

The cover features a central laptop with the title on its screen. The background is a collage of educational and professional images: a person writing on a clipboard, a person reading a document, and various papers and folders. The color palette includes blue, orange, and yellow.

# SCHOOL INSPECTION SUPPLEMENT

DUBAI SCHOOL INSPECTION BUREAU

**المعرفة**  
Knowledge

2017-18



# **DUBAI SCHOOL INSPECTION BUREAU SCHOOL INSPECTION SUPPLEMENT**

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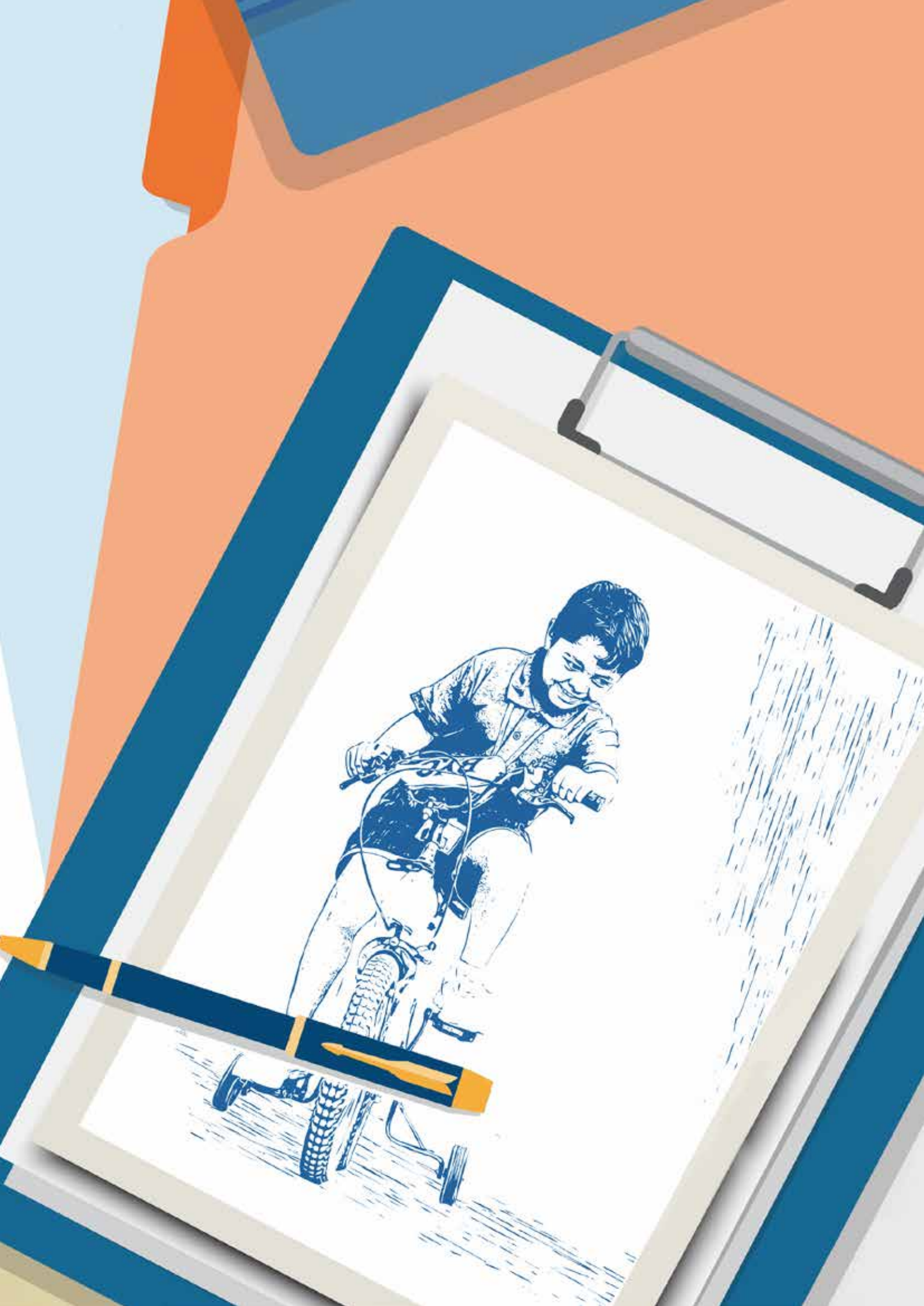
