School Performance Review

REPORT | **(SPR)**

The City School International Private School
3 to 6 February 2025

Overall
Effectiveness
Rating:
GOOD

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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 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.

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3rd to 6th February 2025

School		
	School ID	419
	School location	Al Azra, Sharjah
	Establishment date	16 August 2021
	Language of instruction	English
	School Curriculum	National Curriculum for England (NCfE)
	Accreditation body	-
	Examination Board	N/A
	External Assessments International and Curriculum Benchmark Assessments	Granada Learning Assessments (GL) Cognitive Abilities Test (CAT4) Progress Tests (PT), New Group Reading Test (NGRT) Pupil Attitudes to Self and School (PASS) Renaissance: Situation Task Action Result (STAR) Arabic Benchmark Tests (ABT) Test of Arabic Language Arts (TALA) Mubakkir assessment Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS)
	Fee Range	AED 14,000 to AED 19,000
Staff	Principal	Christine Woods
	Chair of board of governors	Osama Hatem
	Total number of teachers	40
	Total number of teaching assistants	9
	Turnover rate	9%
Students	Teacher: student ratio	1:12
	Total number of students	472
	Total number of students per cycle/phase	Phase 1: 77 Phase 2: 337 Phase 3: 58 Phase 4: 0

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Pre-FS: number and gender	Boys: 11	Girls: 6
Phase 1 (FS): number and gender	Boys: 35	Girls: 25
Phase 2: number and gender	Boys: 194	Girls: 143
Phase 3: number and gender	Boys: 31	Girls: 27
Phase 4 : number and gender	Boys: 0	Girls: 0
Total number of Emirati students	2	
Pre-FS: Emirati number and gender	Boys: 1	Girls:1
Phase 1: Emirati number and gender	Boys: 0	Girls: 0
Phase 2: Emirati number and gender	Boys: 0	Girls: 0
Phase 3: Emirati number and gender	Boys: 0	Girls: 0
Phase 4: Emirati number and gender	Boys: 0	Girls: 0
Nationality groups (largest first)	1. Pakistani	
	2. Egyptian	
Total number of students with special educational needs	24	

PROGRESS JOURNEY

Previous Review: 2023-24	Current Review:
ACCEPTABLE	GOOD

SUMMARY OF REVIEW FINDINGS

These findings draw from our team of 5 reviewers 124 lesson observations, 70 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 an improvement since the previous review when the overall effectiveness grade was acceptable. Leaders set a clear strategic direction for the school which is clearly embedded in self-evaluation and improvement planning. This has led to improvements in teaching and learning and students' progress across almost all subjects. Students personal and social development continues to be good. The safeguarding of students is good. The school's governance and partnerships with parents are highly effective. The overall learning environments are designed well to promote learning.

KEY AREAS OF STRENGTH:
- Students' progress across almost all subjects.
- Students' positive relations and attitudes to learning.
- Students' appreciation of UAE culture and traditions.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding.
- The school's governance and partnerships with parents.

KEY AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT:
- Students' attainment in international benchmarking examinations.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment to reach the next level.
- Middle leaders' accountability for improving standards.
- The capacity of governors and senior leaders to raise the school's performance.

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PERFORMANCE STANDARD 1: STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENT				
Students' achievement is good overall.				
Indicators:	**Phase 1**	**Phase 2**	**Phase 3**	**Phase 4**

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

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Islamic Education	• Students' achievement in Islamic education is good across the school. Lesson observations and students' work show that the majority of students make better than expected progress over time across Phases 2 and 3. This matches the school's judgment that progress is good across the school. • There are no externally benchmarked assessments in Islamic education. Internal assessment data indicates acceptable attainment across the school. In lessons and students' work, most students attain in line with curriculum expectations. • In Phase 2, students develop a secure knowledge and understanding of Islamic etiquette when eating food and using transportation. Students develop knowledge and understanding of the virtues and the rules of fasting. Students understand the importance of prayers offered when travelling. Students' knowledge and understanding is less developed concerning the impact of fasting on faith and social bonds. Students are less able in memorising the travel prayers. In Phase 3, students develop knowledge and understanding of the meaning of tolerance and the importance of dealing flexibly with others. Students understand the meaning of Majlis in Islam and the proper etiquette and manners to observe a Majlis. Students' ability to connect tolerance with relevant verses of the Holy Qur'an and the Noble Hadeeth is less developed. • The majority of groups of students make similar rates of progress.

Areas of Strength	**Areas for Improvement**
• Students' knowledge and understanding of Islamic etiquette in Phase 2. • Students' knowledge and understanding of what tolerance means to Islamic values in Phase 3.	• Students' knowledge and understanding of the impact of fasting on faith and social bonds in Phase 2. • Students' ability to link Islamic topics to verses of the Holy Qur'an and the Noble Hadeeth in Phase 3.

