



دائرة التعليم والمعرفة
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
AND KNOWLEDGE

Inspection
Report of

Dunes International School

Overall
Effectiveness

Good

Academic year: 2018-2019



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School Information

School Profile			
School Name:	Dunes International School		
School ID:	9294	School phases:	Primary, Middle and High
School Council: **	N/A		
School curriculum: *	Central Board of Secondary Examination (CBSE)	Fee range and category*	AED 12,000 – AED 21,000. Low to medium.
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Staff Information			
Total number of teachers	89	Turnover rate	9%
Number of teaching assistants	21	Teacher- student ratio	1:12

Students' Information				
Total number of students	1093	Gender	Boys and girls	
% of Emirati students	0%	% of SEN students	2%	
% of largest nationality groups	Indian 95%	Pakistani 3%	Bangladeshi 1%	
% of students per phase	KG 44%	Primary 38%	Middle 14%	High 4%

Inspection Details				
Inspection dates	from:	13/01/1440	to	16/01/1440
		23/09/2018		26/09/2018
Number of lessons observed:		122	Number of joint lessons observed:	9

*Relevant for Private schools only

** Relevant for Government schools only



The overall performance of the school:

- Ryan Private School changed its name to Dunes International School in April 2017 after leaving the Ryan International Group. The principal and almost all teaching staff have remained in the same post since the last inspection. Six of the senior leaders have joined the school within the last year. Student numbers have remained stable. Teacher turnover is low.
- The overall performance of the school is good. Leaders have maintained standards in all subjects and all performance standards. They have raised students' achievement in Arabic as a second language (ASL) and English in the Kindergarten (KG). Teachers are now using more diverse teaching strategies in the classroom, resulting in high levels of engagement by students. However, lessons are not always sufficiently challenging for higher-achieving students. There are limited opportunities for students to develop their critical-thinking and innovation skills in lessons.

Performance Standard 1		Students' Achievement		
Judgment	Good	Change from previous inspection		No Change
Justifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students achievement is good in all subjects except mathematics, where achievement remains acceptable.• Students achievement has improved in Arabic as a second language in the primary, middle and high phase. English achievement in the KG has also improved. These are now good.• Students demonstrate good attitudes to learning across all subjects. They work collaboratively together. There is no significant difference in students' achievement between different groups of learners.			

Performance Standard 2		Students' personal and social development, and their innovation skills		
Judgment	Very Good	Change from previous inspection		No Change
Justifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students' display very positive attitudes to learning. Their relationships and behaviour are very good, and also their appreciation of Islamic values and UAE culture.• Student attendance and punctuality, at 99%, are outstanding.• Students' social responsibility is very good. Their innovation skills in lessons remains an area for improvement; students do not always initiate projects or research independently without adult direction.			

Performance Standard 3		Teaching and Assessment		
Judgment	Good	Change from previous inspection		No Change
Justifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teachers impart secure subject knowledge. They plan practical opportunities for students to learn and they use a diverse range of teaching strategies to engage all learners.• Interaction between teacher and students is good. However, lessons are not sufficiently challenging for higher-achieving students.• Teachers do not always develop students' critical thinking, innovation and independent learning skills purposefully in lessons.			

