



هيئة الشارقة للتعليم الخاص
SHARJAH PRIVATE EDUCATION AUTHORITY

School Performance Review (SPR) | Report

Al Qemah Private School
11 – 14 March 2024

**Overall
Effectiveness:
ACCEPTABLE**





TABLE OF CONTENTS

PURPOSE AND SCOPE	3
THE SCHOOL PERFORMANCE REVIEW PROCESS	4
SCHOOL INFORMATION	7
THE SCHOOL PERFORMANCE REVIEW FINDINGS	8
Performance Standard 1: Students' Achievement	9
Performance Standard 2: Students' personal and social development and their innovation skills	18
Performance Standard 3: Teaching and assessment	20
Performance Standard 4: curriculum	22
Performance Standard 5: the protection, care, guidance and support of students	24
Performance Standard 6: Leadership and management	26
ADDITIONAL FOCUS AREAS	29



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

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	137
	School location	Bat'ha, Khorfakkan, Sharjah
	Establishment date	2005
	Language of instruction	Arabic
	School curriculum	Ministry of Education (MoE)
	Accreditation body	-
	Examination Board	MoE
	National Agenda Benchmark Tests/ International assessment	IBT, TIMSS, PISA, PIRLS
	Fee range	4850 – 7518 AED
Staff		
	Principal	Mohammad Saleh Samarah
	Chair of Board of Governors	Dr. Abdullah Sobhi
	Total number of teachers	48
	Total number of teaching assistants	None
	Turnover rate	14.5 %
	Main nationality of teachers	Egyptian
Students		
	Teacher: student ratio	1:12
	Total number of students	575
	Total number of students per cycle	KG: 126 Cycle 1: 219 Cycle 2: 200 Cycle 3: 30
	Number of Emirati students	96
	Number of Emirati students per cycle	KG: 37 Cycle 1: 26 Cycle 2: 30 Cycle 3: 3
	KG: number and gender	Boys: 69 Girls: 57
	Cycle 1: number and gender	Boys: 126 Girls: 93
	Cycle 2: number and gender	Boys: 120 Girls: 80
	Cycle 3: number and gender	Boys: 18 Girls: 12
	Nationality groups	1. Syrian 2. Egyptian
	Total number of students with special educational needs	4



PROGRESS JOURNEY

Previous Review: 2022-23	Current Review:
ACCEPTABLE	ACCEPTABLE

SUMMARY OF REVIEW FINDINGS

These findings draw from our team of 5 reviewers' 145 lesson observations, 43 of which were carried out jointly with school leaders.

SUMMARY OF THE OVERALL PERFORMANCE OF THE SCHOOL:

The school's overall effectiveness is acceptable. This is the same as the previous review visit. Student's achievement is acceptable in all subjects. Progress is good in KG and Cycle 1 in Islamic Education and English, KG in mathematics and science, Cycles 2 and 3 in social studies and Cycle 3 in science and other subjects. It is good in Arabic in all cycles. Attainment is acceptable in all subjects. Students' personal development and understanding of Islamic values are good, while innovation skills are acceptable. The quality of teaching, learning skills and assessment are acceptable as are curriculum design and adaptation. Arrangements for health and safety and the care and support of students are also acceptable. All aspects of leadership and management are acceptable with good partnerships with parents. There is enough capacity within leadership to improve the school.

KEY AREAS OF STRENGTH:

- Students' understanding and application of Islamic values and respect for UAE culture.
- The positive relationships between staff and students across the school.
- The strong partnerships with parents and the community.

KEY AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT:

- Improve progress and raise attainment to be at least good in all subjects and cycles.
- Improve the quality of teaching and use of assessment data to inform lesson planning and curriculum reviews and modifications.
- Improve the identification and support for students' special educational needs (SEN).
- Improve the self-evaluation and monitoring skills of all school leaders to raise their effectiveness.



MAIN REVIEW REPORT

PERFORMANCE STANDARD 1: STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENT

Students' achievement is acceptable overall.