Arabic	
	• Students' achievement in Arabic as a First Language (AFL) and Arabic as a Second Language (ASL) is good overall. The school's internal data shows good progress in Phases 2 and 3. This matches with what is seen in lessons and in students' work, where the majority of AFL students in Phases 2 and 3 make better than expected progress and the majority of ASL children in Phase 1 and students in Phases 2 and 3 make better than expected progress. • The school's internal data shows that attainment in AFL and ASL is acceptable across the school. This matches what is seen in lessons and in students' work, which shows that most students attain in line with curriculum standards. The school's external data shows that attainment in AFL is good in Phase 2, very good in Phase 3, and acceptable across the school in ASL. • In Phase 2, students of AFL develop their skills in using new vocabulary when writing in full sentences. Students can use what they have newly learnt to read aloud individual sentences. Students' fluency in reading texts is less well developed. Phase 1 children learning ASL develop basic skills in sounding letters and pronouncing simple words. In Phase 2, students of ASL can identify the main elements of a story. They can use simple grammar accurately. Their skills in reading texts are less well developed. In Phase 3, students can analyse the main elements of a story. Students can read and write simple sentences and apply new vocabulary. Students' skills in reading texts fluently and their ability to write in paragraphs are less developed, Overall, most groups make better than expected progress.

Areas of Strength	Areas for Improvement
• Students' skills in reading and writing sentences in AFL in Phase 2. • Students' ability to identify the main elements of a story in Phases 2 and 3.	• Students' ability to read expressively in AFL in Phases 2 and 3. • Students' skills in writing paragraphs and their application of grammar conventions in Phase 3.

Social Studies	• Students' achievement in social studies is good overall. It is good in Phase 2 and 3. In lessons and in their work, the majority of students make better than expected progress over time. This aligns with the school's internal assessment data which indicates good achievement overall.
	• The school's internal assessment data shows that students' attainment is acceptable overall. This does not match with what is seen in lessons and in students' work which shows that the majority of students attain above curriculum expectations. There is no external data for social studies.
	• In Phase 2, students know the key inventions of the past and how they are linked to their modern counterparts. They know about past and present inventions and how these have made an impact on society. They know that technology has made inventions more durable and environmentally efficient. In Phase 3, students know the importance of healthy habits and can define healthy eating. They can link them to sleep patterns, regular exercise and eating a healthy balanced diet. They know that the UAE has implemented initiatives to promote healthy living. They lack the confidence to present their ideas and to write extensively about their learning. In Year 8, students know about the terms: empire, civilisation, parliament and peasantry. They know the historical context of these terms and can make comparisons. They know about the Bedouin communities in the UAE. They are less confident in their knowledge of the economy of the Bedouins.
	• Overall, both boys and girls make similar progress. Higher attaining students are not sufficiently challenged to accelerate their progress.

Areas of Strength	Areas for Improvement
• Students' knowledge about the impact of inventions on societies in Phase 2. • Students' knowledge of healthy eating in Phase 3.	• Student's ability to present ideas on healthy living in Phase 3. • Students' knowledge of the Bedouin economy in Phase 3.

English	- Students' achievement in English is good overall. The school's internal assessment data shows that students make very good progress in Phase 1 and good progress in Phases 2 and 3. This does not match what is seen in lessons and their work where the majority of children in Phase 1 and students in Phases 2 and 3 make better than expected progress over time. - The schools' internal assessment data for attainment is good for Phase 1 and acceptable for Phases 2 and 3. This does not entirely match with what is seen in lessons and their work, where the majority of children in Phase 1 and students in Phase 3 attain above curriculum standards and most students in Phase 2 attain in line. Students' performance in GL Progress Tests is weak in Phases 2 and 3. There is no external data for Phase 1 - In Phase 1, children rapidly acquire communication and pre-reading skills. Children build the essential phonological awareness to code and decode and understand written text. In Year 2, students expand their basic phonics to include knowledge of suffixes and irregular reading patterns. In Phase 2, their verbal communication skills develop, enabling them to engage confidently in discussions. Their skills in inference and prediction when reading increase at a slower pace. In Phase 2, students develop their writing through keeping fictional diaries and writing short stories. A minority of students in Phase 2 cannot apply grammar conventions, spelling and punctuation correctly in their writing. In Phase 3, students can articulate their ideas clearly, justify their opinions with evidence, and develop the skills to write in different genres. They write persuasive texts such as in creating their own holiday brochures. Students exhibit critical thinking skills, including the ability to infer, predict, and paraphrase. Some students find it difficult to construct and organise their written responses independently. - Overall, most groups of students make better than expected progress.

