



هيئة الشارقة للتعليم الخاص
SHARJAH PRIVATE EDUCATION AUTHORITY

ITQAN
Programme

School Performance Review REPORT | (SPR)



إتقان ITQAN

SCHOLARS INTERNATIONAL ACADEMY PRIVATE SCHOOL
17 to 20 February 2025

Overall
Effectiveness
Rating:
GOOD

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PURPOSE AND SCOPE

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

Purpose

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

Scope

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

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

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



THE SCHOOL PERFORMANCE REVIEW PROCESS

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

Performance Standard 1: Students' achievement, comprising:

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

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

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

Performance Standard 3: Teaching and assessment, comprising:

- PI 3.1 Teaching for effective learning
- PI 3.2 Assessment

Performance Standard 4: Curriculum, comprising:

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

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

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

Performance Standard 6. Leadership and management, comprising:

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

Judgements

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

Outstanding	The quality of performance substantially exceeds the expectations of the UAE
Very good	The quality of performance exceeds the expectations of the UAE
Good	The quality of performance meets the expectations of the UAE
Acceptable	The quality of performance meets the minimum level required in the UAE
Weak	The quality of performance is below the expectation of the UAE
Very weak	The quality of performance is significantly below the expectation of the UAE

To gather the required information to inform these judgements, our team of reviewers carried out a wide range of activities during the four-day visit, including:

- visits to lessons in Arabic, Islamic education, UAE social studies, English, mathematics and science, and other subjects, including lessons reviewed jointly with senior leaders of the school;
- reviewing important documents such as school self-evaluation form, school policies and the school improvement plan;
- meeting the Governors, Principal, senior leaders, middle leaders, subject coordinators, teachers, parents, and students;
- reviewing teachers' lesson plans, samples of students' coursework and related information;
- attending school activities such as assemblies, arrivals, departures, and break times; and
- analysing the outcomes of the surveys returned by parents.



SCHOOL INFORMATION

School	School ID	126
	School location	Muwaileh Commercial, Sharjah
	Establishment date	2007
	Language of instruction	English
	School Curriculum	National Curriculum for England (NCfE)
	Accreditation body	British Schools of the Middle East (BSME) High Performing Learning (HPL) World Class
	Examination Board	CAMBRIDGE, EDEXCEL
	External Assessments International and Curriculum Benchmark Assessments	Cognitive Abilities Test (CAT4) Granada Learning (GL) Progress Tests (PT), English, mathematics and science New Group Reading Test (NGRT) Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) Arabic Benchmarking Test (ABT) International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE), Advanced Subsidiary (AS) Level Advanced Level (AL)
Staff	Fee Range	AED 23,500 to AED 35,875
	Principal	Janice Butterworth
	Chair of board of governors	Dileep Menon
	Total number of teachers	87
	Total number of teaching assistants	25
Students	Turnover rate	23%
	Teacher: student ratio	1: 13
	Total number of students	1,138
	Total number of students per phase	Phase 1: 163 Phase 2: 521 Phase 3: 367 Phase 4: 87
	Pre-KG: number and gender	Boys: 0 Girls: 0 Boys: 85 Girls: 78

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	Phase 1/KG: number and gender		
	Phase 2: number and gender	Boys: 274	Girls: 247
	Phase 3: number and gender	Boys: 209	Girls: 158
	Phase 4: number and gender	Boys: 53	Girls: 34
	Total number of Emirati students	43	
	Pre-KG: Emirati number and gender	Boys: 0	Girls: 0
	Phase 1: Emirati number and gender	Boys: 2	Girls: 1
	Phase 2: Emirati number and gender	Boys: 15	Girls: 15
	Phase 3: Emirati number and gender	Boys: 6	Girls: 2
	Phase 4: Emirati number and gender	Boys: 0	Girls: 2
	Nationality groups (largest first)	1. Indian	
		2. Pakistani	
	Total number of students with special educational needs	39	



PROGRESS JOURNEY

Previous Review: 2022-23	Current Review:
GOOD	GOOD

SUMMARY OF REVIEW FINDINGS

These findings draw from our team of 6 reviewers' 148 lesson observations, 80 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 the same as at the previous review. The school has made steady progress in making improvements since its previous review despite some recent disruption in the leadership of the school, and above average levels of staff change last year. Students' attainment and progress are good across the school. Students' learning skills are good. Teaching and learning are good. Systems to identify students with special educational needs (SEN) are robust and effective, although school-funded provision to support their learning within classes is limited beyond Year 2. Leadership and management are good. Although several senior leadership personnel have changed this year, current leaders communicate a clear vision for the future development of the school and have already implemented improvements. Middle leaders' roles have been enhanced and developed, and their impact is greater than previously. The school's self-evaluation processes are effective. While governance is good overall, delays in identifying a permanent candidate as principal are impeding the pace of the school's improvement. Students' personal and social development is very good. The curriculum is good. Arrangements for the protection, care and guidance of students are very good. The school's partnership with parents is very good. The quality of the premises and level of resourcing are very good overall.

KEY AREAS OF STRENGTH:

- Students' good achievement across the curriculum, supported by the school's commitment to HPL.
- Students' very good personal and social development.
- The consistent use of assessment policies and procedures across the school.
- The very good practice for the safeguarding, care and guidance of students.
- The very clear vision and direction provided by the current leadership of the school.

