

GEMS Royal Dubai School...



National Agenda



Early years



Special educational needs and disabilities



Innovation

## Inspection Report 2015-2016

GEMS Royal Dubai School

Curriculum: UK

Overall rating: Outstanding

[Read more about the school](#)



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“The race for excellence has no finish line”



Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum

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## School information

<p><b>General information</b></p> 	Location	Al Mizhar
	Type of school	Private
	Opening year of school	2005
	Website	www.royaldubaischool.com
	Telephone	04-2886499
	Address	PO Box 121310, Dubai
	Principal	Kevin Murray Loft
	Language of instruction	English
	Inspection dates	16 to 19 November 2015
<p><b>Students</b></p> 	Gender of students	Boys and girls
	Age range	3-11
	Grades or year groups	Foundation Stage 1 to Year 6
	Number of students on roll	1,166
	Number of children in pre-kindergarten	131
	Number of Emirati students	167
	Number of students with SEND	95
	Largest nationality group of students	British
<p><b>Teachers / Support staff</b></p> 	Number of teachers	77
	Largest nationality group of teachers	British
	Number of teaching assistants	62
	Teacher-student ratio	1:15
	Number of guidance counsellors	1
	Teacher turnover	12%
<p><b>Curriculum</b></p> 	Educational permit / Licence	UK
	Main curriculum	UK / English National
	External tests and examinations	None
	Accreditation	None
	National Agenda benchmark tests	Registered for GL – PTE, PTM and PTS

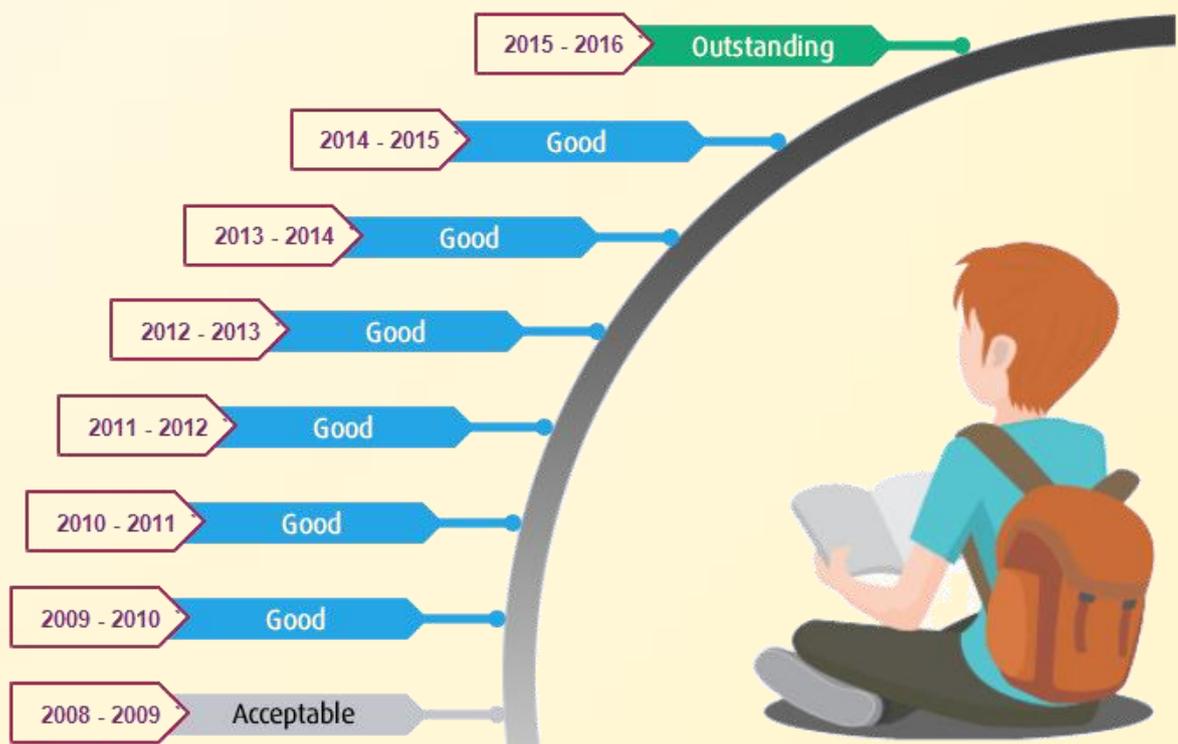


## Summary for parents and the community

**GEMS Royal Dubai School** was inspected by DSIB from 16 to 19 of November 2015. The overall quality of education provided by the school was found to be **outstanding**.