Areas of Strength	Areas for Improvement
- Children's' phonological awareness in Phase 1. - Students' reading skills in Phase 3.	- Students' higher order reading skills in Phase 2. - Students' independent writing skills in Phase 3.

Mathematics	- Students' achievement in mathematics is good overall. In lessons and their work, the majority of children in Phase 1 and students in Phases 2 and 3 make better than expected progress over time. - The school's internal assessment data indicates good attainment in Phase 1. This aligns with what is seen in lessons and children's work. Internal assessment data for Phases 2 and 3 shows weak attainment, which does not reflect what is seen in lessons and students' work, where most students attain levels in line with curriculum standards. External data from CAT4 and Progress Tests shows weak attainment in Phases 2 and 3. TIMSS results for grade 4 are low against benchmarking. - In Phase 1, children are proficient in using numbers to quantify and make patterns. In FS1, they can recognise and compare quantities and know expressions such as 'more' and 'less'. In FS2, children can count to 10 and beyond. In Phases 2 and 3, students develop understanding of the mathematical concepts of shape and space. In Year 1, students can add two-digit numbers to one-digit or two-digit numbers using a number line. In Year 6, students can solve simple equations with missing numbers using algebraic expressions. In Phase 2, students struggle with mental arithmetic. In Phase 3, students can recognise patterns, determine the rule for the pattern and use it to extend the sequence. Some students in Year 7 find it difficult to explain their reasoning clearly in solving algebraic problems. - Overall, most student groups make similar rates of progress.

Areas of Strength	**Areas for Improvement**
- Students' proficiency in number patterns and counting in Phase 1. - Students' understanding of mathematical concepts in Phase 2 and 3.	- Students' mental arithmetic in Phase 2. - Students' ability to explain their reasoning when solving problems using algebra in Phase 3.

Science	- Students' achievement in science is good overall. In lessons and their work, the majority of children in Phase 1 and students in Phases 2 and 3 make better than expected progress over time. This aligns with the school's assessment data for Phases 2 and 3, though not in Phase 1, where school data indicates that a large majority of children make better than expected progress. - In lessons and their work, the majority of children in Phase 1 attain above curriculum standards and most students attain in line with curriculum standards in Phases 2 and 3. The attainment of students in Progress Tests is weak in Phases 2 and 3. TIMSS results for Grade 4 show as intermediate against benchmarking. - Children and students demonstrate relevant knowledge in physical, life, and earth sciences, making connections between scientific concepts and real-life applications, including those relevant to the UAE. In Phase 1, children learn about dental hygiene and methods to maintain dental health. They create a healthy food plate and design a lunchbox with nutritious foods. In Phase 1, students in Year 3 can investigate different materials, selecting those that best resist water and heat while providing strength for a roof. In Year 4, students can identify components of a simple electric circuit, design a manual for an electric toy, and develop concepts for a green transport system and a future dream city. In Year 5, students can form shadows of given objects, record observations by varying the light source's position. They explore the formation of day and night using a globe and flashlight, analysing data to understand how shadow length changes with light position. In Phase 3, students learn about corrosion and the reaction of metals with oxygen and can explore how the size of a solid affects the rate of reaction. Children and students across all phases exhibit strong skills in observation, hypothesis formulation, prediction, data analysis, and drawing conclusions. Their scientific thinking, and investigation, skills are less well developed. Students' abilities in Phases 2 and 3 to carry out research independently using technology are limited. - Overall, student groups make similar rates of progress with girls progressing slightly better than boys.

Areas of Strength	Areas for Improvement
- Children's and students' knowledge of physical, life and earth sciences across all phases. - Students' skill of drawing, observation and making real life connections across the school.	- Students' development of scientific thinking and investigation across all phases. - Students' skills of independent research using technologies in Phases 2 and 3.

Other subjects	• Students' achievement in other subjects is good overall. It is good in physical education (PE), computing and humanities. It is acceptable in French and music. In lessons and in their work, the majority of children and students make better than expected progress over time across the phases. • Internal assessment data indicates that most children and students attain below curriculum standards. This does not match with what is seen in lessons and their work where the majority of children in Phase 1 and students in Phases 2 and 3 attain above curriculum expectations in other subjects. There is no external data for other subjects. • In PE, children and students take an active part and enjoy their lessons. In Phase 1, children know about hands and whole-body posture when running forward. They know how to use their core strength and correct body posture to leap and jump up high. They can crawl like a bear when going through a tunnel, leap like a kangaroo and jump cones like a cheetah and describe their experiences. In Phase 2, students know about basic dribbling and passing techniques in football. They know how to create space and can apply this when in a game situation. They cannot play defensively and use attacking strategies. In Phase 3 students can play more defensively. In Phases 2 and 3 computing students can use block-based programming language when sequencing and selecting. They know how to input a block-based programme environment. They can link this to a code application for fitness tracking. In humanities, children in Phase 1 know what a map is and can make their own maps of their classroom and their school. They cannot understand simple symbols that are used in maps to show their scale. In Phase 3, students can speak simple sentences in French. They know greetings, days of the week and the months of the year. They know how to tell the time in French and use the 24-hour clock. They struggle to maintain short conversations in French and often revert to speaking in English to explain themselves. In music, children and students sing songs in assembly and know how to use musical instruments. They do not routinely practice singing harmonies in songs or use a range of instruments. • Overall, both boys and girls make similar rates of progress.

