DUBAI
Knowledge المعرفة

National Agenda

Early years

Special educational needs and disabilities

Innovation

Inspection Report 2015-2016

The English College Dubai

Curriculum: UK

Overall rating: Good

Read more about the school ⇨

www.khda.gov.ae

'Don't look behind to see who is following you, but look forward to be ahead'

Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum

Contents

School information

General information

Location	Al Safa
Type of school	Private
Opening year of school	1992
Website	www.englishcollege.ac.ae
Telephone	04-3943465
Address	PO Box: 11812, Dubai, UAE
Principal	Ian Paul Jones
Language of instruction	English
Inspection dates	23 to 25 November 2015

Students

Gender of students	Boys and girls
Age range	11-18
Grades or year groups	Year 7 to Year 13
Number of students on roll	602
Number of children in pre-kindergarten	0
Number of Emirati students	1
Number of students with SEND	135
Largest nationality group of students	UK

Teachers / Support staff

Number of teachers	65
Largest nationality group of teachers	British
Number of teaching assistants	0
Teacher-student ratio	1:10
Number of guidance counsellors	1
Teacher turnover	11%

Curriculum

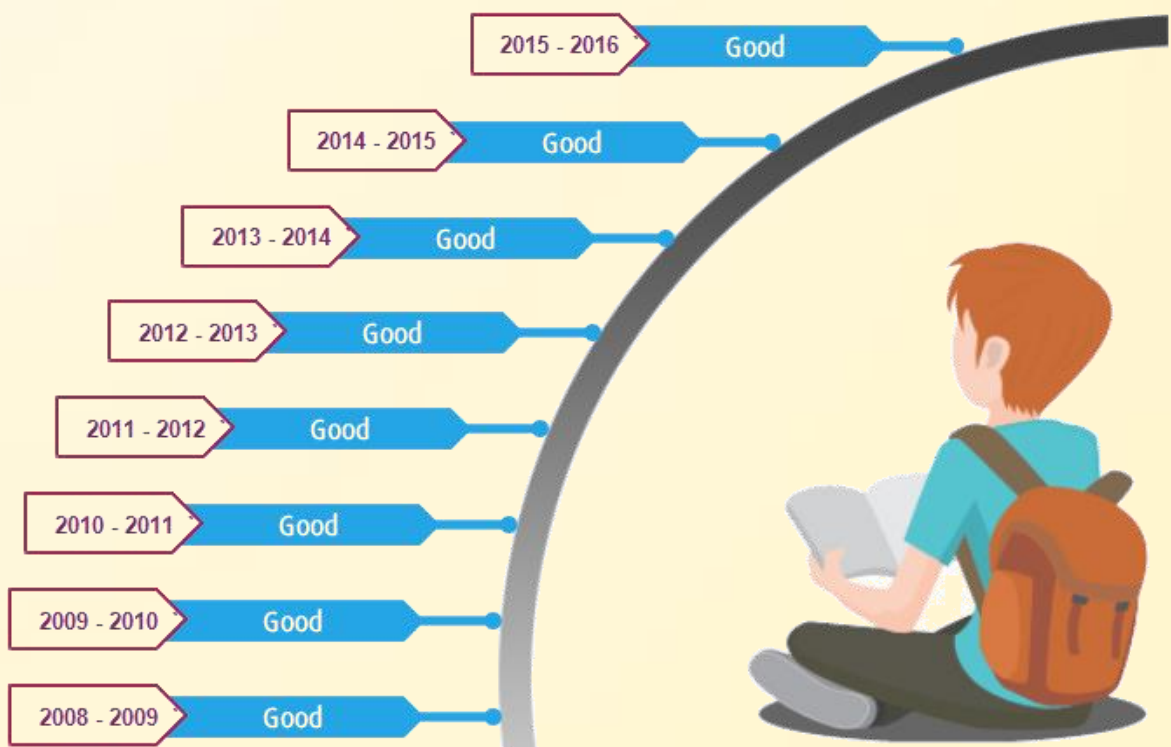|	
Educational permit / Licence	UK
Main curriculum	UK
External tests and examinations	GCSE, AS and A levels
Accreditation	EdExcel, AQA and WJEC
National Agenda benchmark tests	GL Assessments

Summary for parents and the community

The English College Dubai was inspected by DSIB from 23 to 25 November 2015. The overall quality of education provided by the school was found to be good.

In order to judge the overall quality of education provided by the school, inspectors considered six key standards of performance. Inspectors looked at children's attainment and progress in key subjects, their learning skills and their personal and social development. They judged how effective teaching and the assessment of learning were across the school. Inspectors considered how well the school's curriculum, including activities inside and outside classrooms, met the educational needs of all children. They judged how well the school protected and supported children. In addition inspectors judged the effectiveness of leadership and governance, including management, staffing, facilities and resources.

The inspection judgements were drawn from evidence gathered by the inspection team, including observing children learning in lessons, looking at their work, talking with children, meetings with the staff, parents and governors, and reviewing the parents', teachers' and senior students' surveys.