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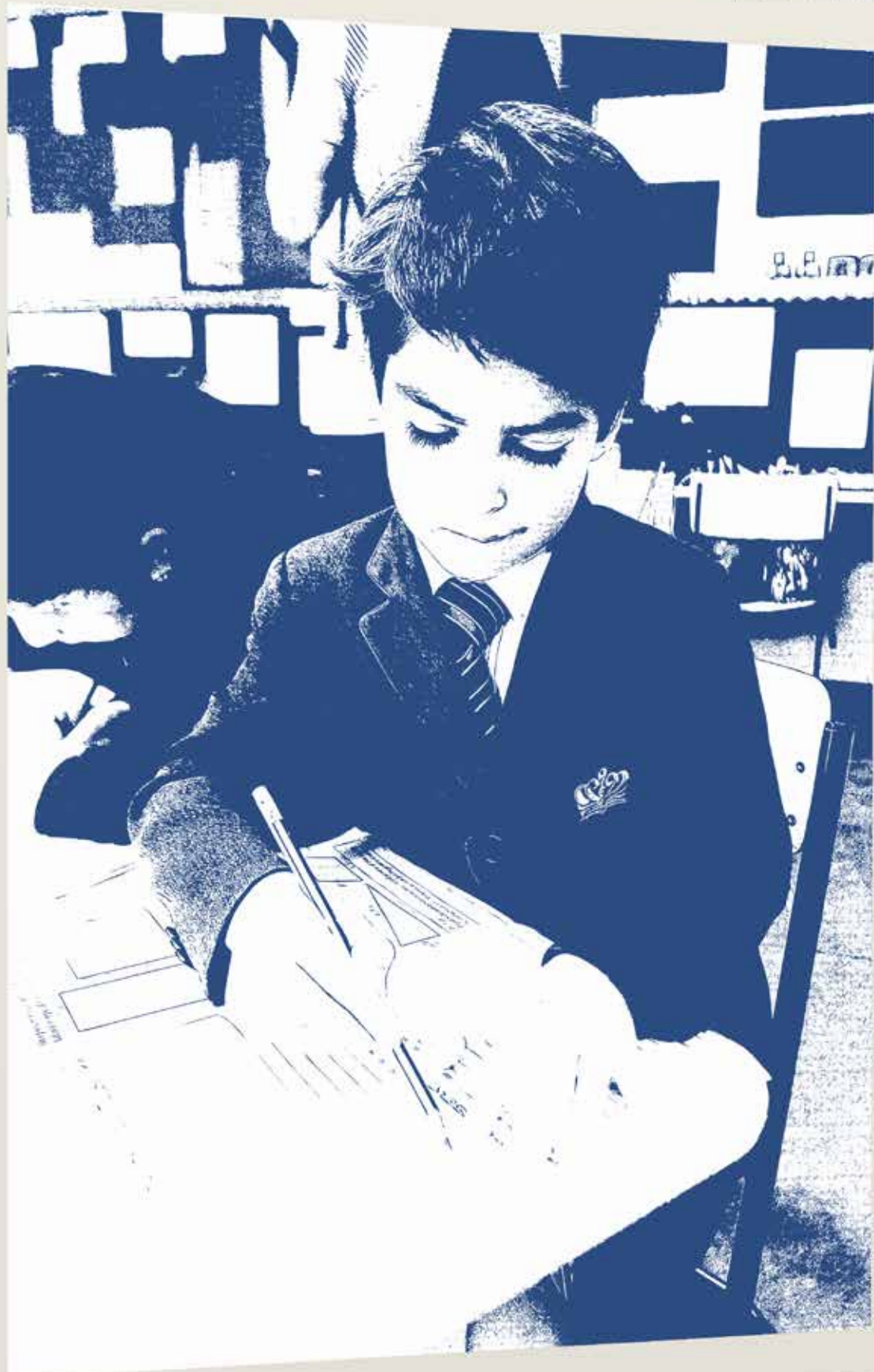
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## FOREWORD:

The quality of education in Dubai private schools is improving. There have been significant improvements in schools that are judged as good or better, and an increase in the number of students who attend these schools. However, key challenges remain for schools that provide less than good education.