	Areas of Strength	Areas for Improvement
	• Children and students' performance in PE across the school. • Students' computing skills in Phases 2 and 3.	• Students' fluency in French and their ability to maintain conversations in Phase 3. • Children and students' development of different harmonies used in songs in all phases.
Learning Skills	• Children and students have good learning skills, show enthusiasm for learning and willingly apply themselves to their tasks. In most lessons, students maintain interest and focus, particularly in upper Phase 2 and Phase 3. In a few classes in lower Phase 2, students are occasionally less focused and attentive. • Students in Phase 3, are aware of their areas for improvement and take increasing responsibility for their learning. When given the opportunity to collaborate, students work well in groups and communicate their learning clearly. In a minority of lessons, the opportunities for extended discussions with teachers and peers about their learning are too limited. The opportunities for such interactions are more frequent in Phase 1, where children relish the opportunity to share their experiences and identify their next steps in learning. • Students frequently make clear connections between their learning and UAE society and culture. They also effectively link their learning to real-world contexts. • Critical thinking and problem-solving skills are most evident in mathematics and science in Phase 3. The use of learning technologies to enhance research skills is emerging across the school. Students' innovation and enterprise skills remain an area to be developed further.	
	Areas of Strength	Areas for Improvement
	• Children's and students' engagement in learning across all phases. • Children's extended discussions about their learning in Phase 1.	• Students' use of technology across all phases. • Students' innovation and enterprise skills across all phases.

PERFORMANCE STANDARD 2:
STUDENTS' PERSONAL AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND THEIR INNOVATION SKILLS

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

Indicators:	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4
Personal development	Good	Good	Good	N/A

- Children and students' personal and social development is good across all phases. They typically have positive and responsible attitudes to learning. The majority are self-reliant and respond well to constructive feedback. The behaviour of children and students is good. They are self-disciplined and respond well to authority. Bullying is extremely rare. Children and students exercise self-control and uphold school rules in and outside classrooms, though there are occasional slips in lower Phase 2.
- Children's and students' relationships with their peers are friendly and respectful. Students are sensitive to the needs and differences of others, including those with special educational needs (SEN). In Phase 1, children learn to share resources fairly, take turns, and be kind to one another.
- Children and students demonstrate positive attitudes towards healthy eating and show an understanding of safe and healthy living. They usually make wise choices about their own health and safety. They frequently participate in activities that promote physical fitness. The school organises a daily morning breakfast for students to encourage punctuality.
- Attendance is good at 94%. Almost all students arrive at school punctually.

Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Good	Good	Good	N/A

- Children and students demonstrate a clear understanding of how Islamic values influence contemporary UAE society. They show this in their participation in the school's celebratory events and competitions. Such activities include community Iftars and celebrations of the Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) birthday.

- Children and students are respectful of the heritage and culture that underpin and influence contemporary life in the UAE. This is evident from the school corridor displays and events such as Flag Day, National Day celebrations, and Martyr's Day that students participate in. In reception, the environment is split into an 'English' half and 'Arabic' half to celebrate both.
- Students have a clear understanding and appreciation of their own and other world cultures. The school currently has global links with schools in Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Malaysia, and Thailand. The school also celebrates other world cultures with International Day events.

Social responsibility and innovation skills	Good	Good	Good	N/A

- Children and students understand their responsibilities to the life of the school. They have a well-developed sense of civic responsibility. Their contribution to the wider community includes volunteer activities. The school prefectural council has delivered an assembly on digital safety to the whole school resulting in follow-on group discussions to further raise students' awareness.
- Children and students enjoy their work. They are happy to be involved in activities although they rarely initiate them. They make valid and helpful contributions to projects although innovation and enterprise do not feature strongly. The students in English classes have designed the school logo and participated in designing robotics.
- Children and students are keenly aware of environmental issues. They participate in projects to improve their school environment. All classrooms have a brush and dustpan which they use to make sure they leave their classrooms clean and tidy. They participate in school schemes that promote sustainability, banning plastic water bottles and ensuring all rooms in the school have a recycling paper tray. They have a garden area for each class in which they grow their own plants and vegetables. They have visited sustainability schools in Sharjah to share their experiences, although they rarely take part in sustainability projects outside the school.

