



هيئة الشارقة للتعليم الخاص  
SHARJAH PRIVATE EDUCATION AUTHORITY

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

**AL MARIFA INTERNATIONAL PRIVATE  
SCHOOL**

30 January - 2 February 2023

Overall Effectiveness

**GOOD**





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## PURPOSE AND SCOPE

Sharjah Private Education Authority (SPEA) is grateful to Sharjah private schools and their stakeholders including students and their parents, teachers and staff, school leaders and governors for sharing their views of the school and engaging with our review teams during this School Performance Review (SPR). This report shares the findings of this four-day review. It identifies strengths and areas for improvement along with strategic recommendations intended to help the school bring about its own improvement.

### Purpose

The main purpose of this SPR is to assist schools in their continuous improvement journey through an external validation of their progress, quality and capacity to improve in the context of Sharjah Private Education Authority's (SPEA) vision to achieve *'Excellence in Education'* by 2024. SPEA has been a pioneer in supporting the private education sector in Sharjah, driven by its mission of *'Enabling the learner's community to grow and achieve aspiring outcomes through supportive and effective services.'* This new and innovative approach to school review is an important part of our strategy for achieving this vision because it supports continuous school improvement.

### Scope

This review is guided by Performance Standards 1 to 6 and seventeen related Performance Indicators taken from the 2015-16 UAE School Inspection Framework. These Performance Standards relate to Student's achievement, Students' personal and social development, and their innovation skills, Teaching and assessment, Curriculum, The protection, care, guidance and support of students, and Leadership and management.

The findings relating to the six Standards and their associated Indicators will provide judgements based on the six-level scale in the UAE School Inspection Framework. These judgements will help schools understand the impact of their provision on students' academic and personal outcomes.

Where applicable, the SPR also gathered information about the provision for Arabic language, the school's use of international benchmarking data, and the provision for KG.



## THE SCHOOL PERFORMANCE REVIEW PROCESS

The SPR uses the six Performance Standards (PS) and seventeen Performance Indicators (PI) from the UAE School Inspection Framework issued in 2015, as follows:

**Performance Standard 1: Students' achievement**, comprising:

- PI 1.1 Attainment
- PI 1.2 Progress
- PI 1.3 Learning skills

**Performance Standard 2: Students' personal and social development, and their innovation skills**, comprising:

- PI 2.1 Personal development
- PI 2.2 Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures
- PI 2.3 Social responsibility and innovation skills

**Performance Standard 3: Teaching and assessment**, comprising:

- PI 3.1 Teaching for effective learning
- PI 3.2 Assessment

**Performance Standard 4: Curriculum**, comprising:

- PI 4.1 Curriculum design and implementation
- PI 4.2 Curriculum adaptation

**Performance Standard 5: The protection, care, guidance and support of students**, comprising:

- PI 5.1 Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection/safeguarding
- PI 5.2 Care and support

**Performance Standard 6. Leadership and management**, comprising:

- PI 6.1 The effectiveness of leadership
- PI 6.2 Self-evaluation and improvement planning
- PI 6.3 Partnerships with parents and the community
- PI 6.4 Governance
- PI 6.5 Management, staffing, facilities and resources



## Judgements

The judgements stated in this report use the following six-level scale.

<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 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	135
	School location	Al Yarmouk, Sharjah
	Establishment date	1986
	Language of instruction	English
	School curriculum	American & British
	Accreditation body	COGNIA & AIAA
	Examination Board	Cambridge, Pearson, ACT, College Board (PSAT,SAT,AP)
	National Agenda Benchmark Tests/ International assessment	PISA, TIMSS, PIRLS, CAT4, PT, EMSAT, MAP
	Fee range	AED 12,700 to 23,200
	Principal	Samer Serhane
	Chair of Board of Governors	Sheikh Dr.Fisal Bin Khaled Bin Khalid Al Qassimi
	Total number of teachers	230
	Total number of teaching assistants	3
	Turnover rate	7%
	Main nationality of teachers	Jordanian
	Teacher: student ratio	1:15
	Total number of students	3378
	Number of Emirati students	137
	Phase 1: number and gender	Total 274: Girls 124, Boys 150
	Phase 2: number and gender	Total 751: Girls 339, Boys 412
	Phase 3: number and gender	Total 942: Girls 412, Boys 530
	Phase 4: number and gender	Total 1411: Girls 678, Boys 733
Nationality groups	1. Egyptian 2. Jordanian	
Total number of students with special educational needs	24	

## 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' 202 lesson observations, 44 of which were carried out jointly with school leaders.

