هيئة الشارقة للتعليم الخاص
SHARJAH PRIVATE EDUCATION AUTHORITY

ITQAN Programme

School Performance Review (SPR) Report

SCHOLARS INTERNATIONAL ACADEMY

20 – 23 February 2023

Overall Effectiveness	GOOD

ITQAN
إتقان

TABLE OF CONTENTS

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	126
	School location	Mowailah Commercial, Sharjah
	Establishment date	2007
	Language of instruction	English
	School curriculum	UK
	Accreditation body	BSO, Cambridge
	Examination Board	Cambridge, Edexcel
	National Agenda Benchmark Tests/ International assessment	PISA, TIMSS
	Fee range	AED 23,000 to 36,000
Staff	Principal	James Batts
	Chair of Board of Governors	Janet O'Keefe
	Total number of teachers	99
	Total number of teaching assistants	21
	Turnover rate	29.3%
	Main nationality of teachers	UK (20)
Students	Teacher: student ratio	1:11
	Total number of students	1223
	Number of Emirati students	48
	FS: number and gender	Total 192: Boys 126, Girls 66
	Primary: number and gender	Total 573: Boys 287, Girls 286
	Middle: number and gender	Total 240: Boys 156, Girls 84
	High: number and gender	Total 218: Boys 118, Girls 100
	Nationality groups	1. Indian
		2. Pakistani
	Total number of students with special educational needs	53

PROGRESS JOURNEY

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

SUMMARY OF REVIEW FINDINGS

These findings draw from our team of six reviewers' 169 lesson observations, 45 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 principal and vice principal have been in post for 18 months and have set a clear path for improvement. The overall quality of teaching and assessment has improved to good, and this has had a positive effect on attainment and progress in subjects and phases. Students' personal and social development has improved to very good, although their innovation and higher order learning skills remain areas for development. Curriculum implementation and modification has improved to good overall, and protection, care, guidance and support have improved to very good. Weaknesses in leadership and management have been addressed so now this is good overall with some very good features. The principal, senior leadership team and governors have had a significant impact on raising standards across the school. All students benefit from an improved, positive learning environment.

KEY AREAS OF STRENGTH:

- The principal and senior leaders' positive impact in raising standards across the school.
- The school's comprehensive and effective focus on students' health and wellbeing.
- Students' positive and respectful behaviour and relationships with adults and peers in lessons and around the school.
- Students' enjoyment of school as evidenced by their good attendance rates.
- The effective use of cross-curricular links to support student learning.
- Students' collaboration and communication skills.
- The significant impact of governors in raising standards across the school.

KEY AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT:

- The further raising of attainment levels across the school.
- The impact and effectiveness of middle leaders and subject leaders.
- The quality of teaching to match the existing best practices in the school.

PERFORMANCE STANDARD 1:
STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENT

Students' achievement overall is Good.

Indicators:		FS	Primary	Middle	High
Islamic Education	**Attainment**	Good	Good	Good	Good
	Progress	Good	Good	Good	Good
Arabic (as a First Language)	**Attainment**	Good	Good	Good	Good
	Progress	Good	Good	Good	Good
Arabic (as a Second Language)	**Attainment**	Good	Good	Good	N/A
	Progress	Good	Good	Good	N/A
Social Studies	**Attainment**	N/A	Good	Good	N/A
	Progress	N/A	Good	Good	N/A
English	**Attainment**	Very Good	Very Good	Good	Good
	Progress	Very Good	Very Good	Good	Good
Mathematics	**Attainment**	Good	Good	Good	Good
	Progress	Good	Good	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

