

INSPECTION REPORT

Elite English School
Report published in February 2014

Knowledge and Human Development Authority

P.O. Box 500008, UAE, Tel: +971-4-3640000, Fax: +971-4-3640001, info@khda.gov.ae, www.khda.gov.ae

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT Elite English School

Location	Al Waheda
Type of school	Private
Website	www.eliteenglishschool.com
Telephone	04-2688244
Address	P. O Box 51212 Dubai UAE
Principal	Mrs. Vatsala Mathai
Curriculum	Indian
Gender of students	Boys and Girls
Age / Grades or Year Groups	3-18 / KG 1-Grade 12
Attendance	Good
Number of students on roll	1200
Largest nationality group of Students	Indian
Number of Emirati students	0 (0%)
Date of the inspection	23rd September to 26th September

Contents

The context of the school.....	3
Overall school performance 2013-2014.....	4
Key strengths	4
Recommendations	4
Progress since the last inspection	5
Trend of overall performance.....	5
How good are the students' attainment, progress and learning skills?	6
How good is the students' personal and social development?	7
How good are teaching and assessment?.....	7
How well does the curriculum meet the educational needs of all students?	8
How well does the school protect and support students?.....	8
How good are the leadership and management of the school?.....	8
How well does the school provide for students with special educational needs?.....	13
What are the views of parents, teachers and students?.....	14
What happens next?.....	15
How to contact us	15

The context of the school

The Elite English School is situated in Deira. During the inspection there were 1200 students aged three to 18 years. The school followed the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) curriculum of India. After Grade 10, students took the All India Secondary School Examinations (AISSE).

Most students were Indian. There were also Pakistani and Filipino students and a few non-Arab African, Russian and South African students. Almost half of the students were in primary classes and nearly one-quarter were in kindergarten. Thirty-four students had been identified as having special educational needs (SEN).

There were 62 full-time teachers including the senior leadership team. Almost all the teaching staff had a teaching qualification. One third of teachers were new to the school. There was a teaching assistant in each Kindergarten class. There were four separate resource classrooms for students with SEN.

Overall school performance 2013-2014

Acceptable

Key strengths

- The inclusive nature of the school.
- High quality relationships and mutual respect between staff and students.
- High quality of care, guidance and support for SEN students based in the Resource Centre.
- Good science teaching in the upper primary, middle and secondary section and English and mathematics in the secondary section.

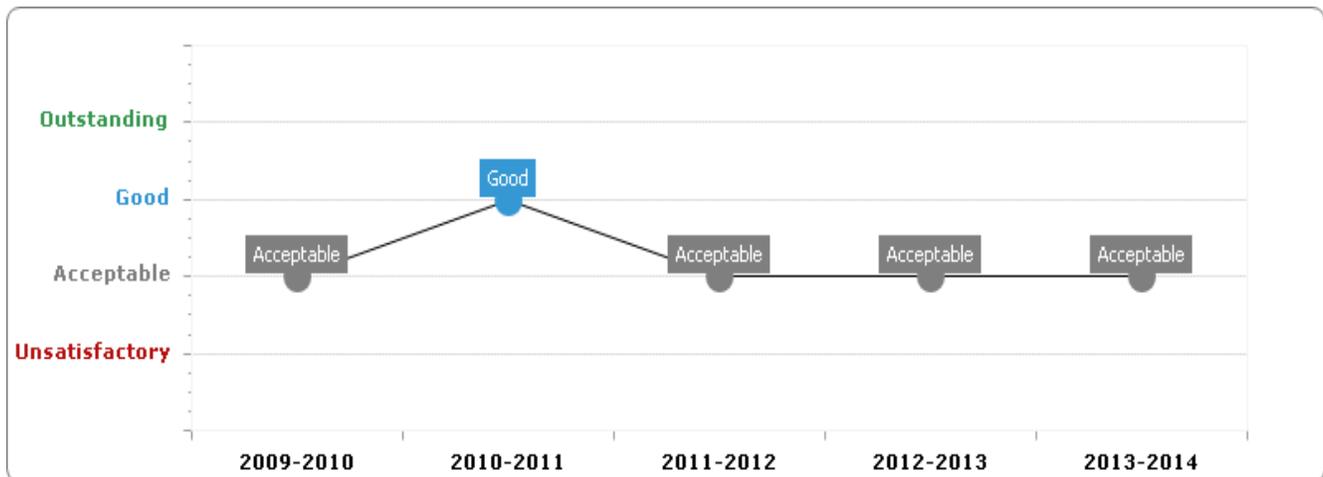
Recommendations

- Improve attainment and progress in Arabic as an additional language;
- Address weaknesses in teaching, learning and assessment throughout the school to help raise attainment and improve students' progress;
- In Kindergarten and the primary phase further develop and implement a curriculum which provides regular opportunities for children to learn through play;
- Provide teachers with a well-planned programme of continuing professional development to extend their range of teaching methods to help students develop independent learning skills;
- Ensure that all governors play a greater role in the life of the school and that they hold the school to account for meeting the recommendations of this report;
- The head teacher should provide clearer direction for the school to ensure consistency in learning and teaching to meet the needs of all students.