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

School Performance Review of Al Qemah Private School
11 – 14 March 2024



Islamic Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students' achievement in Islamic Education is acceptable, overall. The school's internal data shows that students make outstanding progress across all cycles. This does not match what is seen in lessons and in students' work, where most students in KG and Cycle 1 make good progress and in Cycles 2 and 3, acceptable progress.• The school's internal assessment data shows that attainment is outstanding in all cycles. This does not match what is seen in lessons and in students' work, which indicates that the majority of students' attainment across all cycles is in line with the expected curriculum standards. There is no external assessment data for Islamic Education.• In KG, children can memorise, recite and understand some meanings of short Surah of the Holy Qur'an. In Cycle 1, students can explain and differentiate between the creation of Allah (SWT) and man's creation. In Cycles 2 and 3 most students can explain the importance and the benefits of fasting in the Holy Month of Ramadan. They can write compositions about the virtues of the month. Islamic principles and values are reflected in students' behaviour. Most students can explain the Noble Hadeeth of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) to perform praying on time in mosques. Age-appropriate recitation skills and applying Tajweed rules are inconsistent. Students' deeper understanding of the Holy Qur'an verses and the Prophet's (PBUH) Hadeeth to elicit Sharia rules are less developed.• The majority of students' progress is in line with curriculum expectations. A few students make progress above curriculum expectations especially in Cycle 1. There is no significant difference between girls' and boys' groups.	
	Areas of Strength	Areas for Improvement
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• KG students' ability to memorise short Surah of the Holy Qur'an.• Cycle 2 and 3 students' understanding of the importance of fasting in the Holy Month of Ramadan, performing prayers and the application of instructions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students' age-appropriate recitation skills, applying correct Tajweed rules in all cycles.• Students' deeper understanding of the Holy Qur'an verses in Cycles 2 and 3.



Arabic	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students' achievement in Arabic is acceptable. The school's internal data shows that students' progress is outstanding in all cycles. This does not match what is seen in lessons and in students' work, where most students' progress is good across all cycles.• The school's internal assessment data shows that students' attainment is outstanding in all phases. This does not match that seen in lessons and in students' work, which shows that attainment is acceptable across all cycles. Most students attain in line with curriculum standards. The most recent IBT results indicate that students' attainment is acceptable. The school does not have Mubakkir or TALA assessment data.• Most students make good progress across all cycles. Their listening and speaking of standard Arabic skills are good across all cycles. In KG2, children can read the alphabet with short and long vowels and write some letters. In Cycle 1, most students can form questions using the appropriate words. They can explain and use new words in sentences of their own. In Cycle 2, most students can identify parts of speech such as verbs, nouns and prepositions, and write them in sentences. They assess and correct each other's work. In Cycle 3, students can read, analyse literary texts and poems and discuss the main themes. Students' extended writing skills across all cycles are less developed.• There is a difference between groups of students' progress. Higher attaining students across all cycles make stronger progress.	
	Areas of Strength	Areas for Improvement
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students' listening and speaking skills using standard Arabic across all cycles.• Students' ability to read and analyse texts in Cycles 2 and 3.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attainment raised to at least good in all cycles.• Students' extended writing skills across all cycles.



Social Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students' achievement in social studies is acceptable overall. The school's internal data shows that students make outstanding progress across all cycles. This does not match with that seen in lessons and in students' work, where most students' progress is acceptable in KG and Cycle 1, and good in Cycles 2 and 3.• The internal assessment data shows that attainment is outstanding across all cycles. This does not match with what is seen in lessons and in students' work. This shows that most students' attainment, in relation to the curriculum standards, is acceptable across all cycles. There are no external assessments for social studies.• The majority of students make better progress in Cycle 2 and 3 than in KG and Cycle 1. In KG2 children can identify and differentiate between male and female items of dress. They can recognise the photograph of H.H. Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan (RIP), the founder of the UAE. In Cycle 2, most students understand and appreciate UAE culture and respectfully sing the National Anthem. They identify the countries of the Gulf on a map. In Cycles 2 and 3, most students can pinpoint UAE landmarks, discuss, and write about the human and physical characteristics of the Emirates. They demonstrate an understanding of the importance of conserving resources such as water and energy. Their knowledge and understanding of a wider range of world cultures and issues is less developed, particularly in Cycle 2 and 3.• Most groups of students make progress that is in line with curriculum expectations. Higher attaining students do not always make as much progress. The progress of students with special educational needs (SEN) and lower attaining students' progress varies.	
	Areas of Strength	Areas for Improvement
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students' understanding and appreciation of UAE culture especially in Cycle 2.• Cycle 2 and 3 students' understanding of the importance of conserving energy resources in the UAE.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student's progress and attainment raised to at least good in all cycles.• Students' knowledge of a wider range of world cultures and global issues especially in Cycles 2 and 3.