*The UAE School Inspection Framework* continues to be the basis of school evaluations. Nevertheless, as we move towards achieving the UAE Vision to make the UAE among the best countries in the world by the Golden Jubilee Year of the Union in 2021, key focus areas (the National Priorities) are also being emphasised. These include:

- the UAE National Agenda parameter and expectations
- the provision for, and achievements of, Emirati students
- provision and effectiveness of moral education
- planning, teaching, assessment and learning of UAE social studies
- the provision for, and achievements of, students with special educational needs and disabilities
- the development of innovation within schools' curricula
- reading literacy

*The DSIB School Inspection Supplement 2017-2018* provides information and assessment criteria to guide schools and DSIB inspectors in the use of the quality indicators and in the evaluations of these National Priorities.

DSIB remains committed to providing accurate and reliable evaluations of the quality of education in Dubai private schools, and I have great confidence that this year will add to the legacy of growth that has been established over the last nine years.

I wish you continued success in this tenth year of school inspections in Dubai.

Fatma Belrehif  
*Chief Executive Officer- Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau*

# 1 NATIONAL PRIORITIES (INSPECTION FOCUS AREAS)

## THE UAE NATIONAL AGENDA PARAMETER 2017 - 18

KHDA introduced the UAE National Agenda Parameter in 2015-2016 as a way of measuring the progress that Dubai's private schools are making towards achieving their individual TIMSS and PISA<sup>1</sup> assessment targets. The next PISA tests will be in 2018 and in 2021. The next TIMSS tests will be in 2019, the last before 2021. Schools are required to participate in international benchmarking tests and use the results to evaluate their progress towards meeting their National Agenda targets.

The requirements for the National Agenda Parameter in 2017-2018 include two mandatory components, summarised in Table A below. The components cover all grades from Grade 3 to 9 (UK schools Years 4 to 10).

TABLE A: MANDATORY COMPONENTS FOR ALL SCHOOLS

The National Agenda Parameter 2017-2018 components		Requirements	
		Targeted grades	Number of students
1	GL Cognitive ability test – CAT 4	Grades 3, 4, 6 and 8 (UK schools: Years: 4, 5, 7 and 9)	All students in the targeted grades
2	One benchmark assessment in Mathematics, Science and English (Arabic, Mathematics and Science for MoE schools) listed in Table B and specific to each curriculum.	All grades from G3 – G9 (in UK schools: All Years from Y4 – Y10)	All students in the targeted grades

<sup>1</sup> Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) and the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA)

**TABLE B: BENCHMARK TESTS AVAILABLE ACCORDING TO THE CURRICULUM**

Curriculum	Recommended assessment (choose one from this list)	Targeted Grades	Number of students
UK curriculum schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GL (PTE, PTS and PTM)</li> <li>• ACER (ISA)</li> </ul>	Years 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 (Grades 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9)	All students in the targeted grades
US curriculum schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•NWEA MAP</li> </ul>	Grades 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9	
Indian curriculum schools (CBSE, CISCE, KSB)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•ASSET</li> <li>•ACER (ISA)</li> </ul>	Grades 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9	
MoE private schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•UAE NAP</li> </ul>	All UAE NAP Grades	
IB curriculum schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•ACER (ISA)</li> <li>•NWEA MAP</li> <li>•GL (PTE, PTS, PTM)</li> <li>•ASSET</li> </ul>	Grades 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9	
Others: Pakistani, Canadian, Philippines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•ACER (ISA)</li> <li>•NWEA MAP</li> <li>•GL (PTE, PTS, PTM)</li> <li>•ASSET</li> </ul>	Grades 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9	

During the 2017-18 academic year, schools should focus particularly on Grade 3 and Grade 7 (UK schools Years 4 and 8), because students in these grades will be taking TIMSS in 2019. Schools that wish to test other grades in addition to the target grades may do so. Schools should use the data obtained to monitor progress and to inform curriculum development and lesson planning. When evaluating the improvement that schools are making towards meeting their National Agenda targets, inspectors will consider other sources of evidence in addition to the UAE National Agenda Parameter results and the schools' analyses of these data.