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

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





### How well did the school perform overall?

Overall, GEMS Royal Dubai School provided an **outstanding** education for its students.

- Children at Foundation Stage had outstanding attainment in mathematics and science, and good attainment in English. Attainment in the primary phase ranged from acceptable in Arabic as a first language, to very good in science. Across both phases, learning skills were outstanding. Children in Foundation Stage and students in the primary made outstanding progress in acquiring knowledge, understanding and skills in English, mathematics and science. Progress in Islamic education and Arabic was good.
- Students' personal development was excellent. They had very positive attitudes towards learning and to others. They were able to take responsibility for their own learning in a range of school, community or environmental projects. Their understanding of Emirati culture was exemplary. Knowledge and understanding of wider cultures, though positive, was less so.
- Teaching at the Foundation Stage encouraged children to capitalise on their curiosity and explore the world around them. The children benefited from an excellent range of motivating activities set up by teachers, who observed and recorded their progress in an outstanding way. Lessons in the primary stage were often of very good or outstanding quality, encouraging students to think for themselves. However, there was a degree of inconsistency across subjects in this regard. Assessment was done very well internally, but did not yet include regular external tests.
- The curriculum was of outstanding quality. It promoted progression and continuity in learning and ensured that tasks and activities were well matched to the learning needs of different groups of students. Care and support for all students were of the highest quality, and students with special educational needs and disabilities benefited from targeted and customised support in their learning and personal development. Arrangements for health and safety, including child protection, were excellent.
- The quality of leadership from the principal, senior team, and others was of the highest quality. Teamwork was a notable feature of the school. Stakeholders were committed to school self-evaluation and taking the school forward. Governors supported the school and that there was no letting up on the drive for improvement. They ensured that the school was appropriately resourced. Partnership with parents was highly developed.



### What did the school do well?

- Students were making rapid progress in acquiring knowledge and understanding in English, mathematics and science. They had exceptionally strong learning skills.
- Students' attainment had improved in Arabic as an additional language and in Islamic education.
- Students' personal and social development was excellent. They could take responsibility in a wide range of activities in and out of the classroom.
- Staff had created a very well planned and stimulating curriculum which, along with teaching, was often inspiring. Rigorous assessment, was highly effective in promoting learning for all groups of students.
- All staff ensured that students, including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), were well protected and very well supported in their learning and personal development. There was an exceptional collegiate ethos among staff, parents and students.
- Governors and the principal promoted teamwork very successfully. They, and staff at all levels, showed high quality leadership in driving the school forward.



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

- Refine the school projects which are focused on improving teaching in Arabic, especially Arabic as a first language, to improve teachers' use of assessment data to match tasks to the learning needs of individuals and to raise students' attainment.
- Build on the best practice existing in the school, and elsewhere, to ensure that more lessons are outstanding, so as to improve students' attainment in those that are currently only good.
- Use external benchmarking tests to confirm students' strengths and areas for development in key aspects of their learning, and continue to work to address these areas to meet the National Agenda targets for the school.



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

- The majority of students with SEND made very good progress in the Foundation Stage and in the primary phase.
- The school kept parents fully informed about their child's progress and encouraged regular communication.
- Parents received regular progress reports through letters, telephone conversations and meetings. They were particularly pleased with the weekly emails updating them on their child's daily progress with examples of work and achievements.
- Parents worked very closely with the school leadership team and the teachers in the achievement centre. The school provided excellent advice for parents on how to support their children at home.
- The SEND team had organised a parent support group to help parents become more involved in their child's education. All parents interviewed were very happy with the support received from the school and the inclusive, caring, positive ethos.

## National Agenda Parameter



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

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

### Main points:

- The school met the registration requirements of the National Agenda Parameter. The school's was making expected progress towards meeting the National Agenda targets.
- The principal, together with his leadership team, had made good progress in promoting the National Agenda amongst all the stakeholders. The leaders acknowledged that by prioritising and promoting the National Agenda it would become an important feature of the school's direction and future development.
- The analysis of TIMSS data and other assessment data had been used to make modifications to the curriculum. Staff had identified that the curriculum needed a sharper focus on the development of skills, as well as knowledge. Staff had undergone training in the development of critical thinking, with an emphasis on the way in which they questioned the students. This emphasis was beginning to have a positive impact on the quality of the students' learning.
- In mathematics and science, the opportunities for students to develop their critical thinking skills were plentiful. They were frequently asked to apply their learning to real-life situations and they worked well independently. Students were being challenged. In English, critical thinking was a developing feature. The use of inference and text analysis enabled students to reflect on their understanding. Overall, critical thinking and enquiry were becoming embedded in teachers' planning.
- Most students made excellent use of the wide range of resources available to them. In science, they were frequently presented with materials with which to experiment. In mathematics, the resources provided by the teacher enabled them to think how best to apply their skills and knowledge to real-life situations. Students reinforced, and extended, their learning through the use of technology in the classroom. A common feature was the use of learning technology such as tablets to research the topics that were being studied.