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KEY AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT:

- The use of data to support more effective modification of the curriculum, to ensure more personalised learning for individual students and groups, both in English-medium and Arabic-medium subjects.
- The enhanced provision, support and development of alternative pathways for students with SEN and the gifted and talented (G&T) students.
- The enhancement of students' experiences and opportunities in the creative and performing arts.
- Arabic-medium subjects to ensure that they are more fully represented in the membership and deliberations of the senior leadership team.



MAIN REVIEW REPORT

PERFORMANCE STANDARD 1: STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENT

Students' achievement is good overall.

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

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Islamic Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Students' achievement in Islamic education is good overall. It is good in Phases 2 and 3, and very good in Phase 4. In lessons and in their work, the majority of students in Phases 2 and 3 make better than expected progress, and a large majority of students in Phase 4 make better than expected progress over time. This does not match the school's internal data in Phases 2 and 3 which indicate outstanding progress in Phase 2, and very good in Phase 3, although it matches the Phase 4 school assessment which indicates very good progress.There are no external assessment data for Islamic education. The school's internal data shows that students' attainment is outstanding in Phase 2 and very good in Phases 3 and 4. This does not match with that seen in lessons or students' work for Phases 2 and 3 where the majority of students attain above curriculum expectations, while it matches Phase 4 where a large majority of students attain above curriculum expectationsIn Phase 2, students are aware of the qualities possessed by the Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) companions, for example, honesty and loyalty. They can discuss and describe the events and challenges the Prophet's (PBUH) and his companions faced during their migration from Macca to Madinah. They struggle to extract the lessons learned from their experiences during the migration. In Phase 3, students understand Islamic rules and can recognise the importance of prayer for Muslims. They are also aware that Allah (SWT) has provided ease in prayer during specific situations, such as travel, by allowing combined and shortened prayers (Qasr and Jam'). However, they lack confidence in applying these rulings practically. In Phase 4, students can provide examples demonstrating how Islamic principles are applied to modern creativity, highlighting their influence on various fields such as the environment. They understand that Islamic principles serve as a foundation for ethical innovation in technology, ensuring that advancements align with moral values and contribute positively to society. Through these examples, students recognise the role of faith-based ethics in guiding responsible development and the integration of technology with human wellbeing.The majority of students, boys, girls and Emirati students across all phases, make similar rates of progress Low and high achieving students, and SEN students, are not supported sufficiently to accelerate their progress.	
	Areas of Strength	Areas for Improvement



	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students' knowledge of the qualities possessed by the Prophet's (PBUH) companions, such as honesty and loyalty, in Phase 2.• Students' ability to think beyond the prescribed textbook, linking Islamic principles to modern creativity, in Phase 4.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students' understanding of lessons learned from the events and challenges faced by the Prophet (PBUH) and his companions in Phase 2.• Students' opportunities to strengthen their understanding of Islamic rule applications in Phase 3.
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Arabic	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Students' achievement in Arabic first language (AFL) and in Arabic second language (ASL) is good across Phases 2, 3 and 4. Phase 1 children do not take formal Arabic lessons. In lessons and their work in AFL and ASL the majority of students make better than expected progress over time. This does not match the school's internal data in AFL which indicates outstanding progress in Phase 2 and very good progress in Phases 3 and 4. The school's internal data indicate outstanding progress in the Phase 2 and very good progress in Phase 3 in ASL. Phase 4 students do not take ASL.The school's internal data for AFL shows that students' attainment is outstanding in Phases 2 and 4, and good in Phase 3. This does not match with what is seen in lessons or in students' work, where the majority of students attain above curriculum standards across all phases. The external test result for AFL students, ABT, indicates very good attainment in Phase 2 and acceptable attainment in Phase 3. In ASL, ABT outcomes indicate good attainment in Phases 2 and 3. The school's internal data for ASL shows that students' attainment is outstanding in Phase 2 and very good in Phase 3. This does not match with what is seen in lessons or in students' work, where the majority of students attain above curriculum standards.Students across the school in AFL and ASL demonstrate good listening comprehension skills. In AFL lessons. Phase 2 students can communicate their learning yet often lack confidence when speaking to illustrate their understanding. In Phases 3 and 4, students can read and comprehend the main ideas and details of various stories and biographies. They confidently discuss different story elements. They struggle with speaking fluently and expressively. Additionally, while they can write short texts, they are inconsistent in producing longer pieces of writing with the correct linguistic structure. In ASL, students with two years of learning can recognise and read some words and expressions in context. Students with four or more years of learning can read short, familiar texts for comprehension. Their fluent and clear speaking skills are less well developed, and students lack confidence in writing when using memorised words and phrases.The majority of students, boys, girls and Emirati students, across all phases, make similar rates of progress. Low and high achieving students and SEN students are not supported sufficiently to accelerate their progress.	
	Areas of Strength	Areas for Improvement



