



هيئة الشارقة للتعليم الخاص
SHARJAH PRIVATE EDUCATION AUTHORITY

School Performance Review (SPR)|Report

American Gulf School
11 - 14 March 2024

**Overall
Effectiveness:
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 | Information | |
|---|---|---|
|  | School ID | 412 |
| | School location | Al Rahmaniya, Sharjah |
| | Establishment date | 2021 |
| | Language of instruction | English |
| | School curriculum | California, Common Core State Standards (CCCSS), International Baccalaureate (IB) |
| | Accreditation body | Cognia |
| | Examination Board | American Curriculum, IB Primary Years Programme (PYP), Middle Years Programme (MYP) |
| | National Agenda Benchmark Tests/ International assessment | TIMSS, MAP, CAT4, ABT, TALA, Mubakkir |
| | Fee range | 33,540 - 65,640 AED |
| |  | Principal |
| Chair of Board of Governors | | Sheikh Majid Al Qasimi |
| Total number of teachers | | 58 |
| Total number of teaching assistants | | 20 |
| Turnover rate | | 62% |
| Main nationality of teachers | | Irish |
|  | Teacher: student ratio | 1:8 |
| | Total number of students | 451 |
| | Total number of students per phase. | Phase 1: 138 Phase 2: 175 Phase 3: 86 Phase 4: 52 |
| | Number of Emirati students | 284 |
| | Number of Emirati students per phase | Phase 1: 90 Phase 2: 114 Phase 3: 52 Phase 4: 28 |
| | Phase 1: number and gender | Boys: 83 Girls: 55 |
| | Phase 2 : number and gender | Boys: 98 Girls: 77 |
| | Phase 3: number and gender | Boys: 50 Girls: 36 |
| | Phase 3: number and gender | Boys: 33 Girls: 19 |
| | Nationality groups | 1. Emirati 2. American |
| Total number of students with special educational needs | 19 | |



PROGRESS JOURNEY

| Previous Review: | Current Review: |
|------------------|-----------------|
| N/A | GOOD |

SUMMARY OF REVIEW FINDINGS

These findings draw from our team of 4 reviewers' 103 lesson observations, 31 of which were carried out jointly with school leaders.

SUMMARY OF THE OVERALL PERFORMANCE OF THE SCHOOL:

The school's overall effectiveness is good. The school was founded in 2021. This is the school's first full review. Students' achievement in subjects is good overall. Their achievement in English and science in Phase 1 is very good. Students' personal and social development are good overall with a very good understanding of Islamic values and Emirati culture. Teaching and learning are good and, in a few lessons, very good. In Phase 1 teaching is very good. Assessment processes are good and form the basis for school improvement. The broad curriculum is mapped well and in line with the Californian Common Core State Standards (CCCSS), blended with the International Baccalaureate (IB). The school currently offers provision to Grade 10 and will be introducing diploma programmes for Grade 11 in the next school year. Protection, care, guidance and support for students are very good. All facilities and resources are of high quality and all safety procedures, including child protection, are fully compliant. An effective special educational needs (SEN) department supports students with special needs and those who are gifted and talented (G&T). Governors and leaders have established comprehensive strategies to move the school forward, which are being successfully implemented.

KEY AREAS OF STRENGTH:

- The strategic plans and school improvement planning to develop the new school.
- The positive impact of the governing body on the school's development.
- The quality of the health and safety, including child protection and safeguarding.
- The quality of teaching and learning in Phase 1.

KEY AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT:

- The attainment of students in Phases 3 and 4 especially in English and mathematics.
- Students' greater involvement in volunteering activities and social contribution.
- Parents' participation and engagement in school life.



MAIN REVIEW REPORT

PERFORMANCE STANDARD 1: STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENT

| Students' achievement is good overall. | | | | | |
|--|------------|-----------|------------|------------|------------|
| 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 | Good | Good |
| | Progress | N/A | Good | Good | Good |
| Social Studies | Attainment | N/A | Good | Good | Good |
| | Progress | N/A | Good | Good | Good |
| English | Attainment | Very Good | Good | Acceptable | Acceptable |
| | Progress | Very Good | Good | Acceptable | Acceptable |
| Mathematics | Attainment | Good | Acceptable | Acceptable | Acceptable |
| | Progress | Good | Good | Good | Good |
| Science | Attainment | Very Good | Good | Good | Good |
| | Progress | Very Good | Good | Good | Good |
| Other subjects (Art, Music, PE) | Attainment | Good | Acceptable | Acceptable | Good |
| | Progress | Good | Acceptable | Acceptable | Good |
| Learning Skills | | Good | Good | Good | Good |