The school's overall effectiveness is Good. This is an improvement since the previous inspection in 2018 where the overall effectiveness grade was Acceptable. Senior leadership in the school is good, with some very good elements. Leaders, the governing body and stakeholders promote improvement well through the strategic plans and this has resulted in improved achievement in English, mathematics, science, and all Arabic medium subjects. The school operates a dual US and UK curriculum in Phase 4. UK curriculum students achieve higher results in external examinations than those in US curriculum, however all students move on to university. Teachers' strategies are effective in meeting the needs of students and teachers are enthusiastic and dedicated. Students enjoy taking responsibility for their own learning, for example through the STEAM initiatives. Student attendance is outstanding, and students have said how much they enjoy coming to school. The school has very good facilities and provides a very safe, hygienic, and secure environment which effectively supports students' learning.

### KEY AREAS OF STRENGTH:

- The vision and strategic direction of the leadership team.
- Students' initiative to form a range of clubs.
- Improved achievement in all subjects across most phases.
- Improved data systems and data analysis.
- Students' attendance, personal and social development and the arrangements for their protection, care, guidance, and support.

### KEY AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT:

- Build upon the significant improvements in students' achievement since the last review.
- Continue to improve teaching and learning to meet the needs of all groups of students and become a fully inclusive school.
- Continue to build leadership capacity at all levels.



## MAIN REVIEW REPORT

### PERFORMANCE STANDARD 1: STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENT

**Students' achievement overall is Good.**

Indicators:		Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4
Islamic Education	Attainment	N/A	Good	Good	Good
	Progress	N/A	Good	Good	Good
Arabic (as a First Language)	Attainment	Good	Good	Good	Good
	Progress	Good	Good	Good	Good
Arabic (as a Second Language)	Attainment	N/A	Good	Good	Acceptable
	Progress	N/A	Good	Good	Acceptable
Social Studies	Attainment	N/A	Good	Good	Good
	Progress	N/A	Good	Good	Good
English	Attainment	Good	Good	Good	Good
	Progress	Good	Good	Good	Good
Mathematics	Attainment	Good	Good	Good	Good
	Progress	Good	Good	Good	Good
Science	Attainment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good	Very Good
	Progress	Good	Good	Good	Very 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 recent work, the majority of students make good progress. This does not match the school's internal data which shows outstanding progress throughout all phases.
- Internal assessment data shows that students achieve outstanding attainment in all phases. This is not seen in lessons, where the majority of students attain above curriculum standards.
- Students make good progress overall. In Phase 2, students show a strong understanding of Islamic principles and values. This is reflected in memorising bedtime supplication and permission etiquettes in Islam. Students begin to recite and memorise Suras like Quraish and talk about the general ideas derived from them. However, a minority of students cannot give the reasons and occasions of the verses' revelations. In Phase 3, most students understand the Islamic Sharia and laws and the Prophet's (PBUH) Seerah clearly, they can talk about the biography of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). However, only a few students can find evidence from the Holy Qur'an and the Noble Hadeeth to justify their answers. Generally, students across both the US and UK curricula make the same good progress in Phase 4. Students in Phase 4 UK curriculum can extend their discussions and understanding of values and principals. For example, the Muslim Dress Code, Modesty for Men and the Hijab for Women, and explain what is meant by the hijab and the importance of this to Muslims. In the US curriculum, students can recite verses from the Holy Qur'an correctly like Surah Al Nazi'at and talk about the general meaning of the verses. However, students' recitation and application of Tajweed rules is underdeveloped.
- Overall, the majority of groups make good progress. Female students make slightly better progress than male students in lessons and in school internal assessment. Students with special educational needs (SEN) and low achievers make good progress, however support in lessons is inconsistent.

**Areas of Strength**

- Students' understanding of Islamic principles and values in their daily lives.
- Students' understanding of following Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) as a role model.

**Areas for Improvement**

- Students' skills to use the Holy Qur'an and the Noble Hadeeth to justify and support answers independently in Phase 3.