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students' listening for comprehension across the school in AFL and ASL. Students reading for understanding in AFL in Phases 3 and 4. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students' ability to speak confidently, fluently and expressively in AFL and ASL across the school. Students' extended writing skills, using the correct linguistic structures, across the school, and particularly in AFL in Phases 3 and 4.
Social Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students' achievement in social studies is good overall in Phases 2 and 3. In lessons and students' work, the majority of students make better than expected progress over time. This good progress does not match with the school's assessment data that shows outstanding progress. There are no externally benchmarked assessments in social studies. Internal assessment data indicates that most students attain above curriculum expectations. This does not match with what is seen in lessons and students' work, where the majority attain above curriculum expectations. In Phase 2, the majority of students can describe well the importance of sustainability in the UAE. They illustrate this by creating a range of attractive posters to display around the school. A few students show difficulty in understanding the concept of recycling items. In Phase 3, students debate effectively about why Al-Aqsa Mosque is important to the UAE and the Muslim world. The majority of students in Phase 3, confidently demonstrate their knowledge of the timeline of the eras of the Islamic state, including the Abbasid era. Students can analyse the lineage of the Abbasid caliphs in the first Abbasid era. A few students have difficulty reading a map that shows the spread of the Abbasid state and its impact on eliminating the Umayyad rule. The majority of students, boys, girls and Emirati students make similar rates of progress. 	
	Areas of Strength	Areas for Improvement



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students' understanding of the importance of sustainability in the UAE in Phase 2. Students' knowledge of the timeline of the eras of the Islamic state, including the Abbasid era in Phase 3. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students' understanding of the recycling of items in Phase 2. Students' reading and analysis of historical maps in Phase 3.
English	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students' achievement in English is good across all phases. The school's internal data shows that students make very good progress across all phases. This does not match with what is seen in lessons and in students' work where the majority make better than expected progress over time across all phases. External NGRT data for 2024-2025 shows weak progress across all phases. Internal assessment data indicates very good attainment across all phases. This does not align with what is seen in lessons and in students' work where the majority of students across all phases attain above curriculum standards. GL examination results for Years 3 to 10 indicate very good attainment overall, although results for year groups vary considerably. The NGRT attainment for 2024-2025 is weak overall, although it is good in Phase 3. IGCSE, AS and A level results were weak in 2024 and show an improving trend for 2025. In Phase 1, children use phonics to build their sounds and words. They can listen to stories and explain the sequence of the story Giant turnip, when assisted by their teacher. In Phase 2, students develop their reading and speaking skills and can read simple sentences and recognise punctuation and intonation in speech. As they progress into the higher years in Phase 2, students develop their comprehension skills well. Writing stamina, vocabulary and reading skills are less well developed. Students in Phase 3, use role play to express their feelings and emotions relating to characters in text, and practise their persuasive skills using case studies. Reading for pleasure, and the use of high-level vocabulary skills when speaking and writing, are less developed. At the end of Phase 4, students converse fluently and can explain and summarise positive and negative faces relating to their experiences and discuss and interpret figurative language. Overall, most groups of students make similar rates of progress. Higher-achieving students are not always sufficiently challenged, while lower-achieving and SEN students do not always receive effective support to maximise their progress. Emirati students make similar progress to their peers. 	
	Areas of Strength	Areas for Improvement



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students' use of roleplay to practise persuasive skills and express feelings and emotions of characters in Phase 3. Students' oral skills, their ability to converse fluently and use figurative language in Phase 4. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students' writing stamina, their use of vocabulary and reading skills in Phases 2 and 3. Students' independent reading skills and reading for pleasure across all phases.
Mathematics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students' achievement in mathematics is good overall. In lessons and in their work, the majority of students across all phases make better than expected progress over time. The school's internal assessment data indicates very good attainment. This does not match with that seen in lessons or in students' work where the majority of children and students attain above curriculum standards across all phases. External GL assessment data shows that attainment is very good in Phases 2 and 3. IGCSE data results indicate good attainment while AS level and A level demonstrate weak performance. Recent TIMSS results show that students performed above national and international average in Grade 8. In Phase 1, children can count forward, match sets of objects with numerals and use part and whole models to demonstrate number bonds. In Phase 2, students can add on, subtract, measure length using non-standard units, represent mixed numbers using part and whole models and solve ratio problems. They still require much guidance from their teacher to use estimation, prediction and inference. In Phase 3, students can classify regular and irregular polygons, use formulae to solve equations, calculate the area of a parallelogram and the sum of an interior angle for a given shape. They require further support in applying their spatial reasoning skills to identify patterns in two-dimensional shapes. In Phase 4, students can solve simple and complex problems to analyse a geometric sequence and the direction of a vector using mathematical processes. Students' use of mental arithmetic is developing. Overall, different groups of students, including those of Emirati heritage, make similar rates of progress. Lower achieving students typically make less progress than others, and higher achieving students do not have sufficient access to challenging tasks to accelerate their rates of progress. 	
	Areas of Strength	Areas for Improvement