KHDA family

Year	Rating
2015 - 2016	Good
2014 - 2015	Good
2013 - 2014	Good
2012 - 2013	Good
2011 - 2012	Good
2010 - 2011	Good
2009 - 2010	Good
2008 - 2009	Good

How well did the school perform overall?

Overall, **The English College Dubai**, offered a **good** quality of education for its students.

- Since the previous inspection, there had been some changes in subject performance. In both phases, attainment and progress in Islamic education and the Arabic subjects was generally acceptable. Attainment in English, mathematics and science was generally very good. Progress was at least good, apart from in science, where it was acceptable.

- Students enjoyed their lessons. They worked very well in groups and in pairs when required. They responded very well to their teachers and could make links between subjects relating what they learned to the real world.

- Students showed a high degree of responsibility. Their attitudes and behaviour were exemplary. In Post 16, students had an excellent understanding of the importance of Islam in UAE society. In the secondar phase, students were slightly less secure. Likewise, their community involvement, their work ethic and their environmental awareness were outstanding in the post-16 phase, and very good in the secondary phase.

- Teachers generally planned lessons carefully to cater for the needs of all students. Their questioning was well directed to develop understanding of what they had taught. They had a good variety of ways of presenting material and provided students with adequate opportunities to practice what had been learned. Assessment was generally well used to inform further teaching.

- The curriculum was well balanced and offered a good choice at later stages. The extra-curricular activities ensured well-balanced enrichment.

- A few health and safety issues meant that provision was very good. Appropriate child protection policies were in place. Pastoral care was very well developed. Students benefited from a warm, caring, supportive atmosphere, where they felt valued. They received appropriate advice in their choices for further and higher education and the world of work.

- The principal had worked very effectively to develop a strong team spirit. School self-evaluation procedures were too optimistic. Communications and relationships with parents had strengthened and were very good. The governing body was not representative. It did not take enough interest in the development of the school or hold the school leaders sufficiently to account. Resources, though adequate, were not entirely appropriate to support learning fully.

What did the school do well?

- The fostering of outstanding attitudes and behaviour, students' relationships with one another and with adults, and high quality personal development

- The development of students' understanding of Islamic values and their effect on daily life in Dubai, and their community and environmental responsibility

- The strengthening of relationships with parents

- The delivery of very good attainment and progress in English and mathematics in secondary and in mathematics post-16, of very good attainment in science in secondary and of very good progress in English post-16.

What does the school need to do next?

- Improve the quality and consistency of teaching, particularly in Arabic, with a focus on developing the four language skills.

- Address health and safety issues and the time allocation for Arabic.

- Take steps to ensure that governors involve themselves in the work and development of the school, and take greater responsibility for it.

- Update information technology and wi-fi provision.

- Improve routine management, making sure that timetabling is efficient and works for the benefit of the students.

How well did the school provide for students with special educational needs and disabilities?

- Students with SEND made similar progress to their peers. Students who received input though out-of-class support or individualised programmes made significant progress and became more independent and confident. They took increasing responsibility for their learning as they gained the necessary learning skills.

- Students with SEND were fully involved in all areas of their lessons and were engaged with their classmates in a wide range of learning activities, including collaborative work. The skills learnt through these activities reflected very well in the students' personal and social behaviour and other students' acceptance of students who have SEND

- Surveys of parents and conversations with them during the inspection, showed a very high satisfaction level with the type of information, support and reporting that they receive with regard to their child. The very detailed knowledge that the school has on students with SEND is appreciated as it means that support for families can be tailored to meet these needs.

- The staff members in the Enhanced Studies Department (ESD) had a good knowledge of the students with SEND and their types of SEND. Class teachers know the needs of the students well due to the detailed information provided by the ESD. This enabled teachers to have well-informed communication with parents, especially those who have children with SEND.

- Parents are informed and involved in the writing of their child's individual education plans (IEPs) and were kept informed of the progress that was made with regard to their work with the ESD. Their contribution was valued and they made a significant contribution to the inclusive ethos of the school.

- Parents are provided with a wide range of information and advice so that they can support their child's needs. These are very well tailored to meet the individual needs of the students. As a result, parents can complement the work of the school, at home.

National Agenda Parameter

In 2014, H.H. Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister of UAE, and Ruler of Dubai, launched the UAE National Agenda 2021, with education being a prime focus. The National Agenda includes two major objectives developed with the intent of placing the UAE among the most successful countries that provide world-class education. By 2021, it is expected that the UAE will feature in the top twenty countries in the 'Programme for International Student Assessment' (PISA) test and in the top fifteen countries in the 'Trends in Mathematics and Science Studies' (TIMSS) test.

In response to this, each participating school was issued a report on their students' performance in these international assessments and in addition, they were provided with clear targets for improving their performance. This academic year, KHDA introduced the National Agenda Parameter, which is a method for measuring and monitoring schools' progress towards achieving their individual National Agenda targets through the use of external benchmarking assessments.

Main points:

- The attainment data was not sufficient to make a full judgement on the progress towards meeting National Agenda targets.

- Governors, owners and the principal promoted awareness and understanding of the National Agenda and the National Agenda targets among a few of its stakeholders. The principal had made a decision not to promote the National Agenda and testing to the parent body until the school staff were more familiar with the demands to be placed upon students.

