



هيئة الشارقة للتعليم الخاص
SHARJAH PRIVATE EDUCATION AUTHORITY

ITQAN
Programme

School Performance Review REPORT | (SPR)



إتقان ITQAN

GEMS WESTMINSTER SCHOOL SHARJAH

20 to 23 January 2025

Overall
Effectiveness
Rating:
GOOD

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PURPOSE AND SCOPE

Sharjah Private Education Authority (SPEA) is grateful to Sharjah private schools and their stakeholders including students and their parents, teachers and staff, school leaders and governors for sharing their views of the school and engaging with our review teams during this School Performance Review (SPR). This report shares the findings of this four-day review. It identifies strengths and areas for improvement along with strategic recommendations intended to help the school bring about its own improvement.

Purpose

The main purpose of this SPR is to assist schools in their continuous improvement journey through an external validation of their progress, quality and capacity to improve in the context of Sharjah Private Education Authority's (SPEA) vision to achieve *'Excellence in Education'* by 2024. SPEA has been a pioneer in supporting the private education sector in Sharjah, driven by its mission of *'Enabling the learner's community to grow and achieve aspiring outcomes through supportive and effective services'*. This new and innovative approach to school review is an important part of our strategy for achieving this vision because it supports continuous school improvement.

Scope

This review is guided by Performance Standards 1 to 6 and seventeen related Performance Indicators taken from the 2015-16 UAE School Inspection Framework. These Performance Standards relate to Student's achievement, Students' personal and social development, and their innovation skills, Teaching and assessment, Curriculum, The protection, care, guidance and support of students, and Leadership and management.

The findings relating to the six Standards and their associated Indicators will provide judgements based on the six-point scale in the UAE School Inspection Framework. These judgements will help schools understand the impact of their provision on students' academic and personal outcomes.

Where applicable, the SPR also gathered information about the provision for Arabic language, the school's use of international benchmarking data, and the provision for KG.



THE SCHOOL PERFORMANCE REVIEW PROCESS

The SPR uses the six Performance Standards (PS) and seventeen Performance Indicators (PI) from the UAE School Inspection Framework issued in 2015, as follows:

Performance Standard 1: Students' achievement, comprising:

- PI 1.1 Attainment
- PI 1.2 Progress
- PI 1.3 Learning skills

Performance Standard 2: Students' personal and social development, and their innovation skills, comprising:

- PI 2.1 Personal development
- PI 2.2 Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures
- PI 2.3 Social responsibility and innovation skills

Performance Standard 3: Teaching and assessment, comprising:

- PI 3.1 Teaching for effective learning
- PI 3.2 Assessment

Performance Standard 4: Curriculum, comprising:

- PI 4.1 Curriculum design and implementation
- PI 4.2 Curriculum adaptation

Performance Standard 5: The protection, care, guidance and support of students, comprising:

- PI 5.1 Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection/safeguarding
- PI 5.2 Care and support

Performance Standard 6. Leadership and management, comprising:

- PI 6.1 The effectiveness of leadership
- PI 6.2 Self-evaluation and improvement planning
- PI 6.3 Partnerships with parents and the community
- PI 6.4 Governance
- PI 6.5 Management, staffing, facilities and resources

Judgements



The judgements stated in this report use the following six-point scale.

Outstanding	The quality of performance substantially exceeds the expectations of the UAE
Very good	The quality of performance exceeds the expectations of the UAE
Good	The quality of performance meets the expectations of the UAE
Acceptable	The quality of performance meets the minimum level required in the UAE
Weak	The quality of performance is below the expectation of the UAE
Very weak	The quality of performance is significantly below the expectation of the UAE

To gather the required information to inform these judgements, our team of reviewers carried out a wide range of activities during the four-day visit, including:

- visits to lessons in Arabic, Islamic education, UAE social studies, English, mathematics and science, and other subjects, including lessons reviewed jointly with senior leaders of the school;
- reviewing important documents such as school self-evaluation form, school policies and the school improvement plan;
- meeting the Governors, Principal, senior leaders, middle leaders, subject coordinators, teachers, parents, and students;
- reviewing teachers' lesson plans, samples of students' coursework and related information;
- attending school activities such as assemblies, arrivals, departures, and break times; and
- analysing the outcomes of the surveys returned by parents.



SCHOOL INFORMATION

School	School ID	120
	School location	Muweilah, Sharjah
	Establishment date	2012
	Language of instruction	English
	School Curriculum	National Curriculum for England (NCfE)
	Accreditation body	Council of International Schools (CIS)
	Examination Board	Cambridge/Pearson
	External Assessments International and Curriculum Benchmark Assessments	Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) Cognitive Ability Test (CAT4) Emirates Standardized Test (EmSAT) Granada Learning (GL) Progress Test in English (PTE), Science (PTS), Mathematics (PTM) New Group Reading Test (NGRT) Pupil Attitudes to Self and School (PASS) Test of Arabic Language Arts (TALA)
	Fee Range	AED 13,428 to AED 26,343
Staff	Principal	Valerie Thompson
	Chair of board of governors	Darren Coulson
	Total number of teachers	199
	Total number of teaching assistants	42
	Turnover rate	20%
Students	Teacher: student ratio	1:16
	Total number of students	3,133
	Total number of students per phase	Phase 1: 214 Phase 2: 1,453 Phase 3: 1,236 Phase 4: 230
	Pre-KG: number and gender Phase 1/FS: number and gender	Boys: 0 Girls: 0 Boys: 105 Girls: 109
	Phase 2: number and gender	Boys: 726 Girls: 727
	Phase 3: number and gender	Boys: 658 Girls: 578



