External tests and examinations	GCSE, A Levels, AS Level
Accreditation	n/a
National Agenda benchmark tests	Acer: IBT, GL: CAT 4

The DSIB inspection process

In order to judge the overall quality of education provided by schools, inspectors consider the six standards of performance that form the basis of the UAE School Inspection Framework (the framework). They look at children's attainment and progress in key subjects, their learning skills and their personal and social development. They judge how effective teaching and the assessment of learning are across the school. Inspectors consider how well the school's curriculum, including activities inside and outside classrooms, meet the educational needs of all students. They judge how well schools protect and support children. In addition, inspectors judge the effectiveness of leadership, which incorporates governance, management, staffing and facilities.
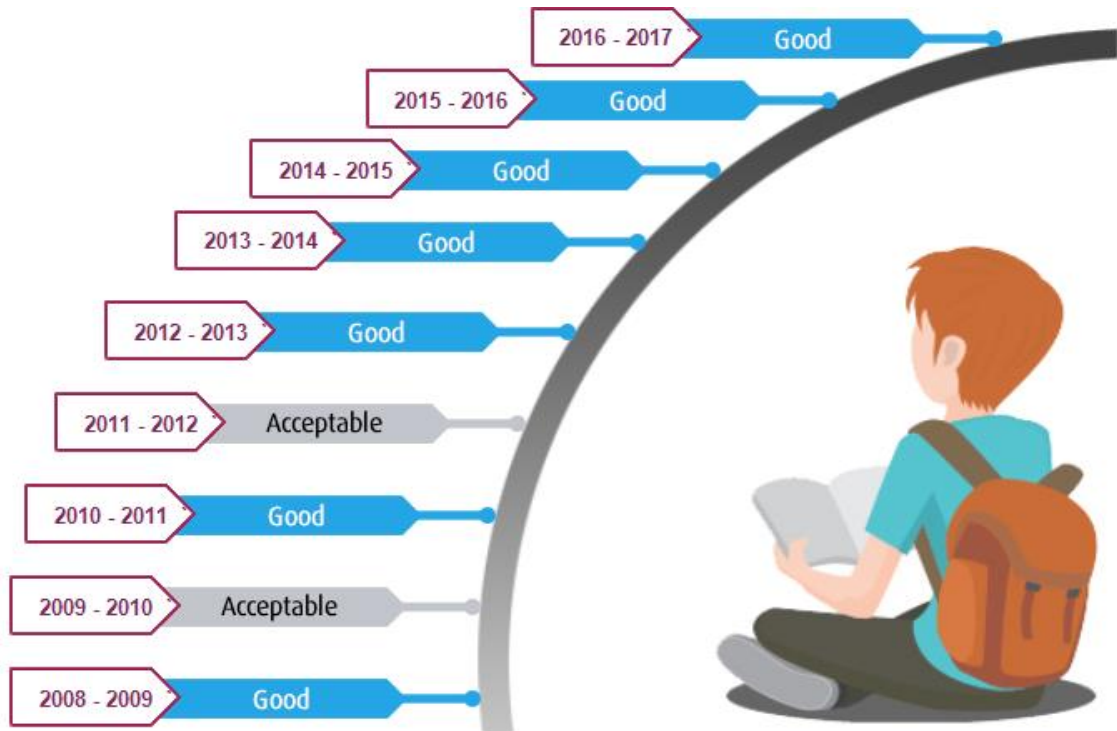
Inspection judgements are drawn from evidence gathered by the inspection team, including observation of students' learning in lessons, review of their work, discussions with students, meetings with the staff, parents and governors, and review of surveys completed by parents, teachers and students.

Judgements are made on a six-point scale.

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

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

Inspection journey for St. Mary Catholic High School-Dubai

- St. Mary's Catholic High School was founded in 1968. Student numbers have remained stable over the past three years. The current principal was appointed from within the school in 2016. The teacher turnover rate is 1%, lower than last year's figure of 7%.

- Inspections carried out over the past three academic years have acknowledged good or better progress in the majority of subjects. Other strengths acknowledged included students' personal and social development, and the school's leadership.

- Recommendations during this period have stressed the need to improve the quality of teaching, particularly in Arabic, by using assessment information to plan and deliver lessons that meet the needs of students. The last inspection report also focused on the need to improve provision for students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), and to improve aspects of health and safety.