Areas of Strength:

- Children's and students' adoption of safe and healthy lifestyles across the school.
- Children's and students' appreciation and respect for the heritage and culture of the UAE across all phases.

Areas for Improvement:

- Children's and students' innovation and enterprise skills and the ability to initiate activities across the school.
- Students' involvement in projects outside of the school aimed at developing sustainability throughout 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	Good	Good	Good	N/A

- The quality of teaching for effective learning and assessment is good overall. The quality of teaching in Phase 1 and Phase 3 is consistently good. In Phase 1, most teachers understand how children learn best. They provide opportunities for children to engage in active play, and independent learning. In Phase 3, teachers more regularly develop independent and critical thinking skills.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge which ensures accurate and confident teaching. They interact very well with students and use questioning to check their understanding. They do not always follow up questions to engage students in discussions to extend and reflect on their learning. Lesson plenaries do not allow teachers to measure rigorously the progress of all students and the achievement of learning objectives.
- Lesson planning is standardised and linked well to curriculum content and expectations. Differentiation of learning for students, based on a detailed analysis of assessment outcomes, is evident in planning and observed during lessons. The learning needs of gifted and talented (G&T) students are not consistently considered in lessons.
- Most teachers plan to develop students' skills in critical thinking, problem solving and using technology for research and independent learning. Implementation is more successful in mathematics and science in Phase 3. Planning to develop students' innovation skills in lessons is less frequent.

Assessment	Good	Good	Good	N/A

- The school's internal assessment processes are well-structured and aligned with the National Curriculum for England (NCfE) ensuring clear measures of student progress. The use of a range of external benchmarking tests; CAT4, GL Progress tests, STAR reading, and TALA

for Arabic, are utilised to support a broad understanding of student performance. The school analyses its internal and external data in depth, including analysis and comparisons across grades and subjects. This use of data, together with well-structured internal processes, ensures that staff are well informed of students' achievements.

- Teachers have a good knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of their students and provide some challenge and support in most lessons. Specific tasks are not matched precisely to the needs of individuals. Consequently, personalised support and challenge are not fully developed especially to accelerate the progress students make in external assessments.
- The verbal feedback teachers give in class is effective in helping students address misconceptions and make continuous progress. Written feedback on how to improve and setting out next steps in learning has improved since the previous review. This is not yet consistently embedded across all subjects. Additionally, students have limited opportunities to self-assess their own work or to undertake peer-assessment.

Areas of Strength:

- Teachers' subject knowledge and the positive learning environment created, particularly in Phase 1.
- The school's well-structured internal assessment processes.

Areas for Improvement:

- Teachers' use of follow-up questioning to develop deeper discussions and students' critical thinking skills in all phases.
- Teachers' effective use of plenaries and reflection time to reinforce and extend learning in all phases.

The quality of the curriculum is good overall.				
Indicators:	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4
Curriculum design and implementation	Good	Good	Good	N/A

- The curriculum is well-designed and effectively implemented across all phases. It has a clear rationale, is broad, and is carefully structured to prepare students for future learning. In Phase 1, the school successfully delivers the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) curriculum. This supports children's communication and language, physical development and personal social and emotional development. It closely aligns with the requirements of NCfE, and the Ministry of Education (MoE).
- The curriculum is designed to build on students' previous achievements, measured against learning intentions in all key subjects. Regular termly reviews help update the curriculum, while periodic vertical-progression meetings ensure necessary modifications based on children's and students' achievement. Recent updates include STAR reading assessments, science laboratory lessons for Phases 2 and 3, and weekly wellbeing themes. CAT4 results show cognitive development is an area needing improvement across all phases.
- Cross-curricular and UAE links are thoughtfully planned across all subjects and phases. The quality of their implementation varies. In the better science lessons, students make meaningful connections with geography and mathematics. In mathematics, students make connections with musical rhythm while they learn patterns. Planned initiatives for research week, the science fair, and integrated art and design projects encourage students to apply their learning across disciplines. Students also participate in a range of extra-curricular activities during and after school to pursue their talents.

Curriculum adaptation	Good	Good	Good	N/A

- The school effectively modifies the curriculum to meet the needs of most learners. All lesson plans incorporate differentiated activities to support those of varying abilities. Students with SEN receive additional support through individual educational plans, (IEPS) learning support assistants and parent support packs to ensure progress from their starting points. G&T

students are challenged with extension tasks in the classroom and offered further support through the advanced learning plan (ALP) and homework tasks.
- The curriculum is functional and designed to engage most learners through relevant learning experiences. Opportunities for innovation, creativity, and social contribution are limited across some curricular areas. Teachers integrate critical thinking, inquiry-based learning, and real-world connections to foster curiosity and exploration. Students actively participate in community involvement initiatives, such as the Wear a Seatbelt campaign, creating handmade recycled paper bags, and organising a school clean-up drive. Children in the EYFS lead literacy and language lessons to their peers in Malaysia and Saudi Arabia. Year 8 students use AI tools to design a business logo while exploring themes in marketing. Year 8 students have developed a fitness-tracker app. In Year 6, students create QR codes to promote UAE culture, and in Year 5, students design and present a code battle game.
- Students take part enthusiastically in school activities to understand UAE values and Emirati culture. These include school assemblies, and recitations of the Holy Qur'an. In addition, National and Flag Day celebrations, and Iftar during the Holy Month of Ramadan demonstrate their respect and appreciation.

