



هيئة الشارقة للتعليم الخاص  
SHARJAH PRIVATE EDUCATION AUTHORITY

ITQAN Programme  
**School Performance Review (SPR)  
Report**

**GEMS Westminster Private School**

**6 – 9 February 2023**

**Overall Effectiveness**

**GOOD**



إتقان ITQAN





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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.




<b>Outstanding</b>	The quality of performance substantially exceeds the expectations of the UAE
<b>Very good</b>	The quality of performance exceeds the expectations of the UAE
<b>Good</b>	The quality of performance meets the expectations of the UAE
<b>Acceptable</b>	The quality of performance meets the minimum level required in the UAE
<b>Weak</b>	The quality of performance is below the expectation of the UAE
<b>Very weak</b>	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 conducted 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	Information	Value
	School ID	120
	School location	Muweilah, Sharjah
	Establishment date	2012
	Language of instruction	English
	School curriculum	National Curriculum for England
	Accreditation body	Council of International Schools (CIS)
	Examination Board	Cambridge/Pearson
	National Agenda Benchmark Tests/ International assessment	PISA; TIMSS; PIRLS; CAT4; EmSAT; GL PTE, GL PTS, GL PTM IBT.
	Fee range	AED 12,600 to 24,200
	Principal	Valerie Thompson
	Chair of Board of Governors	Darren Coulson
	Total number of teachers	199
	Total number of teaching assistants	26
	Turnover rate	16%
	Main nationality of teachers	Indian
	Teacher: student ratio	1:16
	Total number of students	3125
	Number of Emirati students	23
	Phase 1: number and gender	Total 658: Boys 306, Girls 352
	Phase 2: number and gender	Total 1086: Boys 577, Girls 509
	Phase 3: number and gender	Total 1193: Boys 674, Girls 519
	Phase 4: number and gender	Total 188: Boys 98, Girls 90
	Nationality groups	Pakistani Egyptian
	Total number of students with special educational needs	68

## PROGRESS JOURNEY

Previous Inspection (2018):	Current Review:
<b>ACCEPTABLE</b>	<b>GOOD</b>



## SUMMARY OF REVIEW FINDINGS

These findings draw from our team of 7 reviewers' 193 lesson observations, 42 of which were carried out jointly with school leaders.

### **SUMMARY OF THE OVERALL PERFORMANCE OF THE SCHOOL:**

The school's overall effectiveness is Good. This is an improvement since the previous inspection in 2018. The school has made good progress in recent times so that teaching and achievement are now good. The weaknesses identified at the last inspection have been mostly addressed. The school has successfully grouped Foundation Stage (FS) and Years 1 and 2 together into Phase 1, where best practices in teaching children and younger students are effectively shared. Provision and outcomes in FS are very good. Progress across the school is at least good, despite almost all students having limited prior knowledge of English on entry. Students' learning skills are good overall. The strengthened leadership team, with two recent appointments, has boosted the capacity to drive change. This is evident in the rigour of school self-evaluation and in the consistency of good teaching. Not all initiatives, however, are yet fully embedded. Students' personal and social development is good. Assessment procedures are good. The curriculum is good. Arrangements for the protection, care, guidance and support of students are very good. The learning environment is good. Both governance and the school's partnership with parents are very good.

### **KEY AREAS OF STRENGTH:**

- The provision and outcomes for children in the Foundation Stage which build very good foundations for later learning.
- The overall improvement in students' achievement across the curriculum, particularly in mathematics in Phase 3.
- The provision to identify and support students with special educational needs.
- Students' positive behaviour and very good attitudes to learning.
- The improvement in teaching and learning across the school.
- The very good provision for the safeguarding, care and wellbeing of students.
- The identification of key leadership roles to impact upon achievement.

### **KEY AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT:**

- Students' achievement in social studies, Arabic first language and Islamic Education in Phase 4 and in Arabic second language in Phases 3 and 4.
- The consistency of challenge in lessons for all students, especially higher-attainers.
- Increased opportunities for innovative activities in regular lessons across the school.
- More structured provision for the varied needs of gifted and talented students across the school.
- Students' punctuality when arriving to school at the start of the school day.