	Phase 4: number and gender	Boys: 120	Girls: 110
	Total number of Emirati students	17	
	Pre-KG: Emirati number and gender	Boys: 0	Girls: 0
	Phase 1/FS: Emirati number and gender	Boys: 3	Girls: 3
	Phase 2: Emirati number and gender	Boys: 4	Girls: 1
	Phase 3: Emirati number and gender	Boys: 2	Girls: 3
	Phase 4: Emirati number and gender	Boys: 1	Girls: 0
	Nationality groups (largest first)	1. Pakistani	
		2. Egyptian	
	Total number of students with special educational needs	89	



PROGRESS JOURNEY

Previous Review: 2022-23	Current Review:
GOOD	GOOD

SUMMARY OF REVIEW FINDINGS

These findings draw from our team of 7 reviewers' 169 lesson observations, 63 of which were carried out jointly with school leaders.

SUMMARY OF THE OVERALL PERFORMANCE OF THE SCHOOL:

The school's overall effectiveness is good. This is the same as in the previous review visit in 2023. Nevertheless, there have been significant improvements made in raising attainment in the Ministry of Education (MoE) and English-medium subjects. Achievement remains good overall. With most students entering with few English language skills, the school is remarkably effective in developing these students' standards in English. Overall, teaching and learning skills remain good, with Phase 1 demonstrating the best performance in each. Consistency in the quality of teaching still needs to be tackled. Students' personal and social development as well as protection, care, guidance, and support of students are both very good. Developments in assessment and in curriculum design, both of which are now very good, are beginning to have a positive impact on students' achievement. The leadership team has the unwavering support of all stakeholders, and leaders' passion and clear vision is a driving force for the school. The school has very committed and involved parents as well as very experienced and skilled governors. Together with the leadership of the school, they implement a rigorous self-evaluation and school improvement process. Leadership and management is very good.

KEY AREAS OF STRENGTH:

- Students' improving achievement across MoE subjects.
- Students' achievements in mathematics and science in Phases 1, 2, and 3 and in English in Phases 1, 3, and 4.
- Students' engagement and the responsibility that they take for their own learning.
- The assessment systems and procedures across the school.
- The curriculum design and implementation across the school.



- Support for students with special educational needs (SEN), and for the gifted and talented students (G&T).

KEY AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT:

- The effectiveness of teaching and learning in Phases 2, 3 and 4
- Students' progress in the MoE subjects.
- Teachers' use of meaningful links to Emirati culture and UAE society in lesson planning.
- The quality of planned cross-curriculum links that are routinely exploited in lessons.
- The school's effective national and international partnerships to further enrich students' learning and personal development.



MAIN REVIEW REPORT

PERFORMANCE STANDARD 1: STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENT

Students' achievement is overall good.

Indicators:		Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4
Islamic Education	Attainment	N/A	Good	Good	Good
	Progress	N/A	Good	Good	Good
Arabic (as a First Language)	Attainment	N/A	Good	Good	Good
	Progress	N/A	Good	Good	Good
Arabic (as an additional Language)	Attainment	N/A	Good	Acceptable	N/A
	Progress	N/A	Good	Good	N/A
Social Studies	Attainment	N/A	Good	Good	N/A
	Progress	N/A	Good	Good	N/A
English	Attainment	Very Good	Good	Very Good	Very Good
	Progress	Very Good	Good	Very Good	Very Good
Mathematics	Attainment	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good	Good
	Progress	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good	Good
Science	Attainment	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good	Good
	Progress	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
Other subjects (Art, Music, PE)	Attainment	Very Good	Good	Good	Good
	Progress	Very Good	Good	Good	Good
Learning Skills		Very Good	Good	Good	Good

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Islamic Education	- Students' achievement in Islamic education is good. Internal assessments show that students in Phases 2, 3, and 4 make good progress. This progress is fully reflected in lessons and in their recent work, where over time the majority of students make better than expected progress. - Internal assessment data indicates that students' attainment in Phase 2 is very good, while in Phases 3 and 4 it is good. This does not match what is seen in lessons and students' work, where the majority of students in Phases 2, 3, and 4 demonstrate attainment above curriculum expectations. There is no external assessment data available for this subject. - In Phase 2, students can recite prescribed Surahs from the Holy Qur'an, understand the vocabulary of the Noble Hadeeth, and infer their values. They give indications from the Holy Qur'an about fasting for Muslims in the Holy Month of Ramadan. In Phase 3, students demonstrate an understanding of Islamic values, concepts and principles. They can interpret the prophetic guidance in the Noble Hadeeth and discuss moderation in Islam and the importance of family to society. They understand the areas of justice in Islam. In Phase 4, students can analyse health care methodology and the approach to building the family in Islam. They support their answers with evidence from the Holy Qur'an and Sunnah. Only a minority of students recite the Holy Qur'an using age-appropriate Tajweed rules. Students demonstrate their good knowledge and skills in applying Islamic etiquettes, morals and values through the kindness they show to one another and respect given to adults across the school. - Overall, different groups of students, including boys and girls, make similar rates of progress. Lower-attaining students make slower rates of progress than their peers.	
	Areas of Strength	Areas for Improvement



	- Students' knowledge of the essential concepts and principles from the Noble Hadeeth at an age-appropriate level in Phases 2 and 3. - Students' skills in applying the Islamic etiquettes, morals and values such as empathy, mercy, and kindness to peers and respecting adults across the school.	Students' ability to recite the Holy Qur'an using age-appropriate Tajweed rules in Phase 4.
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Arabic