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| Islamic Education | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students' achievement in Islamic Education is good overall. In lessons and in their work, the majority of students make good progress in Grades 1 to 10. This does not match with the school's internal data which shows the large majority of students make very good progress.• Internal assessment data indicates that almost all students in Phases 2, 3 and 4 attain levels above curriculum standards. This is not reflected in lessons or in students' work where, overall, the majority of students in Grades 1 to 10 attain above curriculum standards. There are no external examinations for Islamic Education.• The majority of students make good progress overall. Across all phases and particularly in Phase 2, the majority of students make good progress in memorising the Holy Qur'an verses. In Phase 2, they have strong knowledge of the Islamic pillars, values and manners; for example, they can explain the areas of mercy. Their knowledge of Prophetic guidance is less well developed. In Phase 3, students develop clear understanding of the features of believers, and they can identify the impact of social solidarity in the life of Muslims. They are less confident explaining the accurate meaning of vocabulary in the verses. In Phase 4, students analyse the overall meaning of the Noble Hadeeth in depth. They can infer Prophetic guidance in the Noble Hadeeth.• Overall, the majority of groups of students make better than expected progress and girls typically make better progress than boys. | |
| | Areas of Strength | Areas for Improvement |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students' memorisation of the Holy Qur'an verses across all phases.• Students' ability to analyse the Holy Qur'an verses in Phase 4. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students' knowledge of the Prophetic guidance in Phase 2.• Students' ability to explain the accurate meaning of vocabulary in verses in Phase 3. |



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| Arabic | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Students' achievement in Arabic as a First Language (AFL) and Arabic as a Second Language (ASL) is good overall. In lessons and in their work, the majority of students make good progress in Grades 1 to 10. This matches with the school's internal data which shows the majority of students in both AFL and ASL make good progress.Internal assessment data indicates that almost all students in Phases 2, 3 and 4 attain levels above curriculum standards. This is not reflected in lessons or in students' work where, overall, the majority of students in Grades 1 to 10 attain above curriculum standards. External ABT data for Grades 1 to 10 indicates that the majority of students in both AFL and ASL attain above curriculum standards.The majority of students in AFL and ASL make good progress overall. In AFL, the majority of students in Phase 2 develop clear understanding of stories; they listen well; identify the meaning of the new words; and summarise stories, using their own words. In Phase 3 students develop good listening, speaking and reading comprehension skills. They understand the overall meaning of the text and can extract grammatical rules. In Phase 4 students confidently analyse poetry and infer expressive connotations. Writing skills are less developed across all phases. In ASL, students in Phase 2 can read and write simple words and use them in simple sentences. In Phases 3 and 4 students make good progress in reading comprehension and they can scan text and point out the main details, such as the importance of energy renewal. They can identify the parts of speech in the text. Speaking confidently in Arabic is less well developed in Phases 2 and 3 for ASL students.Overall, the majority of groups of students make better than expected progress. | |
| | Areas of Strength | Areas for Improvement |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Students' confidence in analysing poetry in AFL in Phase 4Students' good progress in reading comprehension in ASL Phases 3 and 4. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Students' writing skills in AFL and ASL across all phases.Students' confidence in speaking Arabic in ASL in Phases 2 and 3. |



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| Social Studies | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students' achievement in social studies is good overall. In lessons and in their work, the majority of students make better than expected progress in Grades 1 to 9. This does not match with the school's internal data which shows the large majority of students make better than expected progress.• Internal assessment data indicates that almost all students in Phases 2, 3 and 4 attain levels above curriculum standards. This is not reflected in lessons or in students' work where, overall, the majority of students in Grades 1 to 9 attain above curriculum standards. There is no external examination data for social studies.• The majority of students make good progress overall. In Phase 2, the majority of students have a clear understanding and appreciation of the UAE leaders and heritage, and they can distinguish between tangible and intangible heritage. In Phase 3 students can analyse the achievements of H.H. Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan (RIP) in enhancing the UAE. Students' deep knowledge of the UAE efforts in protecting the environment is less well developed. In Phase 4 students have good knowledge of the role of women in society and they can compare the role of women before and after the union. They are less confident in analysing the efforts of the UAE in empowering women.• Overall, the majority of students make better than expected progress, and girls make better progress than boys. | |
| | Areas of Strength | Areas for Improvement |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students' understanding and appreciation UAE heritage and leaders across all phases.• Students' understanding of H.H. Sheikh Zayed's bin Sultan Al Nahyan (RIP) achievements in enhancing the UAE in Phase 3. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students' deep knowledge of UAE's efforts in protecting the environment in Phase 3.• Students' ability to analyse in depth the efforts of the UAE in empowering women in Phase 4. |