Summary of inspection findings 2016-2017

St. Mary Catholic High School-Dubai was inspected by DSIB from 9 January to 12 January 2017 . The overall quality of education provided by the school is `good` . The section below summarises the inspection findings for each of the six performance indicators described in the framework.

- Students' attainment and progress in mathematics, English and science are at least good across the school, and consistently very good in the secondary phase. They are mostly acceptable or better in Arabic and mostly good in Islamic education. Students are keen to learn and collaborate purposefully in order to achieve their goals.

- Students' personal development is a strength of the school, especially in the secondary and post-16 phases. Their behaviour is exemplary; they show respect to each other and are courteous to staff and visitors. They have a strong appreciation of Islamic values and Emirati heritage and culture. They have a clear understanding of their responsibilities as members of the school community and contribute to its development.

- The quality of teaching and assessment is good across the school. Teachers have a good understanding of how students learn their subjects, although this is more limited in Arabic. The school has rigorous internal assessment processes in English, mathematics and science. However, the majority of teachers are not yet using assessment effectively to modify teaching.

- The curriculum has a clear rationale in the primary and secondary phases, which is based on the revised National Curriculum for England. Curriculum choices are limited for students in the post-16 phase. There are appropriate curriculum modifications for almost all students with SEND.

- The school has taken effective action to rectify health and safety concerns identified in last year's report and leaders now take steps to identify and minimise risks to students and staff. The procedures in place for the management of behaviour and attendance are very effective. Provision for students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) has improved; identification procedures are mostly accurate.

- Governors and leaders are committed to improving student outcomes and to achieving the UAE National Agenda targets. They have yet to articulate a clear and shared vision for further improvement and set a strategic direction to achieve this. Development initiatives are not rigorously monitored and evaluated. Parents are successfully engaged as partners in their children's learning. The school is well organised and systems run smoothly.

What the school does best

- The school has established a warm and welcoming community ethos, of which all are very proud.
- Most students' attainment and progress in mathematics, English and science are very good.
- The quality of teaching and students' learning skills are good across the school.
- Students' personal and social development, in particular the responsibility shown by older students, are excellent.
- The school's partnership with parents contribute positively to the development of the school.

Recommendations

- Governors and school leaders should establish and share a clear vision for further improvement and set a strategic direction to determine the next stage in the school's development.
- School leaders should make further improvements to the rigour of their self-evaluation practices to ensure that:
    - improvement targets are duly influenced by the school's self-evaluation information
    - the impact of planned actions is effectively and systematically monitored and evaluated
    - stakeholders' views, in particular students' and parents' concerns regarding bullying and curriculum options for the post-16 phase, are systematically sought and acted upon.
- School leaders and teachers should improve teaching across the school, and particularly in Arabic, by:
    - using assessment information on an ongoing basis to set tasks that challenge students of different abilities
    - skilfully using open-ended questions to extend and deepen students' understanding of what they are learning
    - sharing examples of very good and outstanding practice that are evident in the school and beyond.

National Agenda Parameter

In 2014, H.H. Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister of UAE, and Ruler of Dubai, launched the UAE National Agenda 2021, with education being a prime focus. The National Agenda includes two major objectives developed with the intention of placing the UAE among the most successful countries that provide world-class education. By 2021, it is expected that the UAE will feature in the top twenty countries in the 'Programme for International Student Assessment' (PISA) test and in the top fifteen countries in the 'Trends in Mathematics and Science Studies' (TIMSS) test.

In response to this, each participating school was issued a report on their students' performance in these international assessments and, in addition, they were provided with clear targets for improving their performance. In 2015, KHDA launched the National Agenda Parameter, which is a method for measuring and monitoring schools' progress towards achieving their individual National Agenda targets through the use of external benchmarking assessments.

The following section focuses on the impact of the National Agenda Parameter in meeting the school's targets:

- The school meets the registration requirements for the National Agenda Parameter.

- Less than half of the students were entered for International Benchmark Tests (IBT) in 2015. Consequently, although all data shows attainment is above expectations, no conclusions can be drawn about the attainment of the whole cohort from such a small sample.

- The senior team and subject leaders have analysed National Agenda Parameter data in depth. They have identified important areas of improvement for individual students and for the school as a whole. The National Agenda action plan addresses the major areas for improvement. Departmental analyses identify detailed areas for improvement at individual student level. The senior team and subject leaders have provided clear guidance and training to staff.