- Students' achievement in Arabic as a first language (AFL) and in Arabic as a second language (ASL) is good overall. In AFL, internal data indicates that a large majority of students in Phase 2 and a majority in Phases 3 and 4 make better than expected progress. In ASL, a large majority of students in Phase 2, and a majority of students in Phase 3 make better than expected progress. This is not fully reflected in the lessons and students' work seen, where the majority of students make better than expected progress over time in AFL and ASL.
- Internal assessment data indicates attainment in AFL is very good in Phases 2, 3, and 4, and is very good in Phase 2 and good in Phase 3 for ASL. This is not fully evidenced in lessons and students' work. In AFL, the majority of students attain above curriculum standards across Phases 2, 3, and 4. In ASL, the majority of students attain above curriculum standards in Phase 2, and most of the students in Phase 3 attain levels in line with curriculum standards. In AFL, students from Year 4 to 12 have taken part in TALA assessments, and their attainment was above the curriculum expectations. In ASL, there is no external assessment data for this subject.
- In AFL, in Phase 2, the majority of students can read prose and poetry texts and apply new words in sentences. They engage in discussions about story characters in standard Arabic. A minority of students cannot write age-appropriate texts that express their point of view on an issue or topic. In ASL, in Phase 2, the majority of students listen attentively and understand instructions. They use new vocabulary to form extended sentences explaining daily routines. As they progress to Phase 3, students begin to express their opinion when describing their favourite sports and their home. In AFL, in Phases 3 and 4, the majority of students can interpret the symbolic elements and the semantic meanings in poems. They analyse and write responses to literary texts and contribute to comparative discussions. A minority of students are not able to write a research report on a topic, developing the idea with evidence and examples. In ASL, in Phase 3, the majority of students use basic Arabic phrases to explain the Internet's advantages and disadvantages and compare the weather in two countries. In both phases, only a minority of students can write extended texts beyond a familiar context.
- Overall, in AFL, the majority of different groups, including boys, girls and Emiratis make better than expected progress. Lower-attaining students are not sufficiently challenged to maximise their progress. In ASL, there is a significant difference in the rates of progress of the different groups of students, and, in both phases, beginners and new joiners are not making expected progress.



	Areas of Strength	Areas for Improvement
	- Students' reading comprehension and analytical skills, in AFL, in Phases 2, 3 and 4. - Students' attentive listening and confidence in speaking and engaging in communication tasks, in ASL, in Phases 2 and 3.	- Students' writing skills, in AFL in Phases 2, 3 and 4. - Students' writing, using a breadth of vocabulary, developing the idea with evidence and examples and extended writing structure in unfamiliar contexts, in ASL, in Phases 2 and 3.
Social Studies	- Students' achievement in social studies is good overall. Internal assessments indicate good progress in Phases 2 and 3. This progress is evidenced in lessons and recent work, where the majority of students make better than expected progress over time. - Internal assessment data indicates that a large majority of students in Phases 2 and 3 attain above curriculum expectations. This does not match with what is seen in lessons, where the majority of students in Phases 2 and 3 attain above curriculum expectations. There is no external assessment data for this subject. - In Phase 2, students can explain some components of UAE heritage such as national occasions, costumes, and traditions. Students identify different jobs and careers and recognise their importance for society. They identify famous landmarks in the UAE and evaluate the role of tourism in the UAE's development. Students analyse the role of the founding fathers of the UAE in building the union. In Phase 3, students demonstrate their knowledge of the biographies of the Emirates' leaders and their roles in building the union. They analyse H.H. Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan's (RIP) vision for developing the UAE's foreign relations. Students explain the geographical and cultural aspects of the Maya civilisation and identify factors effecting population growth in the Arab world. A minority of students cannot compare different cultures and civilisations. - Overall, the majority of different groups of students, including boys, girls and Emiratis, make better than expected progress. Sometimes, lower-attaining students make less progress than their peers.	
	Areas of Strength	Areas for Improvement



	- Students' understanding of the cultural and historical changes in UAE over time that affect contemporary society in Phase 2. - Students' knowledge of the founding fathers of the UAE and its history in Phases 2 and 3.	Students' ability to compare between different cultures and civilisations in Phases 2 and 3.
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English	- Students' achievement in English is very good overall. This is also observed in lessons and in their recent work where a large majority of students in Phases 1, 3 and 4 make better than expected progress, although in Phase 2, the majority of students make better than expected progress. Students in Phase 2 achieved better in the current year than their long-term trend over time. - In lessons and in their work a large majority of students attain above curriculum standards in Phases 1, 3 and 4 and in Phase 2, the majority attain above curriculum standards. Internal assessment data shows that the large majority of students consistently attain above curriculum standards, although students in Year 13 typically do less well. Benchmarking data is strong in Phase 2 and mixed in Phase 3. In external examinations, the large majority exceeded curriculum standards in the International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE); in AS level the large majority of students obtained the minimum expected grade, and for the small number of A-level students, the large majority reached the required curriculum standard. - In Phase 1, a large majority of children demonstrate strong communication and language skills, and initiate conversations with peers and staff. They have a very good understanding of phonics, letters and sounds and apply this knowledge to sounding out unfamiliar words. Children form legible words and short sentences with phonetical spelling. In Phases 3 and 4, students' reading and writing skills develop at an increasingly rapid rate. A focus on fostering an enjoyment of reading and further developing skills, such as inference and analysis, has been successful across the school. Students' progress in relation to their learning objectives and curriculum standards is not as rapid in Phase 2. Students craft different styles of writing with care and precision. Students understand form and use an ambitious array of linguistic and literary techniques for effect. Students' extended written work is impressive. The small number of students who study English language for A-level examinations have strong oracy and literacy skills. They are involved in guided and independent learning through coursework and research. Students become fluent readers who can use pace and intonation when reading aloud. They can deconstruct a range of different texts and respond with maturity to concepts and ideas. Effective interventions ensure that older students consistently improve their English language and presentation skills. - Phase 2 students make less progress in class than is seen in other phases. Boys and girls progress at a similar pace with students with SEN and G&T students making mostly very good progress.	
	Areas of Strength	Areas for Improvement