English	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students' achievement in English is acceptable overall. Students' progress in KG and Cycle 1 is good and acceptable across Cycles 2 and 3. This does not match the school's internal assessment data, which shows progress to be very good in KG and outstanding in Cycles 1, 2 and 3.• Internal assessment data indicates that attainment is very good in KG and outstanding in Cycle 1, 2 and 3. This does not match that seen in lessons and students' work where students' attainment is acceptable overall. The IBT results have not yet been analysed.• Students' progress is good in KG and Cycle 1 and acceptable in Cycles 2 and 3. In KG, children use their phonic knowledge to read and write words, with initial, middle and end sounds. In Cycle 1, students use and understand recently introduced vocabulary during discussions and offer explanations of what things might happen. A minority of students are not able to share their ideas orally. In Cycle 2, students can read, retrieve, and record information from texts. A minority of students struggle with reading proficiency. In Cycle 3, students speak confidently and effectively in classroom discussions. They can elaborate and clearly explain their understanding and ideas. They read fluently and use inference, deduction, and comparison to identify key details. A minority of students struggle to read with expression. Across the school, writing is not fully developed.• Most groups make expected progress. Higher-attaining students do not always make as much progress as they could.	
	Areas of Strength	Areas for Improvement
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• KG and Cycle 1 students' development and use of vocabulary.• Students' speaking and reading skills in Cycle 3.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Speaking skills in Cycle 1.• Reading skills in Cycle 2.• Students' writing skills across cycles.



Mathematics

- Students' achievement in mathematics is acceptable overall. In lessons and over time, most students across Cycles 1,2 and 3 make the expected progress. KG children make good progress. This does not match the school's internal data which shows that students make good progress in all cycles.
- The school's internal data shows that almost all students attain above curriculum standards in all cycles. Although not fully analysed, the available IBT data indicates acceptable attainment across all cycles. In lessons and in students' work most students in all cycles attain in line with the curriculum standards.
- Students across Cycles 1,2 and 3 demonstrate acceptable mathematical skills and knowledge. Children in KG make good progress and count numbers to 20. They recognise the visual representation of the numbers 1 to 10 through counting images, objects or manipulatives and are starting to learn addition and subtraction. Students in Cycle 1 demonstrate proficiency in basic arithmetic operations with numbers and fractions. Grade 4 students develop sufficient skills in performing addition and subtraction operations with fractions. They face challenges when applying this knowledge to solving mathematical word problems. In Cycle 2, students have adequate algebraic problem-solving skills. By Grade 7, students exhibit a secure understanding of the steps required to solve algebraic equations with two variables. Students face challenges when applying this knowledge to data analysis which is underdeveloped. Mental mathematics is underdeveloped, especially in Cycles 1 and 2. In Cycle 3, students understand transformations such as translations, rotations, and reflections. They solve algorithmic differential problems well. Linking them to real life is a developing skill.
- Most groups of students make the expected progress. A few higher attaining and lower attaining students and those with SEN do not always make sufficient progress.

Areas of Strength

- KG children's early number skills.
- Students' ability to solve algorithmic differential equations in Cycle 3.

Areas for Improvement

- Solving mathematical word problems, particularly in Cycle 1.
- Mental mathematical skills, particularly in Cycles 1 and 2.
- Students' analysis and interpretation of data, particularly in Cycle 2.



Science	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students' achievement in science is acceptable overall. The school's internal data shows that almost all students make better than expected progress in all cycles. This does not match with that seen in lessons and in students' work, which shows that most students make expected progress in Cycle 1 and 2 and the majority make better than expected progress in KG and Cycle 3.• External IBT assessment results for Grades 3 to 10 show that most students attain levels that are in line with the national average. Internal assessments indicate that almost all students across the cycles attain above the curriculum standards. This does not match the external data and what is seen in lessons and students' work, which shows that most attain in line with the curriculum standards.• The majority of children in KG have a basic understanding of the body and can identify body parts. They differentiate between living and non-living organisms in pictures and objects. In Cycle 1 and 2, students demonstrate adequate scientific skills, but do not always use accurate scientific terminology. In Cycle 1, students develop a reasonable understanding of their environment, weather features and seasons. In Cycle 2, students show secure understanding of the respiratory system and aerobic and anaerobic respiration, undertaking experiments using yeast for anaerobic respiration. In Cycle 3, the majority can identify parts of the brain and relate it to function. They understand how degenerative diseases like Alzheimer's take place. Across the school, students relate their knowledge and understanding to real life. They do not have sufficiently developed skills to conduct practical, inquiry-based learning in Cycles 1 and 2. In particular, their ability to discuss and interpret scientific data and draw conclusions in Cycle 2. In Cycle 3, the majority of students work productively in the laboratory to carry out experiments with simple steps. Their research skills and report writing are underdeveloped.• Most groups of students make the expected progress overall. A few higher attaining and lower attaining students and those with SEN do not always make sufficient progress.	
	Areas of Strength	Areas for Improvement
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students' basic knowledge and understanding of scientific concepts and their application to real life across all cycles.• Students' ability to work productively in groups in the laboratory to conduct practical work and experiments in Cycle 3.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students' inquiry, exploration, and practical activities, particularly in Cycles 1 and 2.• Students' ability to research, discuss and interpret scientific data and draw conclusions, particularly in Cycle 2.