- The school has made significant changes to align long and short-term curricular planning with the requirements of TIMMS and PISA, both in terms of content and skills development. The content changes are now in place and are having a beneficial impact. The development of skills, such as critical thinking and verbal reasoning, is more uneven.

- A minority of teachers are starting to adapt their teaching strategies to better meet the requirements of the National Agenda, for example, by encouraging students to pose their own scientific questions and plan enquiries and investigations to find a solution in science. However, it is inconsistent across the school but is better in secondary than elsewhere.

- Students understand the role and purpose of the National Agenda and they and their parents are aware of their National Agenda targets. They use technology competently, including laptops, tablets, and a range of media resources and books, to support their learning. Students' awareness of cross-curricular links has improved significantly since the previous inspection.

Overall, the school's improvement towards achieving its National Agenda targets meets expectations.

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

Promoting a culture of innovation:

- Students do not benefit sufficiently from opportunities to think innovatively and creatively. However, some examples of good practice are emerging, for example in mathematics, where students design interior layouts and furniture to learn about measurements and geometry. The majority of teachers do not ask questions or set tasks in lessons that encourage students to adopt innovative approaches to their learning. School leaders have started to discuss innovation with staff, but they have not yet articulated a coherent understanding of what it means and its potential impact on enhancing students' learning skills. They have yet to develop a plan for its integration into the curriculum.

Overall school performance

Good

1 Students' achievement

		Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Islamic education	Attainment	Good	Good	Acceptable
	Progress	Good ⬆	Good	Acceptable
Arabic as a first language	Attainment	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable
	Progress	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable
Arabic as an additional language	Attainment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Not applicable
	Progress	Acceptable	Acceptable	Not applicable
English	Attainment	Good	Very good	Not applicable
	Progress	Good	Very good	Not applicable
Mathematics	Attainment	Very good	Very good	Very good
	Progress	Good	Very good ⬆	Very good
Science	Attainment	Very good	Very good	Good
	Progress	Very good	Very good	Good

	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Learning skills	Good	Good	Good ⬇

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

	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Personal development	Very good	Outstanding	Outstanding
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Good	Very good	Outstanding
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Good	Very good	Outstanding

3. Teaching and assessment

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

4. Curriculum

	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Curriculum design and implementation	Good	Good	Acceptable ⬇
Curriculum adaptation	Good ⬆	Good	Good

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

	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding	Good ⬆	Good ⬆	Good ⬆
Care and support	Good	Good	Good

6. Leadership and management

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

1. Students' achievement

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

- In Islamic education, the majority of students attain levels that are above curriculum expectations. They make good progress and by Year 6, they develop a strong knowledge of key concepts. As a result they show a clear understanding of the battle of Uhud and the story of the prophets Mussa.. In addition, they have good knowledge of the Five Pillars of Islam, Islamic values, morals and etiquettes. Their development of recitation skills is less secure.

- In Arabic as a first language, the majority of students attain levels that are above curriculum expectations. Their listening and speaking skills are strong; they can speak well using short sentences in Arabic. Whereas students can read aloud, their comprehension skills are still developing. In lessons and in their recent work, the majority make better than expected progress. Students' free and creative writing skills are developing at a slower pace.

- In Arabic as an additional language, most students attain levels that are in line with curriculum expectations. They make acceptable progress overall and by the end of the phase, students are able to read fluently, with variable accuracy. They can produce writing that is legible, which includes appropriate vocabulary for their stage of learning. They can speak about their immediate surroundings; however they have difficulty speaking about new unfamiliar topics.

- In English, school assessments and externally assessed tests indicate that the majority of students reach levels that are above curriculum standards. The trend in attainment over the previous three years is improving. Progress is good, but is most rapid towards the end of the phase. By Year 6, students are able to read with appropriate intonation and can explain why an author wrote in a particular way. Students' writing is accurate and well-structured; similar ideas are logically grouped into paragraphs. Speaking skills are the strongest.

- In mathematics, internal and external assessments indicate that a large majority of students attain levels that are above curriculum expectations. They make good progress in lessons and over time. Skill development in all aspects of mathematics is consistently good. However, opportunities for extended problem solving, particularly for the most able are less evident. Overall, different groups of students, including those who have SEND make similarly good progress.

- In science, internal and external assessments indicate that a large majority of students attain levels that are above curriculum expectations. Students express their ideas clearly using age-appropriate scientific language. They make very good progress, especially towards the end of the phase, in their knowledge and understanding of scientific concepts and development of scientific skills. However, progress is occasionally slower for younger students, especially in the development of their investigative skills.