	• Children's strong communication skills and language development of phonics and writing skills in Phase 1. • Students' reading and writing skills across the school, particularly extended written work.	• Students' progress in relation to their learning objectives and curriculum standards in Phase 2. • Older students' speaking and presentation skills in Phase 4.
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Mathematics

- Students' achievement in mathematics is very good across Phases 1, 2, and 3 and good in Phase 4. In lessons and recent work, a large majority of students in Phases 1, 2, and 3 make better than expected progress; the majority of students in Phase 4 make better than expected progress over time.
- Internal assessment data indicates very good attainment in Phases 2 and 3 and weak attainment in Phase 4. There is no Phase 1 internal assessment data. In lessons and in students' work the large majority of students attain above curriculum standards in Phases 1, 2, and 3, and the majority across Phase 4. GL external progress test results in Phase 2 are very good and outstanding in Phase 3. Currently there is no benchmark data available for Phase 1. Results in IGCSE and at A level in 2024 were good, although Year 12 AS level results were weak.
- The majority of students across Phases 1, 2, and 3 demonstrate very good progress, with good progress evident in Phase 4. In Phase 1, children can subtract single-digit numbers, such as $5 - 2 = 3$, with a few not yet able to explain subtraction strategies or justify their answers unprompted, highlighting the need for further development of critical reasoning skills. In Phase 2, students can identify and interpret key components of a bar chart. Some students cannot reliably evaluate or interpret data trends without adult intervention. In Phase 3, students can apply trigonometric concepts to real-life scenarios, such as calculating heights, distances, or angles in 3-dimensional contexts. A minority of students require support in handling challenging multi-step trigonometry problems. In Phase 4, most students accurately apply the concept of radians to calculate arc lengths. Some students require additional support to calculate arc lengths in more complex real-world problem-solving tasks. Overall, children and students in all phases work well together on mathematical tasks, sharing their learning with their peers.
- Overall, the large majority of all groups of children and students in Phases 1, 2, and 3, and the majority in Phase 4, make better than expected progress. Higher-attaining students are not always sufficiently challenged, particularly in data analysis tasks, to maximise their progress.

Areas of Strength

Areas for Improvement



	- Students' understanding of space and shape, measurement, geometry, and trigonometry in Phases 2 and 3. - Students' collaborative learning in mathematics through group tasks and paired work across the school.	- Children's subtraction strategies and the development of critical reasoning skills in Phase 1. - Students' application of complex mathematical concepts in Phase 4 to better develop real-world problem-solving skills.
Science	- Students' achievement in science is very good overall. Internal assessment and benchmarking trends over the last three years indicate students' very good achievement. This mirrors what is seen in lessons and students' work where a large majority of children in Phase 1 and students in Phases 2, 3 and 4, make better than expected progress over time. - Internal data indicates that attainment is at least very good in Phases 1, 2, and 3 and is good in Phase 4. This is largely reflected in lessons and students' work, where a large majority of children and students across all phases attain above curriculum standards. Attainment in external examinations in Phase 4 is good, except for AS results, which are weak in all 3 sciences. - In Phase 1, children learn to observe changes in their environment, including the growth of plants, melting ice and mixing paints. They gain an early introduction to technology by using robots and virtual reality headsets. In Phase 2, students in Year 4 can understand how to assemble the components of an electric circuit. Year 5 students use scientific language to predict the outcomes of dissolving solids in water. In Phase 3, Year 10 students experiment with food dye to understand the transport of liquids within plant stems. In Year 12, A-level students show maturity and skill in their laboratory lessons. In chemistry they successfully complete investigations involving heat transfer in chemical reactions and in biology they use titrations to understand the role of acids in living things. Scientific critical thinking skills are not well developed across the school. - A large majority of boys, girls, SEN and G&T students all make better than expected progress, across all phases, in science.	
	Areas of Strength	Areas for Improvement



	- Children and students' knowledge and understanding of general science concepts across the school. - Students' practical and laboratory skills, particularly in Phases 3 and 4.	- Students' attainment in AS level examinations in Phase 4. - Students' capacity to think critically across all phases.
Other subjects	- Students' achievement in other subjects is good overall. In Phase 1, a large majority of children's attainment and progress are very good. In lessons and recent work, the majority of students make good progress in Phases 2, 3, and 4 and attain above curriculum expectations. - External data for Years 11, 12 and 13 indicates that students' attainment in IGCSE, AS and A level is very good in accountancy and art and design. Attainment is good in business, computer science and economics and weak in psychology. In food and nutrition attainment was good at IGCSE. - In Phases 2 and 3, physical education (PE) the majority of students typically make good progress in strength, balance and co-ordination. Progress is very good in Phase 1. Children and students learn to jump, hop, tackle, throw and ball handling skills and to dribble with a stick. In Phase 2, in computer studies younger students can use an application to make a forest background. In Phase 3, in computer studies students identify types of optical storage devices. In Phase 2 and 3 in music, students can create their own melody and learn to play syncopated rhythm patterns. In Phase 2 in art, students explore techniques to create depth and dimension in landscapes. In Phase 3, in art, they learn to create their own art using different artistic styles. Students have yet to benefit from more opportunities to develop their skills in creating extended pieces of artwork in class in both phases. In Phase 3, students in French successfully classify modes of transport. In Phase 3 and 4, students build key skills and knowledge in a range of other subjects such as accounting, sociology, psychology, economics, business studies and food and nutrition. - The different student groups in other subjects make similar rates of progress from their starting points, including those with SEN. There are no significant differences in the rates of progress between boys and girls.	
	Areas of Strength	Areas for Improvement