## EMIRATI STUDENTS

The UAE Vision for 2021 states that at least 90% of Emirati students will complete their high school education, with an increasing proportion of students going on to study at university.

During 2017-2018 there will be a specific focus on the aspirations and achievements of Emirati students in each school. This will take place regardless of the cohort's size. Prior to inspection, schools should analyse the potential and current achievements of all Emirati students, based on available CAT 4 and National Agenda Parameter test data.

Schools must complete the relevant section of the online SEF. This includes data tables to highlight existing differences in achievement between Emirati students and other groups of students.

The data tables will be reviewed and discussed with schools during inspections.

The following aspects of provision and outcomes will be reported:

- 1. Governance and Leadership**  
(Accountability, self-evaluation and improvement planning)
- 2. Learning and the effectiveness of intervention**  
(Learning skills, data analysis and intervention)
- 3. Personalisation**  
(Curricular and pedagogical adaptation linked to CAT4)



# UAE MORAL EDUCATION

The UAE's increasing ethnic and social diversity brings with it a wide variety of moral values. Within this pluralism, moral education is an important part of students' personal and social development, and it is incumbent on schools to guide the development of morally mature citizens. Irrespective of curriculum or academic performance level, the UAE moral education programme can unite our schools by setting clear expectations for students' behavioural and affective domains.

The moral education programme<sup>2</sup> is built around four pillars:

- character and morality
- the individual and the community
- cultural studies
- civic studies.

For each pillar, there is a structured sequence of units for Grades 1-9.

The inspection of moral education will focus on the following key components of provision:

- curriculum (mapping of moral education content, including time allocation)
- teaching (selection of teachers, pedagogical approaches and resources, including use of moral education programme textbooks, engagement of families and community members)
- assessment and reporting to parents.

The inspection report will include statements on all three components, reflecting the school's current status in implementing UAE Moral Education.



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<sup>2</sup> See Appendix A for further details of requirements and expectations of UAE moral education.

## UAE SOCIAL STUDIES

In line with the UAE National Priorities and the Dubai Strategic Plan 2021, schools in Dubai are required to incorporate the Ministry of Education UAE social studies curriculum<sup>3</sup> into their programmes of study.

In reviewing the UAE social studies provision, inspectors will focus on four key components:

- curriculum (mapping into the school's curriculum, the UAE social studies learning requirements, including time allocation, and language of instruction)
- teaching (methods and resources)
- learning (student engagement, collaboration and research skills)
- assessment methods.

The inspection report will feature an evaluative paragraph covering curriculum, teaching, learning, and assessment reflecting the current status of the implementation of UAE social studies in the school.



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<sup>3</sup> See Appendix B for further details of requirements and expectations of UAE social studies.



# THE INCLUSION OF STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS & DISABILITIES (STUDENTS OF DETERMINATION)

The vision for Dubai to become a fully inclusive city by 2020 is part of a wider strategic plan including health and rehabilitation, employment, universal accessibility and social protection. As a step towards achieving this vision, school owners, operators, governors, senior leaders and other stakeholders should develop a shared understanding of, and commitment to, agreed values and standards of inclusive education.

In order to comply with existing and forthcoming legislation, schools must:

- appoint an ***“Inclusion Champion”***
- nominate a ***“Governor for inclusive education”***
- form an ***“Inclusive education action team”***
- appoint and designate staff as ***“Learning support assistants<sup>4</sup>”***
- produce a ***“Strategic inclusive education improvement plan”***

## SELF-EVALUATION

The self-evaluation form for students with SEND includes two updates for 2017-18. The first section, *Governance and Leadership*, includes evaluation statements relating to:

- commitment
- accountability
- policy
- investment in resources
- specialist staff
- systems and coordination
- capacity to improve

The second section, *Identification and Intervention*, includes evaluation statements relating to:

- assessment for identification
- identification and intervention
- categories of identification
- trends and patterns

Developmental discussions between school staff and inspectors will continue to examine and support progress towards establishing a fully inclusive education system within the school.