- Those students who had undergone GL international benchmarking tests had been prepared and their parents consulted. The curriculum was adequately aligned to TIMSS and PISA requirements. Relevant subject skills and knowledge for the National Agenda were acknowledged but progression was not systematically planned.

- Teachers had received some professional development on questioning skills and inquiry pedagogy. Teaching in the GCSE phase, Years 9 to 11, was increasingly effective in developing critical thinking skills of analysis, evaluation and improvement. Those activities based upon real-life scenarios, engaging students in experiential learning were the most effective.

- Development of critical thinking, investigations, open-ended problems, inquiry and application to real life situations formed a part of the teaching strategies in some subject areas. In English teachers effectively developed critical thinking. The most effective activities in these lessons were teacher questioning, and open-ended questions. In mathematics teaching was successful in developing critical thinking when control over their learning was offered to students.

- Students occasionally used information technology and other resources to develop their research skills. In English, students were encouraged to use dictionaries to broaden their vocabulary and enrich their writing. Students were encouraged to use external websites and communication sites such as Google classroom to further their capacity for research. Students were often seen using their own devices in study periods in the library and study rooms.

Innovation in education

The *UAE Vision 2021* sets out the National Agenda for the UAE to be among the most innovative nations in the world. The National Innovation Strategy sets the context for 'innovation' and 'innovative leadership'. It provides a basis for evaluating public and private schools in order to deliver a world-class education for all children in the UAE.

Innovation is driven by a commitment to excellence and continuous improvement. It is based on curiosity, the willingness to take risks, to experiment and to test assumptions as well as questioning and challenging the status quo. Being innovative is about looking beyond what we currently do well, identifying the great ideas of tomorrow and putting them into practice.

Promoting a culture of innovation:

- The principal understood the importance of innovation as a national priority but had not yet articulated a strategic response to this aspect of the National Agenda. Leadership and teachers' responses to developing their capacity to embed a culture of innovation in learning and teaching were being considered, but not yet implemented. With a new school leadership in place, future infrastructure plans included developing the school's facilities to enrich students' learning, coupled with teachers as mentors to generate innovative ideas through collaboration. The curriculum had yet to facilitate the development of students' critical thinking skills. Extra-curricular activities had been most effective in promoting students' enterprise and entrepreneurship.

Overall school performance		
Good		

1. Students' achievement		
	Secondary	**Post-16**
Islamic education		
Attainment	Acceptable	Acceptable
Progress	Good	Acceptable
Arabic as a first language		
Attainment	Acceptable	Acceptable
Progress	Acceptable	Acceptable
Arabic as an additional language		
Attainment	Weak	Not applicable
Progress	Acceptable	Not applicable
English		
Attainment	Very good ⬆	Good
Progress	Very good ⬇	Very good ⬆
Mathematics		
Attainment	Very good ⬇	Very good ⬆
Progress	Very good ⬇	Very good ⬆
Science		
Attainment	Very good ⬆	Acceptable ⬇
Progress	Good	Acceptable ⬇

	Secondary	**Post-16**
Learning skills	Good	Good

2. Students' personal and social development, and their innovation skills		
	Secondary	Post-16
Personal development	Outstanding	Outstanding
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Very good ⬆	Outstanding
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Very good ⬆	Outstanding

3. Teaching and assessment		
	Secondary	Post-16
Teaching for effective learning	Good	Good
Assessment	Good	Good

4. Curriculum		
	Secondary	Post-16
Curriculum design and implementation	Very good ⬇	Very good ⬇
Curriculum adaptation	Good	Good

5. The protection, care, guidance and support of students		
	Secondary	Post-16
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding	Very good ⬇	Very good ⬇
Care and support	Outstanding	Outstanding

6. Leadership and management	
	All phases
The effectiveness of leadership	Good
School self-evaluation and improvement planning	Good
Parents and the community	Very good ⬆
Governance	Weak ⬇
Management, staffing, facilities and resources	Acceptable

The Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau (DSIB) is responsible for inspecting and reporting on the standards reached by students and the quality of education provided in Dubai's private schools.

Judgements are made on a six-point scale

| Very weak | Weak | Acceptable | Good | Very good | Outstanding |

Using this scale, the *Main inspection report* contains the judgements about the different aspects, phases and subjects that form the work of the school.

It provides the reasons for the answers to the questions in the *Summary for parents and the community*:

- How well did the school perform overall?
- What did the school do well?
- What does the school need to do next?

1. Students' achievement		
Secondary		
Subjects	Attainment	Progress
Islamic education	Acceptable	Good
Arabic as a first language	Acceptable	Acceptable
Arabic as an additional language	Weak	Acceptable
English	Very good ⬆	Very good ⬇
Mathematics	Very good ⬇	Very good ⬇
Science	Very good ⬆	Good

- In Islamic education, results in internal assessments were in line with national curriculum expectations. Students had knowledge about many Islamic concepts and principles but their deeper understanding of them was not strong. Year 7 students could list the Seven under the shade of 'Allah'. On the other hand, only a few could answer why Prophet Mohammed had to leave Mekka at 'Hijra' night. Most groups of students made good progress as a result of quality teaching that developed their enquiry skills. Students were developing their recitation skills in lessons and through specialized weekly sessions. Attainment levels in internal assessments had been sustained over time, but the most able students were not making enough progress because they were not stretched.