## 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	Good	Good	Good	Acceptable
	Progress	Good	Good	Good	Acceptable
Arabic (as a First Language)	Attainment	Good	Good	Good	Acceptable
	Progress	Good	Good	Good	Acceptable
Arabic (as a Second Language)	Attainment	Good	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable
	Progress	Good	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable
Social Studies	Attainment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	N/A
	Progress	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	N/A
English	Attainment	Good	Good	Good	Good
	Progress	Good	Good	Good	Good
Mathematics	Attainment	Very Good	Good	Very Good	Good
	Progress	Very Good	Good	Very Good	Good
Science	Attainment	Good	Good	Good	Good
	Progress	Good	Good	Good	Good
Other subjects (Art, Music, PE)	Attainment	Good	Good	Good	Good
	Progress	Good	Good	Good	Good
Learning Skills		Good	Good	Good	Good





<b>Islamic Education</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Students' achievement in Islamic Education is good overall, but acceptable in Phase 4. In lessons and over time, the majority of students make better than expected progress.</li><li>• Attainment is good overall. It is acceptable in Phase 4. Internal assessment data indicates that attainment is outstanding overall. This is not borne out in lessons or in students' work where the majority of students attain above curriculum standards. No external tests are taken in this subject.</li><li>• The majority of Phase 1 and 2 students demonstrate good comprehension and memorisation of the age-appropriate the Noble Hadeeth, and an awareness of their meanings and application to their manners. However, a few students struggle with reciting the Holy Qur'an in accordance with Tajweed rules. The majority of Phase 3 students develop good knowledge of Islamic etiquette and principles. However, a few students do not connect what they have learned to the practice modelled in the Prophet's (PBUH) life. In Phase 4, most students develop adequate comprehension of the individual and collective values of Islam and the expectations of the family's engagement with Islam. However, students' ability to support their opinions using evidence from the Holy Qur'an and the Noble Hadeeth, or to explain further the Surah and the life of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), is less well developed.</li><li>• The majority of groups, other than higher-attaining students in Phase 4, make better than expected progress overall.</li></ul>	
	<b>Areas of Strength</b>	<b>Areas for Improvement</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Students' application of Islamic concepts and values to their daily lives in Phase 4.</li><li>• Students' knowledge of Islamic etiquettes and principles in Phase 3.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Students' capacity to make connections between the Surah of the Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) and their daily lives across the school.</li><li>• Students' ability to support their opinions using evidence in Phase 4.</li></ul>



<b>Arabic</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Students' achievement in Arabic as a First Language (AFL) is good overall. The majority of students in Phases 1, 2, and 3 achieve levels above curriculum standards, but most attain in line with the curriculum standards in Phase 4. In lessons and in their work, students make mostly good progress, other than in Phase 4, where progress is acceptable. This does not match with the school's internal assessment data which shows that students in all phases make very good progress. Students' achievement in Arabic as a Second Language (ASL) is acceptable overall but it is good in Phases 1 and 2. This does not match with internal data which shows that all students make very good progress.</li><li>Internal assessment shows attainment to be very good. However, in lessons and in students' books, the majority of students attain above curriculum standards in AFL and most attain in line with the expectations in ASL.</li><li>The progress of students is mostly good in AFL, but acceptable in Phase 4. Progress in ASL is good in Phases 1 and 2, but acceptable in Phases 3 and 4. In Phases 1 and 2, AFL students develop good skills in listening, speaking and reading. For example, they are able to distinguish between the adverb of time and the adverb of place; they also can write sentences including the adverbs of time and place. In Phases 3 and 4, students continue to develop their listening, speaking and reading skills but in Phase 4 these skills are less well developed overall. Generally, students can discuss the meaning of wider vocabulary and can use these in meaningful sentences. In Phase 1 and 2 ASL, the majority of students develop language skills well and older students can distinguish between types of verbs and conjugate them correctly. However, a few students struggle when they conjugate verbs. In Phases 3 and 4 ASL, students develop adequate language skills. For example, they can use appropriate structures when speaking and they are able to write sentences and paragraphs about a given topic. However, only a few can analyse text in depth and evaluate the style of sentences. In Phase 4 (ASL), most students can distinguish adverbs of time and place. They also can deploy these adverbs in meaningful sentences. In both AFL and ASL, students' writing skills are less developed than their reading and speaking.</li><li>There are no significant differences in the achievement of groups. However, higher-attainment students in both AFL and ASL do not make the progress of which they are capable.</li></ul>	
	<b>Areas of Strength</b>	<b>Areas for Improvement</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Students' listening and speaking skills in Phases 1 and 2.</li><li>Students' reading skills in both AFL and ASL in Phase 4.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Students' reading for deeper comprehension in ASL in Phases 3 and 4.</li><li>Students' skills in writing for different purposes in both ASL and AFL in Phase 4.</li></ul>



