هيئة الشارقة للتعليم الخاص
SHARJAH PRIVATE EDUCATION AUTHORITY

ITQAN Programme

School Performance Review (SPR) Report

AL ITQAN AMERICAN SCHOOL

20 – 23 February 2023

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-level 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-level 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, students' attainment data, school self-evaluation form, school policies and the school improvement plan;
- meeting the Governors, Principal, senior leaders, middle leaders, subject coordinators, teachers, parents, and students;
- reviewing teachers' lesson plans, samples of students' coursework and related information;
- attending school activities such as assemblies, arrivals, departures, and break times; and
- analysing the outcomes of the surveys returned by parents.

SCHOOL INFORMATION

School		
	School ID	151
	School location	Al Azra, Sharjah
	Establishment date	13 August 2018
	Language of instruction	English
	School curriculum	American
	Accreditation body	Cognia
	Examination Board	AP College Board
	National Agenda Benchmark Tests/ International assessment	MAP, IBT, PISA, TIMSS, PIRLS, CAT4
	Fee range	AED 11,445 to 20,265
Staff	Principal	Mrs. Jessica Griffin
	Chair of Board of Governors	Mr. Ali Obaid Ali Al Shamsi
	Total number of teachers	85
	Total number of teaching assistants	3
	Turnover rate	24%
	Main nationality of teachers	Indian
	Teacher: student ratio	1:11
Students	Total number of students	921
	Number of Emirati students	110
	Phase 1: number and gender	Total 68: Boys 31, Girls 37
	Phase 2: number and gender	Total 281: Boys 162, Girls 119
	Phase 3: number and gender	Total 220: Boys 128, Girls 92
	Phase 4: number and gender	Total 433: Boys 185, Girls 167
	Nationality groups	1. Egyptian
		2. Syrian
	Total number of students with special educational needs	10

PROGRESS JOURNEY

Previous Inspection (2018):	Current Review:
ACCEPTABLE	**GOOD**

SUMMARY OF REVIEW FINDINGS

These findings draw from our team of 5 reviewers' 144 lesson observations, 56 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 last inspection in 2018. Students' achievement has improved, except in mathematics and in science in Phase 3 which remain acceptable. Students' personal development remains good overall. Students' understanding of Islamic values and UAE culture, is very good and permeates throughout the school. Teaching and assessment have improved due to a range of professional development opportunities for teachers. Curriculum design and implementation has improved to good. Curriculum modification remains acceptable as enhancement and innovation need strengthening, but links with UAE society are strong. Health and safety, including child protection and safeguarding has improved to very good. Care and support has improved to good, although gifted and talented students and high-attainers do not make as much progress as they are capable of. Leadership has improved to good overall. There is a marked improvement in middle leadership across the school. However, leaders at all levels need to adopt strategies that enable new teachers to embed quickly into the expectations of the school. Governors are now more involved and have had a direct impact on the learning environment through the provision of resources, including technology. Leaders demonstrate good capacity to improve.

KEY AREAS OF STRENGTH:
- Students' improved achievement in most subjects.
- Students' appreciation of Islamic values and their understanding of UAE culture.
- Improved teaching strategies in most subjects and phases.
- The safety, care and guidance for students.
- Increased effectiveness of middle leaders.

KEY AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT:
- Students' achievement, especially in mathematics in Phases 2 and 3 and science in Phase 3.
- Teachers' questioning skills, and their effective use of time to promote critical thinking and challenge consistently.
- Adapting the curriculum to meet the needs of all groups of students.
- Leadership strategies to ensure new staff embed quickly into the expectations of the school.

MAIN REVIEW REPORT

PERFORMANCE STANDARD 1: STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENT

Students' achievement overall is good.