## Innovation in education

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

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



### Promoting a culture of innovation:

- School leaders were very committed to creating a culture of innovation around the school. They had identified innovation champions and encouraged students to get involved in generating ideas. The school was yet to formalise the innovation process and formulate a school wide policy with identified partners. They recognized that building the capacity of all teachers to promote innovation in teaching and curriculum was a priority. The school had provided a learning environment, rich in resources and physical space, to be used by all students to build their skills and pursue their interests. The school had created a rich curriculum where students had numerous opportunities to research and innovate.

Overall school performance

Outstanding ↑

1. Students' achievement

		Foundation Stage	Primary
Islamic education 	Attainment	Not applicable	Good ↑
	Progress	Not applicable	Good
Arabic as a first language 	Attainment	Not applicable	Acceptable
	Progress	Not applicable	Good
Arabic as an additional language 	Attainment	Not applicable	Good ↑
	Progress	Not applicable	Good ↑
English 	Attainment	Good	Good
	Progress	Outstanding	Outstanding
Mathematics 	Attainment	Outstanding	Good
	Progress	Outstanding	Outstanding
Science 	Attainment	Outstanding	Very good ↑
	Progress	Outstanding	Very good ↓

	Foundation Stage	Primary
Learning skills	Outstanding	Outstanding

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

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

## 3. Teaching and assessment

	Foundation Stage	Primary
Teaching for effective learning	Outstanding	Very good ↑
Assessment	Outstanding	Very good ↑

## 4. Curriculum

	Foundation Stage	Primary
Curriculum design and implementation	Outstanding	Outstanding
Curriculum adaptation	Outstanding	Outstanding

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

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

## 6. Leadership and management

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



## Main inspection report

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

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



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

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

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

## 1. Students' achievement

### Foundation Stage

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

- The majority of children had reading, writing and speaking skills in English that were above curriculum standards. A large majority of children were learning English as an additional language and teachers sensitively nurtured their communication and language skills by incorporating daily activities to help them to make progress. Children were able to sequence and tell a story in the correct order, recognising the beginning, middle and end. They were becoming confident writers and used their phonic knowledge to write simple captions, lists and labels during their independent learning time. Different groups of children made similarly outstanding progress in lessons and over time.
- Children made outstanding progress in mathematics. Children had a secure understanding of number. They were able to add two single-digit numbers using creative addition machines. They could write their number sums using the correct mathematical terminology and symbols. Children recognised patterns and could name shapes. They confidently used the language of shape when building space rockets. Children skillfully used tablets with age-appropriate programmes. Teachers helped the children to make connections between mathematical concepts and the world around them. Overall, most children achieved levels of attainment and made progress above the expected curriculum standards.
- The enquiry-based approach in science developed most children's investigation and exploration skills and helped them to develop a secure understanding of different scientific concepts. This led to outstanding progress and resulted in attainment above expected curriculum standards. Children were able to predict changes and comment on what had happened by using their senses. They observed crystals dissolving and were able to try to explain what they had seen. Children could use and apply the knowledge they had acquired to make connections with the real world. Most children successfully noticed changes when they mixed different coloured paints, could talk about how to travel to the moon and could name some planets.