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<sup>4</sup> See Appendix C for explanations of these roles.

# INNOVATION

The UAE vision 2021 includes innovation as part of the National Agenda. The UAE National Innovation Strategy aims to promote innovation in the education sector by introducing creative teaching methods and techniques, as well as designing and developing innovative curricula that equip students with the 21st century skills and knowledge. Schools are required to promote innovation through meaningful learning opportunities with elements of enterprise, enquiry research, critical thinking and the use of learning technologies.

In the 2017-18 inspection cycle there will be a focus on how schools are supporting the achievement of the UAE 2021 vision for innovation. Inspection teams will evaluate each school's work in five key performance indicators:

- Learning skills
- Social responsibility and enterprise
- Teaching
- Curriculum adaptation
- Leadership

In place of the self-evaluation form for innovation, during inspections, each school will have the opportunity to present its evaluation of its approach to innovation. Inspectors will identify whether the school's provision for innovation is **systematic**, **developing**, **emerging** or **underdeveloped**. The diagram on the following page provides details in each of the five performance indicators showing what is required to be considered as developing.

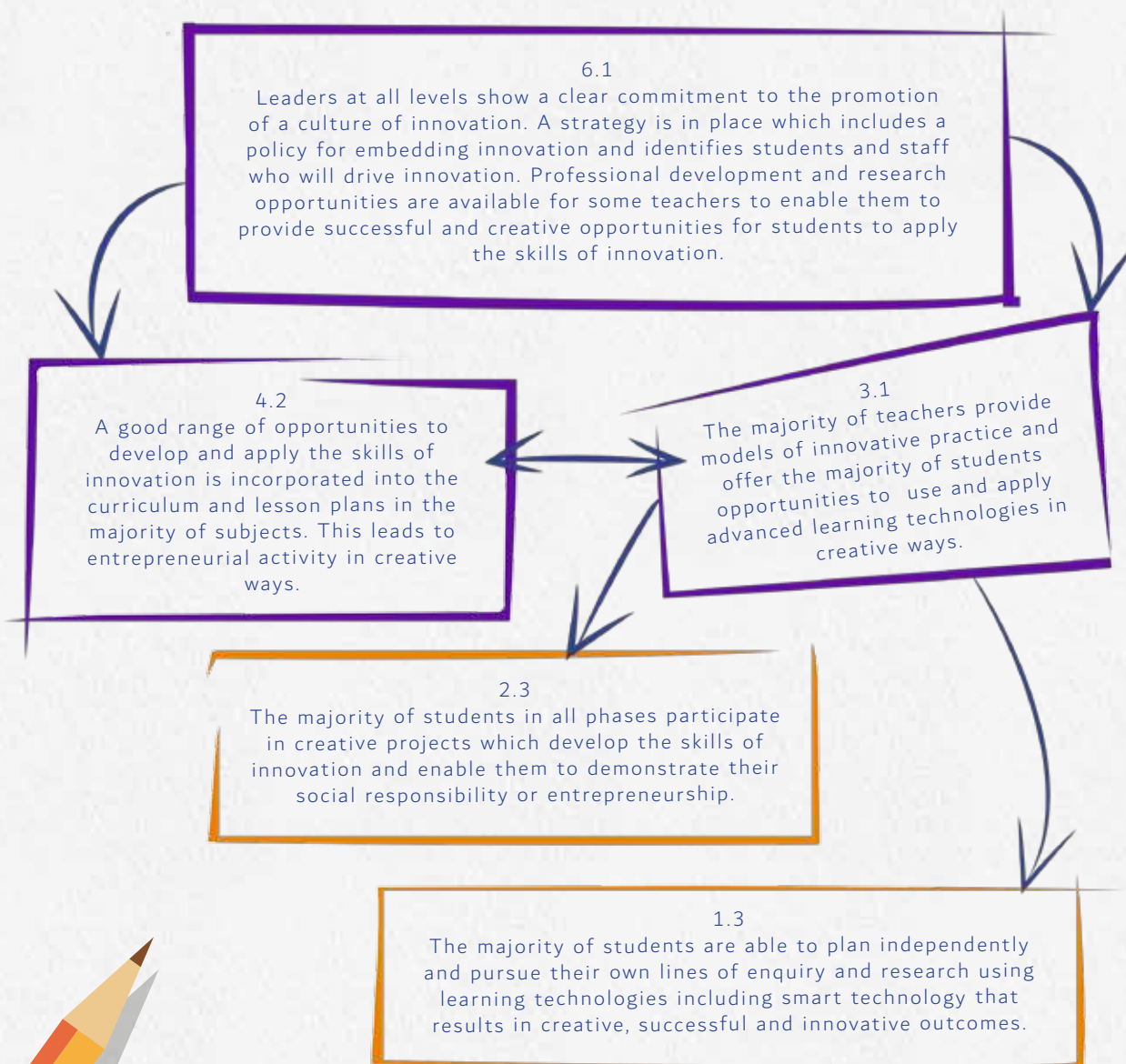
Schools are encouraged to involve all stakeholders to introduce systematic, groundbreaking, original and creative approaches to different aspects of provision.



