



دائرة التعليم والمعرفة
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
AND KNOWLEDGE

Inspection Report of GEMS World Academy

Overall Effectiveness: Very good

Academic Year 2017 – 2018



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School Information

General Information	Inspection date:	from	14th Shaban, 1439h	to	17th Shaban, 1439h
		from	30-Apr-18	to	03-May-18
	School name	Gems World Academy			
	School ID	9210			
	School address	Fatima Bint Mubarak St. Abu Dhabi			
	School telephone	+971 (0) 2 641 6333			
	School official email	gemsworldacad.pvt@adec.ac.ae			
	School website	Gemsworldacademy-abudhabi.com			
	School curriculum	American, IB Primary Year Program PYP			
	School phases	KG to Primary			
	Fee range and category	AED 39,950–58,400. High to Very High			
	Number of lessons observed	98			
Number of joint lessons observed	6				
Staff Information	Total number of teachers	42			
	Turnover rate	15%			
	Number of teaching assistants	26			
	Teacher- student ratio	1 : 22			
Student Information	Total number of students	518			
	% of Emirati Students	8%			
	% of Largest nationality groups	1. India 13%			
		2. USA 10%			
		3. Pakistan 7%			
	% of SEN students	3%			
	% of students per phase	KG: 47%	Middle: N/A		
Primary: 53%		High: N/A			
Gender	Boys and Girls				



The Performance of the School

Performance Standard 1

Students' Achievement

Very Good

Performance Standard 2

Students' personal and social development, and their innovation skills

Very Good

Performance Standard 3

Teaching and Assessment

Very Good

Performance Standard 4

Curriculum

Very Good

Performance Standard 5

The protection, care, guidance and support of students

Outstanding

Performance Standard 6

Leadership and management

Very Good

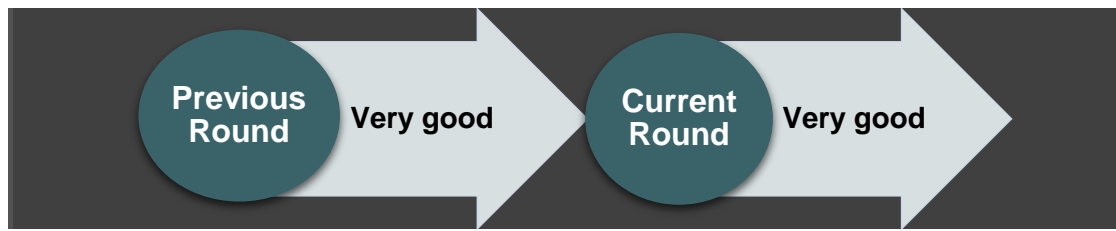


Evaluation of the school's overall performance

- The overall performance of the school is very good.
- Students' achievement is very good overall and has improved considerably in subjects taught in Arabic. Students make outstanding progress in English which supports their learning across the curriculum.
- Students' personal and social development and their innovation skills are very good overall. Students love coming to school, enjoy learning and demonstrate exemplary behaviour. They are responsible, independent learners who are capable of taking a stronger leadership role in school. Attendance is acceptable.
- Teaching and assessment are very good. Consistently high standards of teaching ensuring students develop very good learning skills and high expectations. Most teachers assess progress and support and challenge students very effectively.
- The curriculum is very good. It provides students with a broad range of learning experiences which capture their interest and prepare them well for middle-school.
- The overall quality of protection, care, guidance and support of students is outstanding. Staff keep students safe and teach them how to keep themselves healthy. Staff provide high quality pastoral support and are very effective in identifying and supporting students who need help with their learning or behaviour.
- The quality of leadership and management is very good. The principal, who was appointed after the previous inspection, and vice principal have involved all staff in evaluating and improving the school. They are extremely well supported in their work by highly engaged parents and the active involvement of GEMS school support centre.