<b>Arabic</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Students' achievement in Arabic First language (AFL) and Arabic Second language (ASL) is good overall. In lessons and their work, the majority of students make good progress across all phases except Phase 4 ASL, where students make acceptable progress. This does not match with the school's internal data which shows all students make outstanding progress across all phases.</li><li>Internal assessment data shows attainment as outstanding. External examinations data in Phase 4, for the few students who take these, indicate outstanding attainment. However, attainment at this level is not seen in lessons and in students' books where, overall, the majority of students attain levels that are above curriculum standards.</li><li>Overall progress is good. In Phase 1, children recognise the form and sound of the Arabic language alphabet and can understand simple texts. In Phase 2 AFL, students can read different texts correctly and meaningfully out loud. Students in Phase 2 ASL recognise the form and sound of the letters of the Arabic language alphabet, and understand familiar words, expressions and sentences in texts related to daily life. However, vocabulary and language structures are less developed. In Phase 3 AFL, students can understand, appreciate, analyse and evaluate curriculum related literary texts, whereas ASL students can only recognise common memorised words and expressions, and support ideas in short texts. In Phase 4 AFL, students can engage in discussions and debates on familiar topics using standard Arabic, whereas for students' speaking in ASL, this is less well developed. They can understand the main idea and supporting details in texts and dialogue about personal and general topics, but are less confident in oral interpretation and pronunciation, and expression in writing. Students studying the UK curriculum express themselves and communicate in the Arabic language more confidently than students studying the US curriculum.</li><li>Overall, the majority of groups of students make better than expected progress. In Phase 4 ASL, all groups of students make at least the expected progress. In Phase 4 there is a slight difference between the progress of boys and girls.</li></ul>	
	<b>Areas of Strength</b>	<b>Areas for Improvement</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Students generally engage confidently in discussions and debates on familiar topics using standard Arabic language.</li><li>Students' listening and comprehension skills.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>ASL students' skills to speak and their ability to write more expressively in Phase 4.</li></ul>



<b>Social Studies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Students' achievement in social studies is good overall. In lessons and in their work, the majority of students make good progress across all phases. This does not align to the school's internal data, where progress is outstanding.</li><li>• Internal assessment data show students' attainment to be outstanding in all phases. This is not seen in lessons and in students' books, where the majority of students attain above curriculum standards.</li><li>• Students make good progress overall. In Phase 2, students develop secure knowledge of key initiatives in the UAE to promote sustainability, research and innovation. For example, they can talk about Masdar City and its pioneering work. In Phase 3, students have good knowledge and understanding of national identity and citizenship. For example, they can talk confidently about the achievements of His Highness Sheikh Zayed (RIP) and the impact of his leadership. However, students' ability to connect past events in history to events happening now is not fully developed. In Phase 4, students studying UK and US curriculum make the same good progress. They develop secure knowledge and understanding of the national economy. For example, they can talk about industries related to holidays, transport, accommodation, and distinguish the differences between different types of tourism. However, students' understanding of the tourism industry, and the negative and positive effects of tourism on a country are less well developed.</li><li>• Overall, the majority of all groups of students, including SEN students, make better than expected progress across all phases.</li></ul>	
	<b>Areas of Strength</b>	<b>Areas for Improvement</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Students' knowledge and understanding of Sheikh Zayed's (RIP) sayings.</li><li>• Students' understanding of the national economy.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Students' skills to connect past events in history to events happening now in Phase 3.</li><li>• Students' deeper understanding of the tourism industry and its effects in Phase 4.</li></ul>



English

- Students' achievement in English is good overall. In lessons and in their work, the majority of students make good progress across all phases. This does not match with the school's internal data, which shows all students make outstanding progress across the school.
- External assessment data indicates that attainment is acceptable in Phases 2 and 3. In Phase 4, students studying the UK curriculum obtain outstanding results, however these outcomes are for a minority of students in the phase and do not represent the full cohort's attainment overall. In lessons and in students' books, the majority of students attain above curriculum standards.
- Students' progress is good overall. In Phase 1, children develop phonics skills and can write both upper and lowercase letters and recite their vowels. They learn to speak accurately through playing, singing and rehearsing letters and words. In Phase 2, students expand their skills and knowledge through the STEAM project using higher level vocabulary and language when speaking and writing. In Phase 3, students make good progress in literacy as they explore how poets use rhyme and investigate a variety of techniques to express the emotions evoked. They develop their understanding of alliteration, assonance, consonance, and repetition. In Phase 4, students studying UK and US curriculum make similar good progress. UK curriculum students develop their language skills further through debating about air pollution. The students debate a range of perspectives, are confident and rational about their reasoning and speak articulately. However, a minority of students find it difficult to express themselves persuasively. In the US curriculum, students study a Robert Frost poem, and learn about rhythm, scansion, and metaphors in poetry. In both curriculums, extended writing is less well developed.
- Overall, the majority of groups of students make better than expected progress, however girls make better progress than boys.

**Areas of Strength**

- Students are confident and articulate speakers.
- Vocabulary and language in Phase 2 speaking and writing.

**Areas for Improvement**

- Students' skills to express themselves using persuasive language in Phase 4.
- Students' extended writing skills in Phase 4.