- In Arabic as a first language, attainment levels in internal assessments were in line with national curriculum expectations and progress was acceptable. Students had adequate listening and reading skills. Year 9 students could read short stories or biographies of famous Islamic characters. They could summarize main events and characters. Year 10 students were developing their skills by writing short articles about UAE and environmental issues. Their speaking skills in standard Arabic were underdeveloped, where many were using colloquial Arabic. Attainment levels in internal assessment over time were sustained. Progress was not effectively tracked. Differences between boys and girls were unknown. Students, who were often in very small classes, were not making enough progress because of imbalanced development of the different language skills.

- Less than three quarters of students studying Arabic as an additional language achieved in line with general expectations. Most students made an acceptable progress especially in writing and the amount of vocabulary. Students lacked self-confidence to build conversations; they were able only to respond to teacher's directions using very simple statements which were poor in their use of vocabulary. The school failed to provide progress data of individuals and cohorts of students. No bench marking was available to measure attainment. The school made adequate efforts to raise attainment, but they were not succeeding beyond some basic signs of improvement in progress. There was no noted differences in the progress levels of different groups of students, including those with SEND.

- The large majority of students attained levels in English above curriculum expectation, with a steady year-on-year increase in the proportion of students attaining the higher levels at GCSE. Recent results were notably stronger in literature than language, with more students attaining levels A* to B. Taking both subjects together, a large majority of students attained levels that were above UK standards in GCSE in 2015. In lessons and in recent work, students showed skills, knowledge and understanding beyond age-related expectations. Year 8 students engaged in high quality discussion about moods and genres. Different groups of students made better than expected progress, and the school was determined to ensure that past discrepancies between the achievements of boys and girls did not recur.

- In 2015, two-thirds of students attained grade B or above in GSCE mathematics. Over the past three years a large majority of students had attained results at grade B or above. In PISA 2012 and TIMMS 2011 international benchmarking tests the majority of students attained levels that were above international standards. By the end of the phase students showed strong skills in algebra, being able to express generalisations algebraically and model situations. They could solve a variety of problems involving equations, formulas, and functions. Attainment in the Year 11 set taking further mathematics was particularly high. The large majority of students made better than expected progress over time and in lessons, with little difference in progress rates between girls, boys and students with SEND.

- In science, attainment and progress against English curriculum standards were very good across the phase. GCSE results in physics, chemistry and biology had been very good over the previous three years, and international PISA test scores were significantly above international norms. Attainment and progress in lessons and in students' work were at least good. Students confidently carried out investigations with minimal teacher intervention. Students in Year 7 explored the effect of pesticides on ecosystems, while Year 11 students were able to successfully determine drivers' reaction times and stopping distances in traffic. Students with SEND made progress in line with the rest of the class.

Post-16		
Subjects	Attainment	Progress
Islamic education	Acceptable	Acceptable
Arabic as a first language	Acceptable	Acceptable
Arabic as an additional language	Not applicable	Not applicable
English	Good	Very good ⬆
Mathematics	Very good ⬆	Very good ⬆
Science	Acceptable ⬇	Acceptable ⬇

- In Islamic education, results in internal assessments were high for most students but attainment was only in line with expectations. Students had suitable recitation skills, but their understanding of deeper meanings of the Holy Qur'an was underdeveloped. Year 12 students could read 'Sourat-Al-Noor' adequately but were not able to explain its diverse meanings or relate it to their lives. Students made adequate progress on different Hadeeth topics and Islamic morals. Year 12 students were developing their knowledge in Hadeeth with the moral value of meditation and reflection to reach serendipity. Students of all abilities were not making better progress because of low expectations and too much emphasis on knowledge rather than understanding. Progress was not effectively tracked. Differences between Arabic and non-Arabic speakers were unknown.

- In Arabic as a first language, attainment levels in internal assessments were high but attainment and progress were only in line with expectations. Students had strong listening skills while their reading and writing skills were acceptable. Year 12 students, for example, could read and summarize a short article about water and desert. Students did not always use standard Arabic when communicating their ideas. They made acceptable progress because they were developing their reading and writing skills properly. However, creative writing was underdeveloped. Progress was not effectively tracked. Differences between boys and girls were unknown. Students were not challenged sufficiently and were not making better progress because of this.

- In English, the majority of students attained levels that were above UK curriculum expectations, as reflected in the most recent external tests including GCE A level examinations. The school had sustained

good outcomes over recent years. In their recent work and in lessons, students demonstrated abilities in speaking and listening, in their interpretation of a wide range of texts and in their writing that were good. Internal and external assessment information and work in lessons showed better than expected progress in relation to curriculum benchmarks. Year 12 students developed their literary skills by reflecting very perceptively on the interplay of characters in the 'Great Gatsby'. Year 13 students quickly developed verbal and writing skills when critically discussing the 'Clockwork Orange'.