<b>Social Studies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Students' achievement in social studies is acceptable. In lessons and in their written work, students make acceptable progress. This does not match the school's internal data which shows outstanding progress overall.</li><li>• Students' attainment is acceptable overall. This does not match the school's internal data which shows attainment is outstanding. No external tests are taken in this subject.</li><li>• In Phases 1 and 2, most students develop an adequate understanding of national identity and citizenship. For example, they understand the characteristics of the UAE's land and the interrelationships between human society and the physical environment. However, some students find it difficult to compare the economic significance of the coastal plains to that of the interior. In Phase 3, most students develop adequate knowledge of values and ethics. For example, they understand the importance of loyalty to the UAE's culture, values and beliefs and how the nation was established. They can describe the contributions of H.H. Sheikh Zayed (RIP), particularly in education. Older students learn adequate knowledge about government initiatives, such as the empowering of young people, including the National Ambassadors Program for the Emirates Youth Council. However, some students find it challenging to compare the opportunities provided by H.H. Sheikh Zayed (RIP) to those available to young citizens in other countries. Not all terminology used in social studies is fully understood, but students can research and work together to prepare presentations.</li><li>• Overall, most groups of students make acceptable progress. However, at times, the work for high-attaining pupils lacks challenge and they do not make the progress they can.</li></ul>	
	<b>Areas of Strength</b>	<b>Areas for Improvement</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Students' knowledge of individual rights and responsibilities in the UAE.</li><li>• Students' ability to research, discuss, and present their ideas.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Students' ability to compare regional economic differences in Phases 1 and 2.</li><li>• Students' skills to compare UAE society to that of other nations in Phase 3.</li></ul>



English

- Students' achievement in English is good overall. In lessons and in their work, students make good progress in Phase 1 overall and very good progress in FS. Progress is good in Phases 2, 3 and 4. This does not fully match with internal data which suggest that students make very good progress.
- Students' attainment is good in all phases, and very good in the FS, which does not fully align with the school's internal assessment data, which indicates that attainment is good in Phase 1, very good in Phases 2 and 3 and weak in Phase 4. External assessment shows that attainment was good in IGCSE in 2022, weak at AS level (Year 12) and good at A Level. This does not fully match with what is seen in lessons or in students' books where attainment is good in all phases.
- The majority of students make good progress in developing listening, speaking, reading and writing skills. Few children enter Phase 1 with significant prior knowledge of English. However, they make very good gains in blending phonic sounds to pronounce words correctly, so that by the end of Phase 1, speaking skills are very good. However, there are inconsistencies in pace and intonation when speaking across all phases. Writing skills in Years 1 and 2 are less well developed. In Phase 2, students make good gains in identifying the difference between a command and an instruction and can identify 'bossy' verbs in a sentence, before using them in their own writing. Students in Phase 3 can analyse a text to extract the explicit and implicit meanings and identify effective language features. In Phase 4, students make good gains in showing connections across texts and writing PEE paragraphs.
- Overall, the majority of groups of students, other than higher-attainers, make better than expected progress. However, girls' literacy skills are, overall, stronger than boys' in Phase 3.

**Areas of Strength**

- Students' phonic skills in Phase 1 and in writing in Phase 2.
- Students' skills in the analysis of text, especially in Phases 3 and 4.

**Areas for Improvement**

- Students' writing skills in Years 1 and 2.
- Students' pace, intonation and confidence when speaking across all phases.