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

- In Islamic education, the majority of students attain levels that are above curriculum expectations. They have good knowledge and understanding of the Six Pillars of Faith, and Islamic principles and etiquettes. Their knowledge and understanding of zakat and its rules, are above expectations. They make good progress in understanding most Islamic principles, morals and values, and in their recitation skills. However, their ability to quote verses from the Holy Qur'an in their presentations and debates is less evident.

- In Arabic as a first language, most of students attain in line with curriculum expectations. They are able to express their views using Arabic adequately. They can read aloud about familiar topics with accuracy. Their free and extended writing skills are less well developed. Most students make adequate progress in the development of their listening, speaking and reading skills. Their creative writing skills develop at a slower rate.

- In Arabic as an additional language, most of students attain in line with curriculum expectations. They can read fluently but with frequent errors in pronunciation. Their reading comprehension skills are acceptable. They have adequate listening skills and can express themselves using familiar vocabulary, but have difficulty participating in short conversations. They make acceptable progress over time and in lessons. Their progress in writing is less secure; it is not yet consolidated as expected for their years they have been studying this subject.

- In English, school assessments and IGCSE exam results indicate that a large majority of students reach levels in English that are above curriculum standards. International benchmark tests at Year 9 confirm this picture. Students make very good progress, which is most rapid in Years 10 and 11. By Year 11, they have developed a deep understanding of the strategies writers use to convey meaning and are able to provide evidence in the text to support their opinions. Most students can express their ideas, viewpoints and arguments clearly and cogently. Progress for all groups of students is similar.

- In mathematics, students reach very good levels of attainment when compared to the expected outcomes of the school's curriculum. GCSE results have been consistently strong for the past three years. They make very good progress in all areas of mathematical study. There are no differences between the rates of progress made by different groups of students. However, opportunities to challenge the most able with extended problem solving are less evident.

- In science, a large majority of students attain levels that are above curriculum expectations. This is confirmed by internal assessments, international benchmark tests and the very strong GCSE exam results. In lessons and over time, students make rapid and secure progress in developing their knowledge and understanding of scientific concepts and in developing practical skills. The majority develop an understanding of fair testing and use it to design their own questions and investigations.

Post-16		
Subjects	Attainment	Progress
Islamic education	Acceptable	Acceptable
Arabic as a first language	Acceptable	Acceptable
Arabic as an additional language	Not applicable	Not applicable
English	Not applicable	Not applicable
Mathematics	Very good	Very good
Science	Good	Good

- In Islamic education, most students demonstrate knowledge and understanding of Islamic principles that are in line with curriculum expectations. They show an adequate understanding of fate and destiny in Islam and the different terms of Fiqh, such as conditional law. Their recitation skills are less strong. Most students make an adequate progress in understanding Hadeeth, Fiqh, Islamic principles, and values.

- In Arabic as a first language, most students attain in line with curriculum expectations. Most have well-developed listening and responding skills. They are able to read familiar topics with accuracy, but most find difficulty when reading unfamiliar topics. Their extended and creative writing skills are less well developed. Students make acceptable progress in relation to their starting points and against the learning objectives in lessons. Progress is more rapid in the development of their listening and speaking skills.

- In mathematics, internal and external assessments indicate that a large majority of students attain levels that are above curriculum expectations. A level and AS level examination results are strong, especially when compared to international averages. This has been an improving trend over the past few years, and particularly over the past year since more time has been given to students to complete the courses. Students make very good progress in all aspects of mathematics.

- In science, internal and external assessments indicate that the majority of students attain levels that are above curriculum expectations. In their assessments, in lessons, and in their recent work, students make good progress overall. However this is better reflected in chemistry and physics, where students make rapid progress in problem-solving and investigation and develop secure knowledge and understanding of scientific concepts. In biology, where examination results are less secure, attainment and progress are weaker because work lacks challenge.

	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Learning skills	Good	Good	Good ↓

- Students are keen to learn and are very engaged in their work. They take pride in what they do and try very hard to improve through working independently. They are taking increasing responsibility for their own learning, especially when they are aware of what they need to do to improve.

- Students communicate clearly with each other and collaborate purposefully in order to achieve their goals, especially in the post-16 phase. When working in groups, they all take part in the activities assigned and generally share the work equitably. They are confident in explaining their learning to others and answer challenging questions eagerly.