Progress made since last inspection and capacity to improve



- The school has made very good progress in addressing all of the recommendations of the previous inspection. Improvements have been sustained through strong direction from the senior leadership team and high quality continuing professional development for all staff.
- Teachers have implemented a wide range of approaches to assessment in most subjects. They now use assessment information effectively to plan students' next steps in learning, and to identify what the school needs to do to improve achievement further. This work is continuing in a few subjects, including science and Arabic, to ensure that students' progress is tracked carefully across the school.
- Most teachers now show considerable skill in checking students' understanding and progress in lessons. They use a range of techniques to involve students effectively in assessing their achievement of lesson objectives and personal learning targets.
- Students who are exceptionally gifted and talented (G&T) are identified and their curriculum is being developed to ensure it builds consistently on their knowledge and skills. Staff have yet to introduce adequate scope for a few identified individuals to make accelerated progress.
- The school has made considerable progress in improving students' learning in subjects taught in Arabic and achievement in these subjects is now good. Teachers have adopted the highly successful approaches employed in the teaching of English and are continuing to develop their skills.
- The school established a Local Advisory Board in October 2016 in addition to the board of governors. This includes representation of all stakeholders and provides very good support and challenge to the senior leadership team (SLT). Overall, school leaders' capacity to improve the school is very good.



Key areas of strength and areas for improvement

Key areas of strength

1. Improvements in students' achievements in English and in Arabic medium subjects, particularly Islamic Education.
2. Students' positive attitudes to learning and their communication and collaboration skills.
3. Integrated and meaningful curricular experiences which develop students' skills and values.
4. The care and welfare of students.
5. Partnerships with parents.

Key areas for improvement

1. Continue to raise achievement in all subjects by:
 - i. sharing best practice between staff and subjects to ensure the highest standards of teaching and learning consistently across the school
 - ii. tracking students' achievement consistently across all subjects
 - iii. developing personalised feedback and challenge for all students and adapting the curriculum further for higher achieving students
 - iv. developing opportunities for students to learn by discovery and enquiry, especially in science and technology, and to lead enterprising activities.
2. Improve attendance by:
 - i. working with parents to further raise awareness of its importance to achievement at the highest levels.
3. Continue to develop delegated leadership by:
 - i. encouraging teachers to innovate and improve aspects of the school.



Provision for Reading

- The school's spacious library contains a broad range of books in English and Arabic which support the curriculum across all subjects, promote students' development of positive moral values, and appeal to their interests. Students have designed a range of inviting learning and informal reading spaces in the library. Books in other languages support students in maintaining their literacy skills in their first language.
- Teachers develop students' reading skills very effectively using a broad range of fiction and non-fiction resources. They promote reading for comprehension effectively in classrooms using guided reading programmes, books and tablet computers. During their weekly library period, students learn about literature and literacy, for example, how to select books and find information from reliable sources.
- Reading is very well integrated across the curriculum as teachers expect students to develop and apply their reading and writing skills in all subjects. Students and families participate in regular competitions and events such as international book day, visiting authors and book fairs.
- Regular workshops for parents promote reading, for example through a focus on creative writing, and advice on how to select books at the right level for their child. The librarian regularly takes small groups of parents to the public library to develop their confidence in using the facility. Students and their families access a range of online reading resources to support reading at home.
- The school's plan to promote reading is comprehensive and effectively implemented. All teachers have been very effectively trained and consequently students' reading skills are of a very high standard. Assessment and tracking of students' reading skills and experiences are rigorous.