<b>Mathematics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Students' overall achievement is good across all phases. The internal assessment data indicates that students' progress is outstanding in Phase 1 and 2 and very good in Phases 3 and 4. This does not match the lesson observations. In lessons and their work, students' progress is good across all phases.</li><li>• Internal school data indicates that students' attainment is outstanding. This was not seen in lessons and in students' work. External attainment data for the US curriculum indicates acceptable progress. For the UK curriculum, external examination data indicates very good attainment for the minority of students who take these. Overall, students' attainment was seen to be good in all phases.</li><li>• Overall progress is good. In Phase 1, children are confident in their use of number and quantity and can multiply and divide two-digit numbers. They can identify and build three dimensional shapes using a range of resources. In Phase 2, students expand these skills and can accurately add, subtract, and multiply fractions. Students in Phase 3 can calculate the perimeter of polygons using a combination of mental mathematics and concrete manipulatives. In Phase 4, students studying UK and US curriculum make similar progress. In the US curriculum, students are confident in employing their conversion of fractions and can interpret and solve problems of trigonometric equations and different shaped objects. UK curriculum students use sine and co-sines to interpret and solve trigonometric problems. In all phases, students' ability to transfer and apply their mathematical thinking to real-life contexts is less well developed, especially in Phase 2.</li><li>• Overall, the majority of groups of students make better than expected progress. School data and classroom observations suggest that girls make better progress than boys across all phases.</li></ul>	
	<b>Areas of Strength</b>	<b>Areas for Improvement</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Younger students' skills to perform mathematical operations.</li><li>• Older students' skills in solving mathematical problems and equations.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Application of mathematical thinking to real-life situations in all phase, especially in Phase 2.</li></ul>



<b>Science</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Students' achievement in science is good overall. In lesson observations and work, students' progress in Phases 1 to 3 is good, and in Phase 4 progress is very good. This does not fully match with the school's internal data, which indicates that progress in Phases 1 and 2 is outstanding and progress is very good in Phases 3 and 4.</li><li>• Overall attainment in science is good. School internal data indicates attainment to be very good or outstanding. Examination results for IGCSE's, AS and A levels indicate good to outstanding attainment for the students who take these tests. However, attainment for the whole cohort of students was seen to be good overall in lessons and books.</li><li>• The majority of students make more than the expected progress in lessons. Most students develop good scientific thinking, enquiry and investigative skills in all phases. For example, in Phase 1, children can explain why changing the environment by cutting down trees and building on the land, is bad for the planet. In Phase 2, students develop good knowledge of space sciences. For example, they understand the features of the moon, including its phases and they can discuss, with confidence, the aim of the UAE to send a rover to the moon in 2024. Students in Phase 3 understand earth sciences well. For example, they can describe the lithosphere, and they can explain that volcanoes and earthquakes occur on plate boundaries. In Phase 4, students studying UK and US curriculum make similar good progress. They develop a very good understanding of more complex science theories. For example, theoretical concepts such as oxidation and reduction of materials. However, students' laboratory skills and their skills to conduct experiments are less well developed, as are their skills to draw conclusions from investigations.</li><li>• Overall, the majority of groups of students make better than expected progress. Higher-attaining students make very good progress. Girls generally make better progress than boys.</li></ul>	
	<b>Areas of Strength</b>	<b>Areas for Improvement</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Students' knowledge of scientific facts and theory.</li><li>• Application of science to technology and the environment.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Laboratory skills and the ability of students to investigate and draw conclusions in Phase 4.</li></ul>



<b>Other subjects</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Students' achievement in other subjects in all phases is good overall. Internal data for ICT, Business Studies, Art, Music, and PE indicates outstanding progress, however this is not seen in lessons, where the majority of students make above expected progress.</li><li>• External data for IGCSE Business Studies and ICT indicates outstanding attainment, this is for a minority of students and is not representative of the whole cohort.</li><li>• Progress in all subjects is good overall. In Phase 1 PE, children develop motor skills and can run, jump, and roll a ball to hit a target. In Phase 3, students move with speed, control and balance and change direction while maintaining balance. These skills expand by Grade 12 enabling students to excel in a range of sports at local, national, and international level. In Phase 2 Art, students use a range of techniques and media including painting, and by Phase 4 they can refine their paintings and sculptures through self-assessment and experiment. In Phase 1 ICT, children can work out the area of rectangles using a computer, and in Phase 3, they can use their ICT skills to purchase flight tickets for large groups. In Phase 4 UK curriculum, Business Studies students develop innovative business plans to set up small businesses, such as designer lamps and food outlets. In Phase 2 Music, students understand the staff and other musical notations, and by Phase 4, students on the elective course combine their skills in musical performances. However, challenge and opportunity are not consistent in all subjects and phases, specifically in Music, where students have limited independence to be creative.</li><li>• Overall, all groups of students make better than expected progress in other subjects. A minority of student's study the UK curriculum in other subjects, and generally both US and UK curriculum students make similar good progress.</li></ul>	
	<b>Areas of Strengths</b>	<b>Areas for Improvement</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Attainment in Business Studies and ICT.</li><li>• Refining and experimenting in Art.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Students' skills to be creative and independent learners.</li></ul>