Islamic Education	- Students' achievement in Islamic Education is good overall. In lessons and in their work, the majority of students make good progress across the school. This does not fully align with the school's internal data, which shows that students make good progress in the Foundation Stage (FS), the Middle and High Phases and very good progress in the Primary Phase. - The school's internal data shows that attainment is good in FS, and outstanding in Primary and Middle and very good in High. This does not fully match with that seen in lessons and in students' work, which shows the majority of students attain above curriculum standards. There is no external data for the subject. - The majority of students in FS, Primary and Middle Phases make more than the expected gains in Islamic Education knowledge, skills and understanding. Students develop a good knowledge and understanding of the Pillars of Islam and the divine revelation in Islam. For example, in FS, the majority of children understand that Islam expects humankind to treat all animals with respect and dignity. In the Primary Phase, the majority of students develop robust knowledge of Islamic values and principles. They speak confidently about good manners in Islam. In the Middle Phase, the majority of students develop the concept of Qasr and Jama. They can determine the distance during which a traveller may shorten prayer. In the High Phase, the majority of students are developing a comprehensive knowledge of the Noble Hadeeth. They define the conditions of a correct and weak Noble Hadeeth. However, progress in understanding the verses and independently applying the rules of the Holy Qur'an recitation is slower in all phases. - The majority of groups of students make above expected progress, although higher-attainers are not always adequately challenged effectively in lessons.

Areas of Strength	Areas for Improvement
- Students' comprehension and understanding of Islamic values and principles across the school. - Students' knowledge and understanding of the Pillars of Islam and the divine revelation in Islam in Primary and Middle.	- The development of Holy Qur'an memorisation and recitation skills, especially in FS and Primary.

Arabic	• Students' achievement in Arabic First Language (AFL) is good overall. In lessons and in their work, students make good progress across all phases. This does not match with the school's internal data for AFL, which shows good progress in the Foundation Stage (FS) and very good progress in Primary and High and acceptable in the Middle Phase. Students studying Arabic Second Language (ASL) make good progress. This does not align with internal data for ASL students, which shows good progress in Primary and acceptable progress in Middle. • Students' attainment in AFL is good all phases. Internal data shows attainment in AFL to be outstanding in FS and Primary, good in Middle and very good in High Phase. For ASL students, the school's data shows that student's attainment is good in Primary and acceptable in Middle. This is not seen in lessons and in students' books where the majority of students attain above curriculum expectations for both AFL and ASL. The external examination, Arabic Benchmark Test (ABT), shows that students' attainment is good in Primary and Middle and very good in High. • Students make good progress in AFL and ASL. In FS and Primary, students' speaking, listening, and reading skills are developed when compared to curriculum expectations. They are able to listen effectively to a text and identify the main characters and ideas and write short sentences about a story. They respond confidently to teachers' questions. However, their skills in applying the basic grammar rules when speaking or writing is still underdeveloped. A few students continue to make basic spelling errors and the same proportion struggle with pronunciation of letters and words. • In the Middle ASL and Middle and High AFL, AFL students show good progress in literacy and reading skills in Arabic in comparison to their starting points. They gradually improve the communication of their ideas using appropriate vocabulary. Students can analyse the text and articulate and interpret information from texts. AFL students in High can extract the metaphorical expressions from the text and apply accurately the grammar rules in their speech and writing. However, students' extended writing skills in both AFL and ASL are less well developed. • The majority of groups of students make above expected progress. However, Gifted and Talented (G&T) students and SEN students do not make as good progress as others.

Areas of Strength	Areas for Improvement
• Students' listening and speaking skills in FS and Primary. • Students' reading comprehension skills and the ability to analyse texts and articulate information in the Middle and High Phases.	• Accurate extended writing skills in AFL and ASL.

Social Studies	- Students' achievement in social studies is good in Primary and Middle. In lessons and in their work, the majority of students make more than the expected progress in the Primary and Middle Phases. This does not fully align with the school's internal data, which shows that students make very good progress in the Primary and Middle Phases. - The school's internal data shows that attainment is outstanding in Primary and Middle. This does not fully match with that seen in lessons and in students' work, which shows the majority of students attain above curriculum standards. - The majority of students develop a good understanding of the individual and society. They can identify different communities and how they are developed. Students are able to connect the Al Aflaj irrigation system to the UNESCO World Heritage site. In the Middle Phase, the majority of students gain a good understanding of the national economy. They can explain the importance of the fur and spice trade in the economy of a country and describe the importance of economic development. Students' wider understanding of trade cultures within and beyond the UAE are less well developed. - The majority of groups of students make above expected progress. Some lower attaining students do not make sufficient progress.

