



هيئة الشارقة للتعليم الخاص  
SHARJAH PRIVATE EDUCATION AUTHORITY

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

**SAMA AMERICAN PRIVATE SCHOOL**  
27 February – 2 March 2023

**Overall Effectiveness**

**GOOD**





## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>PURPOSE AND SCOPE</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>THE SCHOOL PERFORMANCE REVIEW PROCESS</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>SCHOOL INFORMATION</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>THE SCHOOL PERFORMANCE REVIEW FINDINGS</b> .....	<b>7</b>
<b>Performance Standard 1: Students' Achievement</b> .....	<b>8</b>
<b>Performance Standard 2: Students' personal and social development and their innovation skills</b> .....	<b>16</b>
<b>Performance Standard 3: Teaching and assessment</b> .....	<b>18</b>
<b>Performance Standard 4: curriculum</b> .....	<b>19</b>
<b>Performance Standard 5: the protection, care, guidance and support of students</b> .....	<b>20</b>
<b>Performance Standard 6: Leadership and management</b> .....	<b>22</b>
<b>ADDITIONAL FOCUS AREAS</b> .....	<b>24</b>



## PURPOSE AND SCOPE

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

### Purpose

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

### Scope

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

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

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



## THE SCHOOL PERFORMANCE REVIEW PROCESS

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

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

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

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

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

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

- PI 3.1 Teaching for effective learning
- PI 3.2 Assessment

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

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

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

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

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

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





## Judgements

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




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

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

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



## SCHOOL INFORMATION

School	School ID	196	
	School location	Al Riqqa Suburb -Al Azra, Sharjah	
	Establishment date	2012	
	Language of instruction	English	
	School curriculum	American National Curriculum	
	Accreditation body	Cognia	
	Examination Board	AP College Board	
	National Agenda Benchmark Tests/ International assessment	TIMSS, AP-SAT, MAP, PIRLS, CAT4	
	Fee range	AED 14,700 to 33,400	
	Staff	Principal	Mr. Hassan Saleh Sabbah
		Chair of Board of Governors	Ms. Mariam Al Suidi
Total number of teachers		92	
Total number of teaching assistants		4	
Turnover rate		15 %	
Main nationality of teachers		Egyptian	
Students		Teacher: student ratio	1:13
		Total number of students	1172
	Number of Emirati students	239	
	KG: number and gender	Total 155: Boys 85, Girls 70	
	Phase 2: number and gender	Total 429: Boys 233, Girls 196	
	Phase 3: number and gender	Total 363: Boys 195, Girls 168	
	Phase 4: number and gender	Total 225: Boys 112, Girls 113	
	Nationality groups	1. Jordanian 2. Syrian	
Total number of students with special educational needs	20		

## PROGRESS JOURNEY

Previous Inspection (2018):	Current Review:
<b>ACCEPTABLE</b>	<b>GOOD</b>



## SUMMARY OF REVIEW FINDINGS

These findings draw from our team of six reviewers' 169 lesson observations, 52 of which were carried out jointly with school leaders.

### **SUMMARY OF THE OVERALL PERFORMANCE OF THE SCHOOL:**

The overall performance of the school is good. This is an improvement since the previous inspection in 2018, when the school was judged acceptable. The strong commitment and strategic direction of the principal was a key factor in this improved performance. Under his direction, and with the support of other leaders, governors and parents, a strong focus was put on continuous improvement and focused, supportive professional development. This was complemented with external expertise, and as a result, the quality of teaching and learning has improved. Students' attitudes and relationships are positive and procedures to ensure the health and safety of staff and students, including the arrangements for child protection and safeguarding are good. The building is spacious and well maintained and supports students' learning well. All elements of leadership are now good and school leaders, governors and parents work effectively together to improve outcomes. Curriculum modification is focused on all groups of students, especially SEN students, where an effective inclusion unit has been established.

### **KEY AREAS OF STRENGTH:**

- Achievement has improved to good in all subjects.
- Students' communication skills, attitudes and relationships are positive, and they show respect for Islamic values and UAE heritage and culture.
- Improved safeguarding procedures are effective, ensure a high level of care and support for all students and as a result, parents have increasing confidence in the school.
- The commitment and strategic direction set by the principal which has a clear focus on improvement and is supported by senior leaders, governors and parents.
- The realistic and transparent school self-evaluation (SEF) carried out by senior leaders together with a well-aligned school improvement plan (SIP) that has clear priorities and responsibilities.