<b>Learning Skills</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Overall, students' learning skills are good. Girls' learning skills are more developed than boys learning skills across all phases. This, in part, explains why boys make less progress than girls. All students enjoy learning and take increased responsibility for their learning. They interact with each other and their teachers in a positive way. They collaborate effectively with others and support one another. For example, in Grade 11 Girl's Business Studies, the students collaborate in self-directed activities to create an imaginative range of products to market. However, in some lessons, students lack confidence to initiate their own discussions and to elaborate on their answers in depth.</li> <li>Across all phases, students can transfer and apply knowledge between different areas of learning when given the opportunity. They can make connections between their learning and the world around them. For example, in Phase 4 science, students study evolution over time, and research how dolphins branched out from land to water.</li> <li>In Phases 1, 2 and 3, students build sustainable items as part of the sustainable city STEAM project using problem solving and critical thinking skills. They know about sustainability and can discuss their learning fluently. However, challenge to use critical thinking and problem-solving skills is not consistent across all phases and subjects.</li> </ul>	
	<b>Areas of Strengths</b>	<b>Areas for Improvement</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students' collaboration and support of each other.</li> <li>Problem solving skills in the STEAM project.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development of critical thinking and problem-solving skills across all phases and subjects.</li> <li>Students' skills to initiate their own learning.</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>Overall, students' personal and social development are very good. Students have positive and responsible attitudes, and they respond well to critical feedback. In Phase 1, the school holds a Star of the Week award which promotes positive attitudes. Students are respectful to teachers, leaders, and visitors.</li> </ul>				



<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Students are sensitive and empathetic to the needs of others. They have a strong sense of camaraderie and new students adapt very quickly and happily within a welcoming environment. Students demonstrate a secure understanding of safe and healthy living. They celebrate healthy lifestyles in assemblies through exercise and food choices, and this is embedded in the curriculum and seen throughout the school. In Phase 4, a minority of students are not so conscientious and make inconsistent choices about healthy eating.</li><li>Students are punctual to school and lessons. Their attendance percentage is 98.7, which is outstanding. At the student forum, they spoke enthusiastically about coming to school, the percentages of lateness are very low.</li></ul>				
<b>Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures</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 demonstrate a very good understanding of Islamic values and how these influence life in the UAE. This is evident in lessons and assemblies, where students deepen their understanding of Islamic values through the recitation of verses from the Holy Qur'an and Noble Hadeeth.</li><li>Students are very knowledgeable and respectful of the traditions and heritage of the UAE. They celebrate and involve themselves in a range of cultural activities, for example Flag Day, National Day, and Martyrs Day and these are recorded and evidenced pictorially throughout the school. Students have constructed models showing the heritage of the UAE.</li><li>Students are very knowledgeable and respectful of their own and other cultures. This is strengthened through events such as international day and visits to Expo 2020.</li></ul>				
<b>Social responsibility and innovation skills</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 in all phases hold leadership roles and participate willingly in activities that have a positive effect on the school and wider communities. Students volunteer in activities to support the local community including beach cleaning. Students are highly resourceful and innovative and organise and participate in activities to support local charities. They make and sell food and donate the money to the orphanage and old people's homes. The girls raise awareness of breast cancer, and students donate to the UAE Red Crescent.</li><li>Students care for the school and are very aware of the global environmental priorities. Across all phases they are involved in 'Green' initiatives, and these are promoted throughout the school. The students grow plants and vegetables indoors and outdoors, and in Phases 1 to 3 they are involved in the STEAM sustainable city project. Students across all phases are engaged in, and have introduced projects, such as zero waste and recycling.</li></ul>				
<b>Areas of Strength:</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Attendance of students which is currently outstanding.</li><li>The social and environmental awareness of students across all phases.</li></ul>				



**Areas for Improvement:**

- Healthy eating and lifestyle choices in Phase 4.