## THE REQUIREMENTS FOR A SCHOOL TO BE CONSIDERED “DEVELOPING” INNOVATION

### INPUTS

### IMPACT



The above diagram provides a benchmark of what *developing* innovation provision might look like. It also shows the relationship between the provision (indicators 6.1, 3.1, and 4.2) and outcomes for students (1.3 and 2.3).

## READING LITERACY

The President, His Highness Sheikh Khalifa Bin Zayed Al Nahyan in announcing the UAE Reading Law in October 2016 said its purpose is to consolidate reading in society. H.E. Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid al-Maktoum, the UAE's vice-president and Dubai's ruler, stated: *"Our goal is to make reading a daily habit that is deeply ingrained.... It is the duty of relevant institutions to make this law a reality"*.

The theme of PISA 2018 will be Reading Literacy. PISA defines Reading Literacy as, *".. understanding, using, and reflecting on written texts, in order to achieve one's goals, to develop one's knowledge and potential, and to participate in society."*

The recent PISA and TIMSS results highlight the importance of reading literacy on student performance in international assessments, including science and mathematics, in which there is a clear link to the National Agenda.

The UAE Inspection Framework states on p.21, ***"Inspectors will pay close attention to students' acquisition of higher order reading skills, including inference, interpretation and integration of information"***. These key areas will receive particular attention in the inspection of science and mathematics, as well as Arabic and English (and the language of instruction).





## 2 EVALUATING STUDENTS' ATTAINMENT

### EVALUATING STUDENTS' ATTAINMENT AGAINST CURRICULUM STANDARDS - ELEMENT 1.1.1

When evaluating students' attainment using the framework, it is essential that judgements are made against the authorised and licensed curriculum standards.

The framework evaluates attainment based on the proportions of students "in line with curriculum standards" and at the "level above curriculum standards".

The table below provides guidance for schools and inspectors for evaluating attainment across a range of curriculum standards.

For attainment to be acceptable, at least 75% of the students should be attaining "in line with curriculum standards". Only after meeting this threshold, will schools then consider the proportion of students reaching the "level above curriculum standards", and evaluate whether attainment is good, very good or outstanding.

It is important to note that assessment data are just part of the evidence sources that inspectors use to judge attainment in each subject (refer to Indicator 1.1 in the framework).

TYPE OF CURRICULUM		ACCEPTABLE	BETTER THAN ACCEPTABLE
		In line with curriculum standards	Level above curriculum standards
		Attainment is <b>Acceptable</b> if at least 75% of students are attaining at or above the curriculum standards stated in this column	Attainment is <b>Good</b> : If at least 50% of the students are at or above the curriculum standards in this column <b>Very Good</b> : If at least 61% of the students are at or above the standards stated in this column <b>Outstanding</b> : If at least 75% of the students are at or above the standards stated in this column
UAE	Grades 1-9	Minimum 50%	70%
	Grade 10, 11 and 12 only	Minimum 60%	70%
French	National Curriculum	10 (Out of 20)	12 (Out of 20)