### Primary

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

- In Islamic education, the majority of students attained levels that were above the UAE Ministry of Education (MOE) curriculum standards. They were able to make links to prior knowledge and had a secure grasp of the key principles of the Islamic faith. Students demonstrated detailed knowledge and understanding of the lives of prophets and could relate to the morals in the stories. Their skills in reciting the Holy Qur'an were improving and students were able to recite a number of short Surahs. All the assessments were internal and students' attainment over the past three years was tracked. In relation to their starting points, the majority of students made better than expected progress. All groups of students, including those with SEND and lower attaining students, made good progress.
- In Arabic as a first language, most students attained levels that were in line with MOE curriculum standards. A few reached levels above expectation in internal examinations and in their recent work. In lessons students demonstrated levels of language skills that were in line with the appropriate lesson objectives. They listened with understanding and could express basic ideas using a reasonable range of familiar words. Students could read about familiar topics, but their comprehension skills were under-developed. Students' use of grammar when writing was often inadequate. The majority of students' progress had recently improved with students in the lower year groups generally making the best progress. Girls' attainment was better than that of boys, especially in speaking.
- In Arabic as an additional language, progress in lessons was good. For the majority of students' their attainment was above curriculum standards. According to internal examinations and recent work a higher proportion of students in the lower year groups achieved above curriculum standards. Students had good listening skills, were able to respond to teachers' use of standard Arabic and could interact with each other. They could express their ideas using a reasonable range of familiar sentences. Most students could read simple text but were less competent in answering questions about the topic. Their independent writing skills were variable. Students in the lower year groups were more confident and able to write using the Arabic script. Levels of attainment and rates of progress for different groups of students had recently improved against MOE expectations.
- In English, the attainment of the majority of students was above curriculum expectations and national standards. Standards had been maintained for the past few years and progress was outstanding. Students, many of whom spoke English as an additional language, rapidly developed their reading and speaking skills as they progressed through the school. For example, in Year 1, students quickly learned how to write in full sentences and these skills were developed year-on-year. By the time students reached Year 5 they were confident in debating and justifying their point of view. Progress accelerated in upper primary so that Year 6 students' written work was powerful, well-constructed and creative. Students with SEND made better than expected progress considering their starting points.

- The majority of students progressed at a better than expected rate in mathematics and a large majority attained levels above the expected standards for their age. The school used a range of national and international benchmark tests to confirm that the majority were performing at levels above national and international standards. All students, including those with special educational needs and disabilities, were challenged by problem solving activities and projects that enabled them to apply their skills to the real world. In lessons, individualised and appropriate tasks enabled most students to make better than expected progress. Over time, there had been a steady improvement in students' levels of attainment.
- Students' attainment and progress in science against National Curriculum for England standards were very good. Attainment was strongest in the later primary years. Tests showed secure progress in the students' development of scientific knowledge and understanding. Attainment and progress in lessons was better than would be expected for comparable age groups. This was especially true in laboratory lessons. Students were able to use the scientific method across all grade levels. They showed proficiency in collecting and analysing data, forming conclusions and presenting their findings in age-appropriate forms. Progress for students with SEND was very good in science. For a large majority of students, achievement over the past three years had been maintained above national and international standards.

	Foundation Stage	Primary
Learning skills	Outstanding	Outstanding

- Students displayed outstanding learning skills across both phases. Students were eager learners with high levels of maturity, working responsibly in lessons. They showed genuine enthusiasm and interest in their learning. They confidently evaluated their work and used 'learning ladders' within lessons to help focus on their own learning. Students were keen to meet their individual targets.
- Student collaboration and interactions were outstanding. Most lessons provided opportunities for group and individual work. For example, students in Year 5 were set the challenge of carrying out a scientific experiment to design a parachute capable of falling at different rates of speed. Students worked collaboratively to solve the problem and successfully communicated their ideas clearly and confidently.
- Students capably made connections between areas of learning to deepen their understanding of the world. For example, students in a Year 6 learning technology lesson researched the internet to find a video clip, suitable to help children to learn about the Victorians, to embed in a website they had designed. Students made the connections to e-safety and used criteria for selecting a clip that was appealing and age appropriate for children.
- Students used learning technologies consistently in lessons for research purposes. Students in Year 4 were skilled at using iPads to scan QR codes to link to websites which showed techniques on how to improve their swim strokes. Critical thinking was a feature of most lessons and was well developed.

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

	Foundation Stage	Primary
Personal development	Outstanding	Outstanding

- Students demonstrated positive attitudes and a strong sense of independence, working at times with little supervision. They were self-reliant and able to question, while not afraid to take risks. Students responded well and thrived on constructive criticism.
- All students behaved well. They often volunteered to 'Buddy' in class, helping other students to complete classroom tasks, or during breaks to act as 'Playground Pals'. When conflict occurred, a helpful conflict resolution procedure was in place, which students understood well. Students responded positively to adults and peers.
- Students often took the lead in demonstrating tolerance towards others. They were sensitive to the needs of others, including students with SEND. Relationships with teachers and peers were very positive.
- Most students were willing to participate in physical activities after school and in physical education classes. They were keen to learn new sports. Students responded well to healthy eating choices which were encouraged in the cafeteria. They benefited from opportunities to learn about nutrition at various points in the curriculum.
- Students' punctuality was excellent with high levels of attendance. The school was working to further improve attendance rates, for example by rewarding students with high attendance.