- Students frequently apply their learning to the real world. For example, young children understand that it is necessary to have a healthy diet and exercise. However, connections are often made in response to teachers' questions, rather from links arising from their own reflections. Making connections between subjects is not as well developed.

- Students display limited innovative thinking and enterprise skills. They use technology frequently but often for low-level, albeit useful tasks, like looking up definitions, or watching videos linked to their text books on their laptops. Attempts at research, problem solving and critical thinking are more evident in the secondary and post-16 phases.

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

	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Personal development	Very good	Outstanding	Outstanding

- Nearly all students have positive attitudes to schooling and learning. All students apply themselves to their activities with enthusiasm. Students in the secondary and post-16 phases are able to sustain their application to their studies with little or no teacher encouragement or intervention.

- The behaviour of secondary and post-16 students in class and around the school is exemplary. They show commendable self-discipline and demonstrate excellent relationships with adults, their peers and younger students. Most primary students also are self-disciplined and work well with each other. Bullying is rare and students express confidence that they would be dealt with well should they occur.

- In all phases of the school, students show respect to each other and are courteous to staff and visitors. Many of the older students choose to support and mentor those in younger classes, enjoying the opportunity to contribute to their school. Students are wonderful ambassadors for the school.

- Students have a secure understanding of nutrition and healthy lifestyles. Many are able to regularly resist the temptations of less healthy options in the canteen, and opt for healthier alternatives. Although, the school facilities limited exercise outside the curriculum, many attend sporting activities out of school.

- Attendance across all the phases in the school is good. Parents confirm that their children are eager to come to school. All students return to their classes after break punctually and as a consequence, very little teaching time is lost.

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

- Students have a strong appreciation of Islamic values and their impact on the UAE society. They understand well how they positively influence their daily routine in school, and their relationships with others. This is very well evident in post-16 phase.

- Students are well aware of the Emirati heritage and culture. They can explain well what they know and understand about national events, and UAE traditional culture and sports. They are eager to share their understanding of how the UAE was established, and how the country's bright future is influenced by its leaders' vision.

- Students take pride in their own cultures, and how these fit in the inclusive diversity of Dubai and the UAE. Older students are able to compare in detail their own culture's customs and daily routines to other cultures that are represented by other students in the school. However, their understanding of other worldwide cultures is less well developed.

	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Good	Very good	Outstanding

- Students play an active role in the school community, especially at the post-16 phase. They have a clear understanding of their responsibilities as members of the school and contribute to its development. The school is proactive in involving students in fund-raising activities and local charities.

- Students have a very positive work ethic. They participate in, and contribute to, the life of the school, and the local and international community through a range of opportunities. This is particularly evident with older students who actively participate in initiatives such as 'diabetes walk' and 'green hope'.

- Students show care for their school environment. In the primary phase, they take care of the school's organic garden. In the secondary, students are encouraged to recycle and plant trees in Dubai. In the post-16 phase, students play a key role in local and international environmental activities.

3. Teaching and assessment

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

- Teachers, especially those in the secondary, have a good knowledge of the subjects they teach. The majority have a good understanding of how students learn their subjects best. This is however less evident in Arabic and Islamic education. Where teaching is particularly effective, for example, in some of the secondary mathematics lessons, students' ability to think as mathematicians is skilfully developed to solve problems.

- Most teachers' lesson planning is thorough and comprehensive. Plans contain a wide range of information for teachers to consider, and are sometimes overambitious in scope, especially considering the short duration of the lessons. Some teachers annotate their plans to record how much students have learnt.

- Teachers' interactions with students are very positive. Students, in particular older ones, respond well to questions which deepen their learning and challenge their ability to think critically, although this does not happen in the majority of lessons. In the primary phase, a minority of teachers' questioning tends to be closed, untargeted and all students are expected to answer.

- Strategies to meet the needs of different groups of students are inconsistently applied. Most teachers set work that meets the needs of some groups, including those with SEND. However, they set insufficient tasks to challenge students of higher ability.

- Teaching to develop critical thinking is not a feature in many lessons in the secondary phase. However, teachers in primary do not always have the confidence to ask questions which promote the development of skills and higher order thinking in the subjects they teach.

	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Assessment	Good	Good	Good

- The school has developed rigorous internal processes to assess students' attainment and progress in English, mathematics and science. They include end of module, interim, end of year and on-going tests. In Arabic and Islamic education, external assessment is now used in Years 10 and 11. However internal assessment in other years is not consistently accurate.