<b>Mathematics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Students' achievement in mathematics is good overall. In lessons and in their work, students make good progress overall, although progress is very good in Phase 1 and Phase 3. Internal data indicates that students make very good progress overall. This does not fully align with progress seen.</li><li>• Internal assessment indicates that attainment is very good. This is not fully seen in lessons or students' books where overall attainment is good, but very good in Phase 1 and Phase 3. External assessment data indicates that results in IGCSE and at AS level in 2022 were weak, although Year 13 'A' level results were good.</li><li>• The majority of students make good progress in lessons. In Phase 1 the large majority of children develop sound number, and shape and space skills. They can use numbers while counting object in different contexts, such as pictures, concrete objects and body parts. Older Phase 1 children recognise 2D and 3D shapes and name the faces, edge and vertices. in Phase 2, students develop good change and relationship skills. For example, they can create pictograms by converting numbers to images and can compare different sets of information, though their skills in mental mathematics are still developing. Students in Phase 3 make very good progress developing their understanding of geometry and trigonometry. For example, they use Pythagoras' theorem to solve problems, such as the optimum position for a fire truck ladder to get maximum reach to a building. Phase 4 students make good progress in mathematical thinking skills when they determine lengths in a cuboid and find the size of angles between given points. They also accurately calculate the distance between two points using the distance formula. However, calculation steps are often not fully set down in written work.</li><li>• Overall, all groups of students make better than expected progress from their starting points.</li></ul>	
	<b>Areas of Strength</b>	<b>Areas for Improvement</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Students' understanding of geometric concepts.</li><li>• Students' ability to apply theorem to solve problems.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mental mathematic strategies to support more rapid calculations in Phase 2.</li><li>• More systematic recording of the stages of complex calculations in Phase 4.</li></ul>





<b>Science</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Students' achievement in science is good overall. In lessons and in their work, the majority of students make very good progress in FS and good progress in Years 1 and 2, and in Phases 2, 3 and 4. This aligns with the school's internal data which shows good progress.</li><li>• Internal assessment data indicates good attainment in Phase 1, very good attainment in Phases 2 and 3, and acceptable in Phase 4. IGCSE results in 2022 were mostly good, other than in Biology. A Level results declined in relation to previous years and indicate weak attainment. However, in lessons and in students' work, the majority of students are attaining above curriculum standards across the phases.</li><li>• The majority of students develop sound age-appropriate knowledge and understanding of physical, life and earth sciences. FS children develop a good knowledge of the world around them though investigate materials that sink and materials that float. Older Phase 1 students explore the natural world of plants with interest and record their observations clearly. Students in Phase 2 develop good knowledge of science facts and vocabulary. For example, they can predict, analyse and justify the properties of a magnet using scientific vocabulary such as, repel, attract, like and unlike. In Phase 3, students make good gains in physical, life and earth sciences. For example, they can prepare an improvised model of the human respiratory system to illustrate the efficacy of gas exchange in lungs. In Phase 4, students' scientific thinking skills develop well. For example, they can frame a hypothesis and test it, such as when identifying edible items with the maximum amount of vitamin C and investigating the concentration of ascorbic acid using different indicators. Overall, students age-appropriate laboratory and practical skills in scientific procedure are well-developed. However, students' skills in applying their knowledge to the real-world applications of scientific theory are less evident.</li><li>• Overall, all groups of students, other than higher-attainers, make better than expected progress.</li></ul>	
	<b>Areas of Strength</b>	<b>Areas for Improvement</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Students' enquiry and investigative skills.</li><li>• Students' practical and laboratory skills, particularly in Phase 4.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Students' capacity to make links between scientific knowledge and real-life applications across the school.</li></ul>



<b>Other subjects</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Students' achievement in other subjects is good overall. Internal tracking and data from subjects which have external examinations, indicates that the majority of students make good progress overall. This was mostly evident in lessons, where students make good progress across all phases. However, progress in sociology in Phase 4 is very good. Overall, opportunities for drama and performance arts are developing.</li><li>• Attainment is good overall. Internal tracking indicates very good attainment across the school from Phase 1 to Phase 4, although attainment is generally good in lessons and students' work. IGCSE and A level data in examined subjects indicates relatively weak outcomes in 2022.</li><li>• In Phase 1, younger children participate in specialist PE lessons which develop their skills effectively. In Phase 2, students build good skills in Information Technology and can use IT in other subjects. In Phase 3, students are able to structure simple sentences in French. In Phase 4, class groups are very small, so that students work intensively in Economics, Business and Accountancy, exploring these subjects in some depth. While PE is taught across the school, available space is limited, so that opportunities for all students to be fully engaged are restricted. However, the school does organise various sports teams so that extension opportunities are available.</li><li>• Overall, all groups of students make good progress.</li></ul>	
	<b>Areas of Strengths</b>	<b>Areas for Improvement</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Students' achievement in Sociology.</li><li>• The commitment of students in Phase 4.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The further engagement of students in PE lessons across the school.</li><li>• Opportunities for Music, Drama and performance for older students.</li></ul>