Other subjects	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students' achievement in other subjects is mostly acceptable. In lessons and in their work, most students make expected progress in KG and Cycle 1 and 2. In Cycle 3 the majority make better than expected progress.• There is no internal or external data for other subjects. From lessons and students' work most students attain in line with curriculum standards, in all cycles.• In music in KG, children learn basic rhythmic patterns following basic notation. In Cycle 1 students consolidate their understanding of notation and develop an adequate understanding of musical scales. In art in Cycle 2, students have sufficient knowledge of artistic techniques to produce abstract art, their general understanding of artistic techniques is limited. In physical education (PE) in Cycle 2, students build their understanding of the importance of physical activity on the human body, but their understanding of the need to avoid unhealthy foods and substances is less developed. In Cycle 3, information technology (ICT) students are making good progress and are consolidating their understanding of coding and how programmes can be constructed. Most students in the upper grades of Cycle 3 display secure proficiency in digital skills and can create and edit with videos, audio, and photographs.• Most groups of students make acceptable progress in all phases, including SEN and lower attaining students.	
	Areas of Strength	Areas for Improvement
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students' musical knowledge of rhythmic patterns and scales in KG and Cycle 1.• Students understanding of coding in ICT in Cycle 3.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students' understanding of different artistic techniques in Cycle 2.• Students' understanding of the importance of healthy food for physical wellbeing in Cycle 2.



Learning Skills

- Students' learning skills are acceptable overall. They are better in Arabic, English and Islamic Education in KG and Cycle1, mathematics in KG and science in KG and Cycle 3 as well as other subjects in Cycle 3. In the better lessons, students enjoy learning and have positive attitudes, although they are passive in others. They do not take enough responsibility for following their own ideas and learning especially in Cycles 1 and 2.
- In Cycle 3, students' productivity in groups, through the sharing of ideas, is inconsistent. Although children in KG and students in Cycle 3 are confident speakers in both English and Arabic, students in Cycle 1 and 2 are more reticent in presenting their learning.
- Children in KG make clear connections between mathematics, science and English, where they spell subject specific words and count the number of letters accurately. In Cycle 2, students integrate UAE social studies with mathematics, applying mathematical thinking skills while simulating engineering tasks, such as constructing the Burj Khalifa. Similarly, students in Cycle 3 draw examples from real-life to illustrate their learning in Arabic, English, mathematics, and science. The KG curriculum fosters real-life connections and interdisciplinary learning to enhance children's progress across the core subjects.
- Children in KG and students in Cycle 1 to 3 are able to undertake basic research with teachers' direction. There are too few opportunities for students to use technology to support learning. Critical thinking, enterprise and innovation skills are less developed in most lessons.

Areas of Strength

- Students' positive attitudes toward learning across the school in the better lessons.
- Students' linking learning across subjects and to real life in all cycles.

Areas for Improvement

- Students' taking responsibility for planning their own activities and learning in Cycles 1 and 2.
- The development of critical thinking, problem-solving, innovation and enterprise skills across cycles.



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

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

Indicators:	KG	Cycle 1	Cycle 2	Cycle 3
Personal development	Good	Good	Good	Good

- Students across the school have a positive attitude towards learning. They are respectful and follow the school rules both inside and outside the classroom. They are courteous and respond well to other students. Students reported that incidents of bullying are very rare. A few students from Cycle 3 are given responsibility in lessons and take leadership roles during break-times.
- Students demonstrate a general understanding of safe and healthy living. They make inconsistent choices about their own health and wellbeing. They participate in activities that promote safe and healthy lifestyles during morning assemblies and attend health awareness sessions led by specialist staff.
- The school's overall attendance rate is 96%. This is very good. Students almost always arrive at school and to lessons on time.

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

- Students demonstrate a clear appreciation and understanding of how Islamic values influence life in the UAE. Students perform noon prayers and are involved in a variety of Islamic events, activities, and competitions. These include celebrations of the Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) birthday and Holy Qur'an and Hadeeth competitions. Students recite Holy Qur'an verses and Hadeeth Sharif respectfully in morning assemblies. They celebrate the Holy Month of Ramadan and put into practice the Islamic values they learn.
- Students show good understanding and appreciation of UAE heritage, culture, and values. They show their respect and appreciation of the UAE leaders and feel proud of their country. Students' artwork shows their recognition of the achievements of UAE leaders. They sing the



national anthem in morning assemblies with enthusiasm. Morning assemblies include presentations about sustainability and the vision of the UAE. Students celebrate national and cultural events, including National Day, Flag Day, and Martyr Day. They celebrate a range of cultures when they wear their national costumes and bring traditional food but this is underdeveloped.