- The school benchmarks students' attainment in English, mathematics and science against international and national expectations using a range of external tests. Analysis of these results is detailed and rigorous, and highlights specific areas for improvement. In Arabic and Islamic education external benchmarking takes place at the end of the secondary phase.

- The school analyses students' assessment data well, using various sources of information to establish the attainment and progress of individuals and groups of students. In English, mathematics and science, teachers are setting more challenging tests to encourage students to think deeper. In Islamic education and Arabic, assessment information is not being used consistently to provide the right level of challenge.

- Assessment information is increasingly used to modify the curriculum and to identify students who need support, especially in the secondary phase. This is not as consistent in Arabic and Islamic education.

- Most teachers are well aware of students' academic strengths and areas for development. They provide good support when students find the work too difficult. Feedback in class is frequently supportive and challenging. Marking is often done in class with the students. Written feedback, although encouraging, rarely provides guidance to students on how to improve.

> 4. Curriculum

	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Curriculum design and implementation	Good	Good	Acceptable ⬇

- The curriculum has a clear rationale and is based on the revised English national curriculum and the UAE Ministry of Education standards, and it complies with all requirements. Most programmes of study include a mixture of relevant knowledge, skills and understanding. One exception, computing, is in need of updating.

- The curriculum is planned to ensure progression of knowledge, skills and understanding from one year to another. Transition from KG 2 to Year 1 from a number of feeder schools is facilitated through the school's admission process. Units of learning, which are taught towards the end of Year 6, support students' transition from the primary to secondary phase.

- Curriculum choices are limited for students in Post-16. Although psychology has been added this year, English language or literature are not provided, nor is there an option for any form of computer study. Additionally, there is no provision for recreational physical education for many students in this phase. A significant minority of the students surveyed are not satisfied with the choices that they are being given.

- The consolidation and application of students' learning is often enhanced through planned cross-curricular links. This is a particular strength of the secondary phase. In the primary phase these links are often evident in students' project work.

- Review of the curriculum by subject leaders is on-going and effective for most subjects. Modifications are often made during the year after an analysis of mid-term and end of unit assessments. Additionally, there are regular reviews in response to national developments, such as the changes to the National curriculum in England and the introduction of the UAE social studies programme, or as a result of external feedback.

- The UAE social studies curriculum is drawn from the MoE curriculum. The curriculum is systematically planned to provide students with a wide range of meaningful learning experiences. It is based on the balanced development of knowledge of concepts and skills. Progression is supported by increasing the depth and breadth of curricular concepts. Students engage readily with learning activities. Assessment strategies are well structured and provide accurate data on students' attainment and progress.

	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Curriculum adaptation	Good ⬆	Good	Good

- There are appropriate curriculum modifications for most SEND students. Individuals with very complex or sensory needs receive significant and skilled help to access the curriculum. Formal identification of gifted and talented students and consequent targeted challenges are in the early stages of development.

- The curriculum is enhanced by frequent off-site visits which broaden and deepen learning. However there are few examples of innovation and enterprise across the school. The opportunities for students to generate, drive and organise activities for themselves are not sufficiently matched to their abilities.

- Displays throughout the school encourage students to appreciate and celebrate the rich texture of the UAE culture alongside their own. Students take part in celebrations relating to UAE society both in school and in the community. Principles of tolerance and respect are deeply enshrined in the school ethos and students recognise the importance of these values in society.

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

	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding	Good ⬆	Good ⬆	Good ⬆

- The school has clear policies and procedures in place for the safeguarding of students. Staff know what needs to be done should a concern around students' welfare be raised and students are aware of what they can do if they feel at risk. However, there is no specific reference in the policy to keeping students safe on-line.

- The school has taken effective action to rectify the health and safety concerns identified in the previous year's report. Leaders are very aware of the risks of sharing the property with a public building and takes effective steps to negate any risk to students. Students are supervised during their time at school and on the buses.

- Buildings and equipment are well maintained, regularly checked and kept in good order. Clear records are kept with regards to maintenance and repairs, and the school has risk assessment procedures in place to support the safety of students. There are records of any incidents which occur and the subsequent action taken.

- The upper floors of the school are inaccessible to those with limited mobility, as there is no lift. When necessary, the school accommodates such needs by rearranging the classes, to make them accessible as required. However there are no washroom facilities for students with disabilities.