Performance Standard 4		Curriculum		



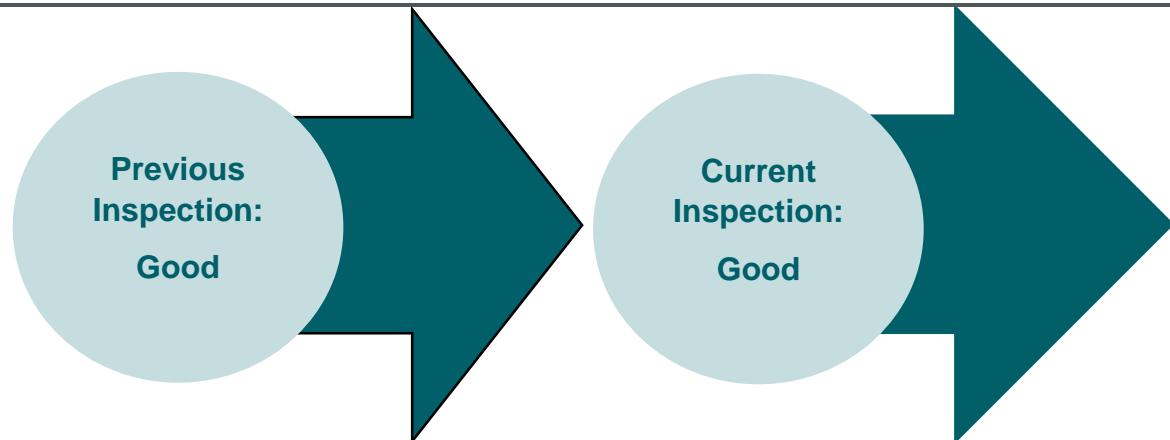
Judgment	Good	Change from previous inspection	No Change
Justifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The school's curriculum is broad and balanced. The curriculum makes meaningful cross-curricular links with other subjects, Emirati culture and UAE society. It offers a good range of curriculum choices, particularly in the high phase of the school.Although the curriculum is reviewed regularly, it does not yet fully take account of the higher-achieving students or the development of their innovation skills in lessons.		

Performance Standard 5	The protection, care, guidance and support of students		
Judgment	Very Good	Change from previous inspection	No Change
Justifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The school has highly effective procedures in place to keep students safe. Student and staff relationships are very good and promote a positive climate for learning.Students with special educational needs (SEN) are identified accurately and supported in class, resulting in their good outcomes. The identification of students who are gifted and talented (G&T) is also good. However, the support and challenge for these students in lessons remains an area for improvement.		

Performance Standard 6	Leadership and management		
Judgment	Good	Change from previous inspection	No Change
Justifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The principal's promotion of a welcoming, positive and inclusive ethos is at the heart of the school. Partnership with parents and the community result in positive learning experiences being afforded to the students.The school's self-evaluation (SEF) is well considered but is not always written analytically. Information is not always linked to students' achievement and outcomes.Almost all middle leaders are new to the school within the last year. They are at the early stages of leading their subjects, monitoring lessons and writing actions plans.		



Progress made since last inspection and capacity to improve



- Since the last inspection, senior leaders have made progress in almost all of the areas identified for improvement. Overall, they have raised students' achievement in Arabic as a second language in the primary, middle and high phase, and in English in the KG. These are now good. Mathematics remains acceptable.
- The school ensures that best teaching practice is shared regularly and evaluated. Learning objectives are now differentiated and shared with students. Teachers now promote active based learning in lessons and are less reliant on the use of text books. They are not yet asking questions to fully challenge the higher-achieving students in lessons. Innovation in lessons remains an area for improvement.
- The school has introduced more rigorous assessment practices across all phases. Data clearly tracks students' progress and is analysed by senior leaders to highlight where students are underperforming. However, middle leaders are not yet analysing data.
- Lessons in Arabic as a second language now have clear learning outcomes and promote good levels of literacy learning. Assessments are undertaken regularly and analysed by senior leaders. The newly appointed Arabic leader is sharing best practice with her team but is yet to start monitoring the impact on students' learning through formal observations.
- Overall, the progress made in raising standards since the previous inspection indicates that leaders demonstrate good capacity to further improve the school.



Provision for Reading



- The school's library hosts a selection of good quality texts both in Arabic and in English. There is a wide range of fiction and non-fiction books to support learning across the curriculum for all ages. Students can choose from a range of age-appropriate texts for their own enjoyment or personal study. In Arabic and English, most classes are taught in the library once a week.
- There is no specific action plan to raise students' achievement in reading overall. However, leaders promote a positive culture for reading across the school. They understand what is working well and how things should improve. Leaders are at the early stages of tracking children's achievement in reading beyond continuous and external assessments.
- Staff receive training about how to teach reading, including promoting links with reading across the curriculum.
- Arabic and English lessons focus on developing students' reading and comprehension skills. The majority of students read at an above age-expected level. They demonstrate a good understanding of books. Children in the KG are at the early stages of reading but enjoy listening to stories and can segment and blend simple words and sentences in English.
- To promote students enjoyment of reading, the school participates in a range of in-house reading competitions and themed events.