	Foundation Stage	Primary
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Very good ↑	Very good ↑

- Students had a secure appreciation and understanding of Islamic values and the impact of these values on everyday life in the UAE. They could provide many examples of how values such as tolerance and kindness influence people's lives.
- Students were very knowledgeable and respectful of the Emirati culture. Opportunities to reflect on the UAE national identity were clearly embedded in the school curriculum. Students recognised that heritage and culture were important to the people of the UAE. They celebrated the UAE National Day and Flag Day, and participated in cultural assemblies and trips.
- Students knew about their own culture and celebrated it through the 'International Day' event. They appreciated other world cultures and could provide basic details about many of the nationalities represented in Dubai. They were aware of cultural diversity and understood that there are similarities and differences between cultures.

	Foundation Stage	Primary
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Outstanding	Outstanding

- Students eagerly demonstrated how to be good citizens and were able to create a harmonious school environment. Students actively participated in the life of the school and wider community. They were passionate to take on leadership roles such as civic ambassadors, civic and culture leaders, eco warriors and head boy and head girl roles. The weekly charity club encouraged students to volunteer and take the lead in charitable activities such as 'Acts of Kindness' week and Eid dress donation.
- Students demonstrated an excellent work ethic. They were creative and successful in taking the initiative to participate in activities and competitions. For examples, they participated in the Annual Science Fair, Art Exhibitions and ran workshops on computer coding for parents and other students at Makers Day. Students also presented their entrepreneurship projects at the GEMS 'Skills Network'. These actions had led to significant social benefits for the global community.
- Students cared for their school and demonstrated strong environmental awareness. They had led several environmental initiatives such as participating in the world's largest lesson on sustainability and collecting junk mail for recycling.

### 3. Teaching and assessment

	Foundation Stage	Primary
Teaching for effective learning	Outstanding	Very good ↑

- Teachers had extensive knowledge of their subject material and understood well how children learn. They were able to make difficult information understandable through the use of targeted examples and probing questions. Teachers in the Foundation Stage were particularly successful at teaching for effective learning.
- All teachers planned lessons effectively. They set out clear learning objectives, firmly linked to curriculum standards. Lessons were richly resourced and included print, digital, and laboratory resources. Teachers included clearly differentiated tasks and strategies for different groups of students in their lesson plans. Attention to the needs of individuals as well as groups was evident in planning.
- Teachers skillfully used questioning to enhance students' learning. They adjusted teaching strategies as well as the pace of their lesson according to how well students' responded. Questions designed to encourage students to think critically were not consistently used by teachers and teaching assistants. The use of classroom learning partners was a useful strategy and expanded the students' depth of understanding through dialogue.
- Data was used well when planning learning appropriate for their students' range in ability. Adjustments to teaching strategies and curriculum modifications were evident in most lessons. Alternate forms of assessment were designed to allow students with SEND, as well as English language learners, to demonstrate their mastery of curriculum standards in different ways. This resulted in high rates of progress for all groups of learners.

- Teachers were increasingly trying to develop students' critical thinking skills. They used laboratory and research lessons to encourage independent thinking and learning. Within these lessons, students were required to collect data and analyse it, and evaluate and present their conclusions. Lessons of this type were seen across all curriculum areas. Awareness of National Agenda targets had helped to motivate teachers to embed these teaching strategies.
- Teachers of Arabic as a first language had good subject knowledge and understanding of how students learn the language. They planned purposefully and managed time and resources well. They promoted interaction within the classroom with well-focused questioning and dialogue, recognising the importance of creating tasks that students could work on independently. They were using assessment information to match learning tasks to the needs of individuals and groups.
- Teacher with responsibility for the teaching of Arabic as an additional language had a secure understanding of effective teaching strategies needed to motivate students. They consistently modelled standard Arabic within well planned contextualised learning experiences.