### **KEY AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT:**

- Improve achievement to very good in all subjects.
- Develop further the quality and consistency of teaching and assessment.
- Enhance curriculum adaptation and implementation to ensure it is better suited to all groups of students.
- Continue to develop the role and empowerment of middle leaders at whole school level.



## MAIN REVIEW REPORT

### PERFORMANCE STANDARD 1: STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENT

**Students' achievement overall is Good.**

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





<b>Islamic Education</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Students' achievement in Islamic Education is good overall. In lessons and their recent work, the majority of students make good progress in Phases 2, 3 and Phase 4. This matches the school's internal data which shows good progress in Phases 2, 3 and 4.</li><li>• Students' attainment is good in Phases 2, 3 and 4. This does not align with the school's internal data which shows attainment as outstanding.</li><li>• In Phase 2, students begin memorising short Surahs and recite with Tajweed rules, such as Al Qadir. They can explain the meaning of the verses. A minority of students cannot give the reasons for the revelations expressed in the verses. In Phase 3, students can deduce the rules of Ihram from the Holy Qur'an and the Noble Hadeeth and can explain the prohibitions of Ihram. A minority of students cannot explain the reasons for Ihram in Umrah and Hajj Rituals. In Phase 4, students can identify the clothing permitted for men and women to wear in Islam and give examples. However, a minority of students can't give examples of the benefits of adhering to Islamic dress in the Islamic societies or find the evidence from the Holy Qur'an and the Noble Hadeeth to justify their answers.</li><li>• Overall, the majority of all groups of students, including SEN students, make better than expected progress in all phases.</li></ul>	
	<b>Areas of Strength</b>	<b>Areas for Improvement</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Students' understanding of Islamic rules in Phase 2, 3 and 4.</li><li>• Students' skills in memorising and reciting the Holy Qur'an in Phase 2.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Students' skills to research evidence from the Holy Qur'an and the Noble Hadeeth in Phase 4.</li><li>• Students' skills in understanding the reasons for the revelations expressed in the verses in Phase 2.</li></ul>



<b>Arabic</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Students' achievement in Arabic as First Language (AFL) and Arabic as Second Language (ASL) is good overall. In lessons and in their work, the majority of children in KG in AFL and in ASL for Phases 2, 3 and 4 make better than expected progress. This does not match the school's internal data, which shows outstanding progress in all phases. There is no data for KG.</li><li>Internal assessment examination data shows attainment as outstanding for both AFL and ASL. This is not aligned to what is seen in lessons and in students' books, where attainment is seen to be good in KG, Phases 2, 3 and 4 for AFL and in Phases 2, 3 and 4 in ASL.</li><li>The majority of AFL students in all phases make good progress. In KG, children can link the letters with different words and pronounce them with simple correct grammar. They can write their names and read short full meaning sentences. In Phases 2, 3 and 4 students have well developed speaking skills, they can use the correct standard Arabic while expressing their ideas and views. In Phases 2 and 3, students can read passages and stories and explain their meaning. In Phase 4, students' reading and comprehension skills are well developed. They can read and analyse poems and essays and deduce the meaning, their extended writing skills are also good. However, in Phases 2 and 3, students' skills in dictation and extended writing are less well developed. In Phases 2, 3 and 4 students find difficulty in applying grammar rules consistently.</li><li>The majority of ASL students in Phases 2, 3 and 4 make good progress. There is no ASL for KG. In Phase 2, students can use suitable vocabulary and apply simple grammar rules to describe pictures and express themselves in standard Arabic. In Phase 3 and 4, students' skills in speaking standard Arabic is well developed and their handwriting is legible and neat. However, in Phases 2, 3 and 4 students' skills in reading comprehension are less well developed. In Phases 3 and 4, students' extended writing skill is developing.</li><li>Overall, the majority of groups of students make better than expected progress in all phases.</li></ul>	
	<b>Areas of Strength</b>	<b>Areas for Improvement</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Speaking standard Arabic in Phases 2, 3 and 4 in AFL and ASL.</li><li>Reading comprehension and extended writing skills in Phase 4 AFL.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Extended writing and dictation in Phases 2 and 3 in ASL.</li><li>Grammar description in Phases 2, 3 and 4 in ASL.</li></ul>