Performance Standard 1: Students' Achievement

Students' achievement Indicators		KG	Primary	Middle	High
Islamic Education	Attainment	Good	Good		
	Progress	Good	Very Good		
Arabic (as a First Language)	Attainment	Good	Good		
	Progress	Good	Good		
Arabic (as additional Language)	Attainment	Good	Acceptable		
	Progress	Good	Good		
Social Studies	Attainment	N/A	Good		
	Progress	N/A	Good		
English	Attainment	Very Good	Very Good		
	Progress	Very Good	Outstanding		
Mathematics	Attainment	Very Good	Very Good		
	Progress	Very Good	Very Good		
Science	Attainment	Very Good	Very Good		
	Progress	Very Good	Very Good		
Other subjects (Art, Music, PE)	Attainment	Very Good	Very Good		
	Progress	Very Good	Very Good		
Learning Skills		Very Good	Very Good		



Overall achievement

- The overall quality of students' achievement is very good. Progress is outstanding in English in primary phase. Well-developed English skills support very good attainment in English medium subjects, and good attainment in Islamic Education taught in English. Attainment in Arabic medium subjects is good overall and improving as they apply successful language learning strategies adopted in English. Students also demonstrate levels of skill in music and physical education that are well above curriculum expectations. School examination performance data accord with attainment seen in lessons.
- Students' progress in lessons and over time is very good overall. Groups of students including those with special educational needs (SEN) and those who are higher achieving, including G&T, make very strong progress on prior attainment.

Subjects

- Students' achievement in **Islamic Education** is good, and they are making very good progress overall. The majority attain above curriculum standards. Students in Grade 3 can discuss perseverance, tolerance and inclusion as Islamic values.
- In **Arabic as a first language**, the majority of students achieve above curriculum standards. They listen carefully to one another and talk confidently in groups. The majority of children in KG can read key words, re-tell a story and express an opinion. By Grade 4 students can write short descriptive pieces about their topic.
- Students' achievement in **Arabic as a second language** is good overall. Attainment is good in KG and acceptable in primary phase. Most students make good progress, particularly those who are just beginning to learn the language. Students in KG can recognise letter sounds in texts and in the spoken words that they know. By Grade 4, students can conduct basic social conversations but make grammatical errors in their writing.
- Students' achievement in **social studies** is good. The majority of students achieve above curriculum standards. Students in Grade 1 can recognise plants which are native to the UAE. By Grade 5, students recognise, research and take practical action to address social and environmental issues affecting Abu Dhabi.
- Students' achievement in **English** is very good overall. Students at the primary phase are making outstanding progress, and the quality of their writing in a range of genres is very impressive. KG children read fluently and by Grade 5 students can select information by efficiently skimming and scanning non-fiction texts. At all stages students have very well-



developed speaking skills.

- Students' achievement in **mathematics** is very good. The large majority of students are demonstrating knowledge, skills and understanding that exceed curriculum standards. In KG, children can count, add and subtract numbers to 20 and a few have a good understanding of number within 100. In the primary phase, students gather, interpret and represent data on graphs and can measure time and space accurately.
- Students' achievement in **science** is very good. The large majority of students demonstrate knowledge, skills and understanding above curriculum standards. Scientific enquiry, investigation and problem solving are features of the most effective lessons, supporting very good achievement.
- Students' achievement in **other subjects** is very good overall. Students demonstrate a range of advanced techniques and ball-handling skills in physical education. They expertly play their compositions on tuned percussion in music. In art, younger students appreciate and recreate the features of Islamic designs.

Learning skills

- Students' learning skills are very good. Students show great enthusiasm for learning, starting work without prompting and focusing on tasks for extended periods. They are very good at working with and learning from others and demonstrate very clear communication skills. Students understand the purpose of what they are learning and apply their skills readily in new situations. They think critically about problems, use learning technologies confidently and thrive when given opportunities to make independent choices about what and how they learn.

Areas of Relative Strength:

- Improvements in students' achievement in subjects taught in Arabic.
- Students' achievement in English.
- Students' communication and collaboration skills.

Areas for Improvement:

- Further raising achievement across subjects.
- Discovery and enquiry skills.