Areas of Strength:

- The continuity and progression in the curriculum across all phases.
- The connections with UAE society and Emirati culture that enhance students' learning experiences throughout the school.

Areas for Improvement:

- The opportunities planned and provided for promoting students' innovation and enterprise skills in all phases.
- The widening of the curriculum to foster students' independent learning and develop skills of research and critical thinking in all phases.

PERFORMANCE STANDARD 5: THE PROTECTION, CARE, GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT OF STUDENTS				
The protection, care, guidance and support of students are good overall.				
Indicators:	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection /safeguarding	**Good**	**Good**	**Good**	**N/A**

- The school has a robust safeguarding system, and a comprehensive child protection policy shared with all stakeholders. Teachers, staff and parents receive training on first-level child safety protection procedures and how to address student welfare concerns. Staff guide students through moral and social studies lessons to ensure they know where to seek help if they have any concerns. The school enforces strict anti-bullying and internet safety policies, with internet safety integrated into lessons. A central registry efficiently maintains records of all staff, requiring police clearance certificates before contracts are signed. These measures ensure a safe and secure environment for children and students. The school has 57 CCTV cameras with full time monitoring.
- The school has a comprehensive health and safety policy to promote a safe, clean, and secure environment. The school conducts thorough risk assessments of learning environments, for educational visits and to ensure inclusion. Supervision is effectively provided in hallways, playgrounds, toilets and during school leaving times, with structured procedures for bus and parent pickups. The school maintains a detailed log of visitors and contractors. Fire drills are conducted each term with equipment checked every three months. The buildings are well-maintained, with spacious, well-ventilated classrooms, five SEN-accessible bathrooms and three wheelchair ramps. There is stair-access only to the second floor. A full-time nurse and a part-time doctor provide first aid and health checkups.
- The school systematically promotes hygiene, healthy eating, and well-being through workshops for students, staff, and parents. The school together with the nurse, promotes health events such as breast cancer awareness day, fitness week, and yoga for parents. The obesity rate at 16% is high across the school. Currently action by the school is confined to advising parents on health and meal plans and is not sufficiently robust.

Care and support	Good	Good	Good	N/A

- The relationships between staff and students are positive throughout the school. The school's policy which includes specific procedures for managing each level of behaviour is effective. An award certificate system operates to reward students' good behaviour. There is occasionally some low-level disruption to lessons in lower Phase 2.
- The school effectively encourages student attendance and punctuality. An attendance and punctuality policy is in place, with follow-up for students who are absent. Robust procedures are now in place to manage punctuality with a significant reduction in lateness as a result.
- The school follows the UK SEN identification policy with a three-wave approach. Wave 3 students are identified during admission and supported by external specialists, Wave 2 students are identified within the first two weeks of joining the school and supported in class. Wave 1 students are identified through teacher referrals. G&T students are identified using CAT 4 assessments or observations of their skills and talents. The inclusion team observes these students to confirm their identification is correct.
- The school supports Wave 3 for students with severe needs with specialist reports whilst Wave 2 students are identified early and benefit from pull-out sessions. Wave 1 students receive in-classroom support. The school works closely with parents, offering training on how to support their children and involves them in producing the IEPs. The inclusion provision comprises a classroom, a SEN specialist, a social worker, pastoral assistants, and shadow teachers. G&T students are encouraged to participate in competitions such as the British School Middle East (BSME) events. An additional learning plan (ALP) outlines their targets and support though the use of ALPs in lessons is inconsistent.
- The school provides effective personal and academic guidance through a well-structured transition process. Children moving from FS2 to Year 1 visit new classrooms and teachers. For Year 6 to Year 7, transition graduation ceremonies celebrate the move to secondary school. Workshops for parents help them understand IGCSEs and A-Level pathways to universities. During careers week, the school invites professionals from various fields to share career insights with students. They offer students guidance in reaching their aspirations for the future.

Areas of Strength:

- The school's effective safeguarding procedures.
- The positive staff and students' relationships in all phases.

Areas for Improvement:
• The school's procedures for tackling the high level of obesity rates amongst students which require more comprehensive interventions. • The behaviour management to promote students' self-discipline and adherence to school routines consistently across Phase 2.