<b>Social Studies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Students' achievement in social studies is good overall. In lessons and their recent work, the majority of students make good progress in Phases 2 and 3 and 4. This matches the school's internal data which shows good progress.</li><li>• Students' attainment is good in Phases 2, 3 and 4. This does not align with the school's internal data for which shows attainment as outstanding.</li><li>• In Phase 2, students can explain the meaning of the UAE logo and give examples of where they can find the logo, such as on a passport, flag or identity card. They can recognise the Union story of the UAE and talk about His Highness Sheikh Zayed's (RIP) role in establishing the union. They can identify the meaning of the homeland and explain their responsibilities toward the UAE and give examples to justify their answers. A minority of students cannot arrange the union story timeline correctly or connect past events in history to events that are happening now. In Phases 3 and 4, students can specify the prevailing climatic region in the UAE according to longitude and latitude on the map. A minority of students can't distinguish between monsoons and local winds and how they are formed in the climatic region of the UAE or use technology in enquiry and research effectively to extend their learning.</li><li>• Overall, the majority of all groups of students, including SEN students, make better than expected progress in all phases.</li></ul>	
	<b>Areas of Strength</b>	<b>Areas for Improvement</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Students' map reading skills in Phase 3.</li><li>• Students' understanding of UAE culture and identity in Phases 2 and 3.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Students' enquiry-based research skills and effective use of technology in Phase 3.</li><li>• Students' skills to connect the past events in history to events that are happening now in Phase 2.</li></ul>



English

- Students' achievement in English is good overall. In lessons and in their work, the majority of students in KG and Phases 2 and 3, and the large majority in Phase 4 make better than expected progress. This does not fully match the school's internal data, which shows outstanding progress in KG and Phase 3 and good progress in Phases 2 and 4.
- The school's internal data shows attainment as outstanding across all phases. However, attainment in the MAP Reading and Language Tests is weak in Phases 2, 3 and 4. In Phase 4, attainment is outstanding for EMSAT. This does not fully match with that is seen in lessons and in students' work, where attainment is seen to be good in KG and Phases 2 and 3 and very good in Phase 4.
- Children in KG and students in Phases 2 and 3 and the large majority of students in Phase 4 demonstrate secure literacy knowledge and skills. Speaking and comprehension skills are well developed across all phases. In KG, children can effectively use phonic strategies to develop their vocabulary and reading skills. Innovation skills in English in KG and Grades 1 and 2 are developing as students are limited by their level of English writing. In Phase 2, students build on this knowledge to further develop their understanding of language. However, they do not always listen when other students are speaking in class. In Phase 3, students can accurately cite several pieces of textual evidence to support their analysis, although writing skills are not as consistent. By the end of Phase 4, students can construct logical arguments in a debate supported with evidence.
- Overall, the majority of groups of students make better than expected progress in KG and Phases 2 and 3 and the large majority in Phase 4. Challenge for more able students is not always consistent.

**Areas of Strength**

- Students' effective use of phonic strategies in KG and Phase 2.
- Students' speaking and comprehension skills across all phases.

**Areas for Improvement**

- The consistency of students' writing skills, particularly in Phase 3.
- Students' listening skills when other students are talking, especially in Phase 2.



<b>Mathematics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Students' achievement in mathematics is good overall. It is good in KG, Phases 3 and 4, and acceptable in Phase 2. In lessons and in their work, the majority of students in KG, Phases 3 and 4 make progress above curriculum standards and most students in Phase 2 make progress in line with curriculum standards. This does not match the school's internal data which shows outstanding progress in all phases. There is no data for KG.</li><li>Internal assessment examination data shows attainment in Phases 2 and 3 as outstanding and very good in Phase 4. However, attainment in the MAP Tests is weak in Phases 2, 3 and 4. This does not match with what is seen in lessons and in students' work, where attainment is seen to be good in KG, Phases 3 and 4 and acceptable in Phase 2.</li><li>Children in KG can identify two-digit numbers, write them and show them on a number line, counting and subtracting in ones. In Phase 2, students understand the concept of area and perimeter, however they do not always include the units of measure or notation required to differentiate between linear measures and 2D measures. Students in Phase 3 can solve simple equations using inverses and can find the surface area of 3D shapes, they lack confidence to solve their equations and complete simple measurement calculations using mental mathematical strategies. Phase 4 students identify and solve problems in trigonometry and probability. Across all phases, students apply their knowledge and skills in real life scenarios to aid their understanding of mathematics.</li><li>Overall, the majority of groups of students make better than expected progress in all phases.</li></ul>	
	<b>Areas of Strength</b>	<b>Areas for Improvement</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Students' application of mathematics to real-life scenarios across all phases.</li><li>Students' mathematical thinking and collaboration in solving algebraic and trigonometry questions in Phase 4.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Students' use of mental mathematic strategies to solve basic calculations in Phase 3.</li><li>Students' linear and 2D measurement skills in Phase 2.</li></ul>