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

Students' personal and social development, and their innovation skills Indicators	KG	Primary	Middle	High
Personal development	Outstanding	Outstanding		
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Very Good	Very Good		
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Very Good	Very Good		

- Students' personal and social development and their innovation skills are very good overall. Students have very responsible attitudes to learning, work hard in lessons and derive pleasure from achieving high standards.
- Students' behaviour is exemplary. They demonstrate outstanding interpersonal skills and show respect for and appreciation of adults who help them. Older students assess risk, act responsibly and know how to be fit and healthy. Students' attendance is acceptable at 93%, and they arrive punctually to school.
- Students demonstrate their well-developed Islamic values in their relationships and work ethic, and have a sound understanding of the heritage and culture of the UAE. Students are proud to be part of an international community and are intrigued by one another's cultures.
- Students perform responsible roles in the school, make decisions about their learning and contribute ideas about how the school can improve. They take leading roles in assemblies and demonstrate the skills and desire to take more leadership responsibility in un-supported, enterprising projects.
- Students respect the school environment and Grade 5 students' powerful presentations about the sustainability issues facing the UAE show deep understanding of the issues involved.
- Students regularly solve problems in lessons by connecting their learning in several curriculum areas. During projects and events such as innovation week students develop their own ideas. However, within lessons students are not regularly taking initiative and following their own interests in enterprising and innovative ways.



Areas of Relative Strength:

- Positive attitudes and excellent behaviour.
- Understanding of health and wellbeing.

Areas for Improvement:

- Attendance.
- Students' leadership of enterprising activities.



Performance Standard 3: Teaching and Assessment

Teaching and Assessment Indicators	KG	Primary	Middle	High
Teaching for effective learning	Very Good	Very Good		
Assessment	Very Good	Very Good		

- Teaching and assessment is very good. Skilled teachers apply their subject knowledge and expertise effectively to deliver enjoyable and enriching learning experiences to students. Teachers have very good relationships with students, fostering high levels of engagement and motivation to succeed.
- Teachers plan together, supported by SEN and English Language Learning (ELL) specialists, to meet the needs of the diverse student body. Lessons successfully develop students' knowledge and skills as well as enabling them to apply their learning in the real world. Teachers regularly ask students questions that require them to think deeply.
- Most teachers ensure that students understand the purpose of lessons and in best practice, involve students in deciding how their achievement will be evaluated. Most use highly effective strategies and activities including problem solving and research to involve students in their own learning.
- Internal assessment processes and benchmarking against external expectations are effective. Use of assessment data to track students' achievement is very good overall but is less developed in Arabic medium subjects.
- Teachers use assessment continuously to ensure they know the individual needs of students and plan effectively for their next steps in learning. There is inconsistency in how well feedback is personalised to challenge students, especially for those who are higher achieving.

Areas of Relative Strength:

- Planning of active and engaging learning experiences.
- Assessment processes which support learning.

Areas for Improvement:

- Tracking students' achievement in Arabic medium subjects.
- Personalised and challenging feedback to students.



Performance Standard 4: Curriculum

Curriculum Indicators	KG	Primary	Middle	High
Curriculum design and implementation	Very Good	Very Good		
Curriculum adaptation	Very Good	Very Good		

- The curriculum is very good. The school is implementing US curriculum effectively following the U.S Common Core standards. In addition; the school is integrating the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Program (IB PYP) with the U.S. Common Core standards which are used to assess students' progress. The curriculum is aligned very well with both the IB mission and the UAE national vision. It is highly effective in developing students' knowledge, skills and understanding and prepares them well for life-long learning.
- The curriculum is planned effectively and ensures that students' learning is continuous and progressive through the grades. Students benefit from the considerable breadth and depth in topics of study. Recently implemented "un-interrupted play" in the KG is enabling students to follow their own interests and learn by discovery and enquiry.
- The curriculum makes well-planned links across subjects which support students to develop and apply their learning for real purposes. It gives very thorough attention to students' personal development and learning skills through rich opportunities for creativity and problem-solving. Opportunities for discovery and enquiry are not fully developed in science and technology.
- Staff review the curriculum regularly to take account of students' achievements and national priorities.
- Teachers modify the curriculum well to meet the learning needs of all groups of students including those with SEN and ELL. Personalised targets and modifications for higher achieving students are under-developed.
- Opportunities for innovation, and social contribution are provided through most curricular areas. A variety of extra-curricular activities enhances students' skills and development. Almost all aspects of the curriculum develop students' understanding of UAE culture and society very well
- The school meets requirements for the delivery of moral education by delivering weekly lessons in the subject based on MOE resources, and embedding outcomes across the curriculum and daily life of the school.