Key areas of strength and areas for improvements:

Key areas of strength

- Students' raised achievement in Arabic as second language.
- Students' positive attitudes to learning and their relationships with others.
- Teachers' use of diverse teaching strategies and activities to engage students in their learning.
- Identification and support for students with special educational needs.
- Leaders' promotion of a welcoming, positive and inclusive ethos, and their partnership with all stakeholders.

Key areas for improvement

- Raise students' achievement in all subjects, particularly in mathematics by:
 - ensuring all lessons build on students' prior learning and understanding
 - providing work that is sufficiently challenging
 - helping students to understand mathematical concepts through visual and practical modelling
 - planning work that promotes critical-thinking, independent problem solving and innovation skills in all lessons.
- Improve teaching and learning by:
 - providing more challenging work in lessons, particularly for the higher-achieving students, including those who are gifted and talented.
 - asking open-ended questions to challenge and deepen understanding
 - using moderated assessment data more effectively to personalise future learning.
- Develop leadership and management by:
 - evaluating the school objectively through triangulating information and noting the impact sources of information has on students' learning and outcomes
 - training teachers to understand what constitutes as innovation in lessons, and how to develop students' critical-thinking skills.
 - ensuring all leaders continue to monitor teaching and learning, but focus on students' achievements
 - supporting middle leaders to understand and use data to write a strategic action plan that sets targets to raise achievement.



Performance Standard 1: Students' Achievement

Indicators:		KG	Primary	Middle	High
Islamic Education	Attainment	N/A	Good	Good	Good
	Progress	N/A	Good	Good	Good
Arabic (as a First Language)	Attainment	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Progress	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Arabic (as additional Language) *	Attainment	N/A	Good	Good	Good
	Progress	N/A	Good	Good	Good
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	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good
	Progress	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good
Science	Attainment	Good	Good	Good	Very Good
	Progress	Good	Good	Good	Very Good
Other subjects (Art, Music, PE)	Attainment	Good	Good	Good	Good
	Progress	Good	Good	Good	Good
Learning Skills		Good	Good	Good	Good

*Relevant for Private schools only



Islamic Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Students' achievement in Islamic Education is good.Attainment is good overall. In high, Grade 10 examination results are outstanding. However, these examinations are taken by a small proportion of students. In lessons and students' work, the majority of students attain levels above curriculum standards.Most students demonstrate a good understanding of the Holy Qur'an and Hadeeth. Students can relate their understanding to the world and suggest solutions to environmental, social and economic problems. Students demonstrate a good understanding of Islamic concepts and values. Although, students' recitation skills are good overall, they find it hard to pronounce certain Arabic sounds.
Arabic	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Students' achievement in Arabic as a second language is good and has improved since the last inspection.Attainment is good overall. In high, Grade 10 CBSE exam results are very good. However, these examinations are taken by a small proportion of students and do not concur with inspection evidence as seen in lessons or students' coursework.The majority of students demonstrate good speaking and listening skills in Arabic. They can understand what is said to them and respond at a level that is above expected for the length of time they have been learning this subject. Students read and write confidently, demonstrating good comprehension skills. However, students in the KG and primary phase are not given sufficient opportunities to read more challenging texts and write at greater length.
Social Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Students' achievement in social studies is good.The majority of students achieve levels above those expected for their age. They demonstrate a good understanding of Emirati history, culture and heritage. They are aware of environmental issues such as pollution. Students demonstrate a good understanding of UAE geography; its history and the role key leaders play in its success. However, there are limited opportunities for students to use resources, such as maps, to help consolidate and deepen their understanding.
English	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Students' achievement in English is good and has improved in the Kindergarten since the last inspection.Attainment is good overall. In Grade 10 CBSE examinations, attainment was outstanding in 2018. However, these examinations are taken by a small proportion of students in the school. In lessons, and students' work in other phases, attainment is good.Students make good progress in all phases. Most students speak well in English and can hold conversations with confidence and understanding. Students can read with understanding and can infer and deduct, particularly in the middle and high phases. Spelling and punctuation are mostly accurate, but students' grammar is not always correct. Students in the KG and primary phase do not have sufficient opportunities to speak and write at length beyond just single words and simple sentences.