<b>Science</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Students' achievement in science is good overall. In lessons and in their work, the majority of children in KG and students across all phases make better than expected progress. This does not match the school's internal data which shows outstanding progress in all phases.</li><li>• Internal assessment examination data shows attainment as outstanding in KG and Phase 2 and very good in Phases 3 and Phase 4. Attainment of Grade 12 students, in Physics, in EmSAT is very good. This is not aligned to what is seen in lessons and in students' books, where attainment is seen to be good in all phases.</li><li>• Students' knowledge and understanding of concepts of life sciences are secure in all phases. In KG, children can identify different types of weather and have developed positive enquiry skills. In Phase 2, students can label the parts of a volcano in a given picture and can analyse the reasons for the sharp eyesight of birds. In Phase 3, students can analyse the importance of non-renewable resources and their conservation and can explain the importance of reflex action. In Phase 4, students can prepare solutions of different concentrations and study the movement of water through the membrane in isotonic, hypotonic and hypertonic solutions. Although students demonstrate knowledge and understanding of various scientific concepts, they lack fluency in using scientific terms. Across all phases, skills of prediction, investigation and using mathematical calculations are less well developed because of limited opportunities of experiential hands-on learning outside of laboratory work.</li><li>• Overall, the majority of groups of students make better than expected progress in all phases.</li></ul>	
	<b>Areas of Strength</b>	<b>Areas for Improvement</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Developing skills of enquiry in KG.</li><li>• Basic knowledge and understanding of natural processes by students in all phases.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Students' fluency in using scientific terms to explain scientific concepts in Phase 4.</li><li>• Students' skills of prediction, investigation in practical lessons in all phases.</li></ul>



<b>Other subjects</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Students' achievement in other subjects is good overall. In lessons and in their work, the majority of children in KG and students in Phases 2, 3 and 4 make better than expected progress. No data was presented for other subjects.</li><li>• No internal assessment examination data was presented. In lessons and in students' books, attainment is seen to be good overall, in all phases.</li><li>• In KG and Phase 2, children and students enjoy PE and develop their movement and coordination skills well. However, the quality of the activity at times is varied and leads to reduced engagement and full participation. Art is well integrated across many subjects and has helped to enliven lessons and deepen understanding. In Phase 3, the strong focus on PE continues with clear development of dribbling and throwing skills. Lessons are well organised and students are challenged appropriately. In Phase 4, Art is developed as a standalone subject that engages all. Students have matured and gain positive understanding of the wider world through History in exploring the American Revolution, and an understanding of credit options and the business world in Business and Economics. Students are particularly interested in Global Studies, which examines the broader issues of health and longevity. However, at times the discussion can be dominated by a few at the exclusion of the ideas of all.</li><li>• Overall, the majority of groups of students make better than expected progress in all phases. A few students in Phase 4 make very good progress.</li></ul>	
	<b>Areas of Strengths</b>	<b>Areas for Improvement</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Students' ability to understand the world of Business and Economics in Phase 4.</li><li>• Students' understanding and ability in engaging with abstract themes such as the connection between lifestyle and longevity internationally.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Students' capacity and ability to practice the basic skills of sport in a sustained enjoyable and structured way in Phase 2.</li><li>• Ensure that all students are afforded the opportunity to put forward their own ideas and solutions to discussions in Phases 3 and 4.</li></ul>



<b>Learning Skills</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learning skills are good overall. Students enjoy learning and take increasing responsibility for this and their assessment. Resources, including technology, are used effectively to support learning and make students more independent, although this is less developed in Arabic subjects.</li> <li>Students are comfortable working together with others. Collaboration and communication skills are well developed across most areas of the school. However, students can struggle to listen effectively when others are speaking.</li> <li>Students across almost all subjects and phases effectively make real world connections in their lessons. Cross curricular links are often made, as well as links to UAE culture, students can apply aspects of their learning to the world beyond school.</li> <li>In some lessons there is still an over reliance on textbooks, worksheets and students waiting for instructions to be provided by the teacher, and so their independent thinking and questioning skills are not always consistently well developed, especially in Phase 2. In the higher phases, students are more resourceful and can find things out for themselves in a range of ways.</li> </ul>	
	<b>Areas of Strengths</b>	<b>Areas for Improvement</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students' positive attitudes towards their learning.</li> <li>Students' application of learning to the wider world and UAE culture.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students' consistent use of technology in lessons to support their learning, especially in AFL and ASL.</li> <li>Increased opportunities for students to be innovative and enterprising, especially in Phase 2 and science.</li> </ul>