<b>Learning Skills</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students' learning skills are good. Students across the school demonstrate very good engagement with their learning. They enjoy learning and remain focussed on tasks. They know their targets and work purposefully to improve their outcomes. Independent learning tasks are a key element of the Phase 4 curriculum.</li> <li>Students work well in groups. They demonstrate from Phase 1 onwards that they can communicate with their peers and share ideas. They collaborate in order to meet learning outcomes such as problem solving and report back clearly on joint findings.</li> <li>In most lessons, there are opportunities for students to link their learning to the real world. At times this is teacher led, at other times students offer their own ideas. For example, Phase 2 students used metric conversions to find distances between Sharjah and Dubai by road. They make links to their understanding of the world in a variety of learning activities in Phase 1, such as using the UAE currency for shopping and making imaginary healthy soup.</li> <li>The use of tablets in technology is well-developed, students use technology effectively to find lesson content, do background research or send work to their teachers. Critical thinking and problem-solving skills are seen in some lessons, but this is not consistently developed. Innovation and enterprise skills are seldom evident in lessons, but older students do undertake work experience and community activity.</li> </ul>	
	<b>Areas of Strengths</b>	<b>Areas for Improvement</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students' engagement with their learning.</li> <li>The linking of students' learning to the real world.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students' critical thinking skills.</li> <li>The development of students' innovation and enterprise skills.</li> </ul>

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

Indicators:	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4
<b>Personal development</b>	<b>Very Good</b>	<b>Very Good</b>	<b>Very Good</b>	<b>Very Good</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students' personal and social development and their innovation skills is good overall. Their innovation skills are relatively less well developed. Students demonstrate positive attitudes. They are self-disciplined, self-reliant and seek and respond very well to critical feedback.</li> <li>Incidents of bullying are very rare and are addressed effectively by the anti-bullying awareness programmes in assemblies and through the wellbeing champions' programme. Anti-bullying messages are prominently displayed.</li> </ul>				



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students are sensitive to the needs of others. Mutually respectful relationships are enhanced, for example, in the morning meet and greet with senior leaders. Students show compassion for the needs of others.</li> <li>Students have a good understanding of healthy choices in diet and maintain active lifestyles which is evidenced in school displays and promoted well in assemblies. Attendance is very good at 96%. However, the punctuality of students is inconsistent.</li> </ul>				
<b>Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Good</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students demonstrate a good understanding of Islamic values and how these influence life in the UAE. This is evident in displays which reflect UAE heritage and culture, and the daily assemblies with Holy Qur'an recitation and prayers.</li> <li>UAE culture and heritage is celebrated in National Day, Flag Day and Martyrs' Day celebrations, The school Islamic Council promotes Islamic values and hosts annual inter-school Holy Qur'an competitions. Students participate in the prestigious H.H. Sheikha Fatima scholarship program.</li> <li>While students are very knowledgeable and respectful of the traditions and heritage of the UAE, their understanding of other world cultures is not so fully embedded.</li> </ul>				
<b>Social responsibility and innovation skills</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Good</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students are active in volunteering within the school and the local community. For example, older students support younger classes and SEN students distribute food to people living in labour camps.</li> <li>Students show a positive work ethic. They enjoy lessons and sometimes take the initiative to organise activities such as flip lessons. However, their innovation and enterprise skills are less well developed.</li> <li>Senior students have access to frequent career guidance as part of the curriculum and the passport program helps them to prepare for further education. Students demonstrate a good understanding of sustainability. They have, for example, initiated a scheme to recycle plastic bottles.</li> </ul>				
<b>Areas of Strength:</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students' positive attitudes and behaviour.</li> <li>Students' commitment to the heritage and culture of the UAE.</li> </ul>				
<b>Areas for Improvement:</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students' punctuality at the beginning of the school day.</li> <li>Students' understanding and appreciation of other world cultures.</li> <li>Students' skills in innovation and enterprise.</li> </ul>				