Areas of Relative Strength:

- The coherent and relevant curriculum which develops students' skills very successfully.
- Well-planned cross-curricular links.

Areas for Improvement:

- Opportunities for independent discovery and enquiry, particularly in science and technology.
- Challenge for higher achieving students.



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

The protection, care, guidance and support of students Indicators	KG	Primary	Middle	High
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection/ safeguarding	Outstanding	Outstanding		
Care and support	Very Good	Very Good		

- The overall quality of care, guidance and support of students is outstanding. Health and safety, and arrangements for child protection are outstanding. Staff, students and parents are fully aware of the school's rigorous procedures for safeguarding, including the child protection policy. Students know how to keep themselves safe in school and online.
- The school consistently provides a fully safe, clean, secure environment. Health and safety checks are frequent and rigorous and children are exceptionally well supervised by vigilant and proactive staff. Buildings and equipment are very well maintained and records, including risk assessments, are comprehensive.
- The school premises have been adapted where necessary to support all students' learning. High priority is given to developing students' understanding of healthy lifestyles and personal safety. A range of community events involve families effectively and promote positive physical and mental wellbeing.
- The school is characterised by a happy and caring ethos. Procedures for promoting positive behaviour are highly effective. Many staff are very skilled in helping students to think positively, build strong relationships and resolve difficulties by themselves.
- The school has taken a range of effective steps to promote punctuality. While attendance has improved, more remains to be done to raise this further.
- The school promptly identifies and effectively supports students with SEN. Students who are learning English as a second language are very effectively supported by specialist staff and class teachers. Support for G&T students is less well developed
- Staff monitor closely and take very effective steps to promote the well-being and personal development of all students.



Areas of Relative Strength:

- The pastoral care, welfare and safeguarding of students.
- Promotion of safe and healthy lifestyles.
- Identification and support of SEN students.

Areas for Improvement:

- Arrangements to promote attendance.
- Accelerated learning for G&T students.



Performance Standard 6: Leadership and management

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

- Leadership and management is very good. The principal and vice principal have used their considerable educational expertise to build the leadership capacity of all staff in the school. They are highly visible around the school and have successfully engaged all staff in evaluating and improving students' learning and development.
- Senior leaders make effective use of data about the school to produce a detailed and accurate self-evaluation form (SEF) and an ambitious school development plan (SDP) which has overtaken almost all the recommendations of the previous inspection. They monitor teaching and learning regularly and effectively. All staff have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and are taking increasing responsibility for improvements.
- Parents are highly engaged in the life and work of the school and are active partners in their children's learning. Staff and parents exchange detailed information on a daily basis about students' learning. Parents regularly lead and participate in workshops which help them to support learning at home. The Parent Association has a very positive influence on promoting family engagement and supporting students' achievement.
- The school makes regular contributions to the community and was part of the One School One Country Initiative hosting Team Bahrain and Team Kuwait as part of World Skills Abu Dhabi 2017.
- The Local Governing Board includes representation of all stakeholders and positively influences school performance. GEMS School Support Centre has provided systematic challenge and practical support for improvement.
- The day-to-day management of the school is efficient and impacts positively on students' achievement. Well-qualified staff benefit from high quality professional development. High quality resources support the curriculum very well. The school encourages students to participate



in ADEK's question a day' initiative to develop students' understanding of assessment approaches used for international examinations such as the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS).

Areas of Relative Strength:

- The leadership of the principal and vice principal.
- Use of data for self-evaluation.
- Partnerships with parents.

Areas for Improvement:

- Continuing to develop delegated leadership among staff.