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

Indicators:	KG	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4
<b>Personal development</b>	<b>Very good</b>	<b>Very good</b>	<b>Very good</b>	<b>Very good</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students' personal and social development and their innovation skills is very good overall.</li> <li>Social responsibility and innovation is good. Students have positive and responsible attitudes. They can count on themselves and accept critical comments.</li> <li>Students are often self-disciplined and respond well to others. They cooperate with each other to resolve any disagreements and bullying is very rare.</li> </ul>				



- Students are sensitive to the needs and differences of others; they help each other, which reflects positively on relationships between them and the staff.
- Students show a very good understanding of safe and healthy living. They have the ability to choose what suits their health and wellbeing.
- Students' attendance is very good at 95.8%. Students almost always arrive to lessons on time although a few may be late for assembly.

<b>Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures</b>	<b>Very good</b>	<b>Very good</b>	<b>Very good</b>	<b>Very good</b>
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- Students have a secure appreciation and understanding of Islamic values in the UAE society. In assemblies, they recite verses from the Holy Qur'an and these values are promoted during lessons and participation in religious events.
- Students are very knowledgeable and respectful of the heritage and culture in the UAE. They celebrate National, Flag and Martyr Days, and other national occasions, and actively take part in cultural events.
- Students demonstrate a clear understanding, awareness and appreciation of their own and other world cultures. They have visited elderly people and worked on the Sama United Nations programme where students discuss important international issues.

<b>Social responsibility and innovation skills</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Good</b>
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- Students understand their responsibilities as members of the school community, some students have key roles. They work as volunteers through regular activities that benefit the school and wider communities, including partnership with Red Crescent.
- Students display a positive work ethic, and sometimes initiate and make independent decisions. They have creative ideas and enjoy developing their own projects, such as the "smart bag" design project in Phase 4.
- Students care for their school and take part in activities to improve its environment. Students participate in a range of activities that supports sustainability and conservation in their local environment, such as the Green School, Sama mini-farm and partners with the Natural Reserves Authority.

**Areas of Strength:**

- Students' positive attitudes, behaviour and relationships.
- Students' appreciation and understanding of Islamic values and Emirati culture and heritage.

**Areas for Improvement:**

- Students' innovation and enterprise skills.
- Students' punctuality at assembly time.



## PERFORMANCE STANDARD 3: TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT

Indicators:	KG	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4
<b>Teaching for effective learning</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Good</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The overall quality of teaching and assessment is good.</li><li>• Most teachers have a thorough knowledge of their subjects and can convey this clearly and confidently to learners. They understand how students learn in different ways and adapt their approaches so that students make good progress.</li><li>• Lessons are planned to align to curriculum standards. Teachers use time and resources effectively to create environments where students can successfully meet learning expectations. However, classroom displays in Phases 3 and 4 could provide tips and support for students about how to make actionable improvements to their work.</li><li>• Teacher-student interactions are mostly positive and ensure that students are sufficiently engaged in lessons. Questioning promotes thought and considered responses, although most higher order questions are asked by teachers.</li><li>• Teachers use strategies to meet the needs of their students and provide appropriate levels of support, but at times challenge for more able learners is inconsistent.</li><li>• The use of technology is developing and opportunities for critical thinking and innovative work are becoming more consistent across the school. This is less well developed in KG and Phase 2.</li></ul>				
<b>Assessment</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Good</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Internal assessment processes provide mostly valid data and clear measures of students' progress against the school's curriculum standards. CAT4, MAP, PISA, TIMSS, PIRLS and EmSAT, results are all compared with the appropriate external, national and international benchmarks. This provides a helpful picture of performance, although the results from both internal and external assessments do not yet consistently reflect what is seen in lessons and students' books.</li><li>• Assessment data is analysed to identify trends, patterns of attainment and individual progress, as well as areas of concern and gaps in knowledge and skills.</li><li>• This is tracked over time so teachers can use the analysis to plan lessons and adapt the curriculum to meet the needs of students. However, challenge for more able learners is inconsistent.</li><li>• Teachers are aware of the strengths and weaknesses of their students. Books are marked and include formative comments about the steps students need to take to improve their performance. Students' evaluation of their own and other's work is a developing and common feature of lessons but is stronger in Phases 3 and 4 currently.</li></ul>				

**School Performance Review of Sama American Private School  
27 February to 2 March 2023**





#### Areas of Strength:

- Teachers' knowledge of their subjects and how students learn.
- Effective internal and external assessment processes.