	Foundation Stage	Primary
Assessment	Outstanding	Very good 

- Internal assessment practices in the Foundation Stage and at the primary stage were systematic. Teachers used a wide range of assessment strategies, including observation, written tests and questioning to assess students' progress. They successfully encouraged students to assess their own work and that of others. Almost all students could describe their progress against curriculum standards accurately.
- The school effectively measured students' academic outcomes against appropriate national and international expectations. For example, students were assessed on England's National Curriculum tests and the international Trends in mathematics and science survey (TIMSS). The school was planning to use additional external commercial tests to measure and compare students' progress in English, mathematics and science against international standards.
- A data manager collected assessment information in a well-managed online system. Staff analysed the attainment and progress data for phases, year groups, different groups of students and individuals. They had detailed information on the strengths and development needs of individual students and were tracking their progress over time.
- Teachers made effective use of assessment information when planning their lessons and almost all used the data effectively to modify lessons to meet the needs of groups and individuals. Teachers used the data to set improvement targets and they regularly assessed students' progress towards those targets.
- Teachers had very good knowledge of the strengths and needs of their students. They understood the personal and academic development of individuals and gave written and oral feedback to students, with appropriate praise and suggestions for improvement. Teachers successfully encouraged self-evaluation and peer evaluation, and involved students in target-setting. Informal assessments driven by teacher-initiated questioning added to the overall view of the students' achievements.

#### 4. Curriculum

	Foundation Stage	Primary
Curriculum design and implementation	Outstanding	Outstanding

- The curriculum was very effective in promoting the school's core values, and it developed learners who were creative, aspirational, reflective and effective communicators. It was compliant with the National Curriculum for England and MOE requirements for Islamic education and Arabic. There was a strong emphasis on independent enquiry and problem solving but critical thinking skills were not developed fully. The Foundation Stage curriculum was based on learning through play principles.
- The curriculum was very well planned to enable students' academic and life skills to be systematically built on year-by-year. Students were very well supported as they moved to the next stage of their education in the school and beyond. The curriculum was carefully adapted to meet the needs of all students. Transition meetings to share information between the phases to support school readiness in Year 1 were well planned.
- Students were able to make independent choices in their learning to fulfil their interests and aspirations. For example, a student chose to conduct an experiment to find out how storage conditions affected the ripening of bananas. Students who chose to join the charity club took responsibility to plan and run fundraising events. Children in the Foundation Stage experienced a wide range of exciting opportunities.
- The curriculum in Foundation Stage and the primary stage was enriched by the well-planned cross-curricular links. Students were able to make meaningful links in their learning. This was particularly effective in English lessons. For example students used the information they found out about the Vikings' raid on the island of Lindisfarne to write a newspaper article.
- The school conducted regular and rigorous reviews of the curriculum, taking account of the views of its stakeholders. Modifications were carefully made in the light of observations, assessment and the UAE National Agenda targets. This resulted in improving provision, for example in Arabic and Islamic education.

	Foundation Stage	Primary
Curriculum adaptation	Outstanding	Outstanding

- The curriculum was successfully modified to meet the different needs and learning styles of its students. Gifted and talented students were challenged through extension tasks in lessons and in enrichment clubs. Activities were modified effectively for students who were at an early stage of learning English, and specialist staff gave those students high quality targeted support.
- The curriculum was exciting and inspirational. Opportunities for creativity and innovation were enhanced through competitions. Older students designed and ran enterprise projects. The wide range of extra-curricular activities enabled students to follow their interests, for example in music, science and sport. Students flourished in the rich learning environment and developed into mature and thoughtful young citizens.

- The school successfully promoted students' understanding of UAE society and culture. Emirati values and traditions were well embedded in school life. For example students gained a deeper understanding of the heritage of the UAE when an Emirati parent visited the school to talk about her family's history of pearl fishing, and members of a women's college led Eid celebrations in the Foundation Stage.
- The school provided Arabic lessons for all children in the Foundation Stage. Arabs and non-Arabs were taught in separate classes. The lessons focused on Arabic greetings, letter sounds and basic vocabulary.

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

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

- Arrangements for the safety of students were implemented very well, including the child protection policy and procedures for arrival and departure. Security personnel followed appropriate systems carefully, and staff, parents, and students were aware of what was required of them.
- Systems such as 'Be Happy' and 'Playground Buddies' were in place, and with peer-to-peer help, gave students a sense of responsibility for their own health and safety. Safety measures for bus travel were thorough, with identification tags, safety belts, scanners and aides to monitor students. Staff encouraged students to bring healthy meals from home, and checked lunchboxes carefully.
- The school kept a detailed electronically recorded record of daily attendance. The quality of record keeping in other areas was thorough, and minor medical emergencies were recorded and reported to parents. Many staff held first aid certification in emergency care. Medicines were checked on a regular basis against expiry dates and were secured and administered carefully by qualified staff.
- School facilities were appropriate to support all areas of development of children in the Foundation Stage and students in the primary years. Signs directed at students helped explain safety rules for a wide range of school activities. These notices enhanced the educational experience of students and encouraged them to take personal responsibility for their own safety. Equipment was appropriately sized for children in the play area.
- Medical staff and the physical education department collaborated well to promote healthy lifestyles in and out of school, to explain the dangers of obesity, and to encourage students to make healthy lifestyle choices. Senior leaders were planning to use an external audit to look at how to reduce incident response times and improve student care in general.