- In mathematics, GCE A-level results in 2015 were outstanding with over three-quarters of students at grade B and above. Over the past three years a majority of students had been above national standards. In lessons and in their recent work, a large majority of students demonstrated levels of knowledge, skills and understanding that were above expected standards. They could reason with information, draw conclusions and make generalisations. Similarly, they could reason with data from several sources or with unfamiliar representations to solve multi-step problems. Of note was the highly collaborative working of a small year 12 mechanics group who were drawing, discussing and solving problems of particles, planes and pulleys. The majority of boys and girls made better than expected progress both over time and in lessons.

- In science, AS and A-level results were acceptable, with the majority of students achieving at curriculum expectations. A-level and AS-level results had been acceptable overall during the previous three years. Attainment and progress were acceptable in lessons and good in students' work. Where teaching was good, the majority of students were able to make better than expected progress in their lessons. However, the development of students' knowledge and conceptual understanding were often limited by lack of appropriate challenge and teacher expectations. Students independently carried out investigations. For example, students in Year 12 were able to test for fats, proteins and carbohydrates, while Year 13 students were able to make soap and bio-diesel and discuss the environmental implications of their production.

	Secondary	Post-16
Learning skills	Good	Good

- Students took personal responsibility for their own learning across the curriculum. They engaged effectively with their teachers and with learning tasks in most cases and often reflected well on their progress. However, teachers did not always enable students to take full responsibility for their learning.

- Students understood and made some connections between areas of learning, for example in their use of computer-aided drawing to reinforce their understanding of mathematics. In English, the acquisition of new vocabulary enabled them to talk about literary texts.

- Students worked collaboratively and purposefully in secondary phase lessons. They communicated well with each other through active learning. Interactions were most effective when students took account of the views of other group members. They recognized the benefits for their learning of working in groups but group work was not always managed effectively.

- The students were heavily directed in their learning which restricted research opportunities. There were some lessons where students thought critically, analyzed and applied judgment based on their analysis. It was promoted well in some classes through questioning and students embraced this, but they were not given enough opportunities to research to support their learning through Critical thinking and using technology.

2. Students' personal and social development, and their innovation skills

	Secondary	Post-16
Personal development	Outstanding	Outstanding

- Throughout the school, students acted in a very responsible manner. They had very positive attitudes towards their work and their life in school.

- Behaviour was excellent. Both in and out of classes, students showed a maturity beyond their years and an understanding of others, which made interpersonal difficulties rare.

- Relationships between staff and students were of very high quality. A few teachers were reported to be over-zealous in their enforcement of discipline, but in general students' responsible attitudes encouraged an excellent rapport.

- Students took issues of health and personal safety very seriously, in the main. Almost all participated in exercise programmes, and chose carefully from the options offered at snack times.

- Attendance was very good. Students had acquired very good time-keeping habits which would stand them in good stead for the world of work. They were punctual and well prepared for lessons.

	Secondary	Post-16
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Very good ⬆	Outstanding

- Post-16 students had an excellent appreciation of Islamic values. They could give examples of how Islam influenced contemporary life in UAE with respect to dress codes, diet and habits. The understanding of secondary students to some issues was not as clear. For example, they thought that Muslim women had to wear black, and not that it is a cultural choice rather than a religious requirement.

- Post-16 students had high degree of respect of the culture of UAE. They knew about the contemporary seven Emirates, and something of the history of pearl diving and Bedouin life. However, secondary students did not show similarly good knowledge and understanding of the UAE's cultural heritage.

- Students in both phases demonstrated excellent understanding and awareness of their own cultures. A few students were familiar with other countries' cultures such as Tanzania, but not many knew enough about cultures of other students coming from different countries. For example, very few students were able to state something about cultures of their friends coming from Belgium, Portugal and Russia.

	Secondary	Post-16
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Very good ⬆	Outstanding

- Students in post-16 felt strongly about making contributions to both their school and local communities, as leaders and initiators. Many had participated in community service dedicating a few hours a week to supporting local charities, schools, and community organisations such as overseas fund appeals and local food banks for construction workers. Some secondary students participated in local sports clubs, lifeguard training and girl guides.

- Older students, particularly, demonstrated an excellent work ethic both within and beyond school. Some had engaged in work experience that would equip them for their future in terms of employability skills. Students spoke with enthusiasm about the dedication, commitment, and determination they felt that they were putting in to their studies in order for their aspirations of higher education to be realised.

- Students were only too aware of the need to preserve and sustain their environment and were anxious to ensure they would inherit a 'greener' future. They referred to the environmental issues facing Dubai and the UAE and understood the potential benefits of new and renewable energy sources. They took their responsibilities to re-cycle and conserve energy seriously and almost all had taken part in environmental projects.

3. Teaching and assessment		
	Secondary	Post-16
Teaching for effective learning	Good	Good

- Most teachers' knowledge of their subjects was secure. The majority applied their knowledge to engage students so that they make good progress. A large minority however did not sufficiently adapt their approaches well enough to ensure that work was set at an appropriate level for all groups of students.