### 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 overall quality of teaching and assessment is good in both the UK and US curricula. Most teachers consistently apply their knowledge and demonstrate a thorough understanding of their subjects. Teachers generally plan purposeful lessons to impart knowledge and promote an engaging pedagogy. Teachers generally make effective use of their time. They use the accommodation, such as the three libraries and specialist rooms for Art, Science, and PE, well. Smartboards, projectors, and laptops are used adeptly to enhance teaching and learning. However, lessons lack consistency in structure and delivery and teachers are less skilled at meeting the needs of boys.</li><li>• Lesson plans are very detailed but lack clarity in specifying aims and objectives or precise detail in what should be taught. Differentiation, although present in most lesson plans, is not applied consistently. Teachers' questioning techniques promote thought and considered responses and create a productive learning environment where students engage in meaningful discussions and reflection. Teachers of the STEAM curriculum encourage students' problem-solving and critical thinking skills. However, in other subjects this is not yet consistently embedded throughout all phases.</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 procedures are good overall. They are mainly coherent and consistent across the school and both curricula. Across all phases, there is regular assessment linked to the curriculum standards, which includes external assessments and informal formative assessment and quizzes in lessons. Assessment data is analysed in some depth by the newly appointed data analyst and then cascaded through department heads to teachers, where it is used to inform teaching and curriculum adaptation.</li><li>• A range of external data enables the school to benchmark performance against international standards, for example IGCSE, AS, A-level and MAP progress tests. Analysis of the data enables teachers to set improvement goals, plan interventions, and modify the curriculum for individuals and groups of students. External examination results show that UK curriculum students achieve better results than their US counterparts. Teachers have good knowledge of</li></ul>				



the strengths and weaknesses of their students and feedback is usually praising and positive. However, it lacks clarity on what needs to be done to improve further. Marking in students' copybooks is irregular.

**Areas of Strength:**

- Use of technology to enhance teaching.
- Teachers' specialist subject knowledge.

**Areas for Improvement:**

- Differentiation in activities to suit students' abilities across all phases.
- Marking in students' copybooks and the provision of next steps for learning.

## 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>

- Overall, the quality of the UK and US curricula is good. Curriculum design and implementation in both is good. It is broad and balanced and helps develop students' knowledge, skills and understanding. It follows the requirements of the school's authorised curriculum and national statutory requirements.
- Across all phases, planning in both the UK and US curricula ensures that learning builds on the achievement of the students from the previous year. It meets the needs of most students and supports students' good progress.
- The wide range of US and UK curricular options in Years 11 and 12 focus on career aspirations. Students can choose between mathematically based subjects such as Commerce, Business Studies and Accountancy or the specialist routes of Science, Chemistry, and Physics.
- Cross-curricular links are planned into lessons and are most successful in the STEAM curriculum.
- Departments meet to amend the curriculum on a termly basis and to ensure that there is broad coverage and opportunity to modify the content when and if appropriate. For example, some changes have been made to the standard texts used across the school to make it relevant to the contemporary world.



Curriculum adaptation	Good	Good	Good	Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The overall quality of curriculum adaptation is good across all phases. The US and UK curricula cater for the educational needs and personal development of almost all groups of students, but less so for boys. The school ensures that teachers respond to any curriculum modifications to meet the needs of less able students.</li><li>The curriculum is interesting and continues to offer a range of opportunities designed to motivate students across all phases. Innovation, creativity, and social enterprise are planned throughout the UK and US curricula although not consistently seen in lessons. A range of extra curricula activities are available to enhance students' development including poetry and debating clubs.</li><li>Coherent learning experiences and links to Emirati culture are embedded throughout the curriculum to enable students to develop a broad understanding of the UAE culture and society. This supports students' appreciation of the heritage and culture of the UAE and Islamic values.</li></ul>				
<b>Areas of Strength:</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The breadth and balance of the curriculum.</li><li>The range of curricular choices to support students' talents, and interests for older students.</li><li>The integration of Emirati culture and UAE values and society in the curriculum.</li></ul>				
<b>Areas for Improvement:</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Broadening the scope of the curriculum through introducing wider range of English and contemporary literature.</li></ul>				

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

Indicators:	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection /safeguarding	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The protection, care, guidance, and support of students is very good overall. The school has rigorous policies and procedures for the safeguarding of students, including child protection. All</li></ul>				



staff and parents have a clear understanding of these procedures and are aware of how to protect children against different forms of abuse, including cyberbullying. Students report that they feel safe, that the school is their second family and are confident to report any concerns to an adult in school.

- The school provides a very safe environment. Students are supervised well at all times. There are regular inspections and fire drills to ensure the safety of all. The school maintains detailed medical records and records of incidents and subsequent actions.
- The premises are clean and well maintained. However, they do not have lifts and ramps to meet the needs of students and adults with physical disabilities.
- The school's promotion of safe and healthy lifestyles is very effective and permeates almost all aspects of school life. For example, in a Grade 3 interactive assembly, students used role play to illustrate the benefits of various foods. However, the promotion of healthy lifestyles is less successful for older students.