	- Children and students' participation in physical education and their progress in building strengths, balance and coordination across all phases. - The range of skills acquired during computer studies in Phases 1, 2 and 3. - Students' progress in the development of key skills and knowledge in a range of other subjects in Phases 3 and 4.	- Students' skills in developing extended artwork in Phases 2 and 3. - Consistency in attainment and progress across all non-core subjects in Phases 2, 3 and 4.
Learning Skills	- Students learning skills are good overall and very good in Phase 1. Students take responsibility for their own learning and display consistent levels of engagement in class. They are aware of their strengths and weaknesses and work purposefully to improve their skills. - Students in all phases interact well with their peers and teachers. Students work effectively in pairs and small groups although they do not collaborate effectively in larger groups, particularly in the MoE subjects in Phase 3. - Children in Phase 1, make clear connections between areas of learning and relate their learning to real-world experiences. When learning about changes in states of matter, they make connections to chocolate melting in the sun and the requirement of refrigeration. Older students' connections between learning and other subjects within the curriculum are less evident. - Students can find things out for themselves and use digital technologies to support their learning, including through research. Critical thinking and problem-solving skills are not yet consistently developed across phases. In some lessons, such as social studies in Phase 3, students show limited independence in using critical thinking or problem-solving skills. Students' innovation skills are underdeveloped across the school.	
	Areas of Strength	Areas for Improvement



	- Children's and students' responsibility for learning and engagement across all phases. - Children's ability to make connections between areas of learning and relate this to real world experiences in Phase 1.	- Students' collaboration, critical thinking and problem-solving skills, especially in Phase 3. - Students' innovation skills across the school.
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PERFORMANCE STANDARD 2:

STUDENTS' PERSONAL AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND THEIR INNOVATION SKILLS

Students' personal and social development and their innovation skills are very good overall.

Indicators:	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4
Personal development	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good

- Students' personal and social development is very good overall across all phases. Students' behaviour in lessons and around the school is very good. Students demonstrate, mature and responsible attitudes. Bullying incidents are very rare and when reported are promptly dealt with through effective procedures.
- Students' relationships are mutually respectful and considerate across the school. Students are supportive of each other, and many take on responsibilities to support fellow students. Students support each other during whole class and group activities, though not as positively in Phase 3 as the other phases.
- Students show good knowledge and understanding of safe and healthy living and typically make healthy food choices. Students participate enthusiastically in healthy exercise and activities in PE, and in the additional activities offered in school.
- Students' attendance at 94.6% is good, and the school's drive to improve punctuality at the start of the day is having a significant impact.



Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Good	Good	Good	Good
- Students demonstrate a clear understanding of Islamic values and how these influence life in the UAE. The school's Islamic Student Council has been active in promoting cultural activities and raising awareness around the school. The school hosts an annual inter-school Holy Qur'an competition and school events, such as My First Fast and Islamic poster competitions. - UAE culture and heritage are celebrated through assemblies and in National Day and Flag Day celebrations. Students participate in the H.H. Sheikhha Fatima bint Mubarak Award which is presented to the winning female student each year. - Students are knowledgeable and respectful of the traditions and heritage of the UAE, and this is increasingly being embedded in the curriculum. Students have a less well-developed understanding of other world cultures.				
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
- Students participate willingly in activities that have a positive impact on the school and wider community. Students in Phase 4 complete a Passport to Success, a logbook that records their hours of community service in and beyond school. Older students participate in Send a Buddy, a scheme where they partner and support a student with SEN in the school. - Students show a very positive work ethic. They organise peer mentoring lessons, where students with a particular understanding or skill teach other students during their own time. Students initiate and run projects such as the Model United Nations, organised by the Student Council and open to schools across the UAE. Opportunities to strengthen students' skills in enterprise and entrepreneurship are underdeveloped. There are insufficient opportunities for students to demonstrate innovation in the curriculum, yet in other areas of the school students can innovate. - Students care for the school and look for ways to improve its environment. Students have organised a debating event to raise awareness of sustainability and environmental concerns. Members of the Environment Club have worked with a local hotel to plant mangroves in the coastal area and to improve the garden areas of the school.				
Areas of Strength:				



- Students' very positive work ethic, responsible attitudes and very good behaviour in all phases.
- Students' awareness of sustainability and care for the school environment in all phases.

Areas for Improvement:

- Students' understanding and appreciation of other world cultures in all phases.
- Students' skills in enterprise and entrepreneurship across the school.

PERFORMANCE STANDARD 3: TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT

The quality of teaching and assessment is good overall.

Indicators:	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4
Teaching for effective learning	Very Good	Good	Good	Good

- Teaching for effective learning is good overall and is stronger in Phase 1 than in the other phases. All teachers plan lessons carefully, making the best use of time and resources, including technology. They implement strategies to enhance the learning experience and adapt methods to cater to the diverse needs of every student. Activities regularly encourage collaborative and independent learning, with time often given for students to reflect on learning. Group work is not always successful for all students and is better in Phase 1.
- In science and mathematics, enthusiastic teaching and skilful questioning promotes high levels of students' engagement. Teachers of English are successful in accelerating children's language skills, starting in Phase 1 and progressing across the school. Positive learning environments exist throughout the school. In MoE subjects, teachers engage students in dialogue and discussions to support their critical thinking skills with mixed success.
- All teachers follow school procedures to ensure the 'You Do' section of the lesson offers a range of tasks to match students' current levels of attainment and their learning biases. They check students' progress during lessons, yet many do not effectively adjust students' learning experiences in response to their assessment.