- Most lessons were planned carefully and with some consideration for the needs of students. Almost all lesson plans included three differentiated outcomes. In the majority of lessons, the levels of difficulty at which these outcomes were set did not sufficiently address the diverse needs of the students in class, even when class sizes were relatively small.

- Teachers' interactions with students were mutually respectful, and they promoted relevant discussions in group and pair discussions. In the majority of lessons, teachers' questioning helped students better understand what they were learning. Students made better progress when teachers asked open, challenging questions that engaged them in deeper, higher order thinking and reflection.

- Teachers occasionally used a range of strategies, including assessments, to address the needs of different students. In a few lessons, they used their prior knowledge of students' strengths and potential to set work at levels that challenged students of different abilities. In these lessons, they provided good support and checked that students were progressing well in relation to the expected differentiated learning outcomes.

- The majority of teachers provided some opportunities for students to think about their responses and their work, but most students relied too much on their guidance. A large minority of teachers provided opportunities for students to engage in problem solving activities. In a few lessons, teachers provided opportunities for students to work independently and they promoted their ability to think critically.

	Secondary	Post-16
Assessment	Good	Good

- Internal assessment processes were increasingly providing valid and reliable information that could be used to measure students' attainment and to a lesser extent, evaluate their progress against the school's curriculum standards. School leaders had taken initial steps to develop assessment practices in response to the changes in the English National Curriculum and were in the process of evaluating these initiatives.

- School leaders were gradually improving the rigour of the processes used for comparing students' performance with those of students internationally. Students sat international standardised tests on entry and at the end of Year 7. International assessment tools were used to predict students' progress in the post-16 phase. Additional benchmark tests were in the process of being introduced for some of the other secondary year groups.

- School leaders were taking steps to ensure that information from assessment was accurate. Analysis was carried out to determine the attainment and progress of individuals and cohorts. The resulting information was shared with middle managers and teachers.

- In most of the lessons, teachers did not use students' assessment data effectively to plan appropriate lesson outcomes. Nor did they use this data to select and use appropriate teaching strategies to meet the varied learning needs of all groups of students.

- Most teachers were aware of the individual strengths and weaknesses of their students, and provided adequate support to students during lessons based on this knowledge. However the majority did not use this knowledge effectively enough to set tasks that challenged all groups of students. The majority of teachers provided helpful oral and written comments to promote further learning.

4. Curriculum		
	Secondary	**Post-16**
Curriculum design and implementation	Very good ⬇	Very good ⬇

- The curriculum had a clear rationale. There was breadth and balance across subjects including good provision for example in drama. While there had been adaptations to changes in the UK curriculum, insufficient time was given to Arabic. Plans for ensuring that students had opportunities for being innovative varied across subjects. Students' regular use of modern technology was not rigorously planned across subjects in the secondary phase.

- Curriculum planning ensured that students could learn systematically, although in Arabic as an additional language there was repetition in some areas. For example, household vocabulary was taught in Year 7 and again at the same level in Year 8. In post-16, students could end their studies in a particular subject after too short a period. Students were very well prepared for the next stage of their education.

- The school was responsive to students' interests and worked to offer an extremely wide range of choices. Those introduced since the previous inspection included sociology and government and politics. Student numbers had grown in the post-16 phase because of such new options, including French and Spanish. Students could 'sample' a few lessons to see if they wished to study a given subject.

- Cross-curricular links between some subjects made learning meaningful. For example, links between Islamic education and mathematics were good, where students had to carry out arithmetic operations when calculating 'Zakah' and in a physics lesson where students learnt about drivers' safe stopping distances. However, the planning of links between subjects was not a consistently strong feature.

	Secondary	Post-16
Curriculum adaptation	Good	Good

- .The school was largely successful in meeting the needs of different groups of students, though less so in Arabic as a first language. Students needing support were included in the enhanced studies' programme in Key Stage 3. Students were grouped by ability in English, mathematics and modern foreign languages, although in science there was more to be done to meet the needs of the most able students.

- There was a broad range of optional subjects in both phases of the school. Students could study Arabic and Islamic studies at GCSE for example. An extensive range of extra-curricular activities significantly enhanced students' academic and personal development. Participation rates were high. The school had not incorporated any vocational courses into its curriculum.

- The UAE social studies programme made a measurable contribution to developing students' knowledge, understanding, and appreciation of the UAE and their understanding of Emirati cultures and values. This was extended in a range of subjects including business studies, history, psychology and geography. There were strong links in science with social aspects of the culture of the UAE.

5. The protection, care, guidance and support of students		
	Secondary	Post-16
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection / safeguarding	Very good ⬇	Very good ⬇

- The school had well developed policies for child protection. All teachers had received training, but not all support and auxiliary staff. There were appropriate policies to combat bullying and cyber-bullying. Some students did not think that procedures to counter cyber-bullying were comprehensive enough.

- Generally, the school was a very safe working environment, but there were weaknesses. For example in science laboratories, girls were allowed near flames with their hair loose and the swimming pool access was not locked. Some students waited unsupervised at the kerb-side to be picked up by their parents.