#### Areas for Improvement:

- Teacher-student interactions consistently resulting in higher levels of questioning and critical thinking.
- Teaching strategies to consistently support and challenge all students, especially high attainers.

### PERFORMANCE STANDARD 4: CURRICULUM

Indicators:	KG	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4
<b>Curriculum design and implementation</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Good</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The overall quality of the curriculum is good.</li><li>• The curriculum has a clear rationale, is broad and balanced, combining the statutory requirements of CCSS (Common Core State Standards), NGSS (Next Generation Science Standards) and MoE curricula.</li><li>• The curricula are planned and build on the students' previous knowledge and skills. Progress is tracked to ensure gaps in learning are identified and students are ready for their next stage of learning.</li><li>• Curricular choices, including Economics, Business Management and AP courses are provided for students in Phase 4, to meet their interests and career needs.</li><li>• Cross curricular links are realistically planned to consolidate meaningful learning and are incorporated into lessons where appropriate. Across all Arabic medium subjects, here are strong connections between science, mathematics, social studies and English.</li><li>• The school regularly reviews and monitors the NGSS curriculum, and this informs changes and modifications such as the inclusion of PISA and TIMSS questions regularly in lessons.</li></ul>				
<b>Curriculum adaptation</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Good</b>



- Curriculum modifications successfully ensure that the curriculum meets the needs of groups of students. However, planning does not always ensure there is sufficient challenge for high attainers.
- Extra-curricular activities are offered to supplement the curriculum, allowing students in Phase 4 especially the opportunity to be engaged in innovative and creative activities. Other extra-curricular activities are offered to all students to supplement the curriculum. These activities include mathematics, science, ICT, cookery and football clubs.
- Learning experiences to promote a good understanding of the UAE's values, culture and society are embedded through all aspects of the curriculum, such as Phase 4 students involving themselves in supporting victims of the earthquake in Turkey and Syria.

#### Areas of Strength:

- Cross-curricular links across all phases.
- Emirati culture and UAE society links embedded across all aspects of the curriculum.

#### Areas for Improvement:

- Modification of the curriculum to cater for all groups of students, particularly the high attainers.
- Interesting and innovative opportunities for all students, including children in KG and students in Phase 2.

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

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

- The overall protection, care, guidance and support of students is very good. The school has rigorous procedures and policies for the safeguarding of students, including child protection and cyber education. All staff, students and parents are made fully aware of these through workshops and emails.
- The school provides a very safe, clean and secure environment for students and staff. Safety checks are frequent and thorough in buses, science labs and corridors. Students are supervised at all times by an additional team of supervisors in every corridor and around 350 cameras that



make them feel safe and secure. Dispersals and arrivals are well managed by the team of transport supervisors.

- The school building and infrastructure is very well maintained. The school maintains comprehensive and secure records of various incidents, building registration documents, students' medical records and licenses of the staff.
- The premises and facilities of shaded playgrounds, resources, science labs, lifts, ramps and stairways provide a safe, conducive, inclusive and secure physical environment for all learners.
- Healthy living is promoted systematically through a series of workshops, health campaigns and PE classes. There are about 235 obese students in the school who are encouraged to follow healthy choices both in school and at home.

Care and support	Good	Good	Good	Good
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- Staff and student relationships are positive. The school implements rewards and sanctions to effectively manage students' behaviour. The various school awards motivate students well but has an over emphasis on higher achievers.
- The school monitors and manages attendance through a digital platform which results in 95.8% attendance rate.
- The inclusion team has successfully set up rigorous systems to identify students with special educational needs (SEN) and those who are gifted and talented (G&T) through teachers' referral, parents' feedback and clinical reports.
- Multiple tiered system of effective support is designed for the students of special needs, this includes pull out sessions, modified worksheets, supervision and monitoring through progress tracker. Although the systems are in place, personal support and guidance in lessons by teachers for SEN students and consistent challenge for the more able is not yet embedded fully in lessons.
- The wellbeing and personal development of all students are routinely monitored. The career guidance programme is robust and supports students' career pathways and aspirations to enter various universities for higher education.

**Areas of Strength:**

- Safeguarding and child protection arrangements.
- Identification systems by the inclusion team.

**Areas for Improvement:**

- A wider range of interventions to promote healthy lifestyles.
- Ensure that the school award system motivates all students.