Areas of Strength	**Areas for Improvement**
- Students' use of technology to research social studies concepts in Primary and Middle. - Students' acquisition of appropriate knowledge and understanding of the history and geographical features of the UAE in Primary and Middle.	Students' wider understanding of trade cultures within and beyond the UAE in Primary and Middle.

English	
	- Students' achievement in English is good overall. The school's internal data shows that students make good progress in the Foundation Stage (FS) and the Primary and High Phases and acceptable progress in the Middle Phase. This does not fully match with what is seen in lessons and in students work, where the large majority of students in FS and the Primary Phases and the majority of students in the Middle and High Phases make progress that is above curriculum expectations. - The school's internal data shows that attainment is good in FS, Primary and High and acceptable in Middle. This does not fully match with that seen in lessons and in students' work, which shows the large majority of students in FS and Primary and the majority of students in Middle and High reach levels of attainment which are above curriculum standards. External data shows that attainment in GL Progress Tests is weak in FS and Primary, and acceptable in Middle. In the High Phase, attainment is very good for IGCSE but weak for AS and A Level. - The large majority of students in FS and Primary Phases and the majority of students in Middle and High Phases develop secure literacy knowledge and skills. In FS, children effectively use phonics strategies to identify sounds, develop their vocabulary and read and write simple words accurately. In the Primary Phase, students build on their phonic strategies to develop understanding of spoken and written language. Talk for Writing has improved writing generally, although more consistency is needed in how this is used in each year group. In the Middle Phase, students use increasingly sophisticated vocabulary to suggest why writers use specific language, although their reading skills are less consistent. The majority can write accurate paragraphs, although handwriting is not always clear. By the end of the High Phase, students recognise the effect of tone, use of opinion and the range of ideas within a text. - The majority of groups of students make above expected progress overall. Higher attaining students and the gifted and talented are not consistently challenged and so do not always make the progress they are capable of. Girls' literacy skills are better developed than those of the boys.

	Areas of Strength	Areas for Improvement
	- Students' effective use of phonics strategies in FS and Primary Phase. - Students' speaking and discussion skills across all phases.	- Students' reading skills in Middle Phase. - The consistency of students' writing skills in Primary Phase.

Mathematics	• Students' achievement in mathematics is good overall. The school's internal data shows that students make acceptable progress in the Foundation Stage (FS) and very good progress in the Primary, Middle and High Phases. This does not match with that seen in lessons and in students' work, where the majority of students in all phases make progress which is above curriculum expectations.
	• The school's internal data shows that attainment is acceptable in FS and very good in the Primary, Middle and High Phases. 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 GL assessment data shows that attainment is weak in the Primary Phase, and very good in the Middle Phase. There is no external data for FS or the High Phase.
	• The majority of students in FS, Primary, Middle and High Phases develop good mathematical knowledge and skills. In FS, children develop good number skills across a range of practical counting activities. In the Primary Phase, the majority of students can measure accurately using a ruler and understand mathematical language linked to measure, such as perimeter. They apply the four operations accurately in copybook activities, but do not always know which operation to use to solve problems. In the Middle Phase, students can use tally marks effectively to gather data to form graphs. In the High Phase, the majority of students develop good algebraic skills and can identify the differences between scalar and vector quantities and can use these to solve speed and distance problems. Across all phases, students lack mental agility in solving computations with too many reliant on calculators.
	• The majority of groups of students make above expected progress overall. Some students who have special educational needs (SEN) do not make sufficient progress.

Areas of Strength	Areas for Improvement
• Algebraic skills in the High Phase. • Number skills in FS and the Primary Phase.	• Mental agility across all phases. • Mathematical problem solving, particularly in the Middle and High Phases.