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

Islamic Education	- Students' achievement in Islamic Education is good overall. The school's internal data indicates outstanding progress in Phases 2, 3 and 4. This does not match with that seen in lessons and in students' work, where the majority of students make good progress. - The school's internal data indicates outstanding attainment in Phase 2, 3 and 4. This does not fully match with that seen in lessons and in students' work, which shows the majority of students reach levels of attainment which are above curriculum standards. There is no external data for Islamic Education. - In Phase 2, students can infer the value of tolerance in Prophet's (PBUH) Surah. They can compare the people of hell with people of paradise on the day of resurrection and understand the deeds that lead to entering heaven. In Phase 3, students are able to deduce the role of the Imam in the field of Noble Hadeeth science in codifying and preserving Prophet's Mohammad (PBUH) Surah. In Phase 4, the majority of students are able to infer the principles of Islam in work. They engage in discussions about business arrangements and the five necessities according to the priorities and budgets. The majority of students in Phases 2, 3 and 4 can extract the letters of Tajweed rules in different verses. However, their individual recitation skills using correct Tajweed rules, and their deep understanding of the whole meaning of the verses, is less secure. - The majority of groups of students make above expected progress. A few students with special educational needs make insufficient progress.

Areas of Strength	Areas for Improvement
- Students' understanding of Islamic principles in work in Phase 4. - Students' understanding of the importance of Prophet's Surah (PBUH) in Phases 2 and 3.	- Students' individual recitation skills using correct Tajweed rules in Phases 2, 3 and 4. - Students' deep understanding of the whole meaning of the verses in Phases 2, 3 and 4.

Arabic	• Students' achievement in Arabic as first language (AFL) and Arabic as second language (ASL) is good overall. The school's internal data shows that students make outstanding progress in Phases 2, 3 and 4 in both subjects. This does not match with that seen in lessons and in students' work, where the majority of students make progress which is above curriculum expectations. • The school's internal data shows that attainment is outstanding in Phases 2, 3 and 4. This does not fully match with that seen in lessons and in students' work, which shows the majority of students reach levels of attainment which are above curriculum standards. External IBT data shows that attainment is outstanding in Phases 2, 3 and 4. • The majority of students in Phases 2, 3 and 4 demonstrate good comprehension reading skills and show effective writing and listening skills. In Phase 2, students show progress in tracking events in a story. They demonstrate progress in their speaking and listening skills in conducting a debate, using standard Arabic. The majority of students in ASL Phase 2 can communicate with their teacher, although their fluency using standard Arabic is less well developed. In Phase 3, the majority of students are able to extract types of dialogue present in the story. Students show progress in recognising the writing patterns used by the author. In Phase 4, the majority of students can identify types of argument in a debate and analyse inaccuracies in a text. The majority of students in Phase 4 can write short paragraphs, although their extended writing skills using correct punctuation is less secure. • The majority of groups of students in AFL and ASL make above expected progress overall. Some high-attaining students do not make as much progress as they could.

Areas of Strength	**Areas for Improvement**
• Students' reading and writing skills in Phases 2, 3 and 4. • Students' speaking and listening skills in Phases 2, 3 and 4.	• Students' extended writing skills using correct punctuation in Phases 2, 3 and 4. • Phase 2 students' fluency using standard Arabic in ASL.

Social Studies	- Students' achievement in social studies is good. The school's internal data shows that students make outstanding progress in Phases 2 and 3. This does not match with that seen in lessons and in students' work, where the majority of students make progress which is above curriculum expectations. - The school's internal data shows that attainment is outstanding in Phases 2 and 3. This does not fully match with that seen in lessons and in students' work, which shows the majority of students reach levels of attainment which are above curriculum standards. There is no external data for social studies. - In Phase 2, students understand the impact of His Highness Sheikh Zayed's (RIP) upbringing on his hobbies and interests and discuss how this influenced his decisions regarding the preservation of the UAE's heritage. However, their own explanations of why it is important to preserve heritage are less well developed. Students in Phase 3 understand and can explain the importance of consultative governance in the UAE. They ask and answer questions about equality and diversity. In Phase 3, students understand the importance of aspects of cultural cooperation between the UAE and France, for example, the Louvre in Abu Dhabi. Students begin to engage in discussions about whether culture bridges communication or causes conflict. - The majority of groups of students make above expected progress overall. High-attaining students do not make as much progress as they could.

Areas of Strength	Areas for Improvement
- Students' understanding of the impact of His Highness Sheikh Zayed's (RIP) upbringing on his hobbies and interests in Phase 2. - Students' discussions about the importance of consultative governance in Phase 3.	- Students' deeper understanding of the implications of cultural cooperation in Phase 3. - Students' understanding of the need to preserve heritage in Phase 2.