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children's ability to count forward and use part and whole models to demonstrate number bonds to 10 in Phase 1. Students' ability to represent mixed numbers as a whole to solve fractions in Phase 2. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students' use of estimation, prediction and inference to measure in Phases 2 and 3. Students' spatial reasoning skills to identify patterns in Phase 3.
Science	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students' achievement in science is good overall. In lessons and their work, the majority of students in Phases 1, 2 and 4 make better than expected progress over time and in Phase 3, a large majority make better than expected progress over time. Internal data suggests outstanding attainment in Phases 1 and 2, very good in Phase 3 and weak in Phase 4. This does not match with what is seen in lessons and their work, where the majority of students in Phases 1, 2 and 4 attain above curriculum standards and a large majority attain above curriculum standards in Phase 3. GL assessments indicate outstanding outcomes in all phases. Recent TIMMS indicate better attainment in Phase 3, where the students' outcomes exceed national and international averages. In Phase 1, children begin independent enquiry applying their natural curiosity and assimilate age-appropriate terminology. Students' pace of scientific learning in lower Phase 2 is not as consistent as in other phases. In Phase 3, students can confidently conduct experiments and in Phase 4, they can design their own fair tests based upon their hypothesis. In Phase 1, children explore push and pull forces which some reinforce in Year 2. In Year 4, students investigate sound as waves processed through the human ear. Students' pace of scientific learning in lower Phase 2 is not as consistent as in other phases. In Year 6, students strengthen their research, debating and presentation skills, for example in a study of the changing status of women in science. In Year 7, they grasp the functions of the skeleton, for support, protection and movement. Year 9 chemists model the impact of acid rain on the environment, observing changes in chalk in vinegar and in distilled water. In Year 11, students explore genetics and heredity before designing experiments in all three sciences in Phase 4. The majority of groups of students, including boys, girls, Emiratis and non-Emiratis and students with SEN make similar rates of progress. 	
	Areas of Strength	Areas for Improvement



	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Children's and students' use of age-appropriate terminology in Phases 1 and 2.• Students' investigative skills in Phase 3 and ability to design their own fair test based upon hypotheses in Phase 4.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Children's knowledge and understanding of push and pull forces in Phase 1.• Students' pace of scientific learning in lower Phase 2.
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Other subjects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students' achievement in other subjects is good overall. The school's internal data indicates that the majority of students, over a range of subjects, make better than expected progress. This broadly aligns with what is seen in lessons and in their work where the majority of students make good progress over time. Internal assessment data in options such as art and design economics, business, physical education (PE), history, geography, psychology and computer science, indicates that in around half of these, attainment is at or above the international average for A* - C grades at IGCSE, the others being slightly below. At A level, outcomes are mostly close to the international averages, with history being slightly lower. In lessons and their work, the majority of students in Phases 1, 2, 3 and 4 attain above curriculum expectations in computer skills, PE, psychology, history and geography while most attain in line with the curriculum expectations in music, French, drama, design and technology and art. Students' finely executed specimen art is on display around the school. In Phase1, children make better than expected progress in art and when they learn about healthy eating to support their wellbeing. In Phase 2, Year 6 students make good progress in PE in developing their bowling skills during an intensive coaching session. Progress in French in Phases 2 and 3 is impeded because not enough time is given to allowing students to practise their oral skills. Phase 3 students make good progress in history when they explore the integrity of the police investigation in the case of Jack the Ripper and in Business in Year 11 when they define cashflow and construct a balance sheet. In general, progress is most consistently good in Phase 4, where students have specific objectives linked to their external examinations. Year 12 BTEC PE students make good progress is researching event management. Students' creative and performing art skills are limited across all phases by the range and quality of the opportunities available. Most groups of students, including Emirati students, make similar rates of progress from their starting points. 	
	Areas of Strength	Areas for Improvement
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students' skills in PE across the school. Students' achievement in the history, and business options in upper Phase 3 and in Phase 4. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students' speaking skills development in French in Phases 2 and 3. Students' creative and performing arts skills across all phases.



Learning Skills

- Students' learning skills are good overall. Most students are interested, enthusiastic learners. They assume increasing responsibility for their own learning and take steps to improve. Concentration is occasionally lost by a few students in Phases 2 and 3, noticeably in English and mathematics when the introduction to the lesson is protracted. Students typically maintain their concentration and engagement in learning in Arabic medium subjects and in science. Children and students collaborate effectively and interact well with each other across all phases.
- Students increasingly communicate their learning well, sharing with their colleagues during regular plenary sessions near the end of most lessons. Students make links to previous learning, to other subjects and to the real world in UAE and beyond, especially during Islamic education, social studies and science.
- Their innovation, enquiry, research and critical thinking skills are developing and are currently stronger in Islamic education and science than in other subjects. Students' use of technologies to support their learning is not commonplace in all subjects, although more typical in Phases 3 and 4. Devices are used most often as a search tool for accessing the activities set by their teachers.

Areas of Strength

- Students' interest in and enthusiasm for learning, especially in Arabic medium subjects across all phases.
- Children's and students' effective collaborative skills and the way they interact with each other across all phases.

Areas for Improvement

- Students' active learning skills development and engagement at the outset of lessons especially in English and mathematics across all phases.
- Students' use of technologies to support their learning and innovation, independent enquiry and research skills, particularly in lower phases.



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

Students' personal and social development and their innovation skills are very good overall.

Indicators:	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4
Personal development	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Students' personal development is very good overall across all phases. Students have positive and responsible attitudes in lessons and around the school. In the higher phases they are self-reliant and respond well to critical feedback. Bullying is rare and antibullying is reinforced through assemblies, PHSE, antibullying week and the consequences point system.Students are very respectful in their behaviour consistently helping each other, particularly in class discussions and group collaboration. This reflects the considerate relationships between staff and students across the school. In the higher phases students take on leadership roles and assess the younger students through the Rising Stars programme.Students demonstrate a secure understanding of safe and healthy lifestyles, reinforced through the PE department and dedicated lessons which highlight healthy food. Students typically make healthy nutritious choices which supports their wellbeing.Students' attendance at 94% is good. They usually arrive at school and to lessons on time.				
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Students demonstrate a secure understanding of Islamic values and their influence on contemporary society in the UAE. They actively participate in a wide range of events and activities that reinforce their comprehension of these values. Throughout the school, students engage in competitions, such the Holy Qur'an recitation competition. The Salah Buddies initiative encourages group prayer among young learners. Students lead events, such as,				



Haq Al Laila, celebrations of the Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) birth, and the Holy Month of Ramadan.