- Students' health and well-being are regularly monitored. The school clinic and its full-time team monitor the health of students and take action as necessary, including providing advice on weight, healthy eating and lifestyles. They also contribute to the curriculum with regard to educating students about staying healthy.

	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Care and support	Good	Good	Good

- Students benefit from good relationships with one another and with staff. The procedures in place for the management of behaviour are very effective and, as a consequence, behaviour is largely exemplary. Where this is not the case, it is mainly due to the teacher's inability to manage behaviour effectively during some lessons.

- The school monitors attendance and punctuality very closely. On the first day of any absence, parents are contacted to ascertain the reasons for non-attendance. They are also contacted should there be a persistent occurrence of lateness to school. The procedures which are in place are effective in promoting good attendance and punctuality.

- Procedures for the identification of students' with SEND have improved. There are now a range of tests in place to identify the nature of need and classification of students is according to KHDA categories. Although there is a low number of students identified as having SEND, the processes are broadly accurate. Formal systems are not yet in place to identify students who are gifted and talented.

- The school provides good support for students with SEND. 'Team around the child' meetings have been organised this year for every child who has SEND. Teachers have a wealth of information to support them in meeting the needs of students with SEND but this is not consistently used to modify teaching.

- Students are provided with a range of opportunities to undertake community service, based on their interests and aspirations. Careers advice, regular university fairs and visits provide older students with information on future options. The school's systems for regularly ascertaining students' opinions, are underdeveloped.

Inclusion

Provision and outcomes for students with SEND	Good ⬆

- The new leadership of the SEND Department is having a positive impact across the provision. The department is well organised and invests considerable time ensuring that support is available for students. All staff have access to information and expertise to promote learning for all.

- Almost all students have their needs identified accurately and quickly. Whilst external diagnosis and advice is encouraged by the school, particularly before the students are admitted, the department's developing skills are augmenting and in some cases reducing the need for such external input.

- Training sessions are organised at the school to help parents to support learning at home and to understand their children's needs and how to help them to achieve well. Parents are encouraged to contribute to the formulation of individual educational and behavioural plans and to monitor their children's success.

- Most students' individual education or behaviour plans feature appropriate and measurable targets. The plans provide detail on how curriculum targets can be achieved and offer advice on how teachers should modify their approach. Teachers have a wealth of information to help them meet needs but do not always use it consistently to modify their approach, such as simplifying language or allowing time for reflection.

- Almost all students with SEND meet the targets set in their individual plans. However, taff do not always check whether cocepts have been learned in lessons.. Assessment techniques which routinely and regularly evaluate learning or encourage self assessment in lessons are under-developed, resulting in some key learning objectives being missed.

6. Leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership	Good

- Leaders at all levels are fully committed to the improvement of students' outcomes. Nonetheless, senior leaders have yet to articulate a clear, shared vision for further improvement, and set a strategic direction to ensure that this vision is achieved. Leaders are working towards achieving the UAE National Agenda targets and are making good progress in this regard.

- School leaders have a good understanding of the curriculum and generally make effective modifications to ensure that the needs of different groups of students are met. Most leaders have a strong knowledge of how students learn best. They work well together with teachers to achieve high standards of students' learning and personal development.

- Relationships and communication among school leaders, and with staff are very positive and supportive. Leadership is distributed effectively and leaders at all levels are clear about their roles and responsibilities. This ensures that leaders share accountability for the improvement of the school.

- Senior and middle leaders have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school, and potential barriers to improvement. Middle and senior leaders receive professional development, however, this is not rigorous enough to ensure that they can effectively lead the school in its next stage of development.

- Leaders have improved or sustained the quality aspects of the school's provision over the past three years. As a result, outcomes for students have improved in most areas during this period. Leaders have ensured that the school is compliant with statutory and regulatory requirements.

School self-evaluation and improvement planning	Good

- School leaders systematically gather and analyse information from a range of sources to review the quality of educational provision and the resulting outcomes for students. Analysed information is not always synthesised well against the expectations of the UAE Inspection Framework. School leaders use inspection reports to set priorities for school improvement.

- Senior and middle leaders systematically monitor and accurately evaluate the quality of teaching, and the impact it has on students' progress. Teachers are given verbal and written feedback following lesson observations. The quality of the written feedback shared with teachers is variable.