English	- Students' achievement in English is good overall. In lessons and in their work, the majority of students in all phases make better than expected progress. This does not fully concur with the school's internal data which indicates acceptable progress in Phase 1 and very good progress in other phases. - Students' attainment is good in all phases. This does not match the internal assessment data, which shows acceptable attainment in Phase 1, and very good attainment in Phases 2, 3 and 4. Recent external MAP data for Phase 2, 3 and 4 shows very weak attainment. - In Phase 1, children make good gains in their phonic knowledge and use these to find three letter words with rhyming sounds. Across the school, students' speaking and listening skills are well developed. They articulate their learning and ideas fluently. In Phase 2, students can infer and deduce the contextual meanings of words in texts. In Phase 3, students make predictions and discuss characters in a story. They identify elements of internal and external conflict based on the text, but their skills to infer and interpret complex texts independently are less well developed. Students' independent extended writing skills are less well developed in Phases 1, 2 and 3. In Phase 4, students research and present facts about transcontinental railroads and their impact on the country's economic condition. They write research papers on topics, such as Intelligent Transportation: Shaping the future of the UAE. - Overall, the majority of groups of students make better than expected progress. High-attaining students do not always make the progress they are capable of.

Areas of Strength	**Areas for Improvement**
- Children's application of phonic knowledge in Phase 1. - Students' ability to be articulate, research and debate in Phase 4.	- Students' extended and independent writing skills, particularly in Phases 1, 2 and 3. - Students' skills to infer and interpret complex texts independently, particularly in Phase 3.

Mathematics	- Students' achievement in mathematics is acceptable overall. It is good in Phase 1 and 4. In lessons and in their work, most students in Phases 2 and 3 make expected progress. In Phases 1 and 4, the majority of the students make good progress. This does not concur with the school's internal data, where progress is very good across all phases. - The school's internal assessment data shows attainment is very good across all phases. This is not in line with lessons observed and students' work where attainment is acceptable in Phase 2 and 3 and good in Phase 1 and Phase 4. MAP data shows attainment is weak in Phases 2, 3 and 4. - In Phase 1, children develop their understanding of measure, using appropriate mathematical vocabulary. They apply this knowledge using a range of resources to compare and measure objects and reason which are shorter, equal or longer. In Phase 2, most students can manipulate equivalent fractions. A minority of students' mental mathematics skills are less well developed which makes it difficult to compare fractions with different denominators. In Phase 3, most students develop proficiency in solving linear equations by substitution. However, a minority are unsure which numerical values should be x and y and which parts of the equation to substitute. In Phase 4, students are able to interpret and use mathematical thinking to factor polynomials in algebra and apply this knowledge to real life situations in engineering. They confidently explain their reasoning and can choose and use their own methods to solve problems. - Overall, all groups of students make at least the expected progress.

	Areas of strength	Areas for Improvement
	- Children's application of their understanding of measure in Phase 1. - Students' mathematical reasoning in Phase 4.	- Students' agility in mental mathematics in Phase 2. - Students' interpretation and use of algebra in Phase 3.

Science	• Students' achievement in science is good overall. It is acceptable in Phase 3 and good in other phases. Internal assessments indicate children in Phase 1 make good progress and students in other phases make very good progress. This did not fully match what was seen in lessons where progress is acceptable in Phase 3 and good in other phases.
	• External MAP tests show attainment is weak and very weak for Phases 2 and 3 respectively. In lessons and in students' books, the majority of children in Phase 1 and students in Phases 2 and 4 attain above curriculum standards. In Phase 3, students attain curriculum standards which are acceptable.
	• In all phases, students make better than expected progress in developing knowledge and understanding of physical, life and earth sciences. In Phases 1, 2 and 4 they develop good exploration and investigation skills. In Phase 3 these skills are less well developed. In Phase 1, children explore many classroom resources and their personal items like hair bands, school bags, and lunch boxes to classify them into soft and rough to understand the concept of touch. In Phase 4, students analyse the working principle of a DC generator and predict the potential contribution of such generators to the UAE energy system, using the scientific method. Children and students in all phases plan and carry out investigations with help. Their scientific skills in prediction and hypothesizing are less developed than those of observation, classification and measurement.
	• In lessons, the majority of groups make better than expected progress. High attaining students do not always make the progress they are capable of.