Science	• Students' achievement in science is good overall. Students make good progress across all phases. This is in agreement with the school's evaluation of progress in the High Phase. It does not match the school's internal assessments which show that children's progress in the Foundation Stage (FS) is weak, and that students make outstanding progress in the Primary Phase and very good progress in the Middle Phase. • Students' attainment is good overall. This does not match levels of attainment in school data which show that students reach an acceptable level of attainment in the Foundation Stage and that attainment in the Primary and Middle Phases is very good. Students' attainment in the GL external assessment in science is good overall in the Primary and Middle Phases. Although last year's IGCSE data indicates outstanding attainment, in the years prior to that, attainment was variable. This is similar to the pattern of attainment at A-level. • Students make good progress above curriculum standards when developing their scientific knowledge and understanding. In the Foundation Stage, children respond enthusiastically when using first-hand experiences to explore the structure of flowering plants. In the Primary Phase, students develop their scientific skills. For example, they make careful observations of the changes that take place when different substances are mixed together. In the Middle Phase, students begin to understand the inter-relationships between living organisms and the effects of human activity on the environment, for example the causes of air pollution and the effect on human health. High Phase students extend their knowledge and understanding of the physical sciences. For example, they can explain electron transfer in redox reactions and carry out associated calculations. They build models of polymers and describe how bonds are formed between the monomers. Across the phases, students' practical science skills are less well developed, partly due to a lack of access to resources and facilities. • The majority of student groups make good progress. Students with special educational needs and those identified as gifted and talented (G&T) do not make the progress they are capable of.

Areas of Strength	Areas for Improvement
• Students' awareness of the application of science to their lives and the wider world environment across the school. • Primary students' skills of scientific observation and accurate record keeping.	• Students' practical and experimental skills in upper Primary and Middle Phases.

Other subjects	• Students' achievement in other subjects is good overall. Students make good progress in most other subjects. They make very good progress in Art and PE. • Students' attainment in other subjects is good overall, but very good in Art. In lessons and in their work, the majority of students attain levels above curriculum standards. • In Art lessons, students produce artwork that is interesting, colourful and expressive in a range of different styles. All students use the computer laboratory to develop their computer skills. Students participate enthusiastically in PE lessons throughout the school. Boys have had significant success in sports, including in football and basketball. In PE lessons, students are developing skills of teamwork, collaboration and co-operation. In the Primary Phase, students participate enthusiastically in Music where they are developing an understanding of musical composition and terminology. Moral Education students can define and exemplify producers and consumers as part of the economic system. History students in the High Phase are able to explain the reasons for Adolf Hitler's rise to power and the causes of the Second World War. Business Studies students understand the different types of leadership and the advantages and disadvantages associated with each. In the non-practical lessons, groupwork is collaborative and purposeful but there are limited opportunities for students to develop their critical thinking and independent problem-solving skills. • There are no significant differences in progress between different groups of students.

Areas of Strengths	Areas for Improvement
• Students' enthusiastic participation in PE, Art and Music. • The positive, highly productive learning environment in Art.	• Student-centred learning in the non-practical subjects. • Opportunities for students to develop their subject-specific critical thinking and independent problem-solving skills.

Learning Skills	• Students' learning skills are good overall. Students' engagement and accountability towards their learning is consistently strong throughout the school. They demonstrate effective collaboration skills in various learning environments, particularly in the High Phase.
	• Students exhibit a positive attitude towards learning. Most students engage well with the tasks assigned during lessons. They demonstrate effective interpersonal skills and interact with their peers and teachers in a positive and cordial manner.
	• Students apply their acquired knowledge to real-world situations well and establish connections between different areas of learning. Students can relate their learning to UAE heritage and culture when encouraged to do so. Most students are able to relate what they are doing to the world around them.
	• Students demonstrate acceptable levels of innovation, enterprise, enquiry research, and critical thinking skills. They use learning technologies throughout the phases. They are able to conduct appropriate research using various technologies to facilitate their learning, where they are encouraged to think critically while working on problem-solving tasks. However, this approach to learning is not consistent across subjects and students' innovation and enterprise skills are generally underdeveloped.