Social responsibility and innovation skills

Acceptable

Acceptable

Acceptable

Acceptable

- Students are aware of their responsibilities in the school community. The Students' Council plays a positive role in school life and shows commitment to social responsibility. Students participate in some volunteering like Tarahom, where they collect clothes and food and give it to the Red Crescent to help people in need.
- Students enjoy project work but are often reluctant to participate and lack the initiative and commitment to play a full part in activities. They undertake some individual creative work in recycling materials and use it in art lessons for decoration in Cycle 2 and some students participate in solar energy projects.
- Students care for their school and are aware of environmental and sustainability issues. They participate in a limited range of environmentally friendly activities such as litter picking in the park.

Areas of Strength:

- The self-discipline of students and their courteous relationships with each other and their teachers.
- Students' attendance and punctuality in coming to school and lessons.
- Students' appreciation of UAE culture and Islamic values.

Areas for Improvement:

- Students' willingness to initiate and engage in projects that develop innovative and enterprising skills.
- Understanding and appreciation of a broader range of world cultures.



PERFORMANCE STANDARD 3: TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT

The quality of teaching and assessment is acceptable overall.

Indicators:	KG	Cycle 1	Cycle 2	Cycle 3
Teaching for effective learning	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

- Teachers have secure subject knowledge. In Cycle 1, teachers have an assured understanding of how students learn. This is more inconsistent in Cycles 2 and 3. Teachers plan lessons that contain clear learning objectives. They share the objectives with students at the start of lessons so that they are clear about what they are expected to learn. Teachers provide appropriate learning environments in their classrooms.
- Teachers make effective use of a variety of resources to support students' learning. They manage time appropriately to ensure that students are able to accomplish their work. Positive interactions between teachers and students help ensure that students are sufficiently engaged in lessons.
- In most lessons, teachers ask too many short-answer questions and do not always challenge students to think more deeply or provide extended answers. In the better mathematics lessons, for example, teachers use well-planned questions to introduce learning at the start of lessons and to review and consolidate learning at the end. In English in Grade 4 and Grade 7, teachers modify their questions and engage students in discussions to ensure comprehension. In the less effective lessons, teachers do not cater for the range of abilities and learning needs when planning and delivering lessons. In these lessons teachers' expectations of students are too low, and students are not provided with enough support and challenge.
- In most lessons, teachers encourage students to work independently on given tasks. In mathematics in Grade 9, students take responsibility for their own learning and complete independent research. Such practice is not yet a common feature across the school. Teaching to develop students' innovation skills is also a less developed feature.

Assessment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
------------	------------	------------	------------	------------

- The quality of assessment is acceptable, across the school. Internal assessment processes are consistent and generally linked to the school's curriculum. The school's internal assessments do not always align with the outcomes of external benchmark tests. The use of results from TIMSS,



PISA, PIRLS and IBT tests is inconsistent. The results are analysed but information about students' progress, as individuals and groups, is underdeveloped.

- In Cycle 3, teachers use assessment to plan learning and match tasks to students' abilities. The use of assessment in this way is inconsistent in Cycles 1 and 2. In the successful lessons, mostly in KG and Cycle 3, there are different levelled tasks for different abilities. There are still too many lessons where higher achieving students do not complete more challenging tasks as they complete the same work as other students first. Inconsistent support is given to students with SEN. The analysis and use of assessment for G&T students is limited.
- The quality of feedback and follow-up varies across subjects and cycles. Teachers provide oral feedback to students in lessons. Books are marked but there are very few comments to help students to improve. Students' evaluation of their own and other's work is an irregular feature of lessons in all subjects.

Areas of Strength:

- Teachers' subject knowledge and how children learn in Cycle 1.
- Teachers' positive interactions with students across cycles.

Areas for Improvement:

- Learning activities that meet the needs and abilities of individual and groups of students.
- Opportunities for students to research, innovate, think critically, and use learning technologies.
- The accuracy of internal assessments and use of assessment information to guide lesson planning particularly in Cycles 1 and 2.



PERFORMANCE STANDARD 4: CURRICULUM

The quality of the curriculum is acceptable overall.