Areas of Strength	Areas for Improvement
• Practical and investigative skills in Phases 1, 2 and 4. • Knowledge and understanding of physical, life, and earth sciences across all phases.	• Practical and investigative skills in Phase 3. • Skills of systematic enquiry and ability to think scientifically across all phases.

Other subjects	● Students' achievement in other subjects is good overall. Internal data for Phases 2, 3 and 4 in ICT indicates outstanding progress. This does not match what is seen in lessons where students make good progress in all phases. There is no internal or external data for other subjects. In lessons and in their work, the majority of students make progress above curriculum expectations in all phases. ● Internal data for ICT indicates outstanding attainment. This does not fully match with that seen in lessons where a majority of students attain above curriculum standards. There is no internal or external data for other subjects. In lessons and in students' work, a majority of students reach levels of attainment above curriculum standards in other subjects. ● In Phase 1, children make good progress in using a range of tools to create patterns on playdough models of turtles. Students in Grades 1 and 3 acquire new knowledge and understanding of optical illusions and create their own patterns. Artistic skills are less developed across the other phases. In PE, students make good progress in improving their long jump technique and agility in relays as they practice for sports day. Phase 4 students make good gains in understanding economic, environmental and political migration in History; however, they do not use a range of resources to improve the depth of their discussions. In ICT, Phase 2 students improve their PowerPoints by adding animations and transitions. Students in Phases 3 and 4 covert binary and decimal numbers confidently and explain their reasoning. Phase 4 students make good progress in understanding the quantity theory of money in Economics. ● Overall, most groups make better than expected progress in other subjects. High-attaining students do not make as much progress as they are capable of.

Areas of Strengths	Areas for Improvement
● Students' technique in athletics. ● Phase 4 students' understanding of economic concepts.	● Students' practical skills in Art in all phases. ● Students' use of a range of resources to discuss topics with more depth in History in Phase 4.

Learning Skills	• Learning skills are good overall but remain acceptable in Phase 3. Students are engaged in learning and enjoy contributing to lessons. They take increasing responsibility for their own learning although, occasionally, they can be passive learners, particularly in Phase 3. Students know what to do to improve and are increasingly able to take steps to do so. • Students interact well with each other and their teachers. They articulate their learning confidently in lessons and assemblies. They often work in groups, but occasionally allow high-attaining students to dominate the discussions. • In lessons, students regularly make links to prior learning and other subjects. Links to the real world, including their lives in the UAE are a strength across the school. For example, in Phase 1, children design a skyline with buildings of different heights and compare them when learning about measures. Phase 4 students make links in the quantity theory of money in Economics to velocity in Physics. They also make links to understand more about money supply in the UAE. • Students' research skills have improved, especially in English, science and in Arabic subjects. They use learning technology confidently in all phases to support their learning at school and at home. Their critical thinking skills are less well developed. There are few opportunities for students to be enterprising and innovative, for example, in clubs.

Areas of Strengths	Areas for Improvement
• Students' links to the real world and life in the UAE across the school. • Students' use of technology across all phases.	• Students taking steps to improve their work, particularly in Phase 3. • Students' skills in critical thinking, innovation and enterprise across the school.

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

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

• Students' personal and social development skills are good overall. Their understanding of Islamic values and Emirati culture is very good.

- Students have positive and responsible attitudes overall. They demonstrate growing self-reliance. They respond well to feedback from their peers as well as teachers.
- Students exercise self-control and follow school rules. Consequently, the school is safe and orderly. Behaviour is positive, although in Phase 3, particularly in the boys' section, behaviour is acceptable. Bullying is rare.
- Student-staff relationships are friendly and respectful. Students are polite and courteous to adults and their peers. They are sensitive to the needs of others, including those with special educational needs, and are always ready to offer help.
- Students have positive attitudes towards healthy eating and maintaining active lifestyles. They follow the school's advice by selecting healthy choices for snacks and meals. They actively participate in Physical Education classes and sports clubs.
- Attendance is at least 96%, although a minority of students are late arriving at school and for lessons.

Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good

- Students demonstrate a very good understanding of Islamic values and how these influence life in the UAE. This is evident across the school in displays of photographs and students' work as well as in lessons across the school.
- They are knowledgeable and respectful of the traditions and heritage of the UAE and demonstrate this through special events and celebrations, clubs, and in their social studies lessons. They sing the UAE national anthem with pride and perform heritage dances such as Al Ayala at assemblies.
- School events increase their understanding of their own and other world cultures, although this is less developed in lessons. Students learn about famous scientists and poets in assemblies. Activities such as the UAE National Day, Flag Day, United Nations and UNESCO-themed celebrations provide students with opportunities to showcase their talents and understand world cultures. Students learn about famous poets through themed weeks, such as, I am a Poet.

Social responsibility and innovation skills	Good	Good	Good	Good

- Students are responsible members of the school and volunteer around the school, tidying up school premises, collecting attendance data and monitoring punctuality and behaviour. Older students read to younger students in the school and volunteer at clubs. They also contribute positively to the schools' wellbeing program and assume roles such as 'Happiness Ambassadors' in the school. However, their social contribution in the local community is limited.
- Students show a positive work ethic. They enjoy lessons and engage enthusiastically in helping to organise activities in school. However, their ability to be innovative and initiate schemes, is less well developed. A few students demonstrate creativity and real entrepreneurial skills through

projects in robotics. Phase 4 students initiate activities like the World Kindness Day and antibullying awareness through the student council.

- Students' awareness and understanding of the benefits of sustainability is evident through their efforts towards environmental awareness, in celebrations such as World Food Day and around the school garden. Children in Phase 1 came to school in clothes made out of used or recyclable materials demonstrating their understanding of reusing and recycling. Students participate in activities like pledging to be helpful and kind, celebrating International Day of Charity.

Areas of Strength:

- Students' appreciation of the role and values of Islam in UAE society.
- Students' respect for the heritage and culture of the UAE.

Areas for Improvement:

- Students' understanding of the wider world.
- Students' ability to initiate activities involving innovation, enterprise and entrepreneurship.

PERFORMANCE STANDARD 3: TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT

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

- The overall quality of teaching and assessment is good. It is acceptable in Phase 3.
- Most teachers apply their subject knowledge and adapt approaches to engage students in their learning except in a few lessons, where low-level disruption results in students being disengaged.
- Teachers plan engaging lessons with a range of strategies and resources, including technology, to provide opportunities for learning that enable students to make good progress. However, plenaries in few lessons are less productive due to ineffective time management skills.
- In better lessons, teachers' questioning promotes thought and draws out students' ideas which enables them to verify their learning. However, they do not always allow students sufficient time to discuss these ideas with depth and meaning.
- Teachers are mindful of students' needs and design tasks to meet them. They build on students' prior learning. However, high attainers are not always challenged to make enough progress to reach their potential.
- Teachers develop students' independent learning skills through classwork, homework, projects and research activities. The provision for critical thinking and innovation is, however, still a developing feature.

Assessment	Good	Good	Acceptable	Good

- The school's internal assessment processes are clear and coherent. They measure information on students' progress periodically. These are linked to the school's prescribed curriculum, although they often rely on tests.
- The school uses TIMSS, PISA, IBT and MAP for national and international benchmarking for their baseline tests as well as internal diagnostic assessments.
- The assessment information is analysed and trends and patterns are identified to track the individual progress of students in lessons as well as comparisons between groups of students to inform planning.
- Assessment data is used in planning lessons and modifying the curriculum to accommodate the needs of groups of students, though high-attaining students can be challenged further. In a few lessons, work does not match the needs of individual learners.
- Teachers provide oral feedback to students on their work. However, written constructive feedback is limited. Teachers involve students in self and peer assessments although this is not consistent across all subjects and grades.

Areas of Strength:

- Teachers' subject knowledge and improved teaching strategies.
- Regular analysis of assessment data.