Mathematics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Students achievement in mathematics is acceptable overall. It is good in the high phase.Overall, students' attainment is acceptable. In High, Grade 10 CBSE examination results are good. This concurs with inspection findings in this phase.Students' mental mathematics skills are good across the school. Students use mathematical vocabulary with understanding and can recall number facts. However, their understanding of mathematical concepts is not secure, except in the high school where students confidently discuss mathematical ideas.Practical learning and problem-solving are common features of learning in mathematics. However, students are largely dependent on adults and more-able peers to help them solve problems and communicate their mathematical reasoning. Explanations and modelling of mathematical concepts are often not visual or practical, thus hindering students' progress.
Science	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Students' achievement in science is good overall. It is very good in the high phase.Overall, students' attainment is good. In high, Grade 10 CBSE exam results are good. These examinations are taken by a small proportion of the school. However, attainment as seen in lessons and in students' coursework would indicate that attainment in this phase is very good.Students demonstrate good scientific knowledge and skills. They can apply these in a range of contexts and can use scientific language and observation well. However, there are less opportunities to develop students' scientific enquiry and investigations skills. Critical thinking skills are also underdeveloped features of learning.
Other subjects	<ul style="list-style-type: none">In Art, most students are beginning to develop their creativity by exploring with different mediums.In physical education (PE), most students engage in physical activity, developing skills in football and basketball. Most can swim confidently. Few students are not always engaged or included in PE lessons. In such instances, these students learn little by watching.In music, most students learn to sing in time and in tune. The minority of students who are enabled to use untuned percussion instruments can play in time and keep a steady beat. Greater opportunities to use instruments by all students are needed.In Hindi and French, students can write simple stories and use vocabulary related to the weather.
Learning Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Students' learning skills are good overall.Students are responsible learners. They engage readily and collaborate effectively. In almost all subjects, students make clear connections between areas of learning.In lessons, students find things out by themselves and, when encouraged, use IT to support their learning. Problem-solving skills are common features of lessons. However, students' independent learning, and critical thinking skills are not fully developed.



Subjects	Relative Strengths	Areas of Improvements
Islamic Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Students' knowledge and understanding of the Holy Qur'an and Hadeeth.Students' application of Islamic teaching to their lives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Students' recitation skills.
Arabic	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Students' speaking and communication skills.Students' listening comprehension skills.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Opportunities to read more challenging texts in the KG and primary phaseStudents' extended writing skills.
Social Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Students' understanding of Emirati culture and heritage.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Understanding of geographical concepts such as maps
English	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Students' speaking, listening, reading and comprehension skills, particularly in the middle and high phase	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Students' grammar.Opportunities to speak beyond single word answers and write at greater length in the KG and primary phase.
Mathematics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Students' mental mathematics abilitiesStudents' use of mathematical vocabulary	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Understanding of mathematical concepts.Application of mathematical concepts through independent problem solving
Science	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Students' scientific knowledge and understanding.Students' application of science across areas of learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Students' opportunities to investigate in scienceDeveloping students' critical thinking and enquiry in lessons.
Other subjects	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Students' ability to sing in time and tuneStudents' range of skills in PE.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Greater opportunities for all students to develop their skills in musicAll students engagement in PE
Learning skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Students' engagement in their own learningStudents' collaboration and communication skills.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Students' independent learning, critical thinking and innovation skills in lessons.