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| English | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students' achievement in English is good overall. In lessons and in their work, a large majority of Phase 1 children make better than expected progress; the majority of Phase 2 students make better than expected progress; and most students in Phases 3 and 4 make expected progress. In Phases 1 and 2 this matches with internal data but not in Phases 3 and 4 where it is very good overall. Internal assessment data indicates that a large majority of children in Phase 1 and a majority of students in Phase 2 attain levels that are above curriculum standards; a large majority of students in Phase 3 attain levels above curriculum standards; and most students in Phase 4 attain levels that are above curriculum standards. In Phases 1 and 2, this is reflected in lessons and in children's and students' work. In Phases 3 and 4, the work in lessons and in workbooks shows that most students attain in line with curriculum standards which does not support this data. MAP data for the very small 2022-23 cohort is very good overall. In Phases 1 and 2 children and students demonstrate a very good understanding of phonics and the alphabet and use this knowledge to read and write in simple sentences. Across the school, an area of strength is in inquiry-based learning. For example, in Grade 3, students create their own inquiry questions around the theme of travel and explorers, they confidently present these to peers who listen attentively and respond well to the questions asked. In Grade 4, students can analyse a short text on H.H. Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan (RIP) and show a developing understanding of the differences and similarities and key features of autobiographical and biographical writing, including the language in the first and third person. The development of students' high-level text analysis skills in Phases 3 and 4 is inconsistent. In Phase 3 students are able to explain the difference between antonyms and synonyms and provide examples. Phase 4 students are able to list the features of persuasive writing including alliteration, repetition and anecdote. Students' application of these skills in Phases 2 to 4 to demonstrate their understanding of different genre techniques in extended writing is underdeveloped. Overall, most groups make similar rates of progress. Some high attaining students do not consistently make the progress of which they are capable, | |
| | Areas of Strength | Areas for Improvement |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students' progress in phonics, particularly in Phases 1 and 2. Students' inquiry skills across all phases. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students' high-level text analysis skills in Phases 3 and 4. Students' extended writing skills in Phases 2, 3 and 4. |



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| Mathematics | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students' achievement in mathematics is good overall. In lessons and in their work, a majority of students make better than expected progress in all phases. This does not align with the school's internal data which indicates that progress is outstanding in Phase 1 and good in all other phases.• Internal assessment data indicates that attainment is outstanding in Phase 1, very good in Phase 2, acceptable in Phase 3, and weak in Phase 4. This does not align with what was seen in lessons and in children's and students' work where a majority of children in Phase 1 attain above curriculum standards and most students in Phases 2, 3 and 4 attain in line with curriculum standards. External MAP data for 2022-23 for a small number of students indicates that attainment was outstanding in Phase 1, acceptable overall in Phase 2, good in Phase 3 and weak in Phase 4.• In Phase 1 lessons children can use the vocabulary and understand the concepts of capacity and weight and offer suggestions about what in the class is 'heavy'. A minority of children are not able to share their ideas orally. In Phase 2, students can explain data, graphs, and pie charts as they explore numbers. In Phase 3 students' skills in problem-solving are underdeveloped. In Phase 4 students can extend the properties of integer exponents to rational exponents and can solve problems with rational exponents using the properties of exponents. A minority of students are unable to complete these complex topics. Mental mathematics is not well developed across the school.• Overall, most groups of students make similar rates of progress. | |
| | Areas of Strength | Areas for Improvement |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Children's understanding of number concepts and operations in Phase 1.• Students' ability to understand geometric measurement and take information from data on graphs in Phase 2. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students' ability to solve problems, reason and analyse information using mathematical concepts in Phase 3.• Students' skills in the application of mental mathematics across all phases. |



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| Science | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Overall students' achievement in science is good. In lessons and in their work, the majority of children and students make good progress in Phases 2, 3 and 4. In Phase 1 progress is very good overall and it aligns with the school's internal assessment of progress for Phases 2 and 3.• Internal data indicates that attainment is outstanding in Phases 1, 2 and 3. There is no internal data for Phase 4 in science. This does not concur with what was observed in lessons and in students' work where the majority of students attain above curriculum standards. There is no external data for Phase 1. External MAP data for a small cohort of students indicates that attainment is outstanding in Grade 4 and acceptable overall in Grades 5 to 9.• In Phase 1 children explore habitats. They can confidently identify that a jungle is a habitat and can readily name many jungle animals. Children can securely examine hot and cold environments and explain how animals survive in these habitats. In Phase 2 students research the effects of erosion. They understand aspects of the natural process of its effect on the Earth, particularly on how water changes landforms. Some students' use of topic language is narrow. Students' investigative skills as they undertake experiments are underdeveloped in Phase 2. In Phase 3 students competently demonstrated the use of adaptive technologies and its use in assisting persons with disabilities to feed themselves. In Phase 4 biology, students consider how birds adapt to their changing environment and in chemistry reactions to heating up and cooling down are researched, demonstrating students' investigative and experimental skills.• Overall, most groups of students make better than expected progress. | |
| | Areas of Strength | Areas for Improvement |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students' understanding of the use of adaptive and assistive technology in Phase 3.• Students' development of good experimental and scientific investigative skills in Phases 3 and 4. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students' understanding of the scientific terminology to better grasp new concepts in Phase 2.• Students' investigative skills in Phase 2. |