PERFORMANCE STANDARD 6: LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The quality of leadership and management is good overall.

Indicators:

The effectiveness of leadership	Good

- Leadership and management are good overall. Leaders at all levels are led by a focused principal who sets the vision and direction of the school. The school was established in 2021 and is part member of the British Schools in the Middle East organisation. Since the last review there have been changes in middle leadership. An evaluation of staff utilisation resulted in twenty-six new staff appointments. These developments have resulted in the formulation of a clear mission to be a community school where children and students learn and celebrate their individuality. Senior leaders are committed to the UAE's National and Emirate priorities. The school is inclusive and welcomes seven nationalities. Professional relationships are effective and morale throughout the school is positive. Staff turnover rate is at 9%, reflecting a slight increase from the last review.

- Almost all leaders demonstrate a secure understanding of the EYFS, NCfE and MoE curricula The school has adopted up to date pedagogical activities involving personalised learning and a skills-based curriculum. Leaders know the UAE School Inspection Framework and acknowledge that it underpins further improvement. The school understands the importance of using reliable data to raise standards. The school has benefitted from intensive school improvement and quality assurance support from Schools Improvement and Quality Assurance (SIQI) in Pakistan; alongside training from SPEA. The impact of this is reflected in the improvements in progress in almost all subjects across the phases. Leaders know the importance of developing teaching best practice. A comprehensive programme of continuous professional development and financial support for individuals to achieve their teacher licence are supporting newly appointed teachers in building their expertise. The teacher programme is transformative and personalised.

Self-evaluation and improvement planning	Good

- The school has acknowledged some failings in its previous self-evaluation and that it was also over-ambitious. It has adopted a different approach for its successor, based on surveys of key stakeholders and identifying the school's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. The lack of input by external stakeholders has been addressed. Governance has become more proactive and accountable through the adoption of realistic key performance indicators. The school now clearly knows its strengths and areas for improvement and has addressed almost all the areas for improvement identified by the previous review. The school has a clear policy for teaching and learning which is resulting in a consistent whole-school approach to lesson planning. Data is now used as the basis for decisions. Its use is still under development with middle leaders. A challenge for the school is that new student arrivals' attainment is two years behind that of their peers. The school knows the journey that it is on to bring positive change and has the capacity required to secure improvements.

Partnerships with parents and the community	Good

- Parents have strong opinions about the school. Through the parent council they put forward their views about their child's education. They actively take part in the school and want the school to raise its profile to become outstanding. They speak positively about the safe environment and how the ethos of the school results in care and nurture for their child. Parents are kept well informed and receive regular reports on their child's academic progress and achievements.They speak positively about the extensive curriculum and the extracurricular activities that support their child's social, physical and emotional development. They feel part of the decision-making process.
- The school has comprehensive partnerships at all levels. At a local level, they are part of the City Schools group with their sister schools and parent school in Dubai for support. They have sustained international partnerships with schools in Saudia Arabia, Oman, Malaysia and Thailand. Through these partnerships they can share lessons online. They work with Sharjah Education Academy with PGDE students coming into the school for practical experience.

Governance	Good

- Governance since the previous review has become more representative. The school works closely with head offices in Dubai and Pakistan. Governors are now more accountable with daily contact and data-based targets for students' attainment and progress. The governing body continues to ensure that the school is compliant with statutory regulations, the

curriculum and health and safety requirements. Governors are driven by their desire to raise the profile of the school and have invested in resources to support teaching. The investment in reading schemes and STAR has seen a significant number of children improving their literacy levels. Each governor now has a specific role in contributing to the school's improvement.

Management, staffing, facilities and resources	Good

- The day-to-day management of the school is effective. Managers have established clear routines which are adhered to by all. The attainment of new students to the school is significantly below expected curriculum standards and as a result they need more time to adjust. Most are unfamiliar with a school environment and the induction procedures are effective in helping them adjust The school is well staffed. Resources throughout the school support positively teaching and learning. The school has accommodation for a planned expansion to years 10 to 12 in classrooms available on the second floor. The school is sufficiently staffed and utilises teaching assistants in Phase 1. The school knows there is still development needed with a few teaching assistants, so that they become more than resource monitors.

Areas of Strength:

- The school's governance and parental partnerships.
- The vision and direction of the school.

Areas for Improvement:

- The continued building of the capacity of governors and senior leaders to raise school performance to the next level.
- The development of teaching assistants to fully discharge their roles and responsibilities.