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

Indicators:	KG	Primary	Middle	High
Personal development	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Students' personal and social development is very good. Their innovation skills are good overall. Almost all students demonstrate positive attitudes to learning. They welcome feedback about their work and want to know how to improve.Students' behaviour is very good, and incidents of bullying are very rare. Very good relationships amongst staff and students promote a very positive climate for learning.Students demonstrate a very good understanding of safe and healthy living. They understand how to keep themselves safe, including online. Almost all students eat healthy and take part in regular physical activity.Students' attendance is outstanding at 99%. Very few students arrive late to school.Through assemblies and cross-curricular links in learning, students demonstrate a very good understanding of Islamic values. They show respect for Emirati culture and heritage. However, students do not yet have a deep understanding of other word cultures.Students are responsible members of the school community. They develop their leadership skills as members of the school council and help plan and organise events and projects. They have donated resources to the Red Crescent, and to disadvantaged students in India. Students engage in projects which show care for their environment.When directed, students demonstrate that they can be innovative and creative thinkers. They have participated in environmental initiatives such as the 'say no to plastic' campaign and are helping to construct a bio-gas plant to help generate electricity for the school. In lessons, there are more limited opportunities to be innovative, independent of adult support and guidance.				
Areas of Relative Strength: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Students' positive attitudes and very good behaviour.Students' outstanding attendance.Understanding and appreciation of Islamic Values, UAE culture and society				
Areas for Improvement: <ul style="list-style-type: none">The promotion of innovation and creativity in lessons.				



Performance Standard 3: Teaching and assessment

Indicators:	KG	Primary	Middle	High
Teaching for effective learning	Good	Good	Good	Good
Assessment	Good	Good	Good	Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none">The overall quality of teaching and assessment is good. Most teachers impart good subject knowledge, engaging students in a range of practical learning experiences. This is less evident in mathematics, overall.Most teachers plan lessons effectively and use time and resources well to support learning. Although learning objectives are differentiated, most lessons are not always sufficiently challenging for the higher-achieving students.Teachers ask effective questions to assess and secure students' understanding. However, these do not always deepen students' understanding or develop critical thinking skills.Teachers' are aware that students have different learning needs. Most work is practical and engaging and no longer textbook driven. Teachers are using diverse teaching strategies to interact and engage with students.Teachers engage students in a range of active learning experiences. However, these are typically adult directed and do not yet always encourage students to problem-solve independently or think creatively beyond the activities taught.The school's internal assessment processes are good. The school compares itself against international and national standards. Teachers assess students regularly in class and most use continuous assessment to help modify future learning. The progress of students is now being tracked, although internal data produces inconsistent results and would benefit from more careful moderation.Teachers' demonstrate a good understanding of students' capabilities. They provide effective support and guidance to enable all students to improve. In most lessons, students are involved in assessing their own learning and reviewing their progress.				
Areas of Relative Strength: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Teachers' subject knowledge.Interaction between teachers and students.Diverse teaching strategies to engage learners.Teachers' knowledge of and support for students' learning.				
Areas for Improvement: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Challenging high achieving students.Critical thinking and innovation in lessons.Moderation of internal assessment data.				



Performance Standard 4: Curriculum

Indicators:	KG	Primary	Middle	High
Curriculum design and implementation	Good	Good	Good	Good
Curriculum adaptation	Good	Good	Good	Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none">The overall quality of the curriculum is good. The school follows the CBSE curriculum. At each phase, learning is well structured and builds on prior learning. Content and activities are well matched to age and interests of the students.The school offers a broad range of subjects for older students, including business studies, commerce and accounting. Extra-curricular provision is varied and meets the interests and needs of most students.Cross-curricular links are planned between areas of learning. These help students to make meaningful links between their learning in school and to life at home.Leaders and teachers review the curriculum every term. Leaders have adapted the curriculum to empower teachers to deliver its content in more creative ways. There is now less emphasis on the use of textbooks in lessons and more on active learning.Modification of the curriculum to meet the needs of most students is good, particularly for students with SEN. Opportunities to ensure all higher-achieving students are effectively challenged in lessons are less well developed.A wide range of opportunities for enhancement, enterprise and innovation is promoted through the curriculum. However, in lessons, innovation is less well promoted, and students rarely get the opportunity to develop their creative learning skills independent of adult support.The curriculum makes good links with Emirati culture and UAE society. The 'My identity' initiative promotes students' understanding about UAE culture and heritage. This is further complemented by educational trips to the Grand Mosque, heritage village and mangrove forest.Moral education is planned for, effectively, across the school. It is taught in English as a discrete subject, . Lessons promote positive values such as tolerance, empathy and sympathy. These values are upheld by both students and staff, during assemblies and in their behaviour around the school.				
Areas of Relative Strength: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Planned cross-curricular links.Range of curricular choices.				
Areas for Improvement: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Modification of the curriculum to better promote innovation in lessons.Modification of the curriculum to fully challenge higher-achieving students.				