- In the better lessons, teachers integrate opportunities to develop students' critical thinking and problem-solving into learning. They are skilled in their questioning of students, probing to check that they have understood new concepts and encouraging them to think deeply and solve problems.

Assessment	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
• Internal assessment processes are coherent and consistent. They are linked well to the school's curriculum and provide comprehensive information for planning and review. The management system enables leaders to analyse assessment data and be confident about its reliability. The school uses a comprehensive range of external assessments including yearly progress tests in English, mathematics and science in Phases 2 and 3. TALA is used to measure attainment in Arabic and CAT4 provides a measure of students' potential. PASS is used to assess attitudes. Results are used to provide a detailed multi-dimensional picture of individuals and groups of students. • Assessment information is analysed and used effectively to identify curriculum gaps and gaps in students' knowledge and skills, and to monitor their individual progress. Assessment data is combined to form individual student assessment profiles, and these are available to all teachers. These profiles are used to influence teaching and its impact on learning and the curriculum. Regular meetings are held to review progress and to ensure that students' needs are met. • Teachers have a good knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of individual students. A recently introduced school marking and feedback policy is having a positive impact on the quality of feedback provided to students. When used well, it provides clear, targeted, and supportive guidance to students. This is not yet consistently applied across the school.				
Areas of Strength:				
• Teachers' well-planned lessons that contain clear objectives, creating a positive learning environment that promotes students' independent learning across the school. • The school's very effective assessment processes which influence teaching and its impact on learning in all phases.				
Areas for Improvement:				
• The development of group work with sufficient opportunities for students to develop their critical thinking and problem-solving skills across subjects and phases.				



- The full implementation of the recently introduced marking and feedback policy so that all students receive targeted and supportive guidance in all phases.

PERFORMANCE STANDARD 4: CURRICULUM

The quality of the curriculum is very good overall.

Indicators:	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4
Curriculum design and implementation	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
- The school successfully delivers the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), National Curriculum for England (NCfE) and formal IGCSE and A-level examinations. The MoE subjects follow the MoE curriculum and standards. - The curriculum is broad, balanced and age-appropriate, and it is relevant and effective in developing students' knowledge and skills. It builds well on students' previous achievements in almost all key subjects. - The range of curricular options is wide and provides older students with choices that develop their interests and skills as well as activities that encourage their talents, interests, and aspirations. In Phase 1, the use of cross-curricular links is highly effective in enhancing children's learning. This is not the case in the other phases. In Islamic education, valuable cross curricular links are made with other subjects such as science. These cross-curricular links are less well established in Arabic and other subjects. - The curriculum for each phase is reviewed annually and the subsequent delivery plan, implemented throughout the school, is shared with parents.				
Curriculum adaptation	Very Good	Good	Good	Good
The school effectively modifies the curriculum to meet the needs of almost all student groups, including students with SEN and G&T, while achieving notable success in Phase 1, with an English as an additional language programme that enhances communication and vocabulary				



skills. Further refinement is required to fully challenge higher-attaining students across all phases, ensuring a curriculum that inspires and meets the aspirations of all learners.

- The curriculum is engaging and supports students' motivation through opportunities such as science, technology, engineering, art, mathematics (STEAM) based learning in Phases 1 and 2, with a variety of extra-curricular activities and community links. Innovation, enterprise, and creativity are inconsistently integrated into regular lessons, highlighting the need to refine the curriculum to embed more consistent and meaningful activities for innovation and enterprise across all phases.
- The curriculum effectively supports students' understanding and appreciation of Emirati culture and UAE society, although teachers inconsistently include these links across subjects. The incorporation of diverse and inspiring activities will further enhance students' cultural understanding and engagement.

Areas of Strength:

- The broad, balanced, age-appropriate curriculum and extra-curricular activities that are relevant and effective in developing students' knowledge, skills and understanding across the school.
- The wide range of curricular options that develop older students' skills, talents, interests, and aspirations and the highly effective use of cross-curricular links that enhance children's learning in Phase 1.

Areas for Improvement:

- The implementation of meaningful cross-curricular links to enhance students' transfer of learning between different subjects in Phases 2, 3 and 4.
- The enhancement of the curriculum by integrating a diverse range of engaging and inspiring activities, including innovation and enterprise, tailored to meet the interests and aspirations of all students across the school



PERFORMANCE STANDARD 5: THE PROTECTION, CARE, GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT OF STUDENTS

The protection, care, guidance and support of students are very good overall.

Indicators:	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection /safeguarding	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
- The school provides very good protection, care, guidance, and support for all students. Safeguarding procedures are rigorous and robust, with parents, staff, and students fully informed about the appropriate steps to ensure students' safety, including effective measures to prevent cyber-bullying. - The school conducts comprehensive inspections of its facilities to maintain a very safe, hygienic and secure environment. Well-organised transport arrangements ensure students' safety during travel. High-quality record-keeping ensures that students' health-related information is regularly shared with teaching staff, contributing to the students' wellbeing. The premises are secure, with facilities designed to meet the learning needs of all students, including those with SEN. Maintenance is regular with records kept. - The school actively promotes healthy lifestyles through assemblies and parental guidance, encouraging students to make informed food choices and adopt healthy eating habits. The school has started working to establish regular monitoring and referral processes for students with weight concerns, involving collaboration with parents, dieticians, and the PE department. A more systematic approach to monitoring health concerns, including weight, would enhance the school's overall efforts to support students' wellbeing.				
Care and support	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
The school ensures very good care and support, fostering strong relationships between staff and students. Students understand the consequences of their behaviour and teachers demonstrate a secure understanding of their needs.				