SPEA ADDITIONAL FOCUS AREAS

Provision for Arabic Language

- The school employs 6 Arabic teachers from years 1 to 9. The teacher-student ratio is 1:79.
- The library has 107 Arabic books, of which 72 are fiction and 35 non-fiction titles.
- The library organises reading sessions for students. Each class has a designated reading corner. Students can borrow books from the library. The MoE provides e-book resources to the school.
- The school has reading competitions. Students' progress in the Arabic language is discussed at meetings with parents.

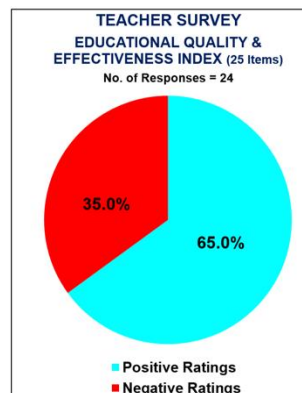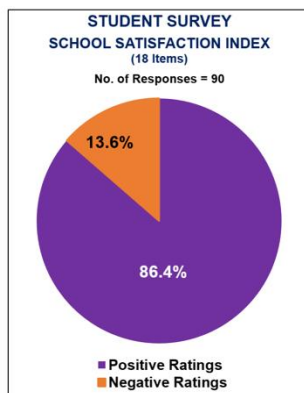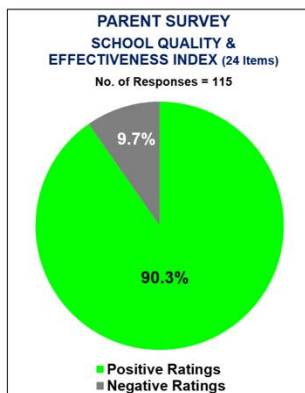### The school's use of external benchmarking data

- The school makes use of Progress Tests in mathematics, English and science. It uses CAT4 and ABT for benchmarking. In years 4 to 9, 43% of students take these tests. From year 2 to year 9, 69% of students take STAR and PASS. From FS2 to Year 3, 8% of children and students take Mubakkir. From years 4 to 9, 9% of students take TALA.
- The school prepares students for the TIMSS using the Celebry platform.
- The school shares the reports with students and carries out gap analysis.
- The results of international tests are reported to parents.

Provision for KG

- For Phase 1 (FS1 and FS2) the school has 4 teachers, 5 teaching assistants, and 6 support staff. The teacher-child ratio is 1:19.
- The indoor learning environment has soft play equipment, a role-play house, and a cosy living area with Majilis-style seating. It has construction toys, small-world toys, reading corners, mathematics and investigation stations, as well as sensory and exploration areas. An auditorium includes an area with staging for performances and ceremonies.
- The outdoor learning environment has a variety of resources, including a sandpit, mud kitchenette, an outdoor investigation area, a small-world area, a play gym, a hopscotch grid, a cycling track, plant beds for gardening, a water play area, an area of astro turf and an arts space.
- The induction process for new children includes a parents' orientation day. This is followed by additional meetings. In the first week, activities are planned to help children settle confidently, with a shorter school day arranged if required. The transition to Year 1 is managed through collaboration between teachers from both phases. The school maintains regular communication with parents using emails and newsletters.

PARENT SURVEY
SCHOOL QUALITY & EFFECTIVENESS INDEX (24 Items)
No. of Responses = 115

- 9.7%
- 90.3%

■ Positive Ratings
■ Negative Ratings

STUDENT SURVEY
SCHOOL SATISFACTION INDEX (18 Items)
No. of Responses = 90

- 13.6%
- 86.4%

■ Positive Ratings
■ Negative Ratings

TEACHER SURVEY
EDUCATIONAL QUALITY & EFFECTIVENESS INDEX (25 Items)
No. of Responses = 24

- 35.0%
- 65.0%

■ Positive Ratings
■ Negative Ratings

STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS & NEXT STEPS

- Improve students' attainment in international benchmarking examinations by:
  - planning opportunities for extended writing.
  - providing systematic opportunities for case study questions.
  - planning practice of online tests and providing practice questions.
  - linking learning to challenging situations.

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by:
  - raising the level of challenge for all students through target setting.
  - developing students' responsibility to lead their own learning.
  - widening students' use of self- and peer-assessment.
  - providing opportunities that develop students' research, innovation and enterprise skills and use of technology to support learning.
  - extending teachers' use of plenaries and reflection time to reinforce and extend learning in all phases.

- Improve middle leaders' capacity to be more accountable to improve standards by:
  - providing external training on barriers to learning for boys.
  - enhancing confidence to evaluate precisely what good and very good lessons look like.
  - building capacity to understand how data raises standards.
  - setting challenging and measurable improvement priorities.

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- Improve the capacity of governors and senior leaders to raise the school's performance to the next level by:
    - planning the schools next steps robustly and accurately.
    - widening the dissemination to the school of very good practice.
    - developing senior leaders' strategic thinking about the steps required to reach the next level in the school's performance.

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.