Areas of Strengths	Areas for Improvement
• Students' collaboration and communication skills. • Students' effective interaction among their peers and teachers to support their learning.	• Students' innovation, and enterprise skills.

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

Indicators:	FS	Primary	Middle	High
Personal development	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good

• Students' personal and social development and their innovation skills are very good overall. Students are responsible, self-reliant, and respond well to critical feedback. They have positive attitudes in lessons and around the school, although a small minority rely too much on teacher-direction and sometimes need reassurance.

- Behaviour is very good in lessons and around the school. Students are courteous to adults and other students and are generally self-disciplined. Their very positive behaviour contributes to the harmonious working environment.
- Students are sensitive to the needs of others. Relationships between students and school staff are respectful. Most students willingly help others in lessons.
- Students have a sound understanding of healthy living and eating. Their understanding is supported through the school curriculum, although some students do not take full responsibility for their healthy lifestyle choices.
- Attendance is very good at 96%. However, a number of students often arrive late to school.

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

- Students have a strong appreciation and understanding of the impact of Islamic values on the UAE society. They demonstrate these values in their relationships with their peers and adults in the school. Students understand the importance of mosques and Friday prayers as parts of daily life in the UAE.
- Students are knowledgeable about many Emirati customs and traditions. They can talk about the development of UAE society and can describe the historical economic journey from trade to commerce and tourism. They engage in UAE national celebration activities in the school and through participation in a variety of cultural events outside school.
- Students in all phases, take pride in their own cultures, and especially so in the Foundation Stage and the Primary and Middle Phases. They show great respect and clear appreciation for other cultures.

Social responsibility and innovation skills	Good	Good	Good	Good

- Students lead community-linked activities, ranging from creating displays in the school corridors to raising funds for causes such as the earthquake disaster in Turkey and Syria and broader issues such as breast cancer awareness. They also support local organisations, such as the Red Crescent and orphanages.
- Most students enjoy work and taking part in projects, but often rely on others to take the lead. HPL Ambassadors meet regularly with the learner leadership team to plan for and run innovative events. For example, science week involves students promoting innovative ideas such as games that talk about Biology, the food web, Chemistry and Physics.
- Students' strong environmental awareness is promoted through the school curriculum. They generally keep the school tidy, but their involvement in environmental projects further afield is limited.

Areas of Strength:

- Students' very positive behaviour.
- The positive relationships amongst students and with staff.

Areas for Improvement:

- The development of students' innovation skills.
- Students' involvement in environmental projects beyond those at school.

PERFORMANCE STANDARD 3:
TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT

Indicators:	FS	Primary	Middle	High
Teaching for effective learning	**Good**	**Good**	**Good**	**Good**

- The overall quality of teaching and assessment is good. Most teachers demonstrate secure subject knowledge and understand how students learn. On occasions, teaching is not sufficiently customised for groups of students, such as low and high attaining students.
- Teachers plan lessons that are well aligned to curriculum standards. Most teachers create a positive learning climate to support students' learning by quickly moving students to active learning.
- Teaching strategies provide support and challenge to meet the needs of different groups of students. Occasionally, the support for students with special educational needs and challenge for high-attaining students is inconsistent across the school.
- Teacher-student interactions are positive, and the majority of students are engaged effectively in lessons. Most teachers use targeted questioning well to check students' understanding and extend their learning.
- Most teachers plan problem-solving and critical thinking skills for lessons. However, too many activities are over-teacher directed with limited open-ended questioning to enable students to apply their problem-solving or critical thinking skills.

Assessment	**Good**	**Good**	**Good**	**Good**

- Internal assessment processes are consistent and in line with curriculum requirements. They provide useful information about students' progress. The school's use of external national and international data provides detailed information about students' current and predicted levels of attainment.
- The school analyses student data in detail. This information is now being used by school leaders to understand patterns of performance.
- Most teachers have access to assessment information. However, it is inconsistently used to plan lessons.
- Teachers have a good knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of individual students. However, support for low-attaining students, those who have special educational needs and challenge for high-attaining students is inconsistent.