- Students deeply appreciate Emirati heritage and culture, actively participating in various national and cultural events such as Flag Day, National Day and Martyr's Day. The school integrates UAE traditions into learning through the Learning Majlis, 4 dedicated spaces where students engage in moral education lessons. The school displays handcrafted work created by students that showcases the customs and traditions of the UAE.
- Students demonstrate a clear understanding of their own culture. Students are less confident in discussing other cultures. They do actively engage in cultural events such as Diwali and King Charles coronation. Students engage in International Day, offering their peers the opportunity to explore and celebrate different global cultures.

Social responsibility and innovation skills

Good

Good

Good

Very Good

- Students understand their responsibilities as members of a school community and the learning leaders, particularly in Phase 4, they initiate and lead activities such as helping the bus drivers and support staff to speak basic English. Students participate willingly in supporting the Red Crescent, Pink Day and Fiesta, where they raise money for charity.
- The learning leaders in Phase 4 meet monthly to discuss and plan ideas. They are innovative and successfully manage projects such as the Rising Stars, the MUN conference and the Shark Tank, a dragons' den type project involving senior staff and governors, in evaluating students' ideas. Students in the lower phases demonstrate a positive work ethic and enjoy taking part in projects although their innovation, enterprise and entrepreneurship skills are less well developed.
- Students care for the school and participate in activities to promote sustainability such as the Trashion show where younger students dress up wearing sustainable outfits. The learning leader for sustainability ensures students in the higher phases support schemes that promote sustainability and engage younger students in participating. Students' involvement in conservation initiatives in the wider world are underdeveloped.

Areas of Strength:

- Students' positive and responsible attitudes and their respectful and considerate relationships across the school.
- Students' clear understanding of Islamic values and deep appreciation of Emirati culture across the school.



- Students' care for the school community and especially the roles of the learning leaders in initiating and leading activities that promote sustainability and encourage others to participate in them.

Areas for Improvement:

- Students' innovation, enterprise and entrepreneurship skills, particularly in the lower phases.
- Students' involvement in conservation in the wider world across the school.

PERFORMANCE STANDARD 3: TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT

The quality of teaching and assessment is good overall.

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

- The quality of teaching is good overall across all phases. The majority of teachers demonstrate strong subject knowledge, plan activities and adapt their approaches to ensure students engage in learning through group work, peer interaction and whole class discussion. This is demonstrated consistently in science in Phases 3 and Islamic education in Phase 4. Teachers plan structured lessons based on the gradual release of responsibility model. In a minority of lessons, planning lacks sufficient detail for students' skills to be developed and fully extended, particularly in Phase 2. Teachers make effective use of time and resources to support learning. This is seen best in Phase 1 where indoor and outdoor spaces promote children's successful learning and development through experiential play.
- Teacher and students' interactions are positive and good relationships benefit students' learning. In the best lessons, teachers' questioning is used to review prior learning, encourage students' dialogue, and build interest in the topic. In some lessons, teachers address questions generally to the class and accept answers from those who are most confident, not paying sufficient attention to students who are more reticent or in need of additional support.
- Teachers are aware that students have different needs, and most lessons are planned with this in mind. The implementation of the planned activities is not always effective in meeting



the needs of all students, particularly students who require further support or challenge. In most lessons, teaching assistants and other support staff facilitate students' learning in Phases 1 and 2.

- In all phases, teachers are developing opportunities for students to think critically, problem solve and learn independently. Teachers demonstrate increasing skill in integrating technology into lessons. They provide opportunities for students to complete online quizzes, access texts, and use writing platforms, particularly in Phases 3 and 4. Innovative skills are less well developed across all phases.

Assessment	Good	Good	Good	Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The overall quality of assessment is good. The school's assessment and reporting policy is well-established, and processes are linked to the school's curriculum standards and expectation to measure students' attainment and progress. Formative and summative continuous assessments, in addition to standardised testing, are used to evaluate students' achievement and to benchmark students' attainment against external expectations. Students' results show gaps between internal assessments and external standardised tests in some subjects. In Phase 1, learning trackers effectively detail evidence of children's progress, strengths and next steps.• Analysis of both internal and external data is organised, easily available, and identifies broad trends and patterns of attainment and individual progress. This information is shared with teachers to inform their future planning and to adapt the curriculum to meet the needs of different groups of students. In the best lessons, teachers use information from the analysis of assessment data to plan activities and tasks to meet the needs of students, although such practice is inconsistent across all phases.• Teachers know students' strengths and understand what they need to do to improve. They offer students constructive verbal feedback in lessons. Teachers regularly check students' work books and activities and employ simple self and peer assessment techniques. Teachers' written comments, and students' evaluation of their work and that of their peers, provide insufficient guidance on identifying the next learning steps.				
Areas of Strength:				
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teachers' and students' positive interactions and good relationships which benefit students' learning across the school.• The school's assessment policies and processes.				



Areas for Improvement:

- Teachers' use of information gained from assessment data analysis to adapt the curriculum, and plan lessons and activities to effectively meet the needs of all students across the school.
- Teachers' systematic use of written formative feedback, self and peer assessment to develop students' ownership of their learning and to guide their next steps in learning across the school.