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| Other subjects | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students' achievement in physical education (PE), art, design and music is acceptable overall. In lessons and in their work, the majority of children in Phase 1 and students in Phase 4 make good progress while in Phases 2 and 3 most students make expected progress.• Internal assessment data indicates that the majority of students attain above curriculum expectations. This is not reflected in lessons or in students' work where, overall, most students in Grades 1 to 8 attain in line with curriculum expectations. In Phase 1 other subjects and in Grade 9 business studies, attainment is good. There is no external data for other subjects.• Phase 1 children confidently show their acting skills in recounting the story of 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears'. In PE, in Grade 1, students develop their gross motor skills and spatial awareness as they take part in movements and patterns at different levels. In music lessons, Grade 3 students can identify musical instruments from different cultures and explain the type of sound they would make. Most can also use coding to develop a jumping game using a visual programming website; a few students lack confidence in using the website. Students in Grade 6 make good gains in design skills as they identify the criteria required to test and evaluate the wooden animals they had previously made. In PE they show limited knowledge of different sports. In art lessons, students in Grade 7 show good progress as they create ceramic pots influenced by the designs of a well-known artist. Students in Grade 9 business studies make good progress when debating the proposals of Taylor's Scientific Theory of management.• There is no significant difference in the progress of boys and girls or Emirati and non-Emirati students. Students with SEN are well supported and make good progress from their starting points The G&T students do not always make the progress of which they are capable. | |
| | Areas of Strength | Areas for Improvement |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Children's acting skills in drama in Phase 1.• Students' ability to recognise the importance of testing and evaluating products in Grade 6. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students' ability to use visual programming websites with confidence in Grade 3.• Students' broader knowledge of different sports in Grade 6. |



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| Learning Skills | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Children and students' learning skills are good in all phases. Students demonstrate a good attitude towards their learning. From Phase 1 onwards, they take responsibility and actively engage with the tasks they are following. The majority of students in all phases can use technology independently as a resource in lessons for research and need little guidance from their teachers. They are aware of where they need to improve, such as higher scores in MAP and are keen to achieve their goals.• Students' and teachers' interactions are positive in most classes and students readily ask for support if needed. They work collaboratively with peers in pair and group work across the school, children in Phase 1 use a strategy such as 'tell your friend. Students in Phases 2, 3 and 4 are able to quickly produce ideas and conclusions, communicating well in group tasks, where they often have designated roles. Students lack confidence when they present their findings to the class, across the phases.• Connections across areas of learning are planned into every lesson, though students may not always be offered the chance to discuss them in Phases 2,3 and 4. Consequently, they do not always feel confident in transferring knowledge to different contexts in detail. The skills which they acquire through the IB curriculum, such as thinking, communication and research are transferable across subjects and themes and students readily apply these across their lessons.• Students conduct research often and confidently using their tablets. They are enterprising in being able to find out information for themselves. They benefit from a broad selection of applications which they use effectively to support their learning, such as those to develop coding skills, mathematical skills or reading in English and Arabic. Their skills in using critical thinking and problem solving are developing well in the majority of subjects, such as finding arguments for why people are motivated to work for money in Grade 9 business studies. | |
| | Areas of Strength | Areas for Improvement |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Children and students' responsibility for and good attitude towards their learning across all phases.• Students' use of technology independently as a resource in lessons for research and activities with little guidance from the teacher across all phases. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students' presentation and communication skills when speaking in front of the class in Phases 2, 3 and 4.• Students' ability to make connections between different subjects and relate them to the real world in discussions in Phases 2, 3 and 4. |



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 2 | Phase 3 |
|---|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Personal development | Good | Good | Good | Good |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students' personal and social development is good overall. Throughout the school students display positive attitudes to their learning. They are self-reliant and react well when discussing their work with their teachers. Students' behaviour across the school is good and they follow school rules, such as careful attention in lessons and respect for others at breaktimes. Students confirmed that bullying is rare. Their relationships are friendly and respectful. They are sensitive to the needs of others and keen to help others. Students demonstrate secure understanding of healthy living, and they choose healthy meals. They participate in morning exercises during assemblies and during PE lessons. Students' attendance is good at 95.1%. Students usually arrive on time for lessons. | | | | |
| Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures | Very Good | Very Good | Very Good | Very Good |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students demonstrate a secure appreciation and very good understanding of Islamic values and how these influence life in the UAE. It is shown in assemblies and Holy Qur'an recitation competitions which honour students who memorise the Holy Qur'an. Students are very knowledgeable and respectful of the heritage and culture of the UAE. They are involved in a range of cultural activities such as Flag Day and National Day, and the school has heritage corners and numerous displays of students' works about contemporary and traditional UAE life. Students have clear appreciation and deep understanding of their own and other cultures. They respect their friends from other cultures. In school celebrations, they wear traditional clothes and share their traditional food. | | | | |
| Social responsibility and innovation skills | Acceptable | Acceptable | Acceptable | Acceptable |