Areas of Strength:
• Teachers' secure knowledge of their subject. • The school's internal assessment processes.

Areas for Improvement:
• The development of students' skills in critical thinking, problem-solving, enquiry, innovation and research. • The use of assessment information to meet the needs of all students.

PERFORMANCE STANDARD 4: CURRICULUM

Indicators:	FS	Primary	Middle	High
Curriculum design and implementation	**Good**	**Good**	**Good**	**Good**

- The overall quality of the curriculum is good. The curriculum follows all statutory requirements and is broad and balanced, with content and activities that are well matched to the age of the students. This is underpinned across all phases by the High-Performance Learning (HPL) framework.
- Planning across all phases of education within the school builds on prior learning and meets most students' needs. It is structured so that students learn systematically. However, it does not always consistently support the learning for higher achieving students.
- The outcomes of student surveys have resulted in a range of curricular choices for students in the Middle and High Phases. Students are able to study subjects that they are interested in and that develop talents.
- Cross-curricular links are meaningful and planned carefully. They are managed well and enhance students' transfer of learning between different subjects to develop key skills. Regular curriculum reviews identify development priorities to ensure good provision in almost all subjects.

Curriculum adaptation	**Good**	**Good**	**Good**	**Good**

- The curriculum has effective adaptations to meet the needs of almost all groups of students. Read, Write, Inc ensures a consistent approach to the teaching of phonics to successfully develop students' reading, communication and vocabulary in FS and Primary.
- Lessons are still generally teacher-led and are quite often driven by the textbooks. Opportunities for students to be independent, innovative and develop their enterprise skills are limited during

lessons across curricular areas. Although there are a range of extra-curricular activities that develop these skills, they are not consistently developed in lessons. The Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) scheme has resulted in an increased use of technology in Primary, but this is not yet seen consistently in lessons across all subjects.

- The curriculum includes programmes which develop students' knowledge, understanding and appreciation of the heritage of the UAE. This includes Emirati traditions, culture and the values that influence UAE society.

Areas of Strength:

- Programmes that develop students' skills, such as reading, communication and vocabulary in FS and Primary.
- Cross-curricular links in learning across all phases.

Areas for Improvement:

- Opportunities for enterprise and innovation in lessons.
- Modification of the curriculum to effectively meet the needs of all students, particularly those who are higher attaining.

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

Indicators:	FS	Primary	Middle	High
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection /safeguarding	**Very Good**	**Very Good**	**Very Good**	**Very Good**

- The protection, care, guidance, and support of students is very good overall. The safeguarding procedures in place are highly effective, including those for school transportation. Child protection policies and procedures are fully understood by all staff, students and parents. Protective measures are in place to ensure that students are protected from all forms of abuse and bullying.
- Health, safety and security management is effective. Comprehensive records are kept and regularly reviewed. Buildings and equipment are maintained in excellent condition. The school premises are very well suited to learners, including those with special educational needs. However, the school does not have an elevator.
- The school effectively promotes healthy living. Participation in sports competitions both internally and externally motivates students to remain fit and healthy. The variety of food provided by students is checked to ensure that students have made healthy choices for their lunchboxes or when purchasing food from the canteen.

Care and support	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good

- Effective behaviour management procedures ensure behaviour is consistently very good. Attendance is very good. Students' enjoyment of school is clear from their very high attendance. However, the consistency of punctuality to school in the morning remains an area of focus for the school.
- The school has an effective system to identify SEN and gifted and talented students. Specialist staff are available to support SEN students in lessons. Teachers are aware of those students who are high attaining in their subject or are generally gifted and talented and plan differentiated activities for them. However, the delivery and resourcing of activities and tasks which stretch, challenge and advance the learning of these students is not consistently applied in lessons across subjects and phases.
- Students' wellbeing and personal development are closely monitored. Students have regular health checks throughout the year. Comprehensive information and guidance is provided for the older students to assist with their next steps in education, including career fairs in school and visits to universities.