- Prioritisation of school improvement targets is based mainly on areas identified in previous inspection reports. Most targets in the school improvement plan have clear success criteria. However, target setting is not based on precise self-evaluation, leading to inaccurate targets and unrealistic and rigorous monitoring.

- School leaders have made significant progress in addressing the recommendations from the previous inspection reports. Since the last inspection, issues relating to health and safety, assessment, teaching in Arabic and the provision for students with SEND have been addressed. Consequently the school has shown sustained improvements over time in most key areas.

Partnerships with parents and the community	Very good

- The school has been very successful in engaging parents as partners in their children's learning and in school life. The views of parents are considered when deciding upon school improvement priorities and the parent teacher association (PTA) facilitates this process. Parents are proud of the school and acknowledge the significant improvements made over time.

- Effective communication strategies, including the use of a newly-introduced technology platform, ensure that parents are well informed about activities in the school that have an impact on their children's learning and development. Parents feel that the school deals with concerns well,

- Reporting on students' academic progress, and their personal and social development is regular. School reports convey important messages on key aspects of students' achievements, areas for improvement and the next steps in their learning. Parents attend meetings to discuss their children's progress and they meet PTA representatives, who seek their views and concerns.

- Leaders and teachers have developed links with local schools, universities, environmental groups and festival organisers. As a result, students benefit from opportunities to participate in entrepreneurship, environmental and literature events and activities.

Governance	Good

- The governing board includes representation from a number of stakeholders, including the owner's representatives. Governors, most of whom have taken on specific roles, such as the oversight of curriculum development and health and safety, meet regularly to discuss key areas relating to the school's developments. The board seeks the views of parents and teachers in informal ways. But this process is not yet systematic.

- The school principal provides the board with regular reports on matters relating to the operation and improvement of the school, including the achievements of all students. Governors are not yet ensuring that the school improvement plan is systematically monitored and evaluated so as to determine the impact of the school's actions.

- Governors are responsive to the needs of the school. They make resourcing decisions based on their well-informed understanding of the work of the school, to ensure that the needs of all students are met. They have yet to oversee the articulation of a clear vision for improvement, and the setting of a strategic direction to guide the next stages of the school's development.

Management, staffing, facilities and resources	Good ⬆

- The school is well organised and systems run smoothly. The 'light touch' of supervision around school results in a relaxed but orderly community. Staff and students work harmoniously to ensure that the school day is efficient. Older students readily take responsibility and offer community service..

- Almost all staff are well qualified for their roles. Teachers are deployed appropriately and the school makes good use of their subject knowledge. Almost all lessons benefit from good academic expertise on the part of the teachers. Staff who support students who have additional needs are skilled and efficiently timetabled either in class or for one to one sessions.

- Classrooms are suitable for purpose and of sufficient size to promote a range of teaching methods. The school makes good use of limited outside space. Displays are utilised to promote the ethos of the school and to ensure that the whole environment contributes to the curriculum experience. Too few facilities exist to promote access for students with physical disabilities. and PE facilities fo older students

- The school makes good use of the limited classroom resources available to support learning. Recent improvements in the availability of quality ICT resources is promoting greater research and learning opportunities, particularly in the higher phases. The best lessons utilise physical materials to assist learning and illustrate real world examples, which particularly helps the less able.

The views of parents, teachers and senior students

The views of parents, teachers and senior students

Before the inspection, the views of the parents, teachers and senior secondary students were surveyed. Key messages from each group were considered during the inspection and these helped to form inspection judgements. A summary of the survey statistics and comments from those who responded to the survey follows:

Responses to the surveys		
Responses received	Number	
Parents*	2016-2017	461
	2015-2016	480
Teachers	131	
Students	500	

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

- Almost all parents that responded to the survey are satisfied with most aspects of their children's education, including the quality of teaching and learning.

- Almost all parents believe that their children are well cared for and that they respect their teachers.

- A few parents do not agree that the school offers a good range of extra-curricular activities and that the school's response to bullying, when it happens, is satisfactory.

- A minority of students that responded to the survey feel that they do not have a wide choice of activities to choose from and that they do not have enough opportunities to practice their leadership skills.

- Almost all teachers responded very positively to all questions in the survey.

What happens next?

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

• recommendations from DSIB

• areas identified by the school as requiring improvement

• other external reports or sources of information that comment on the work of the school

• priorities arising from the school's unique characteristics.

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

Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau

Knowledge and Human Development Authority

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