**Care and support**

**Good**

**Good**

**Good**

**Good**

- Relationships between staff and students are warm and respectful. Behaviour management is highly effective, and most students manage their own behaviour well. There is an efficient system which records all incidents in real time allowing immediate action to be taken where necessary. The school promotes outstanding attendance and punctuality.
- The students who are identified with SEN receive very effective individual support from specialist staff. However, this is not always followed up in all mainstream classes. Gifted and talented students are effectively supported in extracurricular activities, but less consistently challenged in mainstream lessons.
- Students' well-being and personal development are very effectively monitored. Students in Phase 3 are guided on career and subject option choices in the UK and US curriculum. The school is connected to 17 universities that provide advice to students. Phase 4 students receive advice and support in their transition to university.

**Areas of Strength:**

- Arrangements for safeguarding students, including child protection.
- Staff and student relationships and behaviour management.

**Areas for Improvement:**

- Procedures for identifying and supporting students with SEN and G&T students in lessons.
- The inclusivity of the premises.



## PERFORMANCE STANDARD 6: LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

### Indicators:

<b>The effectiveness of leadership</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Self-evaluation and improvement planning</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Partnerships with parents and the community</b>	<b>Very Good</b>
<b>Governance</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Management, staffing, facilities and resources</b>	<b>Very Good</b>

- The overall quality of leadership and management is good. The Director of the school has a clear vision and strategic direction which is shared with the SLT and disseminated through the heads of school. Senior leaders are committed to the UAE national and Emirate priorities, which are embedded within the school's vision and strategic plans, for providing a high-quality education for every student. The priority for leaders is the creation of an inclusive school that fully accommodates all groups of students.
- Most leaders demonstrate secure knowledge of the curriculum and best practices in teaching, learning and assessment. They are establishing a positive learning culture with a clear and accurate understanding of the steps required to innovate and to improve the school. The school is very effective in trialing a sustainable STEAM project through Phases 1 to 3, and they are planning an 'innovation bus', which will be accessible to all students. There is a focus on accountability through various committees engaged to implement and achieve the steps of the improvement plan. Morale is positive. Statutory and regulatory requirements are met.
- The school overestimated the judgements in the SEF however, they have identified strengths and areas for improvement and analysed key priorities. Staff meet regularly to reflect on progress, results and interventions. Plans are comprehensive and based on thoughtful self-evaluation, containing detailed actions and focused goals. Whole-school tracking monitors and evaluates student achievement, however the system is new, and data analysis is inconsistent across all managers and teachers. The school has shown sustained improvements over time in all key areas, specifically in the UK curriculum results where students' achievement is higher than those taking the US curriculum.
- The school is successful in effectively engaging parents. The parent focus group meets to discuss priorities and their views can influence decisions, for example the school made required adjustments when parents had concerns about the timing of the school day. Parents confirm that the school is quick to take action on any identified concerns. Parents are informed about students' performance once every semester through scorecards and detailed information is



available through the website and Horizon app. In Phase 1, the teachers share photos, videos, and children's work daily with parents via the Dojo app.

- The governance team is newly formed and includes representation from the Board of Trustees and various stakeholders. They monitor the work of the school and work closely with the Director to ensure accountability for the quality of the school's performance. They have a direct impact on the overall performance of the school. The governors influence budget setting and decision making and are instrumental in the school accreditation with Cognia and NEASC.
- Most aspects of the day-to-day management of the school are very well organised. Staff are suitably qualified and rigorously checked prior to employment. They receive professional development matched to the school's priorities. The school premises are well designed, and teachers have access to a range of resources to promote effective teaching and learning. This can be seen through the building of sustainable city models and resources available in the STEAM labs and LRC.

#### Areas of Strength:

- The vision and strategic direction of leaders.
- Engagement and communication with parents.

#### Areas for Improvement:

- Inconsistency of data analysis across some areas.

## SPEA ADDITIONAL FOCUS AREAS

### Provision for Arabic Language

- The school has appointed a total of 63 teachers in the Arabic medium section which comprises of 35 Arabic teachers, 18 Islamic Education teachers, and 10 social studies teachers. There is a 1:53 teacher to student ratio. Teachers work across the UK and US curriculum provisions.
- There are two libraries located in the main campus of the school. The libraries have a wide collection of literature, research, and religious titles. There are a total of approximately 7000 fiction books and 3000 non-fiction books in Arabic language. The school management provides generous financial support to the library to buy the latest titles including during the Sharjah International Book Festival held every year.
- The school supports BYOD system by providing laptops and tablets. There is a Learning Resource Centre (LRC) adjacent to the British section which is accessible for all the students. The LRC has internet kiosks where students can conduct internet research and e-reading activities.
- Speaking, reading, and listening skills in Arabic are supported in Holy Qur'an recitation and reading. Students compete in recitation, elocution, roleplaying, young teachers, and storytelling every term and parents are invited to help and participate.