Areas of Strength:

- Staff-student relationships across the school.
- The school's effective procedures for safeguarding.

Areas for Improvement:

- Support and challenge in lessons for students who are gifted and talented.
- Students' punctuality to school.

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 quality of Leadership and Management is good overall. The principal and senior leaders are committed to UAE national priorities. The consultative approach to leadership, including collaborating closely with the school's governing body, ensures the school has effective capacity to make the necessary changes to provision and to raise standards.
- Relationships in the school are respectful and professional. Communications between leaders and teachers are effective, but there are still issues with ensuring all teachers to follow the principles of HPL pedagogy. Teacher morale is high. However, Heads of Department and Heads of Phases have still not been rigorous enough in monitoring and improving the quality of teaching.
- The school's internal evaluation processes are comprehensive and based on analysing contributions from all major stakeholders as well as the analysis of relevant school data. However, middle leaders generally overestimate the quality of teaching. The school knows its strengths and areas for development well and departmental action plans are in place.
- The school works very effectively to gain the support and engagement of parents. Communication channels with parents are extensive and effective. Parental support makes a positive contribution to improving student achievement. The school provides detailed reporting on students' academic and personal development. Parents are appreciative of the access to school staff.
- The governing body has a significant impact on the performance of the school. The principal and senior leaders are held accountable for the school performance and report regularly on student performance and strategic decisions of the school.
- The school is managed very effectively on a daily basis. The school is fully staffed. Teachers have been provided with regular professional development. The impact of this has ensured most teachers focus on delivering generally effective student-centred learning.
- The sports facilities are extensive. There are dedicated Music, Design and Drama classrooms which effectively support students' wider learning. However, the specialist teaching of Primary and Middle science is limited by the cramped conditions. Subject resources are generally flexible and appropriate for the range of students.

Areas of Strength:

- The principal and senior leaders' positive impact in raising standards across the school.
- The significant impact of governors in raising standards across the school.

Areas for Improvement:

- The impact and effectiveness of middle and subject leaders.
- Science specialist facilities.

SPEA ADDITIONAL FOCUS AREAS

Provision for Arabic Language

- The school has 13 Arabic teachers, 5 Arabic First Language (AFL) and 8 Arabic Second Language (ASL) teachers. Arabic is provided for 2066 students from FS1 to Year 13. Arabic is taken as an option from Year 11 to Year 13 but is compulsory for Arab passport holders in these years. The teacher/student ratio is approximately 1:24 per class.
- The school supports the Arabic targets in the UAE National Agenda with the subject integrated into relevant topics, including those to do with heritage and culture. The library has approximately 700 Arabic fiction and non-fiction books, including dictionaries, children's stories and Arabic language resources for beginners. These cover language levels 1 to 9.
- A wide range of Arabic-themed activities occur each year. National commemorations are celebrated each year. Assemblies feature Arabic-themed stories and songs. The school regularly participates in competitions.
- Parents have access to Arabic teachers should they have any concerns about their child's progress in the subject. They attend formal parent-teacher meetings with staff twice a year. Students who do not make sufficient progress are given extra support, attend after-school lessons.

The school's use of external benchmarking data

- All students at the school sit external assessments. External examinations include the Cambridge IGCSE, AS and A Level. The school enters students for the required National Agenda international assessments.
- Benchmarking assessments include CAT4, GL assessment and the PASS assessments to evaluate students' wellbeing and confidence. The school uses CAT4 as a diagnostic tool throughout the school and triangulates the results with other benchmark/diagnostic tests. This generates any required student intervention plans and adaptations to lesson planning and delivery.
- Parents are kept fully informed of all tests to be carried out and the outcomes for their children. Teachers attend Professional Development workshops to improve their understanding of the assessments and how to interpret and use the results to inform lesson planning and curriculum modifications. Students are made familiar with the structure and timing of the assessments.
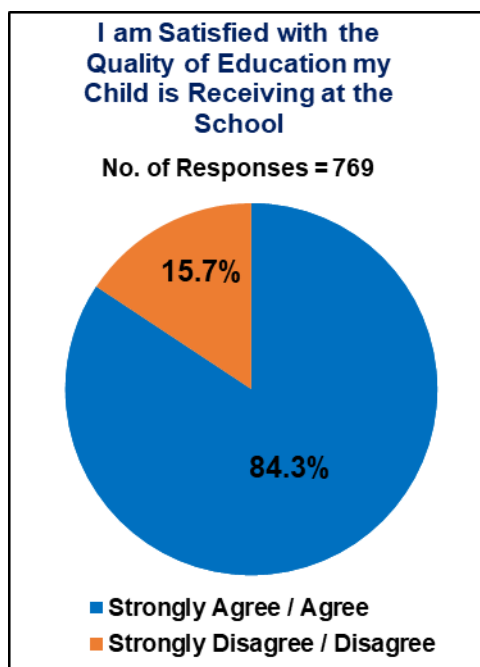
Provision for FS