	Foundation Stage	Primary
Care and support	Outstanding	Outstanding

- Relationships between staff and students were based on mutual respect and contributed to the caring, inclusive ethos of the school. Teachers knew the students very well and were fully aware of their individual needs. They promoted positive behaviour effectively in the school and encouraged students to take responsibility for their actions.

- The school kept accurate records on attendance and punctuality and there was clear guidance on expectations. Appropriate action was taken in respect of students who were repeatedly late or absent, and parents were contacted promptly where there were concerns about individual students.
- Procedures were in place for accurate, early identification of students with SEND. Early identification and rigorous screening was seen as a key factor in the provision for students with SEND and the gifted and talented. Most lessons provided excellent challenge to promote the learning and progress of those students.
- The school information management system was effectively used as a tool to support focused monitoring of the achievement patterns and trends of students with SEND. The achievement centre team had excellent understanding of how children learn, and they used evidence-based approaches to support students. The needs of students new to the school were identified as soon as possible after entry. As a result, support for most students was quickly matched to provision, where appropriate and challenging targets were set.
- The school expertly supported and monitored the well-being and personal development of students using a variety of creative strategies, including the weekly 'Listening Lounge'. Students' needs and concerns were handled professionally and with empathy. Students were given responsibilities and leadership roles to encourage them to take ownership of their own well-being, this resulted in outstanding personal development.

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

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

Outstanding

- The school senior leadership team was fully committed to the provision for students with SEND. The school's admission and SEND policy were clear, comprehensive and effectively put into practice. Clear timescales and excellent systems were in place to support identification and to meet the needs of students with SEND.
- The school had clear pathways for identifying students with SEND and used a wide variety of evidence to assess barriers to learning. The teachers were encouraged to identify student's giftedness and were aware of their individual talents.
- Staff had developed highly effective, positive relationships with parents and had an open door policy with regular communication by telephone and email. Parents' contributions to their child's learning were valued. Parents were fully involved in the process of identifying their child's needs as well as the setting of targets and reviewing of their individual educational plan (IEP).
- The school made varied, appropriate and creative modifications for students with SEND through IEP learning targets to suit students' interests and learning styles. The experienced head of the individual needs department had developed excellent strategies for supporting students' needs and monitoring the interventions. Some students participated in effectively supported learning sessions with a modified curriculum, which took place during withdrawal sessions in the achievement centre.
- The school had an effective system that tracked and monitored the progress of students with SEND. Feedback in lessons and teacher assessment informed next steps in learning well. Teachers set targets based around learning skills and competencies. In most lessons, planning and resources were well modified and individual targets were appropriate. In some classes, the learning activities did not match the students' IEPs and they made limited progress.

## 6. Leadership and management

### The effectiveness of leadership

Outstanding

- Leaders at all levels had a strong and up-to-date knowledge and understanding of the National Curriculum for England. They were overseeing the implementation of recent changes very successfully, while maintaining very high standards of student achievement. They had built a very strong, inclusive and collegiate ethos among staff, students and parents.
- Working with governors, his senior team, and staff at other levels, the principal had been successful in raising the overall quality of the school's work and impacting on student outcomes. The outstanding aspects had been maintained, while others were steadily improving.
- The principal had delegated responsibilities to a wide range of staff, and teamwork was a notable feature of the school's work. As a consequence, many individuals were building up experience and expertise in bringing about change and improvement. Morale among staff and others was strong.
- Leaders at all levels had shown that they could be creative in implementing the required changes to overcome barriers and improve the school. Senior leaders had re-structured the leadership team and worked successfully to sustain the positive aspects of the school's work and address and improve other areas requiring improvement. The school's overall capacity to improve was significant and was growing.
- Under the inspirational leadership of the principal and senior leaders, all staff successfully implemented a shared, ambitious vision for the school. They were fully committed to the aims of the UAE National Agenda, which were embedded in the school's improvement plans, and were putting them into practice. Students benefited from opportunities to show leadership and initiative.