- Students contribute to the life of the school community through supporting each other. For example, students in Phases 3 and 4 read to Phase 1 children. They participate in charitable works such as for Gaza. Phase 1 children visit homes for the elderly with gifts which is mutually beneficial. However, opportunities for students to be involved in the local community as volunteers are limited.
- Students have a positive work ethic. They use technology independently and they have creative ideas when developing personal projects.
- Students understand the importance of the environment. They take care of their school. They undertake some recycling projects. Their participation in activities that support sustainability is insufficient.

Areas of Strength:

- Students' appreciation of Islamic values and the UAE heritage.
- Students' adoption of safe and healthy lifestyles.

Areas for Improvement:

- Students' greater social contribution as volunteers in the local community
- Students' participation in environmentally sustainable activities.



PERFORMANCE STANDARD 3: TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT

The quality of teaching and assessment is good overall.

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

- The overall quality of teaching is good. The majority of teaching in Phase 1 is very good, and in Phases 2, 3 and 4 it is good. Most teachers display very good subject knowledge. Teachers' understanding of how students learn best is less well developed in some subjects in Phases 3 and 4.
- The majority of teachers plan well-paced, well-structured lessons that are related to curriculum expectations and that have clear and appropriate objectives. Positive and enjoyable classroom environments are created by the teachers to enhance and support learning. Positive interactions and engagement between students and teachers are evident throughout Phases 1 and 2 in a range of learning contexts, though they are not always positive in Phases 3 and 4. Across the school, teachers make very effective use of resources to engage students. Skilful teachers use open questioning to establish students' levels of knowledge and understanding and to promote their deeper reflection.
- Teachers use a range of helpful strategies to meet the needs of different groups of students. The most effective teachers understand that students, including students with SEN and G&T students, have differing abilities, requirements, strengths, and challenges, and provide suitably tailored lesson content accordingly. In Phases 3 and 4, the range of activities set and level of questioning and challenge, especially for high attaining students, lacks consistency as it relies too heavily on the skills of the teacher.
- Curriculum and lesson planning results in teachers systematically developing students' critical thinking, problem-solving, innovation and independent learning skills in lessons.

| | | | | |
|------------|------|------|------|------|
| Assessment | Good | Good | Good | Good |
|------------|------|------|------|------|

- The overall quality of assessment is good. The clear and coherent internal assessment processes are based on the requirements of the IB curriculum. There are benchmarking assessments at the beginning and end of each unit. This provides reliable data to evaluate students' progress and influence teachers' future planning. The school is exploring trends and patterns, though as a new school there is limited data. Detailed assessment in Phase 1 is through observation-based formative assessments of children's learning and developmental stages.
- Assessment results for MAP growth are analysed in detail for internal use and support actions for improvements in Rasch unit (RIT) growth comparison scores. There is no information on scores or international comparisons yet for TIMSS as the school is awaiting results. The work of MYP students has not yet been assessed externally. CAT4 data is used to identify starting points for each individual student and is used effectively to track their progress against predicted IB levels in Phases 3 and 4.



- Teachers use formative assessment during lessons and modify teaching accordingly, although the information used may not ensure that all groups consistently have a good level of challenge. Most teachers know their students well and are aware of the best ways to support them. They set out the expected outcomes in lessons. These are not always reviewed in plenary assessments towards the end of learning stages in lessons. Teachers' feedback in students' workbooks often does not always include constructive guidance on their next steps and future goals.

Areas of Strength:

- Teachers' purposeful planning with effective use of resources.
- The overall quality of teaching and learning in Phase 1.
- The clear and coherent internal assessment processes.

Areas for Improvement:

- Teachers' consistently positive relationships and the use of teaching approaches to meet the needs of individuals and groups of students, especially in Phases 3 and 4.
- Teachers' feedback in students' workbooks that includes advice on next steps and future goals.
- Teachers' use of assessment data to ensure that all groups have a good level of challenge, specifically high attaining students.