- The Foundation Stage is comprised of two foundation stages, FS1 and FS2. Foundation Stage comprises seven teachers and eight teaching assistants. The ratio of teachers to children is 1:10.
- The internal learning environment includes book corners and provision areas, which change per theme. The books are English reading books plus there is a selection of appropriate Arabic books. There are many resources to assist with writing. The children's progress in their reading and writing is reported regularly to parents. A weekly home learning activity is also given to

parents. Parents can also access a digital library to support their English development at home. There are also many resources to support numeracy including early years software including a range of manipulatives and magnetic tumblers. Children also have access to digital devices and parents can track students' progress digitally.

- The outdoor environment includes many large play areas with opportunities to experience soil for growing plants, weighing scales and a play kitchen area. A number of large activity structures support children with their physical development and motor skills.

- When children enroll, they and their parents are invited to the school. Parents of enrolled children attend a workshop before the academic year starts and are provided with all the information needed to prepare their children for school.

- Communication with parents is regular. A weekly curriculum plan is sent to parents, formal meetings are held every half term with a formal progress report issued termly. The seven areas of learning in the Foundation Stage are delivered through a play-based based Early Years curriculum.

VIEWS OF PARENTS

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

No. of Responses = 769

15.7%

84.3%

■ Strongly Agree / Agree
■ Strongly Disagree / Disagree

School Performance Review of Scholars International Academy
20 – 23 February 2023

STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS & NEXT STEPS

- Raise attainment across the school to consistently very good/outstanding levels, particularly in the core subjects:
  - in Islamic Education, by improving students' Holy Qur'an memorisation and recitation skills, especially in FS and Primary.
  - in Arabic, by always using the classical Arabic language in lessons and applying grammar rules accurately, particularly for extended writing tasks.
  - in social studies, by students' always linking real-life scenarios to topic content.
  - in English, by improving students' reading skills, particularly in the Middle Phase.
  - in mathematics, by developing all students' mental agility skills.
  - in science, by improving the range, availability and use of simple practical equipment, particularly in Primary and Middle Phase lessons.

- Improve the impact and effectiveness of middle and subject leaders by:
  - continuing to provide relevant professional development in key leadership areas.
  - embedding a more rigorous system of accountability for subject performance, particularly in raising long term attainment levels.
  - ensuring all middle leaders undertake rigorous lesson observations, particularly in evaluating and feeding back on the implementation of the principles of High-Performance Learning.
  - ensuring subject leaders provide appropriate subject-specific support and guidance to all teachers delivering their subject.

- Improve the quality of teaching to match the existing best practices at the school by:
  - all teachers planning and delivering lessons that have a clear focus on student-centred learning with minimal teacher exposition.
  - using student assessment data more effectively to inform lesson delivery to meet the needs and aspiration of all students.
  - ensuring all lessons have activities and tasks which involve students developing and using their innovation, critical thinking and problem-solving skills.
  - ensuring teachers use targeted questions more effectively in lessons to assess student understanding and accelerate learning for all, particularly the higher attaining students.

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.

School Performance Review of Scholars International Academy
20 – 23 February 2023

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.