## PERFORMANCE STANDARD 3: TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT

Indicators:	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4
<b>Teaching for effective learning</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Good</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The quality of teaching and assessment is good overall. Teachers have good subject knowledge. They know how students learn, as the learning style of each student is identified.</li><li>Well planned lessons, based on Bloom's Taxonomy, include learning activities, objectives and assessments. Good time management is a strength in most lessons.</li><li>Teacher-student interactions are good. Questioning is used effectively in every lesson and engages students well. However, the promotion of deeper thinking is inconsistent.</li><li>Teachers are well-trained in recognising the needs of students with SEN and can modify the curriculum and teaching strategies, offering different levels of challenge. However, this is less effective for the higher-attaining students.</li><li>Students' independent learning skills are developed consistently, although teachers do not always promote students' critical thinking and innovation skills sufficiently.</li></ul>				
<b>Assessment</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Good</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Internal assessment processes are good. They are effectively linked to the school curriculum and provide information for planning and review. The school uses TIMSS and PISA for benchmarking to the UAE and internationally. Cambridge IGCSE, AS and A level examinations provide robust benchmarks of performance. CAT 4 Progress Tests and NFER reading tests give standardised indicators of student progress.</li><li>Details of tracked progress for individuals and groups are analysed and next steps defined. The data produced provides evidence for the modification of the curriculum, teaching strategies and lesson planning to support student progress.</li><li>Teachers know how their students perform. Feedback is usually formative with specific targets, especially in English. However, this is not consistent across subjects.</li></ul>				
<b>Areas of Strength:</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Teacher's understanding of their students' learning needs.</li><li>The school's internal assessment processes.</li></ul>				
<b>Areas for Improvement:</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The promotion of deeper thinking through open questioning techniques.</li></ul>				





- The consistent use of formative assessment in both oral and written forms.

## PERFORMANCE STANDARD 4: CURRICULUM

Indicators:	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4
<b>Curriculum design and implementation</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Good</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The overall quality of the curriculum is good across all phases. The school follows the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and the National Curriculum for England. It meets all statutory requirements, and the curriculum is broad and balanced, with content and activities that are well matched to the age of the students.</li><li>• Planning is structured so that students learn systematically. It builds on prior learning and meets most students' needs, other than higher-attaining students.</li><li>• There is a range of curricular choices for students in Phases 3 and 4, enabling them to study subjects which develop their interests and talents. This prepares them well for future learning.</li><li>• Cross-curricular links are carefully planned and integrated into lessons. This helps students to relate their studies to the wider world. Regular and systematic curriculum reviews ensure that the academic and personal needs of most students are met.</li></ul>				
<b>Curriculum adaptation</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Good</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Curriculum modifications are mostly successful but do not yet fully meet the needs of all students, especially those who are higher attaining. Modifications are particularly successful in Phase 1, where students follow a successful EAL programme to develop their communication and vocabulary.</li><li>• STEAM-based learning provides lower Phase 3 students with opportunities to explore creative ways of problem-solving, innovating and making cross curricular links. However, opportunities for students to be innovative and develop their enterprise skills are inconsistent in regular lessons, especially in Arabic subjects. Extra-curricular activities offer a range of clubs and community links.</li><li>• The curriculum supports students' good knowledge, understanding and appreciation of Emirati culture and UAE society.</li></ul>				
<b>Areas of Strength:</b>				



<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Programmes that develop students' skills, such as problem-solving in lower Phase 3.</li><li>• Cross-curricular links in learning.</li></ul>
<b>Areas for Improvement:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Modification of the curriculum to meet the needs of higher-attaining students.</li><li>• Increased opportunities for enterprise and innovation in regular lessons, especially in Arabic subjects.</li></ul>

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

Indicators:	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4
<b>Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection /safeguarding</b>	<b>Very Good</b>	<b>Very Good</b>	<b>Very Good</b>	<b>Very Good</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The overall quality of protection, care, guidance and support for students is very good. The school has rigorous procedures for the safeguarding of students. All parents, staff and students are fully aware of the appropriate procedures to follow. There are effective safeguards to protect students from cyber bullying.</li><li>• The school conducts thorough checks of the school building ensuring all students feel safe. The very effective arrangements for bus transport ensure the safe movement of all students. There is high-quality record keeping and maintenance. Students' health related information is shared regularly with the teaching staff.</li><li>• The school premises are very secure. School facilities ensure that the learning needs of all students, including those with special educational needs, are fully met. The school systematically promotes healthy eating in school assemblies and through advice to parents. Students are encouraged to make healthy food choices.</li></ul>				
<b>Care and support</b>	<b>Very Good</b>	<b>Very Good</b>	<b>Very Good</b>	<b>Very Good</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Relationships between staff and students are very good. All students are aware of the consequences of their behaviour. Teachers have a secure understanding of students' needs.</li><li>• The school has effective systems for regular tracking of student attendance. However, procedures to ensure students' punctuality at the start of the day are not consistently effective.</li><li>• The specialist staff are very effective in establishing a systematic procedure for the identification of SEN and gifted and talented students. The teaching staff are generally aware of the</li></ul>				