Indicators:	KG	Cycle 1	Cycle 2	Cycle 3
Curriculum design and implementation	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Curriculum adaptation	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

- Curriculum design and implementation, and curriculum adaptation are acceptable across all phases. The curriculum is broad and balanced and compliant with MoE expectations.
- Continuity and progression of the curriculum is guided by MoE examinations outcomes. This ensures that students are adequately prepared for the next cycle of their learning. There are no option choices for older students as current Year 9 students transition into Year 10 in another school.
- The curriculum offers some planned cross-curricular links enabling students to transfer knowledge and skills from one subject to another. For example, Islamic Education and social studies took an integrated approach to the exploration of the benevolent deeds of H.H. Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan (RIP). Moral education is strongly linked with Islamic Education and the importance of Islamic values. Such approaches are not consistently seen across subjects and cycles.
- The school conducts regular reviews of the curriculum. These reviews help to ensure that the curriculum is up to date and relevant to students' needs.

- The school has had some success in recent modifications to provide students with critical thinking and problem-solving skills, especially in mathematics with the use of digital applications. This is not a consistent feature across the school. The G&T students are identified but students with SEN are not always identified or provided for adequately. The curriculum does not include enough enrichment through the inclusion of enterprise and innovation skills to stretch higher attaining students.
- The curriculum provides a good range of activities to enhance students' learning, including Spelling Bee, reading competitions in Sharjah, recitation of the Holy Qur'an, and planting trees

**School Performance Review of Al Qemah Private School
11 – 14 March 2024**



as part of the sustainability theme. The school also offers enterprise events such as supporting and organising charities and has partnerships with two local community schools and a university. Assemblies offer platforms for talented students in Cycle 2 to showcase their abilities. These include piano playing and leading on recitations of the Holy Qur'an and Noble Hadeeth to demonstrate their confidence in public speaking. Innovation is not a developed feature across the school.

- The curriculum provides good links with Emirati culture and UAE society. The school organises special celebration events including National Days. The history and heritage of the UAE is well embedded. For example, in science in Cycle 2 and 3, students link study of environmental conservation to the UAE vision 2021. In KG1, children studied recycling and made rockets using recycled material to celebrate the UAE space programme. In English in Grade 5, students wrote about the life of H.H. Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan (RIP) as a source of inspiration.

Areas of Strength:

- The integration of links with Emirati culture and society in the curriculum.
- Curriculum reviews to ensure it is broad, balanced, and relevant.

Areas for Improvement:

- Strengthened cross-curricular links between subjects.
- The development of students' enterprise and innovation skills, across all subjects and cycles.



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

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

Indicators:	KG	Cycle 1	Cycle 2	Cycle 3
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection /safeguarding	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The school has effective procedures and policies for the safeguarding of students. All parents, staff and students are aware of the appropriate procedures to follow. There are effective procedures to protect students from cyber-bullying.• The school meets the general requirements for maintaining the health and safety of students and staff. Safety checks are regular. The effective arrangements for transport ensure students' safe arrival and departure.• The school maintains secure records. The school premises, resources and facilities are adequate and maintained to a sufficient standard but are limited in quantity and quality. Students' health-related information is recorded regularly. The school clinic shares, in confidence, student's individual health plans (IHPs) with teachers and trains them on severe and chronic conditions. The school does not cater for individuals with permanent or temporary physical accessibility needs. The promotion of safe and healthy living is inconsistent. Students are encouraged to make healthy food choices during special events and during the Holy Month of Ramadan.				
Care and support	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Relationships between staff and students are positive. Students are disciplined and respectful. The code of conduct and behaviour policy is shared with students and parents. Records of any behaviour incidents are maintained. The school's arrangements are effective in supporting positive behaviour.• The monitoring of attendance and punctuality is effective. As a result, attendance is very good and students are punctual at the start of school and to lessons.				



- The school has appropriate procedures for identifying SEN students through observation and assessment in lessons. The G&T students are also identified in subjects such as music, art and reading.
- Support is given to SEN students by the school social workers. Support for lower, higher attaining and G&T students is less developed.
- Students' wellbeing and personal development are routinely monitored throughout the year. More emphasis is required to cover all aspects of wellbeing and personal development. At present it is the social worker that gives guidance and information to Grade 9 students about universities and careers, including visits to local universities.

Areas of Strength:

- Respectful, caring, and strong courteous relationships between students and staff.
- Attendance, and punctuality at the start of the day and to lessons.

Areas for Improvement:

- Robust identification processes for SEN and G&T students.
- Support for all groups of students especially lower and higher attainers in lessons.
- Further guidance and support on aspects of student wellbeing and personal development.



PERFORMANCE STANDARD 6: LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The quality of leadership and management is acceptable overall.