PERFORMANCE STANDARD 4: CURRICULUM

The quality of the curriculum is good overall.

| Indicators: | Phase 1 | Phase 2 | Phase 2 | Phase 3 |
|--------------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Curriculum design and implementation | Good | Good | Good | Good |

- The school's curriculum rationale is based on the CCCSS, incorporating Gold Standards in Phase 1, IB PYP, MYP and is compliant with UAE statutory requirements. It is age-appropriate, broad, balanced, and constructed so that it builds on students' achievement. It meets the needs of most students for the next phase of their education. The curriculum offers choices from Grade 9 which include combinations of biology, chemistry and physics, or music, visual art and design.
- Cross-curricular links are embedded in the planning and implemented through the Phase 1 PYP and the MYP curriculum. A trans-disciplinary approach in Phases 1 and 2, and an inter-disciplinary approach in Phases 2 and 3 support the cross-curricular model.
- Systematic curriculum reviews take place which ensure the academic and personal needs of students are broadly met in the planning for all subjects. The school has not had sufficient time to measure the positive impact of these reviews on students' achievement.

| | | | | |
|-----------------------|------|------|------|------|
| Curriculum adaptation | Good | Good | Good | Good |
|-----------------------|------|------|------|------|

- The school modifies the curriculum effectively to meet the needs of most students. Data driven modifications for SEN and G&T students are integrated into planning, and further adaptations are made during the formation of students' individual education plans (IEP) and advanced learning plans (ALP) to guide the planning of differentiated activities in lessons. The consistency of modifications and delivery of these adaptations in lessons across all subjects and phases is an area for development.
- Opportunities for enterprise, innovation, creativity and social contribution are evident in lesson plans and extra-curricular opportunities and embedded into the curriculum. Examples of enterprise, innovation and creativity are evident in the KG with 'My Classroom Economy', science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics (STEAM) lessons that include robotics and coding, and art lessons where students paint portraits of themselves in the style of Picasso. A range of extra-curricular activities and clubs is offered by the school that includes a design club, drama, art and music; and sporting activities such as badminton and gymnastics. Students take part in a variety of competitions such as robotics and the 'Lego League'.
- The curriculum supports students' knowledge and understanding of Islamic and Emirati culture and UAE society. These are integrated into all aspects of students' life from lesson planning to school assemblies as well as in extra-curricular activities. In KG, there are various



trips that align with subject planning such as the Sharjah Book Fair and the Sharjah Desert Safari, special assemblies on Ramadan, the sheikhs, and the 7 emirates. Mathematics incorporates UAE links, such as measuring the Burj Khalifa.

Areas of Strength:

- The curriculum planning that ensures learning builds on students' personal needs.
- Curriculum support for students' knowledge and understanding of Islamic and Emirati culture and UAE society.

Areas for Improvement:

- The consistency in modification of the curriculum to meet the specific needs of all students, including G&T and particularly in Phases 3 and 4.
- The measurement of the positive impact on students' achievement of curricular reviews and subsequent planning.



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 2 | Phase 3 |
|---|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection /safeguarding | Very Good | Very Good | Very Good | Very Good |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The protection, care, guidance, and support of students are very good. The school has rigorous and highly effective safeguarding procedures to ensure students' welfare and safety. All stakeholders are fully aware of all child protection protocols and students report that they feel very safe. The supervision of students is very effective at all times.• The school conducts thorough and frequent safety checks and holds daily records to ensure the school is safe, clean, and secure. Risk assessments are thorough and mitigating actions are taken to ensure the highest expectations for health and safety are met. The school meets all legal requirements and conducts regular emergency fire evacuation drills ensuring full compliance. The school's premises are very well maintained. All records are comprehensive and securely stored. The school has an exceptionally well-equipped clinic with a qualified nurse and a doctor. The clinic supports all students' health requirements and keeps records in both hard and soft copies. All sections of the school are accessible to those with restricted mobility. The school's premises effectively meet the needs of children, especially in Phase 1.• The school benefits from an excellent canteen that serves a variety of healthy food and drinks. The clinical staff and the wellbeing team ensure that students make healthy lifestyle choices including nutritious food and take regular physical exercise. | | | | |
| Care and support | Good | Good | Good | Good |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The school's purposeful behaviour management and wellbeing policies ensure that all aspects of relationships with the school are good.• The school shares its behaviour policies and expectations, and these are supported by parents. The school has effective protocols to record and track students' attendance and punctuality electronically. Attendance is good.• The school has very good processes for the identification of students with SEN and students who are G&T. The school's inclusion department effectively coordinates specialist staff to support SEN students and G&T students both in and out of lessons.• Most students make expected levels of academic progress though additional support for G&T students in lessons is not common practice across the school.• The careers guidance counsellor offers personalised support, tailored to the individual needs of each student. Through in-class presentations and one-to-one sessions on careers and university choice, students receive good guidance on exploring their interests, identifying their strengths and setting achievable goals. | | | | |



Areas of Strength:

- The identification of students with SEN and those who are G&T.
- The inclusive school that provides a nurturing environment for students with SEN.

Areas for Improvement:

- The raising of students' attendance rates, which are good, to at least very good.
- The targeted support and challenge for students who are G&T in lessons, enabling them to reach their full potential.