- Buildings were maintained to a high standard and were kept very clean. Medical records and incident records were kept up-to-date and held securely.

- Overall, the premises and campus were of very good quality. Teaching spaces, corridors and outside play areas presented no obvious hazards.

- Students had adopted healthy lifestyles, as promoted by the school. They were aware of the risks posed by an unbalanced diet and of the need for exercise. The school canteen had few unhealthy snacks.

	Secondary	Post-16
Care and support	Outstanding	Outstanding

- Staff managed behaviour very well. This was in part due to the systems for the management of behaviour but was largely due to the strong and respectful relationships which existed between teachers and students. This positive ethos was also reflected in the very supportive relationships evident between students in all areas of the school

- There were reliable systems in place to secure high levels of attendance and punctuality. These high levels reflected that students enjoyed coming to school and displayed mature attitudes to their learning.

- There were sensitive procedures in place to identify early any students who may have SEND. The system was not yet refined enough to distinguish between students who required extra support for their learning and those who require light touch monitoring. Systems were starting to be developed to identify any student who may have had particular gifts or talents.

- The school provided strong support for students who had SEND and, as a result, they made progress in their academic and personal progress at similar rates to their peers. Students who were gifted were being identified and new procedures established to better meet their needs and provide them with opportunities to develop their talents.

- The pastoral systems for providing support for students' well-being and personal development, in all years, was strong and met the needs of students very well. Appropriate information, advice and guidance was provided by the school to allow students to make well-informed choices about their future careers paths.

Provision for students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)	
The overall effectiveness of provision for students with special educational needs and disabilities	Very good

- The school had an inclusive ethos. A member of the school's leadership team was responsible and accountable of the work being done to support students with SEND. The ESD had a very strong and detailed oversight of students with SEND and planned well for their needs. This was successful shown by students' improvements in their learning.

- Systems to identify students with SEND had resulted in more than a quarter of students being identified. The school used a range of information and diagnostic tests to verify these diagnoses. However, in some cases their needs were not significant enough to impact on their learning. Light touch monitoring of progress was improving the process.

- There was a very high satisfaction level with the type of information, support and reporting that parents received. The detail the school had on students with SEND was appreciated as the support which families received was tailored to meet their child's needs. Parents were informed and involved in the writing of their child's IEP and kept well informed of progress.

- Guidance was provided to teachers on to how they should better meet the needs of students with SEND in their classes. This information was used well by teachers to adapt their planning accordingly. Modification was targeted as required through withdrawal and the provision of additional sessions on aspects of work which students found difficult, such as spelling, comprehension and sentence structure.

- Most students who have been identified as having SEND made similar progress to their peers. As a result, students took increasing responsibility for their learning as they gained confidence and the learning skills necessary to become independent learners.

- Teaching activities in lessons, planned for the involvement of all students including those with SEND. Students were fully involved and engaged with their peers in a wide range of learning activities, including collaborative work. The skills learnt through these activities reflected very well in the students' personal and social behaviour and other students' acceptance of students who have SEND.

6. Leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership	Good

- The aims for the school were largely operational rather than strategic. The principal was acutely aware of the need to restore and rebuild staff morale, which had previously been dented, linked to a perception that the school had not been supported well enough. The principal saw the need for the school to be more accountable, particularly in reporting to parents.

- The principal had extended the senior leadership team. Members had a secure knowledge about operational aspects of the curriculum and a very good understanding of changes brought about by the examination boards. They were not sufficiently outward-looking in identifying what best practice looks like. Some departmental heads were innovative and energetic, others, while committed, were too pedestrian in their approach.

- Relationships were generally very sound. The principal operated a system of consensual leadership. He had established working groups and expected healthy and open discussion. Not all developments, however, needed such extensive discussion, and opportunities to empower leaders to take vital decisions swiftly were not taken. Morale throughout the school had strengthened. Leaders at all levels varied in their abilities to boost morale and maintain an energised, 'can-do' attitude.

- While leaders had maintained standards and were very aware of what needed to be done to improve the school, they had not been successful in surmounting all the barriers to students' progress. Some of these barriers were a reluctance among a few members of staff to embrace change wholeheartedly. The school had the potential to improve, but lacked vibrancy in some quarters to lift itself further.

School self-evaluation and improvement planning	Good

- The school had reviewed, revised and enhanced its systems for the systematic self-evaluation and this better informed the school's improvement and department action plans. However in several areas of the school, leaders had been too optimistic with their judgments, which had led to some opportunities for improvement being missed.

- The school had improved its monitoring procedures so that links were starting to be made, within departments, between the quality of teaching and the outcomes for students. This monitoring of the quality of teaching was starting to inform department action plans more effectively and links with individual targets for staff development were being made although in their early stages

- Improvements plans had been written based on the improved self-evaluation procedures. Department improvement plans were increasingly taking in to account analyses of data, quality of teaching and the suitability of the curriculum. They were also taking in to account the individual development needs of staff and the whole school priorities for improvement.

- There had been improvements in several areas of the school. However some of these are not yet fully embedded. Although there had been impact in some areas, and evidence of improvements against some of the recommendations from the previous report, these changes had not had sufficient time to come to full fruition.