Areas for Improvement:

- Consistent approaches to classroom management, including the use of time.
- Measuring progress in lessons against objectives, as well as in tests, to provide more reliable data.

PERFORMANCE STANDARD 4:
CURRICULUM

Indicators:	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4
Curriculum design and implementation	Good	Good	Good	Good

- The overall quality of the curriculum is good, curriculum adaptation is acceptable.

- The curriculum follows statutory requirements. It is broad, balanced and age appropriate and develops students' knowledge, skills and understanding.
- Curriculum planning ensures learning builds on prior learning, in all key subjects. It meets the needs of most students in preparing them for the next phase of education.
- Older students can choose between General, Advanced Placement and Elite streams. Clubs for students in Phases 2 and 3 give students choice to develop their talents and interests.
- Cross-curricular links are meaningfully planned and integrated into lessons across the school. Technology is used in a range of key subjects. This has had a positive impact on students' independent learning skills.
- Regular, collaborative curriculum reviews identify development priorities based on feedback from parents, teachers, alumni and assessments. Staff engage in some reflective practice to plan across subjects to meet the requirements of the Advanced Placement courses and Common Core Standards.

Curriculum adaptation	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

- Curriculum modifications are framed after "Understanding by Design" to include activities in the unit maps and learning matrices. However, these do not always meet the needs of all students, especially high-attainers.
- The curriculum includes activities that benefit students' academic and personal development. The school offers clubs for students of Grades 4 to 8, but there are very limited opportunities to develop artistic or sports skills for all students. Students have a few opportunities to develop skills for enterprise, innovation, creativity and social contribution within the wider community.
- The curriculum supports students' very good knowledge and understanding of Emirati culture, Islamic values and UAE society. The school playground and "happiness street" showcase the cultural conservation, value aspirations and technological development of the UAE.

Areas of Strength:

- Purposefully planned cross curricular links.
- Links with Emirati culture and UAE society.

Areas for Improvement:

- Modification of the curriculum to meet the needs of all groups of students.
- Enhancement, enterprise and innovation.

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

Indicators:	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection /safeguarding	**Very good**	**Very good**	**Very good**	**Very good**

- The quality of protection, care, guidance and support of students is very good overall.
- Procedures for safeguarding are rigorous. Counsellors and social workers in each phase monitor wellbeing, alongside class teachers. All staff are trained in child protection policies and procedures. Safeguarding procedures are shared with parents. ICT lessons include information for students about how to stay safe online.
- The school provides a safe environment. Students are well-supervised, including on school transportation. Thorough routine checks ensure movement in and out of the school is monitored efficiently. Accurate and secure records are maintained, including records of incidents and subsequent actions.
- Premises are clean and well-maintained with maintenance records in order. The installation of a lift and ramps allows access for those with mobility issues to all floors. Outdoor areas are shaded.
- Healthy living is promoted systematically, through workshops, a strong pastoral system and daily checks of lunch boxes. The school canteen is managed by the school support staff and provides suitable food. In addition to PE lessons, extracurricular activities for students in Phases 2 and 3 offer students the chance to be active and take part in a range of sports.

Care and support	Good	Good	Good	Good

- Relationships between staff and students are positive. Procedures for managing behaviour are good.
- The school's approach is effective in promoting good attendance though a minority of students are not punctual.
- A welcoming, nurturing and inclusive environment is provided for all. Following admission, students with special educational needs are identified and plans put in place to ensure that they receive the required support with external consultation and specialist staff where necessary. Students who are gifted or talented are identified.
- Support for students with special needs are comprehensive. Gifted and talented students are given opportunities outside lessons to succeed in presentations and competitions, but do not always get appropriate challenge in lessons.
- Students' wellbeing and personal development are monitored throughout the year. Career guidance starts from Grade 7. AP orientation, links to the Bridge U programme, visits from alumni and visits to and from local universities offer students information about choices for their next steps.

Areas of Strength:

- Care, welfare and safeguarding of students.
- Guidance and support for all students.

Areas for Improvement:

- Punctuality at the beginning of the school day.
- Challenge for gifted students in lessons.