Progress since the last inspection

The school had made some progress since the last inspection but there were shortfalls in meeting the recommendations of the previous report. Whilst teaching, learning and assessment in Arabic as an additional language were better, standards achieved by students still fell below acceptable levels. Although staff had worked hard to develop and implement a curriculum which was characterised by child-initiated activity they had not achieved their aims. Teaching and learning had improved but good teaching and learning were inconsistent throughout the school. Self-evaluation processes had improved. The current development plan identified areas where improvement was necessary and set out ways to address these deficiencies. Professional development opportunities for teachers had improved.

Trend of overall performance



How good are the students' attainment, progress and learning skills?

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Islamic Education				
Attainment	Not Applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Progress	Not Applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Arabic as a first language				
Attainment	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Progress	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Arabic as an additional language				
Attainment	Not Applicable	Acceptable	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Progress	Not Applicable	Acceptable	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory
English				
Attainment	Unsatisfactory	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good
Progress	Unsatisfactory	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good
Mathematics				
Attainment	Unsatisfactory	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good
Progress	Unsatisfactory	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good
Science				
Attainment	Unsatisfactory	Acceptable	Good	Good
Progress	Unsatisfactory	Acceptable	Good	Good

[Read paragraph](#)

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Quality of students' learning skills	Unsatisfactory	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

[Read paragraph](#)

How good is the students' personal and social development?

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Personal responsibility	Acceptable	Good	Good	Good
Students' understanding of Islamic values and their local, cultural and global awareness	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Community and environmental responsibility	Acceptable	Good	Good	Good

[Read paragraph](#)

How good are teaching and assessment?

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Teaching for effective learning	Unsatisfactory	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Assessment	Unsatisfactory	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good

[Read paragraph](#)

How well does the curriculum meet the educational needs of all students?

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Curriculum quality	Unsatisfactory	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Curriculum design to meet the individual needs of students	Unsatisfactory	Acceptable	Good	Good

[Read paragraph](#)

How well does the school protect and support students?

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Health and Safety	Good	Good	Good	Good
Quality of Support	Good	Good	Good	Good

[Read paragraph](#)

How good are the leadership and management of the school?

	Whole school
Quality of leadership	Acceptable
Self-evaluation and improvement planning	Acceptable
Parents and the community	Good
Governance	Acceptable
Management, including staffing, facilities and resources	Acceptable

[Read paragraph](#)

How good are the students' attainment, progress and learning skills?

In Kindergarten, attainment was unsatisfactory in all key subjects. Children in the Kindergarten demonstrated levels of knowledge, skills and understanding which were below that expected. Too often the work lacked challenge and relevance. At the primary stage, attainment in key subjects was acceptable. In middle and secondary years, attainment was acceptable or good, except in Arabic as an additional language where it was unsatisfactory. Students' conversational and written skills were below the expected level. In Islamic Education, most students demonstrated adequate Qur'an recitation skills with developing use of Tajweed rules. Students' skills in linking learning to real world applications were limited.

Progress in Kindergarten was unsatisfactory. Teachers provided insufficient challenge in lessons. Progress in the primary was acceptable in all subjects. Progress was acceptable or good in the middle and secondary years except in Arabic as an additional language where it was unsatisfactory. In Islamic Education, students' progress in knowledge of facts was adequate but made slower progress on developing deeper understanding of how to relate learning to real life contexts. Students made very limited progress in developing their oral and written communication skills in Arabic. In science, whilst most students demonstrated good theoretical knowledge they had insufficient opportunities to engage in practical skill development due to a lack of sufficient laboratory facilities. Students with special educational needs made acceptable progress overall. Progress was better when students were based in the Resource Centre but it was not sustained when they were integrated into main stream classes.

[View judgements](#)

Quality of students' learning skills

Students' learning skills were unsatisfactory in Kindergarten and acceptable in the other phases. Most students were confident and enthusiastic in sharing their learning with others but were not given enough opportunities to do so. Students undertook very little independent research or enquiry and had limited access to information and communications technology in lessons. In science and business students were challenged to develop their critical and higher order thinking skills. Teachers often shared the objectives of lessons with students, this supported their learning. However opportunities to revisit these at the end of the lesson to check on student understanding were missed.