## PERFORMANCE STANDARD 6: LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

### Indicators:

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

- The overall quality of leadership and management is good.
- The principal has demonstrated a strong commitment to improvement and together with senior leaders, he has given a clear strategic direction which is focused on improved academic achievement, personal development, inclusion, and preparing students for participation in a modern multi-cultural society.
- The principal and senior leaders demonstrate secure knowledge of the American curriculum and have sought out advice on best educational practices when needed. Staff are challenged by leaders but also well supported, this ensures a positive school atmosphere.
- Relationships between staff members are effective and professional with staff feeling valued and a low staff turnover. Leadership is delegated with clear responsibilities and accountability.
- Leaders at all levels demonstrate a clear understanding of what needs to be done. They have been successful in correctly identifying key priority areas for improvement, such as a focus on monitoring the quality of teaching and giving effective one-to-one support.
- Leaders have been successful and innovative in developing aspects of the school, such as teacher led professional development and effective individualised programmes for staff, but all middle leaders are not fully confident in their knowledge of the next steps for improvement.
- The school's self-evaluation structures are systematic and include input from all staff members and to a lesser extent, other stakeholder groups. The self-evaluation document (SEF) is transparent, realistic and provides appropriate evidence sources, such as lesson monitoring and analysis of internal and external assessment data.
- Senior leaders together with heads of department effectively monitor teaching and learning using appropriate mechanisms which are linked closely to the UAE Inspection Framework. Leaders provide feedback to teachers which is specific to their improvement needs and this has led to much improved teaching and learning practices.



- The school improvement plan (SIP) is comprehensive and well aligned to the SEF. Action plans are driven by accurate assessment data and priority actions were identified with clear timelines and staff responsibilities clearly outlined.
- Through the SIP and the consistent work of leaders, the school has made significant progress in addressing all the recommendations from the previous inspection report and this has ensured sustained improvement.
- The school cultivates very positive relationships with parents and, in particular, parental engagement through the parent council. Parents report that the principal and leaders have an open-door policy and welcome comments. Only 1 parent is elected to the governing body.
- Parents are well informed about school activities through the school portal, this includes all plans as well as assessment details, also SMS and information letters through e-mail. The school also facilitates awareness training online and a person from the inclusion department supports parenting related issues. However, most parents were unaware of inspection reports or their outcomes.
- Reporting is regular and gives attention to students' academic and personal development in a clear and effective format. Parents are very satisfied.
- The school has cultivated useful community partnerships which enhance students' learning, such as strong connections to a few local and international universities, connections with local charities, Cognia and the AP College Board.
- Governance includes representation from several stakeholders, including one elected parent and one teacher representative, the board are fully consulted on all decisions.
- The owner's representative, who is the Chairperson of the Governors regularly monitors the school through regular visits. Governors work effectively to support the senior leaders but also hold them to account through clear agreed priorities.
- The governors have been highly committed to the school over a long period of time. They are aware of challenges and are focused on compliance with statutory requirements. The Board has appropriate external expertise in higher education and management.
- Most aspects of the school are very well organised and pre-planned with key roles and responsibilities well defined to ensure a positive impact on student achievement. The school has a strong focus on policies and appropriate training for all staff.
- Appropriate and well-qualified staff are recruited early and deployed effectively; staff turnover is relatively low. Professional development and best practices are promoted extensively in collaboration with external expert advice.
- The building provides a wide range of specialist facilities that are used regularly to engage and enhance students' learning including shaded play areas, 7 science and 4 IT laboratories and plans for further development.
- A wide range of resources are available throughout the school, however, ICT devices in lessons are not always utilised to full effect.

#### **Areas of Strength:**

- The positive culture of improvement created across the school by the principal and senior leaders.
- The realistic SEF and well-designed SIP document.





#### Areas for Improvement:

- Increase the elected parental influence on the governing body.
- Further develop high-quality leadership or subject specific training for middle leaders, leading to stronger empowerment and trust building as the school improves.

## SPEA ADDITIONAL FOCUS AREAS

### Provision for Arabic Language

- The school currently has 1172 students who are mostly Arabic native speakers, except for 73 students who are non-Arabs and are learning Arabic as a second language. The school has 13 teachers of Arabic dedicated to teach Arabic native classes and three more teachers to teach ASL.
- All students are following their studies in Arabic language in full compliance with MOE strategies, curriculum and resources. Students have access to MoE digital and print resources as stipulated by the Ministry of Education.
- Co-curricular activities, such as morning assemblies, the Holy Qur'an recitation, reading/writing competitions, poetry recitation, rhetoric clubs, National Day Celebration are integrated into the Arabic Language curriculum to optimise students' opportunities of learning Arabic.
- All stakeholder groups demonstrate full support for the school Arabic language program and all groups of learners are either meeting or exceeding curriculum expectations.