<b>German</b>	Free State of Thuringia	Level 3 on ranking scale 1-6 (1 is the highest)	Level 2 (1 is the highest)
<b>IBDP MYP</b>	All Subjects (Levels 1 – 7)	Level 4	Level 5
	All Subjects	Level 4	Level 5
<b>Indian</b>	CBSE Board; Class 10-12	Grade C1	Grade B1
	CISCE Board: Class 10 ICSE and Class 12 ISC examinations	Minimum Grade 5	Grade 3
	Kerala Board: Grade 10 / SSLC (School Leaving Certificate) and Gr12 / (Higher Secondary)	C+ (50 - 59%), Grade Value 5	B+ (70 - 79%), Grade Value 7
<b>Iranian</b>	National Curriculum	10 (Out of 20)	14 (Out of 20)
<b>Japanese</b>	National Curriculum	50%	70%
<b>Pakistan</b>	National Curriculum	Grade D (40%)	B (60%)
<b>Phillippine</b>	National Curriculum	75%	83%
<b>Russian</b>	National Curriculum	Level 3 Scale 1-5 (5 is the highest)	Level 4 (5 is the highest)
<b>National Curriculum in England</b>	Year 1 - Phonics Screening Check	Reads 32 out of 40 words (2016 pass threshold)	(Not defined)
	End of KS2 – Y6	95	103
	GCSE / IGCSE - All subjects	Grade C	Grade B
	New GCSE (1-9)	4	5
	GCE A Level (A* - E) and AS Level (A - E)	Grade C	Grade B
<b>UK - other Int'l Cambridge Examinations</b>	KS2 – Primary Checkpoint (Y6)	4	5
	KS3 – Secondary 1 Checkpoint (Y9)	4	5
<b>US Curriculum</b>	State or AERO standards Internal assessment	65%	75%
	AP - Advanced Placement (by subject)	Group A - Mark 2	Group A - Mark 3
		Group B - Mark 3	Group B - Mark 4



## EVALUATING STUDENTS' ATTAINMENT AGAINST INTERNATIONAL BENCHMARKS – ELEMENT 1.1.2

In 2015, KHDA introduced the UAE National Agenda Parameter as a method for measuring and monitoring Dubai's private schools' improvement towards achieving their individual National Agenda targets. The parameter requires all schools to participate annually in international and external benchmarking assessments, other than TIMSS and PISA, and use these assessments to monitor attainment.

The table on the next page provides guidance for schools and inspectors when evaluating attainment across a range of international benchmarks used for the National Agenda Parameter. The "standards" were set in consultation with the test providers and were based on the National Agenda requirements.

For the students' attainment level to be regarded as "acceptable", at least 75% of the students should be attaining at or above the level specified in Column B. Once that threshold has been met, schools may then look at the proportion of students reaching the 'level above international standards', to determine whether attainment is good, very good or outstanding. Column C states the levels for these ratings.



Column A	Column B	Column C
	<b>Acceptable</b>	<b>Better than acceptable</b>
	In line with international standards	Level above international standards
	Attainment is <b>Acceptable</b> if at least 75% of students are attaining <b>at or above the international standards stated in this column</b>	Attainment is <b>Good:</b> If at least 50% of the students are <b>at or above the international standards stated in this column</b> <b>Very Good</b> If at least 61% of the students are <b>at or above the international standards stated in this column</b> <b>Outstanding</b> If at least 75% of the students are <b>at or above the international standards in this column</b>
MAP	41st percentile	61st percentile
GL PT ( PTS, PTM, PTE)	Stanine 5	Stanine 6
ASSET	Stanine 5	Stanine 6
ISA	International mean minus one half of standard deviation*	International mean
	* International mean and standard deviation for each subject and each grade are in the ISA school report under “All schools mean” and “All schools standard deviation”*	
Private MoE: UAE NAP Grade 3 Grade 5 Grade 7 Grade 9	Level 3 Level 4 Level 5 Level 6	Level 4 Level 5 Level 6 Level 7
PISA –Based Test for Schools	The standards will be published after the test provider releases the official report for the test.	