PERFORMANCE STANDARD 4: CURRICULUM

The quality of the curriculum is good overall.

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

- The NCfE and early learning goals shape the provision in Phases 1 and 2 and lower Phase 3. From upper Phase 3 and in Phase 4 the curriculum is driven by UK-based external IGCSE, AS and A-level examination requirements, with a BTEC in PE. Arabic and Islamic studies are based on the MoE curriculum. The Phase 1 and Phase 2 curricula are designed with child-centred activities in real-world contexts. There is an emphasis on improving transitions between phases, particularly from Year 6 to Year 7 and from Year 11 to Year 12, to ensure continuity and progression.
- Academic counselling assists Phase 3 students and their parents to select subjects appropriate to their aspirations. There are several options for IGCSEs and A-levels, yet the range of pathways is extended only by BTEC in PE. The increasing number of students with SEN are not well catered for in the current alternative pathways. During the best lessons cross curricular links are well planned. In most lessons links are successfully made to the UAE, especially in Arabic medium subjects, social studies and science.
- The curriculum is regularly reviewed as gaps are identified from benchmark assessments. The curriculum is also developed around HPL skills and takes into consideration students' differing learning styles.



Curriculum adaptation	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
<ul style="list-style-type: none">The school uses available assessment data to make some meaningful modifications to the curriculum. Well organised interventions meet the needs of students in preparation for IGCSEs and A-levels. In Phase 2 students are levelled across a year group for Arabic medium subjects. The required modifications in lesson plans are not generally delivered, resulting in limited levels of differentiation to meet the needs of all learners, including students with SEN.The opportunities for students to engage in activities that promote enterprise, innovation, creativity and social contribution are limited. Business studies offer opportunities for innovation, design and realisation of ideas which are subsequently pitched to the Shark Tank comprising senior leaders and governors. In computer studies students have considered the potential advantages of automated self-driving vehicles.The extra-curricular activities available include sport, languages, music, creative arts, leadership and adventure, through Rising Stars, in which students develop self-reliance hiking, camping and volunteering. The main curriculum includes programmes that develop understanding of the UAE heritage. The opportunities within the curriculum for music, art and drama, creative and performing arts are insufficient in depth and quality.				
Areas of Strength:				
<ul style="list-style-type: none">The curricular focus on child centred learning through play in Phase 1.The curriculum's highly positive impact on students' very good understanding and appreciation of the UAE's values, culture and society.				
Areas for Improvement:				
<ul style="list-style-type: none">The implementation of planned modifications in lessons to meet the different learning needs of all students, including students with SEN and developing alternative pathways towards educational and career goals for students with SEN.The enhanced curriculum opportunities for students to engage in the creative and performing arts across the school.				

PERFORMANCE STANDARD 5:

THE PROTECTION, CARE, GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT OF STUDENTS



The protection, care, guidance and support of students are very good overall.

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

- The protection, care, guidance and support of students is very good overall. Staff, students and parents are fully aware of the rigorous procedures for safeguarding, child protection, cyber bullying and keeping children safe, including on school transport. Students know who to contact if they have any concerns. The school environment is very safe and hygienic.
- The buildings and equipment are very well maintained. Records are comprehensive and securely kept and reviewed regularly, including evacuation routines, fire drills and other incidents. The school keeps robust records of health and safety meetings and risk assessments. The school has two nurses and a doctor providing effective medical care and health awareness, and all medicines are safely stored. The premises and facilities provide a safe and secure environment, and facilities are of high quality including well-equipped science laboratories. There are sufficient areas for students to participate in sports, including a swimming pool. Phase 1 children have a new outdoor play area to support their learning and development. There is currently no lift although there are emergency evacuation chairs and ramps for accessibility.
- Students' safe and healthy lifestyles are promoted well throughout the school. The PE staff motivate the students through fitness and exercise. Healthy food is promoted effectively through lessons, the clinic, and checking of students' lunchboxes.

Care and support	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
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- Almost all staff develop very positive relationships with each other and their students. There is a climate of trust and respect in the school. The school has a robust positive behaviour management system based on a restorative policy. This outlines five key strategies which create a nurturing and safe environment for learning. As a result, most students manage their own behaviour effectively in and around the school.
- The school has efficient and effective systems for managing and promoting attendance and punctuality. Students receive incentives individually and collectively for good attendance and punctuality.



- The inclusion department staff and counsellors have very good procedures for identifying students with SEN, English as an additional language (EAL), additional educational needs (AEN) and social emotional and mental health needs. Students with SEN have individual education plans (IEP), with appropriate targets which are reviewed regularly. There are also targeted plans for other students. Students who are G&T are identified very well by both standardised assessments and reports from class teachers. The school is at the early stages of implementing fully an advanced learning plan which outlines appropriate goals for G&T students.
- The support for students with SEN is appropriately managed. The effectiveness of the support given individually and in lessons is variable. This is particularly pertinent after Year 2 where there are no school funded learning assistants. There is not yet a sufficiently robust plan to ensure that students with SEN make consistent and rapid academic progress over time. Alternative pathways, available in PE, are not yet in place for all students who would benefit. Students who are G&T benefit from accelerated learning opportunities in specific areas. The large majority of G&T students take part successfully in competitions and clubs.
- Staff monitor and support the wellbeing and personal development of students effectively. All students have access to appropriate advice and guidance on their future education, careers, and personal development. Students attend university fairs and take part in internships. They take part in visits to allow them to make an informed choice on their options when leaving school. A few students with SEN attend a local university after Year 11 to study foundation courses.