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

- The school has effective external benchmarking processes in place. All students in Grades 3, 5, 7 and 9 take the CAT4 test, students in Grades 3 to 9 take the MAP Growth test 3 times a year, Grades 4 and 8 take TIMSS and PIRLS tests, Grade 10 take PISA test, Grade12 take EmSAT, IELTS, AP, SAT tests commencing summer 2023.
- Students are provided with support and training, including practicing with external assessment type questions. The Cerebry platform is used to prepare for TIMSS 2023. Edmentum online platform is used by students to practice for MAP tests in English and mathematics for Grades 3 to 9.
- Students are informed about their external results through individual progress reports. Paper copies reflecting their child's strengths and areas for improvement are sent to parents.

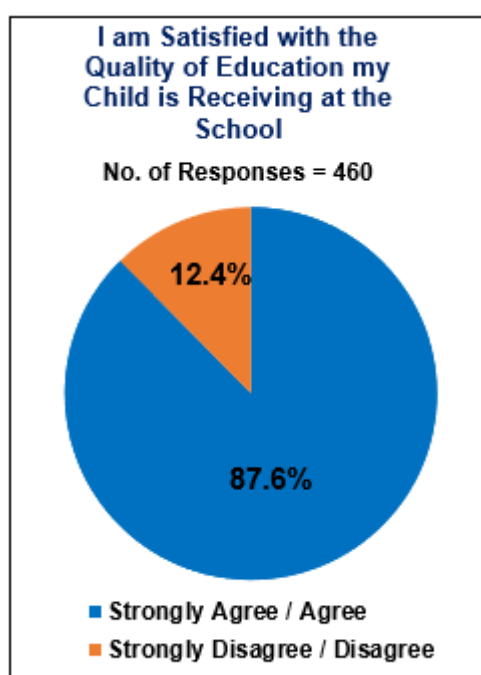
### Provision for KG

- The school has 155 children in eight KG classes with a ratio of 1:14 for both teachers and support staff in school.
- Classrooms are well resourced to ensure they are stimulating and motivating for children. There are interactive whiteboards, books and differentiated learning materials.
- The school has an outdoor play area for younger children. Resources include swings with safety measures, slide, seesaw and various climbing equipment.
- Parents are invited to bring their children for face-to-face induction meetings where children are assessed, and their reflexes are checked. The SENCO and support staff attend this meeting. A



report is compiled on the personal, social, emotional and academic development of each child and this is emailed to the parents, and hard copies are provided if necessary.

## VIEWS OF PARENTS



## STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS & NEXT STEPS

- **Improve achievement to very good in all subjects, by:**
  - Raising teachers' expectations of what students can achieve, by planning tasks that allow the large majority to achieve beyond curriculum expectations.
  - Improving extended writing and dictation in Arabic, especially in Phases 2 and 3 and the consistency of students' writing skills in English, particularly in Phase 3.
  - Developing students' use of mental mathematic strategies to solve basic calculations in mathematics, especially in Phase 3 and overall achievement in Phase 2.
  - Increasing students' skills of prediction, investigation and using mathematical calculations in practical lessons in science.
  - Developing students' skills in asking higher order questions leading to better understanding and discussions.



- **Improve further the quality and consistency of teaching and assessment, by:**
  - Improving teachers' use of higher order questioning to include more meaningful dialogue and consistent independent critical thinking.
  - Developing teaching strategies to consistently support and challenge all students, especially high attainers.
  - Using ICT consistently for research and to personalise learning as much as possible.
  - Differentiating the assessment for learning activity to cater more effectively for all groups of students.
  
- **Improve curriculum adaptation and implementation to ensure it is better suited to all groups of students, by:**
  - Providing teachers with further training on how to adapt the curriculum so they are less reliant on textbook learning and worksheets.
  - Ensuring teachers continue to use assessment information to create differentiated plans that fully meet the learning needs of all students.
  - Ensuring teachers have the skills and strategies to adapt their lessons when learning is not secure.
  
- **Continue to develop the role of middle leaders at whole school level, by:**
  - Further clarifying the roles and responsibilities of middle leaders.
  - Providing leadership or subject specific training where necessary.
  - Empowering middle leaders who are confident in their roles to be more self-reliant.

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

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

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

If you have a concern or wish to comment on any aspect of this report, please contact SPEA on [schools.review@spea.shj.ae](mailto:schools.review@spea.shj.ae) within three weeks of receiving this report.