### School self-evaluation and improvement planning

Outstanding 

- The school's improvement planning process was very systematic, and involved staff at all levels. Class teachers, year heads and heads of department all had appropriate action plans which were closely focused on improving the academic and personal development of all students. Staff employed a wide range of strategies for gathering data and information, and analysing the results to identify areas for improvement.
- Staff worked in teams to monitor and evaluate accurately the quality of lessons. Teachers benefited from a very systematic performance management system, and a helpful and flexible approach to supporting their professional development. There was a strong and consistent focus on student achievement, and staff tracked the progress of individual students carefully.
- The school priorities and those of the UAE National Agenda were set out clearly in a range of action plans. All staff were involved and, as a result, high quality aspects had been sustained, and others had shown improvement.
- The school had been very successful in addressing recommendations. Student progress in Arabic as an additional language had increased, while attainment in science, Islamic education and Arabic as an additional language had improved. Outstanding aspects had been maintained. Processes including the use of assessment data and self-evaluation were now being done more effectively.

Partnerships with parents and the community	Outstanding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school engaged parents in the learning experiences of their children. Parents felt very welcome and thought that their opinions and insights were fully considered. A parents' relations executive and a liaison officer for Arabic parents were instrumental in making parents feel welcome. Parents reported that their concerns regarding the underperformance of their children in Arabic had been acknowledged and that most saw improvements in the programme and in their child's progress.</li> <li>• Parents were kept fully informed about the academic and personal development of their children. Students' learning targets were regularly shared with parents. General communication was through a weekly e-mail update to each family, an informative website, and SMS messages when necessary. A parents' café was maintained on campus. Parents of students with SEND reported great satisfaction with the communication stream provided regarding their child's progress.</li> <li>• The reporting of students' academic and social progress was outstanding. At the end of each term, staff sent comprehensive and helpful reports on their child's attainment and progress in all subject areas. The school provided useful advice for parents on assisting their children to make progress.</li> <li>• The school networked with community organisations, and other schools in the GEMS group through 'mutual help' triads and other approaches to outreach to other school communities and organisations. Students participated in fairs, celebrations and competitions outside of the school. The school assisted and promoted charitable and volunteer endeavors to a high level.</li> </ul>	

Governance	Outstanding 
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents were closely involved in the life and work of the school, including in drawing up the improvement plan. Their views were surveyed regularly by governors, who considered them carefully. Overall, the governors had a comprehensive and accurate view of the school's work. The governing body was representative of the school community.</li> <li>• Governors held the principal and senior staff fully accountable for all aspects of the school's work, including outcomes for students, partnerships with parents and commitment to the National Agenda and Dubai's priorities.</li> <li>• The governing body had shown a strong commitment to school improvement, for example by helping the principal to set up joint working and liaison with other schools in the group for mutual help and support. This had significantly impacted on improving areas of the school's work.</li> </ul>	

Management, staffing, facilities and resources

Outstanding

- The school's daily routines were very well planned and implemented, and backed up by a wide range of policies which were reviewed regularly and amended as necessary. Day-to-day operation of the school, including security aspects, was very effective and smooth.
- Governors had ensured that the school was appropriately staffed with highly qualified teachers who were well deployed across the school. They had expanded the teaching and human resources for Arabic in the Foundation Stage to reflect the growing numbers of Arabic speaking students in the school. Teachers benefited from a comprehensive and flexible programme of professional development.
- The school's building and facilities were of the highest quality. Specialist areas such as the techno room in the Foundation Stage and the information communication technology room were used very well to promote students' learning, as were the outdoor sports areas and the swimming pool. Display of interesting posters and students' exploratory projects was exemplary and helped to create a very rich learning environment.
- The school's stock of learning resources was very well matched to the requirements of the different subjects. A positive feature was that the supply of resources was very well aligned to the requirements of the school's improvement and action plans.

## The views of the parents, teachers and students

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

Responses to the surveys		
Responses received	Number	
<b>Parents*</b> 	2015-2016	162
	2014-2015	128
<b>Teachers</b> 	68	
<b>Students</b> 	0	

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

- A small minority of parents responded to the survey, a slight increase on the previous year. Most teachers responded. The school did not have any senior secondary students, and so no students took the survey.
- Parents' views were very positive. Almost all were satisfied with the quality of education, and felt that their children enjoyed school.
- Views about the progress of their children were positive in English, mathematics and science but less so for Islamic education and Arabic.
- Parents had positive views about the curriculum, teaching, and assessment. They thought that their children were kept safe in the school, and that staff dealt well with any cases of bullying which arose.
- Almost all parents and teachers felt that the school was well led, and most parents and teachers thought that senior leaders listened to their views.
- Teachers felt that they were included in the process of reviewing the curriculum and in school self-evaluation. They were of the opinion that they benefited from regular feedback from line managers on the quality of their work.
- Most parents thought that school inspections had led to improvements.

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)