PERFORMANCE STANDARD 6:
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Indicators:	
The effectiveness of leadership	Good
Self-evaluation and improvement planning	Good
Partnerships with parents and the community	Good
Governance	Good
Management, staffing, facilities and resources	Good

- The overall quality of leadership and management is good. Leaders at all levels set a clear vision and strategic plan for the school, written in consultation with all stakeholders. Local and national priorities are evident in the school's inclusive ethos and throughout the school environment.
- Leaders have good knowledge of best practice in teaching and learning. They successfully establish a learning culture for both staff and students. They attend and provide professional development for teachers which has resulted in improved teaching strategies across the school. However, new staff do not embed quickly enough into the expectations of the school.
- Morale of the staff is good, and relationships are positive. Senior leaders ensure that staff well-being remains a priority and have taken steps to incentivise staff. However, staff retention remains a challenge, particularly when teachers leave during the school year.
- Leaders know and understand their priorities. Middle leaders feel empowered to lead their departments and are held to account for impact on student achievement. Many initiatives

introduced, have resulted in improved outcomes for students, although a few of these are not consistently successful across the school. Overall, leaders demonstrate good capacity to improve.

- Self-evaluation is a collaborative process in the school. Leaders are well aware of the strengths and areas for improvement. School improvement planning is linked to self-evaluation. Actions are prioritised and delegated. As a result, the school has shown improvement over time in most key areas.

- Teaching and learning is monitored regularly by senior and middle leaders and is followed up with individual plans for teachers where required. Expectations of the UAE framework are followed. This has had an impact on raising students' overall achievement since the previous inspection.

- Parents are engaged in their children's learning through a variety of platforms, including weekly online meetings on a range of relevant topics. Parent's views are sought and considered. They read to younger students and assist with and attend celebrations. Reports to parents are detailed and are followed up by termly conferences. Mid-term reports are shared via the parent portal and skills reports through ClassDojo. Consequently, parents feel well-informed about their children's learning as well as their personal and social development.

- The school has links with other local schools to share best practice and a link with an overseas school for students to engage with. They receive support from external organisations such as Al Sondos, for students with special educational needs. The school has partnerships with universities in Ajman and Sharjah. They continue to explore opportunities for older students to volunteer in the wider community.

- Governors' presence in and knowledge about the school has improved. Although not all stakeholders are currently represented on the board, their views are sought. School leaders make periodic presentations to the governors about student achievement and are held to account. Governors were involved in revising the mission, vision and strategic plan for school improvement. They ensure the school is fully staffed. They provide resources and improvements to facilities which have had a direct impact on students' achievement.

- School routines are well-organised and lessons begin on time. However, home-room time is not always spent productively, particularly in the boys' section. Staff are well-qualified and have regular professional development which has resulted in improved practice. The school is equipped with science laboratories and a library. However, a few classrooms, particularly in Phase 3, are cramped and there are few indoor sports facilities except for a small gym used for clubs. A range of resources in Phase 1 promotes active and experiential learning for children. An upgraded infrastructure, together with appropriate e-safety measures, supports the use of technology across the school.

Areas of Strength:

- The development of middle leaders in the school.
- The provision for and access to technology across the school.

Areas for Improvement:

- Links within the wider community.
- Strategies to quickly embed new teachers into the expectations of the school.

SPEA ADDITIONAL FOCUS AREAS

Provision for Arabic Language

- There are 15 teachers in the Arabic department, teaching 921 students across the school in AFL and ASL. The ratio of teachers to students is 1:61.
- The school has one library and a reading room. There are 558 fiction and 2126 non-fiction books in Arabic. Students visit the library weekly to read and borrow books to take home.
- Online Arabic reading programs are provided. Older students volunteer to read with younger students.
- Students in Phases 2 and 3 attend clubs three days a week and can choose to attend Arabic club. They take part in the Arab Reading challenge, Calligraphy and Holy Qur'an competitions.