PERFORMANCE STANDARD 6: LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The quality of leadership and management is good overall.

Indicators:

The effectiveness of leadership

Good

- With a vision and mission based on UAE priorities, senior leaders, including the newly appointed principal, are working effectively to further develop the school. The specific target over time is to become an IB World School. Leadership is delegated to teams, and all are held to account to ensure that their outcomes are of good quality. The senior leadership team (SLT), including PYP and MYP coordinators, undertake observations of teachers, conduct walkthroughs, and assess unit reflections. Feedback is given based on school improvement plan (SIP) goals for improving the quality of teaching and learning. The school has high expectations for the quality of teaching and learning and there is consistency in lesson format and delivery, though elements of these still require developing in a few lessons.
- The student services department is accountable for overseeing the personal development of students, including provision for SEN students, with a strong commitment to inclusion. The senior and middle leaders have shown that they are successful in improving aspects of the school. They now have IB PYP and Cognia accreditation with plans for MYP, Diploma Programme (DP) and Career-related Programme (CP) recognition to follow. The school is fully compliant with statutory and regulatory requirements.

Self-evaluation and improvement planning

Good

- The process for self-evaluation is comprehensive and detailed. Evidence is from a wide range of sources, including data from all departments and standards based on the UAE School Inspection Framework. Feedback from students, parents and the governing board is also considered for inclusion in the final conclusions. This provides robust evidence for identifying key priorities and target setting for the school's improvement plan. The quality of teaching and the impact on students' achievement are monitored regularly through a systematic programme of evaluation. Outcomes from these are also used well to inform future developments. There is a constant cycle of review and adjustment to ensure successful results, though further analysis needs to be made on linking developments to the impact on standards and students' achievement. With no previous report, the school has appropriately set its priorities based on strategic plans for whole school development.

Partnerships with parents and the community

Acceptable

- Parents are involved in their children's learning but more so in Phase 1 than in other phases. They are kept informed by the school on a regular basis through newsletters and online applications which inform them weekly of plans and forthcoming activities. Parents can communicate with the school through a range of methods and any concerns are dealt with



| | |
|---|------------------|
| <p>effectively. Reporting on students' progress is through parents' and teachers' conferences. There are regular reports on assessment and more detailed reports with next steps, termly. Parents are invited to National Day and Sports Day celebrations and some workshops, though parents have little participation in other school activities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">The school only benefits from a few links with the local and wider community, for example through students' participation in competitions. It has no formal links with other schools either locally or further afield. | |
| Governance | Very Good |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">The effective governing body formed from the owner, parents and members of the community offers the school skills and areas of expertise which contribute very well to the mission and vision of the school. The governing body develops and applies policy and practice to the school to assure that the school works within the educational and operational parameters to benefit the whole school community. Members consistently monitor themselves and the policies and practices in the school. They exert a very positive influence on the school to ensure that staffing is appropriate, resources are ready, and all statutory requirements are met. Senior leaders and staff are held accountable as they work on the plans and policies for the day to day running of the school as set out by the governing body. They report to governors on their actions and are supported to achieve strategic objectives. They benefit from having weekly visits from the owner and a board member on site at all times to liaise between all parties. | |
| Management, staffing, facilities and resources | Good |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">Day-to-day management of the school is good as routines and procedures are known to all students and staff. The school is staffed appropriately, although at 62% teacher turnover is high, it is managed well by the school. Effective professional development is based both on the priorities for the school and individual needs of teachers. The premises and the learning environment are of high quality, including very good facilities for technology and a STEAM room, which are well suited to supporting the curriculum. The school is designed to be accessible to all students and promote their achievements. Investment in resources means that students have a wide range of positive experiences in their learning. | |
| Areas of Strength: | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">The robust evidence for identifying key priorities and target setting for the school's improvement plan.The positive impact of the governing body that has led to the development of the school. | |
| Areas for Improvement: | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">Partnerships with parents so that they become more actively involved in the life of the school.The formal measurement and recording of the positive or negative impact of all developments on school improvement. | |



SPEA ADDITIONAL FOCUS AREAS

Provision for Arabic Language

- The staffing provision for teaching Arabic across the school is 10 (5 Arabic teachers, and 5 support staff) with a teacher to student ratio of 1:63. Teachers of Islamic education and social studies support students in reading and comprehension.
- There are around 232 books dedicated to the Arabic language, divided as follows: 136 fiction books and 98 non-fiction books. Students regularly visit the library to attend library sessions for free reading.
- There are weekly classroom reading sessions and bi-weekly library sessions. Additionally, students use 'I Read Arabic' for AFL and 'I Start Arabic' for ASL,
- An Arabic Language Club is set up after school with 2 main areas of focus: reading stories and writing responses, and creative writing, particularly short stories. Parents are involved in reading workshops to aid students' skills. Students contribute to morning assemblies by reciting poems, singing, and introducing Arab writers. Technology is integrated into lessons using programmes such as Kahoot and Quizzes for reading.