- Effective systems are in place for regularly tracking students' attendance. The school is working to strengthen its approach to improving punctuality at the start of the day across all groups of students.
- Specialist staff efficiently identify SEN and G&T students. Appropriate modifications to the curriculum are made to meet the needs of the large majority of students. SEN and G&T students are well-supported in lessons.
- The school is successful in providing suitable support for SEN and G&T students and is increasingly allowing students to make the best rates of progress that they can achieve.
- Older students benefit from a comprehensive career guidance programme that effectively supports them in making informed choices about their future pathways. All students have access to adults who focus on their wellbeing and can provide good levels of emotional and personal support.

Areas of Strength:

- The rigorous safeguarding measures, effectively protecting students across the school from all forms of abuse, including online risks.
- The robust systems to identify students promptly and accurately with SEN and those who are G&T in all phases.

Areas for Improvement:

- The regular monitoring and referral processes for students with weight concerns, involving parents, dieticians, and the PE department.
- Attendance and punctuality across all groups of students.

PERFORMANCE STANDARD 6: LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The quality of leadership and management is very good overall.

Indicators:

The effectiveness of leadership

Very Good



- The school's vision was reviewed by all stakeholders and refined to enhance its relevance. From the principal down, the leadership of the school both shares and lives this vision. All senior leaders are highly committed to the UAE priorities which are reflected in the school's planning. The school is inclusive with a focus on all students' specific needs, including SEN and G&T students.
- All leaders demonstrate open communication and a collegiate approach. They have a strong understanding of the curriculum and a growing appreciation of best practice in teaching, learning and assessment. Collectively, they show strong capacity to innovate, problem-solve and overcome barriers. Effective use of data to identify students' needs and to adjust the curriculum are good examples of how leaders are moving the school forward and promoting students' learning and personal development. The consistency of teaching in Phases 2, 3 and 4 and raising students' progress are concerns that leadership rightly continues to grapple with.

Self-evaluation and improvement planning

Very Good

- A comprehensive self-evaluation process involving a 360-degree workshop with parents, students, governors, and staff considered all sources of data, giving the school a clear picture of its own strengths and weaknesses. Key priorities are informed by the self-evaluation and are translated into specific and measurable goals in the school's improvement plan. All recommendations from the last review have been implemented with significant improvements demonstrated in students' achievement, assessment, curriculum, and students' social responsibility. The quality of teaching is well monitored. Benchmarking data, PISA and TIMSS international testing, IGCSE and A-level results have all improved, although AS-level results were low.

Partnerships with parents and the community

Very Good

- The school is successful in engaging parents actively in their children's education. Initiatives such as the Friends of Westminster and open house encourage parents come to the classrooms and work with the students. Teachers and section leaders effectively keep parents informed through e-mail and social media groups, and senior leaders regularly inform parents of events, activities, and opportunities, not least through the eagerly awaited comprehensive weekly newsletter. Parents receive frequent detailed reports on their child's academic and social development.
- Parents work alongside students with local and international charity drives. Many local initiatives with other schools, both GEMS and non-GEMS, are used to develop teachers'



skills as well as provide students with opportunities for competitions and collaboration. These local links are strong and effective. The school has few links at the national or international level. The school regularly uses specialist local support services to respond to students' specific needs.

Governance

Very Good

- The Local Advisory Board (LAB) has representation from parents, GEMS and other local schools' principals. They are a highly effective group that works closely with the school's leadership and actively monitors students' achievements and social development in many ways, including classroom visits. The LAB canvasses views and opinions from parents, analyses surveys and data, and receives regular updates from the principal. Their detailed knowledge, and the experience they have of school leadership means that they hold the principal and her senior leadership team accountable yet still manage to play the role of critical friend.

Management, staffing, facilities and resources

Very Good

- All systems and procedures work smoothly, considering the constraints placed on the school by its facilities and congested location. The adjustment of the school's start and end times has made a significant difference to students' punctuality. The school has sufficient teachers and assistants to deliver the curriculum. All staff are provided with exceptionally high levels of training which impacts positively on students' outcomes. Learning environments are stimulating and efficiently used, such as the heavy use made of the Foundation Stage (FS) outdoor area and the science laboratories. The premises are well maintained and are fit for purpose, although some class sizes make rooms feel a little cramped. The school is well-resourced including sufficient technology and specialist areas, although the art facilities remain insufficient. The schools' adoption of eBooks has reduced the weight of students' bags.

Areas of Strength:

- The school's effective educational leadership, starting with the principal and her senior leadership team, and supported by the school's governance.
- The relationships and communication with parents and their active engagement in the education of their children.



Areas for Improvement:

- The raising of students' progress across the school.
- The consistency of teaching in Phases 2, 3 and 4.

SPEA ADDITIONAL FOCUS AREAS

Provision for Arabic Language

- The school teaches AFL and ASL. It employs 29 Arabic teachers across the school: 13 teachers for AFL and 15 teachers for ASL. Learning Arabic starts in FS with 2 dedicated teachers. The teacher to student ratio is: 1:101.
- The school has 2 libraries: a Primary and Secondary library. Combined, they have 1100 fiction and 1000 non-fiction Arabic titles.
- The school promotes reading by enrolling all students from Year 2 and above in the Kutubee online platform. Students are assigned a reading book regularly that matches their reading level. Students read and share their learning in book reviews and with their parents.
- The school celebrates International Arabic Day each December with special activities. Students participate yearly in Arabic Language week where they meet writers and authors, participate in competitions and calligraphy sessions. The school participates in competitions in other schools such as poem recitals and in the Arabic Reading Challenge and arranges for students to visit Sharjah bookfair.