identification process. Identified students with SEN are supported effectively in lessons. Higher-attaining and Gifted and Talented students are sometimes supported well in lessons, although this is not consistent. The specialist staff mostly ensure appropriate modifications to the curriculum to meet the needs of most students.

- The school systematically monitors the wellbeing of all students. The newly introduced wellbeing curriculum has yet to make a full impact. A comprehensive career guidance program successfully guides older students to make informed career choices.

**Areas of Strength:**

- Safeguarding arrangements and students' sense of safety and security.
- The quality of record keeping and maintenance across the school.

**Areas for Improvement:**

- Students' punctuality at the start of the school day.
- The quality of guidance and support for all students particularly higher-attaining and G&T.

## PERFORMANCE STANDARD 6: LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

**Indicators:**

**The effectiveness of leadership**

**Good**

**Self-evaluation and improvement planning**

**Good**

**Partnerships with parents and the community**

**Very Good**

**Governance**

**Very Good**

**Management, staffing, facilities and resources**

**Good**

- The overall quality of leadership and management is good.
- The leadership team, including the principal, sets a clear strategic direction and promotes a shared vision, so enabling the school to address current priorities. The leadership team has been considerably strengthened with the appointment of a new vice principal and a new senior coach for teaching and learning. Consequently, leaders have a good understanding of best practice in



teaching, learning and the curriculum and have a clear commitment to the UAE and national priorities. There is commitment to inclusion, reflected in the very good provision for students with SEN.

- Relationships and communication are professional and effective. There is good delegation of key responsibilities to enable the school to function effectively and most staff have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Morale in the school is very positive. School leaders have ensured a particularly good rate of improvement recently, despite a dip in achievement in public examinations in 2022, and consequently demonstrate good capacity for further improvement. However, some recent improvements are not yet fully embedded. All statutory and regulatory requirements are met.
- The processes for school self-evaluation are very thorough and provide a comprehensive, if overly positive view of students' achievement. Good use is made of external data to support benchmarking. There are good systems for the monitoring and evaluation of lessons, and very good support is available to assist teachers in developing their skills in a sophisticated, student-centred teaching style. Subject leaders are mostly effective and almost all senior and subject leaders are undertaking advanced study in leadership, supported by the school. The school development plan, although rather lengthy, identifies appropriate priorities.
- The partnership with parents is very good. The school informs and involves parents very well, regarding them as partners in their children's learning. There are detailed written reports termly, identifying areas for improvement, and regular face-to-face meetings. There are extensive systems for communicating with parents. They receive information about the curriculum, events and initiatives. There is a very active representative Positive Parents' Partnership group. There are effective community partnerships, mostly through school cluster arrangements, and with local sports clubs and charities.
- The school's Local Advisory Board is very well-structured and proactive, including parental representatives, other local Principals, and representation from the owners. This is a dynamic group with a close knowledge of the school's circumstances. There are well-developed channels for views to be shared through surveys and meetings. Board members are effective in holding school leaders accountable.
- Day-to-day management is good. Lessons, activities and school transport arrangements run very smoothly. Staff have access to very good training to improve their skills and effectiveness. The school premises provide good accommodation, with sufficient specialist areas, although the classrooms are relatively small and this impacts on practical subjects such as Art. It also limits opportunities for free-flow activity in the FS. The outdoor area for sport is limited in size. Resources to support teaching and learning are good. The learning environment is stimulating.

**Areas of Strength:**

- The very good processes for school self-evaluation.
- The impact of recently appointed senior leaders.

**Areas for Improvement:**

- An increased focus upon the significance of external public examination results.
- Opportunities for children to engage in free-flow activities in the FS.