The final two standards below, IBT and InCAS, are for tests that are not included in the National Agenda Parameter this year. However, the results of these tests from last year will be used for inspection, and need to be analysed accordingly.

IBT	41st international percentile	61st international percentile
InCAS	Students’ standardised score of 96	Students’ standardised score of 104

# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: PROVISION FOR UAE MORAL EDUCATION

Schools should embed the four pillars of moral education within the ethos of the school. Schools should provide environments where the development of moral character is valued, modelled, affirmed and rewarded. Students should be able to contribute to their schools, families and local communities, as well as nationally and globally.

- All moral education programme (MEP) content must be taught from Grades 1-9 (Years 2-10) by every school, allocating at least 60 minutes per week.
- Each school may integrate the content in the most appropriate way into its curriculum framework.
- Schools may use different approaches in different phases but should ensure that transitions are seamless and content progression is smooth.
- Schools must use the MEP textbook series as a base. Schools may supplement the textbooks with additional materials to make connections to students' prior learning and personal experiences, and to current affairs both locally and globally.
- Schools must select their teachers of moral education very carefully to ensure a pedagogical approach that is personalised, differentiated, engaging and challenging.
- Schools must engage families and community members in the process of moral education.
- Moral education may be taught in Arabic, English, another language of instruction or an appropriate combination of these.
- Schools must assess moral education, and reports to parents must include students' personal and social outcomes.

## APPENDIX B: PROVISION FOR UAE SOCIAL STUDIES

The delivery of the UAE social studies learning outcomes should help to ensure that students will contribute, as responsible citizens and residents of the UAE, to the building of a cohesive society that is inclusive of all, while preserving the UAE culture, heritage and traditions.

- All schools should plan and teach the current UAE social studies curriculum to all students from Grade 1-9 (Years 2-10 in UK curriculum schools, Grades 1-12 in MoE curriculum schools) allocating at least 60 minutes per week.
- Schools may integrate the UAE social studies into different subjects, in ways that suit their curriculum frameworks.
- Schools may use different approaches to teaching UAE social studies in different phases, but should ensure that transitions are seamless and content progression is smooth.
- MoE schools must use the MoE textbook as a main resource for instruction. Schools other than MoE schools have the choice of using the MoE UAE social studies textbook as a base, or opt to use an alternative. All schools may supplement the textbook with additional materials to create meaningful learning experiences for students and make connections to their lives outside school.
- Schools have the option of teaching UAE social studies in English, Arabic, their language of instruction or a combination of these.
- Schools must formally assess UAE social studies learning outcomes. Reports to parents must include reference to these outcomes.

## APPENDIX C: PROVISION FOR STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES (STUDENTS OF DETERMINATION)

### ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Schools are free to choose which members of their communities take up these roles:

#### INCLUSION CHAMPION

Every school must appoint an *inclusion champion*. Inspectors will evaluate the extent to which the inclusion champion is leading cultural transformation in order to achieve fully inclusive provision.

#### GOVERNOR FOR INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

The governing body must nominate a *governor for inclusive education*. Inspectors will evaluate the extent to which the nominated governor for inclusive education holds school leaders to account for the improvements of provision and outcomes for students with SEND.

#### INCLUSIVE EDUCATION ACTION TEAM

The *inclusion champion* and *governor for inclusive education* should work in partnership with other stakeholders to form an *inclusive education action team*. Inspectors will evaluate the extent to which the action team develops, implements and monitors the impact of the *strategic inclusive education improvement plan*.

#### LEARNING SUPPORT ASSISTANT (LSA)

The term “shadow teacher” will no longer be recognised as a professional role within Dubai’s private schools. Members of staff who currently fill this role will now be referred to as *learning support assistants (LSAs)*. In order to improve the quality of support for students with SEND, LSAs will be required to participate in targeted training, mentoring and monitoring.

LSAs will work in partnership with classroom teachers to ensure that students with SEND are successfully included in the classroom environment alongside their peers. The classroom teacher is responsible for the modification, implementation and outcomes of the students’ educational programmes. The role of the LSA is to facilitate this process.



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