Partnerships with parents and the community	Very good ⬆

- Parents were content with the frequency of reporting and with the quality of information which they received. They were very appreciative and spoke highly of the comments which they received on how to support and extend their children's learning at home.

- Parents generally considered themselves to be very well involved in the life and work of the school. They had received questionnaires to seek their views and opinions, but they felt more involved by the fact that everyone, from the Principal to teachers, was very approachable. Some thought that there was scope for greater involvement in strategic planning.

- The school planner effectively aided communication. In many ways, parents preferred it to electronic communications, which the school used very effectively to communicate with parents. All felt that the quality of reporting had improved over the last few months.

- The school's involvement internationally was significant. Each year some students travelled to Tanzania to help to build and maintain a school for orphans. One mother said that the trip had transformed her daughter. Partnerships locally, and sporting connections with other schools, strengthened links at local level.

Governance	Weak ⬇

- There were no representatives of parents on the governing board, nor of any others with a non-commercial interest in the school. The board did not seek the views of parents, or of students, and had poor knowledge of what the school was actually doing in terms of teaching and across the broad field of education.

- The governing board had not shown great interest in the academic or pastoral performance of the school. Members had not discussed the school's performance with regard to national or international comparisons. They did not visit the school to see for themselves what teaching methods were being used or the students' responses. They rarely celebrated the school's successes.

- Little advice or support was offered by governors to the principal. They had not ensured that appropriate time was allocated to Arabic in an acceptable unambiguous way. They had not provided resources beyond basic adequacy to meet students' needs. They had not responded to the recommendation to that effect in the previous report. The board had generally abrogated its more specific educational responsibilities.

Management, staffing, facilities and resources	Acceptable

- Some aspects of the daily life of the school were insufficiently organised. There were some limitations in timetabling. Some allocations meant that popular choices clashed in post-16, meaning that some students could lose out on time needed for the subjects of their choice. The attempt to provide additional time for Arabic outside normal timetabled periods was not always successful and denied students necessary time and space between classes.

- In order to deliver the curriculum appropriately, the school had to rely on some temporary appointments. Parents had expressed concerns that some lessons might be taught by teachers unqualified in the subject, which was the case. Not all teachers had been trained.

- Some rooms, which had never been designed as classrooms, were cramped. Older students had very restricted study areas. Many had to work outside, unsupervised, away from ready availability of reference material and technology. Access to parts of the school was extremely difficult for those with limited mobility.

- Resources were just adequate. There was scope for greater provision of carefully targeted equipment, including information technology, to support students' learning. Wi-Fi links were not extensive to cover the whole school.

The views of the parents, teachers and students

Before the inspection, the views of the parents, teachers and senior secondary students were surveyed. Key messages from each group were considered during the inspection and these helped to form inspection judgements. A summary of the survey statistics and comments from those who responded to the survey follows:

Responses to the surveys		
Responses received	**Number**	
Parents*	**2015-2016**	251
	2014-2015	129
Teachers	42	
Students	320	

*The number of responses from parents is based on the number of families.

- Parents who responded to the survey were overwhelmingly supportive of the school. Almost all were very satisfied with the education available in the English College.

- They expressed satisfaction with Islamic education and Arabic. About half felt that their children were making good progress in Arabic as first language, and a large majority felt so with regard to Arabic as second language and Islamic education. They were positive about their children's understanding of Islam and the importance of Islamic values.

- English, mathematics and science were very favourably commented upon by parents; almost all thought that their children were making good progress.

- Almost all parents were very positive about their children's personal and social development, stating that their children enjoyed school. They felt that the school offered a good range of subjects and extra-curricular activities. Most parents thought that their children were well prepared for life after school.

- There were very few concerns about bullying. Almost all said that children were safe on school buses, but a few written comments expressed concerns about safety on school buses, and about the standard of driving. In written comments, a few parents expressed concerns about security in the school.

- Some parents commented adversely on a few teachers being over-zealous in their pursuit of discipline.

- Almost all students who responded to the survey were satisfied with the education which they received. About half felt that they were making good progress in Arabic as first language, and the majority in Arabic as second language. An unusually large number stated that they did not know whether or not they were making good progress in English, mathematics and science. They were very positive about homework.

- Almost all students felt that behaviour was good in the school. Most thought that they had appropriate opportunities to learn about Emirati heritage and traditions. A large majority said that they had gained a good understanding of Islam, and most said so about the importance of Islamic values.

- A large majority of students was unhappy about facilities and resources. Many stated that the school listened to them and took account of their views. A few were disappointed that some teachers took too hard a line in their interpretation of school rules and discipline.

- Teachers who responded to the survey in general thought that the education offered was of high quality. Their concerns were largely about communication. A large majority felt excluded from the school self-evaluation process. A similar number claimed that they did not receive any feedback on the quality of their work.

- Just over half the teachers thought that senior leadership was not effective, and a slightly lower proportion did not feel that leaders listened to their views.

If you have a concern or wish to comment on any aspect of this report, you should contact
inspection@khda.gov.ae