The school's use of external benchmarking data

- A group of 19 students in Grades 4 and 8 were selected by SPEA to take TIMSS in 2023. Results are pending. The school started MAP assessments in the 2022-23 school year, when the large majority of 128 students from Grades 1 to 9 achieved very good in English and science and good in mathematics. MAP data in 2023-24 showed that the majority of students from KG to Grade 10 achieved at a good level in mathematics and very good overall in English and science. Scores for bi-lingual readers in the NGRT are compared with the international average, which is 100. Results for NGRT reading tests in Grades 6 to 10 for 2024 are low. Results for ABT (Arabic), taken by 97% out of 337 students in 2022-23 were acceptable. Results for the school year 2023-24 for ABT indicate progress has been made and are now good. TALA and Mubakkir were taken in 2024 and results are pending. CAT4 is taken by every student on entry in Grade 1 and repeated at Grades 3, 6 and 9 in order to identify baselines and track progress against predicted levels.
- The school has an intense programme of preparing students for MAP assessments. RIT scores are broken down and individual areas for improvement are identified and students have their own targets. The required skills building starts in KG. The IB curriculum develops the skills required for MAP. Teachers are trained on assessing MAP. Subject teams review progress and results, in planning groups. Identified gaps in skills are included in lesson plans. Improvement targets for scores are included in the school improvement plans. Improvement strategies offered for NGRT are incorporated into the school's reading programmes.
- Students receive results from their teachers. The MAP system identifies next steps for students which are included in their individual action plans.



- Parents receive the MAP results in parents' and teachers' conferences and teachers explain the areas for improvement.

Provision for KG

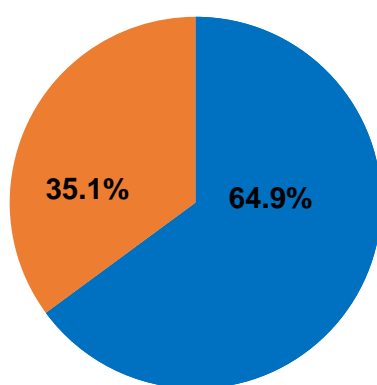
- There is 1 pre-KG class and 1 KG1 and 2 classes that comprise Phase 1. There are 13 class teachers and extra support teachers as English and Arabic reading specialists. There are 138 children which gives a teacher to child ratio of 1:11.
- The facilities for indoor learning are of high quality. Children have the benefit of well-resourced learning centres in the classrooms, which all have their own bathrooms. Other facilities include a well-stocked library, a canteen, and an intervention room. There is a gymnasium with a climbing wall and soft play areas and an oasis for sand and water play.
- The well-resourced, shaded, grassed outdoor facilities include climbing play equipment, slides and sand play and sound play areas for exploration. There are also outdoor toys such as bicycles. Pre-KG children have the benefit of quality resources and play areas as appropriate. Their curiosity as they explore and experiment with sand and water play equipment was evident in lessons.
- Parents visit the school prior to their child starting Phase 1. After a 2-week settling in period at the start of the school year, parents are invited for an orientation session. There they learn more about the school, their children's learning and well-being. Prior to transition to Phase 2, parents are invited to a coffee morning where the different subjects and routines are explained to them. The children visit the section and spend some time there to become familiar with the indoor and outdoor environment. Teachers from Phase 1 meet with Phase 2 teachers 3 times during the year to collaborate on the learning plans for the next stage. Teachers pass on children's' portfolios to Phase 2 teachers.



VIEWS OF PARENTS

Satisfied with the Quality of Education my Child is Receiving at the School

No. of Responses = 77



■ Strongly Agree / Agree
■ Strongly Disagree / Disagree

STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS & NEXT STEPS

- Improve students' attainment, particularly in English and mathematics in Phase 3 and 4 by:
 - providing specific, targeted teacher development on subject knowledge and best practice.
 - building consistent positive teacher and student relationships.
 - ensuring that the curriculum and lessons are well matched to the needs of all students, particularly higher attainers and those with G&T.
 - using assessment data to ensure that all student groups benefit from the right level of challenge.
 - providing engaging and motivating lessons, which have a range of appropriate activities.
 - ensuring feedback both oral and written is constructive and identifies next steps and future goals.
- Improve partnerships with parents by:
 - providing regular opportunities for parents to engage in school activities across the phases.
 - providing workshops on school policies and practices for parents to raise their awareness.
 - engaging parents further in the school self-evaluation and review process and school development planning as valued partners.
 - inviting parents to offer their professional experiences such as giving career talks.
 - building mutually beneficial links with external partners in the community and abroad.



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.