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

Indicators:	KG	Primary	Middle	High
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection/safeguarding	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
Care and support	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none">The overall quality of protection, care, guidance and support for students is very good. There are clear procedures in place to safeguard students. Parents, students and staff follow the school's child protection policy correctly.Health, safety and security procedures are in place and are highly effective in ensuring students remain safe. Staff supervise students well, including on school transport. They are assisted in this process by a team of high school students.The quality of maintenance and record keeping is very good. Regular safety checks are carried out. The building is very well maintained. Students benefit from an environment that meets the learning needs of most learners, including those with mobility issues.The school's promotion of safe and healthy living is very good. Physical exercise is actively promoted across the school.Relationships with students are very courteous and respectful. Behaviour is managed positively in almost all classes and around the school. This results in a harmonious and conducive environment for learning.Attendance and punctuality are exceptionally well promoted. Students are rewarded for excellent attendance.Students with special educational needs (SEN) and those who are gifted and talented are identified using agreed criteria. Students with SEN are supported effectively in lessons, resulting in their good outcomes. Gifted and talented students are not yet sufficiently challenged in lessons.Students' well-being is monitored effectively by the school. Older students receive very good advice about their career choices and next steps in learning.				
Areas of Relative Strength: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Staff relationships with students and behaviour management.Identification of, and support for, students with SEN.				
Areas for Improvement: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Support and challenge for students who are gifted and talented in lessons.				



Performance Standard 6: Leadership and management

Indicators:

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

- The overall quality of leadership and management is good. All leaders' and staff embrace the principal's welcoming, positive and inclusive ethos.
- The principal's strategic direction for the school is understood by all staff. Best practices in teaching, learning and assessment are being embedded across the school by all leaders and teachers. Most middle leaders have only been in post for one year. They are monitoring their subjects but are not yet fully accountable for these. They are not yet fully analysing data independently or setting clear, measurable targets to raise achievement when writing action plans.
- Relationships are professional and effective, leading to good quality outcomes in most subjects. Morale is positive.
- The school's approach to self-evaluation is good. Leaders use a range of sources to evaluate the school, including data. Leaders do not always carefully analyse the impact provision has on student outcomes.
- Leaders, at all levels, manage the school and designate areas of responsibilities effectively. Staff receive regular professional development. Middle leaders are not yet monitoring lessons with a clear focus on student outcomes.
- Partnerships with parents is very good. Parents are instrumental in helping to organise and support school events. They frequently suggest ideas to improve the school. Parents are positive about almost all aspects of the school. Regular communication and reporting ensure that parents are kept well informed about how well students are achieving.
- The governance of the school is good. Governors consider the views of all stakeholders when planning. They monitor the work of the school but do not yet sufficiently understand the school's data to hold leaders to account for student performance.
- The management of the school is good overall. Staff are suitably qualified and well deployed to promote students' achievements. The premises are well designed and include a range of facilities including science and IT laboratories, and a swimming pool.
- The school promotes international assessments effectively. They implement the TIMSS 'Question a Day' initiative in Grades 4 and 8. They have administered PISA mock exams. These results are analysed, and targets set, to help raise achievement. In addition to these, the school administer Assessment of Scholastic Skills through Educational Testing (ASSET) and International Benchmarking Test (IBT) examinations to compare their performance with other schools, internationally.

Areas of Relative Strength:

- Leaders' positive, welcoming and inclusive ethos.
- Partnership with parents.

Areas for Improvement:

- Sharper analyse of information in the SEF to consider its impact on students' learning and outcomes.
- The effectiveness of middle leadership to lead their subject, monitor lessons and write action plans.

*Relevant for Private schools only