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

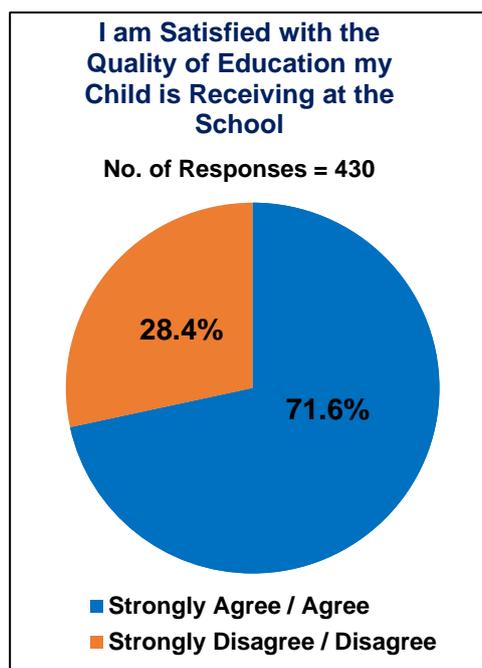
- The school makes use of a variety of external testing, with approximately 130 students attending Cambridge exams and 100 students attending Pearson/Edexcel exams every year. These include core subjects of mathematics, English and sciences, and Business, ICT, and Language electives. Most iGCSE examinations are with Cambridge and AS/A levels with Edexcel. The school currently holds full status of a Cambridge and Pearson International School, and most years they produce several global and regional toppers in various subjects.
- As per SPEA guidelines, the school conducts MAP progress tests for Grades 3 to 9 students. Since the pandemic, this testing switched to an online testing system so students can attend the tests after school hours. There are approximately 1400 students tested in English reading, language, mathematics, and science. The school also conducts TIMMS, PERLS, CAT4 testing periodically.
- Circulars are sent to all the stakeholders with the relevant information for the tests. For UK exams, circulars are sent to the parents and students with registration and online procedure instructions. Results can be accessed directly through the exam portals. MAP and the other international test results are accessible via the school portal for students and parents.

### Provision for KG

- The school provides for KG1 and 2 children. Every class has 1 classroom teacher and 1 assistant for a group of 20-22 students which is a ratio of 1:11. All teachers have experience of working in a KG setting and are suitably qualified.
- The indoor learning environment classes are fully equipped with smartboards and resources to complement teaching and learning. Display boards in the corridors are updated on weekly basis with topic of the week and children have working walls in classrooms to assist their learning. There is an indoor multi-purpose area which is used for assemblies, events, activities, and play, and a bespoke STEAM lab for integrated curriculum activities.
- The outdoor provision includes a well-equipped play area for outdoor exercise and the development of gross motor skills. Children can research and explore the school grounds, and plant and grow fruit and vegetables.
- The first two weeks of the school academic year are dedicated for students' and parents' orientation to familiarise them with the school environment and rules. Diagnostic tests provide levels of prior knowledge so teachers can plan starting points, and the Head of Department and teachers have regular contact with parents to discuss progress and offer support in guiding their child's development at home.



## VIEWS OF PARENTS



## STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS & NEXT STEPS

- Build upon the significant improvements in students' achievement since the last review by:
  - ensuring learning objectives in the lesson provide challenge to students and high expectations.
  - continuing to promote innovation throughout the school and develop STEAM.
  - continuing to develop the systems for data analysis and provide suitable training for all teachers and Heads of Department.
  - broadening the scope of the curriculum through introducing a wider range of library resources to promote students critical thinking and innovation skills across all subjects.
- Continue to improve teaching and learning to meet the needs of all groups of students and become a fully inclusive school by:
  - providing quality feedback throughout lessons and in students' workbooks to advise next steps.
  - reviewing the consistency of lessons through joint observations.



- improving questioning skills to challenge higher level thinking, reflection, and responses
  - improving differentiation techniques through professional development of teachers to meet the needs of all groups of students
  - continuing to build the special educational needs section
  - considering the needs of boys more when planning lessons.
- Continue to build leadership capacity at all levels by:
    - reviewing middle leadership responsibilities and accountabilities in all provision areas requiring improvement
    - implementing the school improvement priorities, with identified actions and timely dates for delivery
    - setting challenging and measurable improvement goals for all teachers, middle and senior leaders.

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.