Indicators:

The effectiveness of leadership

Acceptable

- The principal shares a vision for the school with all staff, which includes a commitment to the UAE National priorities. Leaders' knowledge of best practices in teaching and learning are secure and developing. The personal and social development of students is a strong feature of the school's practice alongside a clear commitment to Islamic values. Leaders' commitment to inclusion, particularly for lower attaining students, is inconsistent in practice. Leaders understand what needs to be done to improve the school and have begun work on some aspects. The school faces financial and staffing challenges.
- Relationships and communication among staff are professional and purposeful. Key responsibilities are appropriately delegated, facilitating the effective functioning of the school. Most staff have a clear understanding of their roles and duties. Morale within the school is positive, and school leaders have facilitated some improvements in achievement in the last year. The school demonstrates an acceptable capacity to achieve further improvements. All statutory requirements are fulfilled.

Self-evaluation and improvement planning

Acceptable

- Although leaders' skills in self-evaluation have been maintained, the school has an overly positive perception of students' achievement. There is a disconnect between internal and external data and the quality of students' work in lessons and in their notebooks. Senior, and middle leaders have enhanced their capacity to monitor teaching and learning. Although this is in the early stages, it is beginning to have positive impact on teaching and learning. The school's improvement planning includes appropriate and feasible goals, which are in line with the recommendations from the previous review. All key stakeholders in the school are involved in the self-evaluation process. This has contributed to enhancements in areas such as the integration of smart technology in lessons and the level of challenge in teaching, particularly in KG and Cycle 3, where students' progress has seen improvement. Overall, the school has



made satisfactory progress in addressing most of the recommendations outlined in the previous review.

Partnerships with parents and the community

Good

- Parents convey very positive views about the school. They say that teachers and leaders are always supportive and approachable. A proactive Parents Council fully supports the school and meets regularly to discuss improvements. Regular communications inform parents about the life of the school and daily events. Parents are informed regularly about their children's progress and the additional support that is available, including parents of G&T students.
- The schools' links and partnerships with the local community are secure. These include links with local clubs to support additional sports provision and with Sharjah schools and the university to enhance academic outcomes. Links with the wider community and internationally are still evolving.

Governance

Acceptable

- Governors represent the school community, including parents and teachers. They value students' views and actively encourage students to express ideas about the work of the school. Governors are informed regularly about students' assessment data and are involved in monitoring some of the actions taken to improve the school's performance. Governors impact on the school is adequate, but they do not challenge leaders to improve students' performance with sufficient urgency. Leaders are not yet fully held to account for students' achievement and school improvement. Governors ensure that the school meets all statutory requirements.

Management, staffing, facilities, and resources

Acceptable

- The school is run efficiently on a day-to-day basis. Procedures and daily routines are well established. The school is adequately staffed, although staff retention is an ongoing concern. Most members of staff are suitably qualified and undertake professional development training provided by the school. The training, including that for middle leaders, has not firmly addressed issues of classroom practice or use of assessment for teaching and learning. The school



premises, resources and facilities are adequate but limited in quantity and quality, particularly to support active and inquiry-based learning practices across all subjects.

Areas of Strength:

- The professional and purposeful relationships and communication across all staff.
- Parents strong support for the school and satisfaction with the quality of education it provides.

Areas for Improvement:

- Leaders' understanding and use of assessment information to improve teaching, learning and inclusion practices.
- Professional development training improve the effectiveness of senior and middle leaders monitoring of teaching and learning.,
- The level of challenge and support provided by governors.
- Resourcing to support more active and inquiry-based learning experiences across all phases and subjects.



SPEA ADDITIONAL FOCUS AREAS

Provision for Arabic Language

- There are 10 Arabic teachers with a teacher to student ratio of 1:45. The Heads of Arabic medium subjects, monitor teachers' lesson planning, and monitor lessons, and assessment information for the 3 Arabic subjects.
- The school's library includes 50 e-Learning books. Students use the library to borrow books and enjoy reading stories and engage in research. The library is timetabled for 27 periods for all cycles, especially Cycles 1, 2 and 3. There is a corner for Arabic language to motivate students to read, and to celebrate their work. The library is under-resourced both in terms of book stock and electronic devices.
- Teachers' focus is on improving students' reading skills. This is reflected in the school's participation in the Arabic Reading Challenge. One student read more than 50 books and the achievement was honoured by senior leaders and SPEA as the student reached the semi-final of the competition. A number of competitions are held to promote reading, writing and spelling, such as the Star Spelling and Best Writer competitions.
- The school encourages parents to support their children's reading skills at home and provides them with appropriate guidance to summarise what their children have read.