Areas of Strength:

- The rigorous procedures for safeguarding, child protection, cyber bullying and keeping children safe in school.
- The school's very good procedures for identifying students with SEN and G&T.

Areas for Improvement:

- The robust planning of the provision made for students with SEN, both individually and through the support in classrooms in all years to enable their consistent and rapid progress over time.
- The targeted support and challenge for G&T students in lessons in all phases.

PERFORMANCE STANDARD 6: LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

School Performance Review of Scholars International Academy Private School
17 to 20 February 2025



The quality of leadership and management is good overall.

Indicators:

The effectiveness of leadership

Good

- The school experienced a period of instability in its leadership and staffing in the first term of the current school year. The successor to the previous principal, who left the school in July 2024, himself left the school within one month, as, soon after, did the head of secondary. The head of primary, also new to the school, became, and remains as, acting principal. Despite being mostly new to the school, the higher-than-usual number of new teachers in the current year, and many parental concerns and uncertainties, this committed leadership team has successfully stabilised the school and communicates a very clear vision for its future development. The school is fully supportive of the UAE and Emirate priorities. With enhanced roles for subject leaders, leadership capacity has increased, with a re-energised focus on raising the quality of teaching and outcomes across the school. The Arabic-based subjects are not sufficiently represented within the current leadership team. Leaders have a very good understanding of best practices in teaching and learning, implementing new coaching and monitoring procedures. The school is very inclusive and the identification of students with SEN is effective.
- Relationships and communication are professional and effective. There is good delegation of key responsibilities. All staff have a secure understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Morale in the school has improved significantly, and this is evident with all stakeholders. Students' achievement is good overall, indicating strong capacity for making further improvements. All statutory and regulatory requirements are met.

Self-evaluation and improvement planning

Good

- The school has a well-established self-evaluation cycle, supported by governors, parents, students and staff. Very effective systems have been implemented to monitor and support teachers. External support is keenly embraced, particularly to support teaching. The school offers good continuous professional development (CPD) opportunities. School improvement planning contains achievable goals, closely aligned to the recommendations in the previous review.

Partnerships with parents and the community

Very Good

School Performance Review of Scholars International Academy Private School 17 to 20 February 2025



- The school is very effective in engaging with parents and their views are considered when planning future improvements. Despite insecurities earlier in the year, parents are now very positive about their relationship with the school and have confidence in current leaders to address any issues, to further improve achievement and to ensure the wellbeing of their children. Communication is effective, making very good use of social media and the internet. Parents have regular face-to-face meetings with teachers and receive written reports. They are actively involved during the school's recognition of national events and other celebrations. They identify they find it very easy to contact teachers and school leaders and achieve a response.
- There are good partnerships with local schools, some of whom are in the same ownership group, and others through membership of British Schools of the Middle East. There are some well-developed links with local charities and universities, one of whom has developed a bespoke programme for the school in support of students' mental health and well-being. International partnerships are less well-developed.

Governance

Good

- The governing board is well-established and representative of most stakeholders in the school, including both owners and parent representatives. The board does not yet include student representation. There are secure systems for addressing any concerns around safeguarding. Governors know the school well. Support is targeted effectively to address the school's priorities, although there has been some delay in identifying a new permanent principal, leading to some drift. Governors are actively involved in the school self-evaluation process. There is regular interaction with parents through surveys and personal contact and governors were quickly aware of their concerns during the period of instability in term 1.

Management, staffing, facilities and resources

Very Good

- The school's daily procedures and routines are effective, and the school runs very smoothly. The school is, overall, well-staffed and staff stability is good in most years. There are no support staff in classes beyond Year 2, other than those directly engaged and paid for by parents, and this impacts upon learning, particularly for identified students with SEN. Overall, staff are deployed effectively. Outdoor space is generous, in comparison with other urban schools, allowing good opportunities for sport. Teaching spaces are mostly sufficiently bright and spacious, although the current drama studio is small and facilities generally to support the performing arts are not extensive. The utilisation of available space in corridors, particularly in Phase 1 and 2 areas, has been reviewed and repurposed in the past term,



creating more vibrant free-flow areas for learning. There are sufficient specialist teaching areas to meet current needs. The overall level of resources available to support learning, including access to technology, is very good, especially in Phases 3 and 4.

Areas of Strength:

- The very clear vision, positive impact and capacity of the current leadership team to make further improvements to the school.
- The very positive relationships established with parents.

Areas for Improvement:

- The availability of support staff to support learning across the school, particularly for SEN students.
- The representation of the students' voice and Arabic teaching staff on the governing board.



SPEA ADDITIONAL FOCUS AREAS

Provision for Arabic Language

- The school has 9 Arabic teachers for Years 1 to 13, with a teacher-to-student ratio of 1:108. No Arabic teaching assistants are available.
- The school library contains 1,410 Arabic books, with an additional 300 books available in Arabic classrooms. Students visit the library once every two weeks based on a scheduled timetable. The books are not categorised into fiction and non-fiction. The school uses the Arison software borrowing system, which automatically records book borrowing, by scanning students' ID cards and book quick response (QR) codes.
- To encourage reading, students have access to the Bravo platform, fostering their engagement and enjoyment in Arabic reading. The school actively involves students in various activities and competitions, such as the Arabic reading club, Arabic support club for non-Arab students, and Arabic calligraphy sessions. Students also participate in Arabic speeches during school events including assemblies, Union Day, Flag Day, Prophet's (PBUH) Day, and the Holy Month of Ramadan. Competitions include the Arabic reading challenge, spelling bee, and Arabic hat challenge.
- Parents are invited to morning coffee sessions, where they receive guidance on supporting their children's Arabic language learning, with a special focus on reading.