The school's use of external benchmarking data

- The school meets the UAE national agenda and SPEA requirements for international tests.
- In May 2022, 76 students sat the PISA test in reading, mathematics and science and are awaiting results. 73 students sat the TIMSS tests in mathematics and science and are awaiting results. In the academic year 2021-2022, 518 (91%) students sat the IBT examination in AFL and ASL. 787 (92%) students took part in the most MAP tests in reading, mathematics and science.
- Students are taught examination techniques to prepare for international tests. They use the Cerebry platform to prepare for PISA and TIMSS tests. Students complete weekly Exact Path activities, a personalised learning path to help them master the fundamental building blocks for the common core standards.
- Information about the tests is explained through links to Webinars and information booklets. Test results are shared with parents and students through online platforms and in student-teacher meetings. Results are used to plan lessons, for example, to include more problem-solving questions and to set group and individual targets for students.
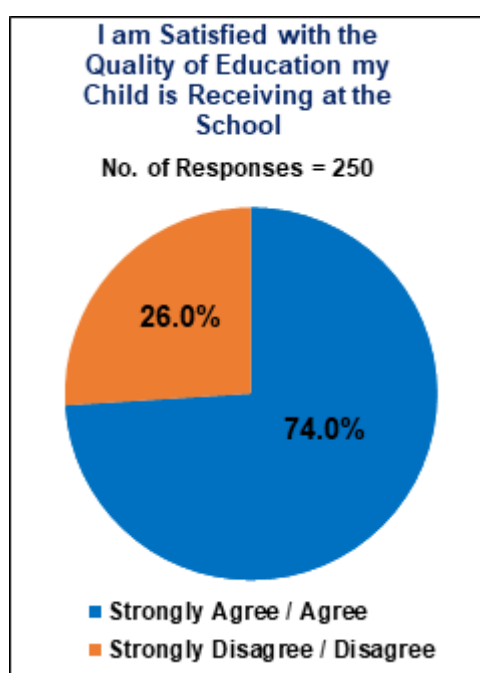
Provision for KG

- There are 68 children in KG1 and KG2 and 5 KG teachers, with a teacher-student ratio of 1:14. Teachers are assisted by 3 assistants.
- Classrooms are well-resourced to support children's learning including in Arabic, English, mathematics and science. Children bring their own devices. These, supplemented by devices provided by the school support their learning. Each classroom has a selection of reading books in Arabic and English. Resources include big books, games and toys. Displays include useful information as well as children's work.
- Outdoor provision includes a play area used for weekly assemblies, PE as well as practical activities, such as science investigations. A dedicated playground with suitable equipment is used during playtime.
- A webinar provides orientation information for parents and an orientation week prior to the start of the school enables children to familiarise themselves with teachers, peers and routines.

Parents receive regular updates on their child's progress through online platforms and termly meetings. Transition to Grade 1 includes teachers sharing key information, a joint assembly and a tour of with Grade 1.

VIEWS OF PARENTS

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

No. of Responses = 250

- 74.0%
- 26.0%

■ Strongly Agree / Agree
■ Strongly Disagree / Disagree

STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS & NEXT STEPS

- Improve students' achievement in all subjects, but especially mathematics and science by:
  - increasing the focus on mental mathematics, application to problem solving and reasoning, particularly in Phases 2 and 3.
  - planning tasks that allow students to reason and think scientifically, especially in Phase 3.
  - ensuring students have access to appropriate resources in other subjects such as History and Art.

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- Continue to improve teaching and learning by:
  - raising expectations so there is no low-level disruption in lessons.
  - asking questions that probe deeper and lead to meaningful discussions.
  - giving students sufficient response time to discuss critical thinking questions.
  - using assessment information to plan appropriate challenge for high-attainers in lessons.

- Modify the curriculum to support the needs of all groups of students by:
  - ensuring the curriculum meets the needs of all groups of students, particularly high-attainers.
  - planning more opportunities for enterprise and innovation, in and out of lessons.
  - planning clear progression in other subjects such as Art, across the school.
  - strengthening the provision for AP courses.

- Further improve leadership by:
  - increasing the validity of internal data so that it does not rely solely on tests.
  - employing innovative strategies to embed new teachers, quickly, into the expectations of the school.
  - ensuring representation from all stakeholders on the governing body.
  - increasing links within the wider community to offer more meaningful opportunities for social contribution.

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 schools.review@spea.shj.ae within three weeks of receiving this report.