The school's use of external benchmarking data

- Almost all eligible students from Grades 3 to 9 participated in the IBT (2019), PIRLS (2016), PISA (2022), and TIMSS (2019) assessments. Attainment data in IBT in 2019 indicates that students in Cycles 2 and 3 attain above the UAE benchmark in English, Arabic, mathematics and science, while students in Cycle 1 attain within the average range. Assessment results for PIRLS in 2016 demonstrate that students in Grade 5 attainment is in the average range. The school is still waiting PISA (2022) results. The TIMSS attainment scores from 2019 indicate students in Grades 4 and 8 attained above the UAE benchmark in mathematics and science.
- Students know their scores and the activities in lessons that will support them next time tests they take the tests.
- The school shares the outcomes of the external tests with students and parents.
- Parents are informed about the tests through the school website, talking to teachers and attending orientation meetings.

Provision for KG

- There are 10 teachers with 4 classes in KG2 and 3 classes in KG1, with a designated KG leader. The teacher to child ratio is 1:13. A Cluster Manager from SPEA visits to support improvement initiatives.



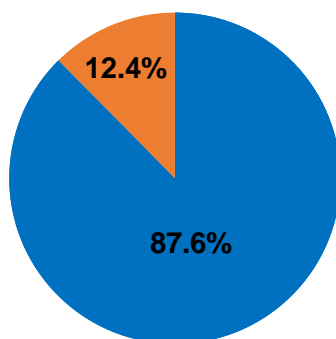
- The indoor environment has 10 classes with its own set of accessible resources for all areas of learning, including UAE National identity, PE and art. There is an indoor PE area and a designated classroom that showcases child made artifacts, representing the acquisition of UAE National targets, along with Emirati culture and heritage.
- Displays are colourful and celebrate children’s work, including artwork crafted from recycled materials, individual pictures and writing in the Arabic and English languages. Topic related vocabulary, days of the week, class rules and words to aid writing are displayed. Spaces are well organised for floor and table work. The large, free flow common area is set up for child-initiated play, and available for children to use during both scheduled and free time. Bulletin boards display children’s latest work in all core subjects to show their latest progress.
- There are 3 outdoor areas. One includes a large open space for PE activities. This is also set up for child-initiated learning, although some areas are not in use currently. Another has an Emirati majlis corner to support children’s progress in Islamic Education, Arabic and social studies. The range of wheeled toys is limited.
- There are suitable arrangements for induction. Parents come to an orientation meeting and staff hold events during the year to welcome and engage parents. There is an open-door policy, where parents feel welcome to inquire and share learning and progress between the home and school. Grade 1 classes are near to KG classes, so children are familiar with them when they transition.



VIEWS OF PARENTS

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

No. of Responses = 251



■ Strongly Agree / Agree
■ Strongly Disagree / Disagree

STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS & NEXT STEPS

- Improve the quality of students' achievements and teaching to a consistently good or better level in all subjects and phases by:
 - providing students with opportunities for active learning to increase independence in learning and foster higher order thinking.
 - raising teachers' expectations of what students can achieve in all subjects.
 - providing students with more regular opportunities to practise their scientific investigation and practical skills using correct scientific method.
 - providing regular opportunities for students to develop their writing, skills in Arabic and English across the school.
 - providing opportunities for students' mathematical word problem-solving and mental mathematics skills and use of manipulatives.
 - providing consistent opportunities in all lessons for students to develop their communication and collaboration skills across subjects.
 - planning regular opportunities for students to develop their critical thinking, problem-solving, and inquiry skills.



- ensuring that teachers implement appropriately modified work to support lower-attaining students and challenge higher-attaining students.
- Improve accuracy and use of assessment information by:
 - ensuring that internal assessments are closely aligned with the outcomes of external benchmark tests.
 - teachers making full use of assessment data to guide lesson planning and match work in lessons to students' abilities and needs.
 - providing quality and consistency of feedback to students to support critical reflection and understanding of what must be done to improve.
 - providing students with consistent opportunities to self- and peer- assess their work.
- Improve the support for students SEN to reach at least a good level by:
 - establishing a clear system to identify students with SEN.
 - developing more targeted individual education plans (IEPs) that clearly specify the adaptations needed to support their learning in lessons.
- Improve the effectiveness of school leadership to at least a good level by:
 - developing the capacity of all staff with leadership roles to drive improvement in their areas of responsibility.
 - improving leaders' understanding and use of assessment information to identify and address gaps in students' learning.
 - ensuring that in the monitoring of lessons there is a clear focus on the impact of teaching on students' learning.



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.