The school's use of external benchmarking data

- The proportion of students taking international tests and examination is compliant with SPEA requirements. All students take part in external assessments in Phases 2 to 4. External examinations include the Cambridge IGCSE, ABT, AS and A Level. The school enters students for the NGRT for Years 2 to 10 and the required National Agenda international assessments.
- Benchmarking assessments include GL assessment, CAT4 and the PASS assessment to evaluate students' social and emotional wellbeing. The school triangulates the results of benchmark assessments and diagnostic tests, including CAT4, to facilitate planning, adapt lessons and generate intervention plans.
- Students are provided with the results of benchmark tests along with their termly assessments. Students are kept fully informed of all tests carried out, and about the expectations and timing of the assessments.
- Results are communicated directly to parents through various platforms, including online sources and school newsletters.

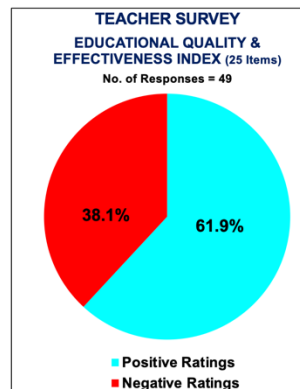
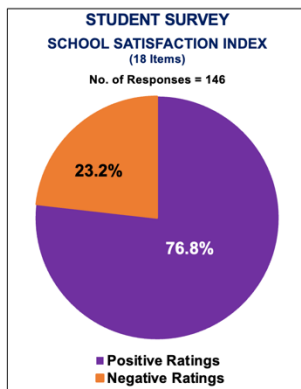
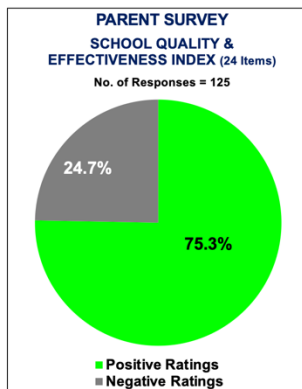
Provision for KG



- The school has 163 children in Phase 1. There are 6 classes, with 2 Foundation Stage (FS)1 classes and 4 FS 2 classes. Each class has an assigned teacher. Teachers are supported by teaching assistants across the phase. The teacher ratio is 1:27 across the whole of Phase 1.
- Classes are spacious and equipped with a range of learning resources providing a stimulating learning environment. There is a smart board which teachers use to enhance learning. There is also a spacious indoor area where children can play and learn. Phase 1 also has appropriate washrooms.
- There is a large covered outdoor area with resources which promote gross motor physical skills development. Other activity areas promote other important skills such as numeracy and literacy. The children particularly enjoy cooking in the mud kitchen.
- The induction and transition arrangement are well organised. Both the children and their parents visit Phase 1 when a child is starting in the foundation stage (FS). There is a staggered start to settle the child effectively. When the children are transitioning to Year 1, they visit the class regularly in term 3. Parents are also invited to an orientation meeting before their children start in Year 1. This allows them to become familiar with the organisation and academic demands in Year 1. Parents are regularly invited to FS to meet teachers and to be updated on their children's progress. There is also regular online communication giving parents weekly information on FS work, events and other relevant information.



VIEWS OF STAKEHOLDERS





STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS & NEXT STEPS

- Improve the use of data across the school to support the greater modification of the curriculum by:
 - ensuring more personalised learning for individual students and groups, both in English-medium and Arabic subjects.
- Improve the provision and support for students with SEN and G&T students by:
 - ensuring that sufficient support staff are made available from Year 2 on, to support SEN students and additional learning needs, so that they all make rapid progress towards their individual targets.
 - developing alternative pathways towards educational and career goals which are more precisely tailored to the needs of SEN students.
 - fine-tuning provision to ensure that the academic, sporting and creative needs of identified G&T students are more fully met in and out of lessons.
- Improve the curricular and extra-curricular provision across the school, and accelerate students' progress further in art, music and drama by:
 - enhancing students' experiences and opportunities in the creative and performing arts.
- Improve the effectiveness and impact of leadership by:
 - ensuring that the status of the Arabic subjects is more fully reflected in the membership and deliberations of the senior leadership team and governing board.
 - ensuring that the profile of the Arabic subjects is accorded equal esteem to their English counterparts.



In addition to considering the full content of this report and identifying actions required to bring about improvement, the school should build the strategic recommendations into its improvement planning process.

In consultation with the assigned School Improvement Advisor, the school should send its revised improvement plan, including specific actions, timescales, and success measures, to SPEA within two months of the publication of this report. Four months later, the school should submit a detailed report on progress to SPEA.

SPEA's next school review will validate the progress report and include a review of further progress made by the school in implementing the recommendations from this SPR report.

If you have a concern or wish to comment on any aspect of this report, please contact SPEA on quality.assurance@spea.shj.ae within three weeks of receiving this report.