The school's use of external benchmarking data

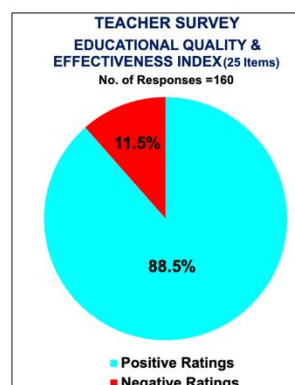
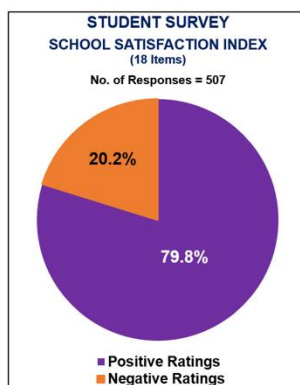
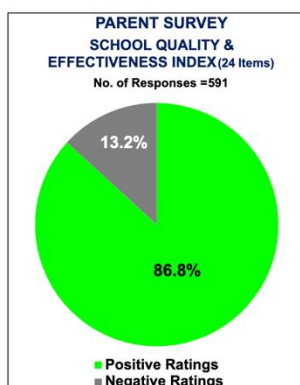
- The proportion of students taking international tests and examinations meets all SPEA requirements. The school uses CAT4 for new students and all students in Years 2, 4, 6, 8, and 10. GL assessments are used from Year 2 to 10 by all students. NGRT is carried out in Year 2 to 6. PASS is taken by all students in Phases 2 and 3. All students take PIRLS in Year 5. PISA and TIMSS are taken by some students. All Arab students take the TALA assessments.
- Students' preparation for these tests includes the provision of past benchmark questions for practice. Workshops are run for parents to inform them about the international tests and benchmarking.
- Communication of international test results to students is carried out individually where appropriate. Students are given detailed information on the results to improve their performance.
- International test results are communicated to parents and parent workshops inform and explain the results.

Provision for KG



- The school has 214 children in the FS. There is 1 FS1 and 7 FS2 classes. Each class has an assigned teacher and teaching assistant. The teacher ratio is 1:27 across the whole of FS.
- The indoor provision has vibrantly decorated, intimate classrooms with a wide range of learning resources to promote independent learning. Free-flow provision relating to all subjects are within the corridors. Imaginative play, sensory centres and reading corners are throughout FS. An indoor hall is used for PE.
- There are 2 shaded outdoor classrooms. These are equipped with a wide range of learning resources, including sensory centres, learning dens and role play areas. There is 1 shaded outdoor play area with climbing apparatus and slides. All classes are timetabled and supervised with teachers and classroom assistants in the outdoor area.
- There are highly effective induction arrangements when children start FS. Parents are invited to an induction meeting upon enrolment, and the Reception Baseline assessment is completed to assess children's development and establish their starting points. Parents are regularly updated on their child's progress through learning journeys, verbal discussions, report cards, and termly parental meetings. When transitioning from FS2 to Year 1, children attend settling-in sessions with their new teacher. In the final term of FS2, the EYFS Profile is completed and shared with both teachers and parents.

VIEWS OF STAKEHOLDERS





STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS & NEXT STEPS

- Improve the effectiveness of teaching in Phases 2, 3, and 4 by:
 - enabling and encouraging teachers to be creative, innovative, and dynamic in the classroom.
 - establishing a shared understanding of what success criteria would represent meeting lesson objectives and what needs to be seen to establish that students have achieved above curriculum standards and expectations.
 - ensuring when teachers collect assessment for learning (AfL) information from students in class that this data is actively used to adapt all students' learning experiences.
 - fully implementing the recently introduced marking and feedback policy so that all students receive targeted and supportive guidance.
- Improve students' progress, particularly in lessons in MOE subjects by:
 - using effective means of checking students' knowledge, skills and understanding towards the start of the lesson.
 - using effective means of checking students' knowledge, skills and understanding towards the end of the lesson.
 - ensuring all students are provided with opportunities to demonstrate progress beyond that which is expected through challenging tasks and extension material at all levels.
- Improve students' learning skills in Phases 2, 3, and 4 by:
 - ensuring, in all lessons, students have opportunities to show their abilities to demonstrate meaningful connections to other areas of learning and to real-world situations.
 - providing opportunities in all lessons for critical thinking tasks, at all levels.
 - giving to students, wherever possible, opportunities to work collaboratively and demonstrate problem-solving, innovation, enquiry, and research skills.
- Improve the school's overall effectiveness by:
 - converting many of the current very good judgements into outstanding.
 - ensuring that all relevant teachers and leaders fully understand the UAE School Inspection Framework descriptors for very good and outstanding in the performance standards and indicators for which they have responsibility.



In addition to considering the full content of this report and identifying actions required to bring about improvement, the school should build the strategic recommendations into its improvement planning process.

In consultation with the assigned School Improvement Advisor, the school should send its revised improvement plan, including specific actions, timescales, and success measures, to SPEA within two months of the publication of this report. Four months later, the school should submit a detailed report on progress to SPEA.

SPEA's next school review will validate the progress report and include a review of further progress made by the school in implementing the recommendations from this SPR report.

If you have a concern or wish to comment on any aspect of this report, please contact SPEA on quality.assurance@spea.shj.ae within three weeks of receiving this report.