## SPEA ADDITIONAL FOCUS AREAS

### Provision for Arabic Language

- There are 28 teachers who cover Arabic First and Second Language. The student-teacher ratio overall in Arabic is 1:111.
- There are 1460 books in Arabic in the school library. Around 800 texts are fiction, the remainder being reference material. Students can readily access the facility and receive advice on their choice of book.
- Most Arabic books are within the library. There is some use of educational platforms and online libraries which offer reading resources. The school has a reading plan for Arabic and supports teachers with 30 minutes discretionary time daily to develop reading. There are systems to monitor reading in Arabic, according to basic reading skills such as fluency and intonation. Detailed records are maintained, and resources are made available to teachers.
- Students participate in some extra-curricular reading activities, like visiting book fairs, and engaging in reading, writing and cultural competitions. such as the Arabic Reading Challenge and the Sharjah Children's Reading Festival. The school advises parents on helping their children to develop their reading skills.

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

- The school is introducing IBT tests in Arabic and Islamic Education for Years 2 to 9, in addition to TIMSS (2019 and 2023) and PISA (2022). CAT4 diagnostic tests are administered to Years 3 to 12 (other than Year 9) alongside GL Progress tests in English, mathematics and science from Years 2 to 11. A high proportion of students participate across the various tests. Overall, there is good statistically valid external test data available for each cohort, enabling the school to focus on value-added data. This is extensively analysed.
- The principal indicates that extensive preparation was provided ahead of the PISA test in 2022, based upon analysis of past papers and available support material. The question formats are now introduced routinely across the school. Good information has been provided for parents and test results are made available to students and parents.

### Provision for Foundation Stage

- Foundation Stage is part of Phase 1 (which extends to Year 2). There are 193 children in the seven Foundation Stage classes, all in FS2. The ratio of teachers to children is 1: 27. There are seven teachers and seven full-time assistants. The classrooms are relatively compact, but with appropriately sized furniture, good resources and vibrant decoration. There are very good learning resources to support the key areas of language, science, mathematics and creativity, available in designated areas. The configuration of the building limits free-flow activity, but there are stimulating spaces to support indoor and outdoor learning and physical development.
- There is a covered internal area, with a soft surface and climbing apparatus. There is a small hall which provides space for PE activities.
- Children have a three-week transition when they start school. Very few speak English on entry. There is an excellent booklet to help parents understand the approach to teaching phonics.



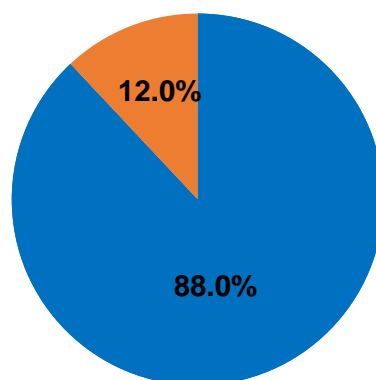


There are planned visits when children move from FS2 to Year 1, and a further induction meeting for parents. Children are assessed on entry against the Early Years standards. Developmental milestones are checked and recorded. Records are passed on when children enter Year 1. There are frequent meetings between teachers and parents.

## VIEWS OF PARENTS

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

No. of Responses = 910



■ Strongly Agree / Agree  
■ Strongly Disagree / Disagree

## STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS & NEXT STEPS

- Improve students' achievement, particularly in the Arabic subjects, by:
  - providing more opportunities for both AFL and ASL students in Phases 3 and 4 to develop their writing skills in Arabic, both at length and for a range of purposes.
  - making better provision to improve the reading skills in Arabic of ASL students in Phase 3.
  - giving greater emphasis to the content and significance of the social studies curriculum in Phases 2 and 3.
  - making more effective use of assessment information to ensure that activities planned across all subjects are more finely tuned to the needs of individual students, especially the higher-attainers.
  - ensuring that the individual needs of the students identified as Gifted and Talented are fully supported and monitored.
  - analysing, responding to, and improving students' performance in external examinations.



- Improve students' skills in innovation and enterprise by:
  - planning activities linked to the curriculum which enable students to develop their innovation and enterprise skills more systematically in lessons.
- Improve punctuality of at the start of the school day by:
  - engaging more effectively with students and parents to address travel issues and delayed arrivals.
  - implementing an incentive program to encourage better levels of punctuality.

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](mailto:schools.review@spea.shj.ae) within three weeks of receiving this report.