How good is the students' personal and social development?

Attitudes and behaviour were acceptable in Kindergarten and good across the rest of the school. Students had good relationships with their peers and respectful relationships with their teachers.

Some children in the Kindergarten and students in early primary classes lacked self-discipline. Attendance was outstanding and almost all students arrived in good time for lessons and at the start of the day. Most students made healthy food choices and were aware of healthy life styles. Students in the secondary phase showed an acceptable understanding of how Islam influenced life in Dubai. In assemblies, students demonstrated strong respect during Qur'an recitation and prayers. They had good understanding of Dubai's diversity and demonstrated respect for their own culture, in addition to UAE culture. Many students made a good contribution to the community through positions of responsibility such as prefects and through an effective School Council. Students were active in supporting schemes which promoted sustainability and conservation locally and in the wider world.

[View judgements](#)

How good are teaching and assessment?

Teaching was unsatisfactory in the Kindergarten and the early stages of the primary section though in primary overall it was acceptable. Teachers lacked an understanding of how young children learn. Teaching was acceptable in the other phases although, across the school, the quality of teaching was inconsistent between subjects. Most teachers knew their subjects well. Lessons were usually carefully planned according to the school's generic framework but the pace of work and expectations in too many lessons were not sufficiently high. The traditional didactic style of teaching, which was prevalent across the school, reduced opportunities for students to think critically and independently, and hindered their progress. The level of challenge for more able learners and support for slower learners were not consistently appropriate. A few teachers supplemented textbooks with some practical activities and worksheets but too often tasks were not related well to real life contexts. There were instances of good questioning in the secondary stages and, in science, there were activities to stimulate learning. However not all teachers were making good enough use of activities, resources and collaboration as teaching strategies to enhance student learning.

The school's assessment of learning was unsatisfactory in the Kindergarten and acceptable in the primary and middle stages. It was good in the secondary. Despite the school having reviewed its arrangements for collecting assessment data, these data were not always used effectively. Most teachers had a good

general knowledge of students' strengths and weaknesses. In the Kindergarten, assessment information was not used well for planning lessons to meet the wide range of student needs. In the other phases, whilst feedback on written work had improved, not all teachers provided sufficient information on next steps in learning nor used assessment data effectively, for example to inform students how to improve.

[View judgements](#)

How well does the curriculum meet the educational needs of all students?

The curriculum quality was unsatisfactory in the Kindergarten and acceptable in all other phases. It had recently been reviewed and this had resulted in some modifications to meet the different needs of its students. However, strict adherence to the CBSE examination syllabus meant that there was still an over reliance on text books. The curriculum in the Kindergarten failed to provide adequately for the needs of early childhood learners. Continuity, progression, integration and coherence were absent. There were too few opportunities for exploration, investigation and learning through play. Across the other phases, the curriculum was broad and balanced and provided some enrichment beyond the core syllabus. Revised lesson planning showed some positive development. Cross curricular links were made across a few subjects but this was not an extensive feature of the curriculum. There were insufficient open-ended and practical experiences across subjects to engage students and promote their creativity and independence. Provision for enrichment of the curriculum was limited; extra-curricular and community activities were at an early stage of development. Nevertheless, individual curricula had been devised for students in the resource unit and this helped them to achieve well.

[View judgements](#)

How well does the school protect and support students?

The school had good arrangements to promote healthy living and ensure that students were safe. Buildings and grounds were maintained to a good standard. Security procedures were implemented well. Arrivals and departures of students were organised well. Emergency evacuation procedures were practised effectively. Fire-fighting equipment was checked regularly. Physical exercise was a positive feature of the school's provision, and healthy living was promoted in a range of ways. The doctor and nurse monitored students' health very effectively and administered first aid and appropriate medicines when required. They ensured that students received helpful advice about healthy living and kept staff well informed about relevant health matters related to students. Child protection procedures were understood clearly. All staff were trained and students were confident that teachers would help them. However the written policies around child safeguarding did not adequately reflect practices in school.

The quality of support for students was good at all phases. Staff and student relationships were a particular strength. Attendance and issues of lateness had improved and were now outstanding. Punctuality to lessons was good. Appropriate support was provided for transition between phases and to the next stage of education. Careers guidance was developing well as Grades 11 and 12 were becoming established. Students' welfare was managed well by teachers and supervisors, with the very good help of the counsellor.

[View judgements](#)

How good are the leadership and management of the school?

The overall leadership of the school was acceptable. Senior leaders had set out a clear vision for the school and this had been successfully communicated to all staff. Steps had been taken to address the recommendations from the previous inspection report and senior leaders had put in place strategies to begin to address these deficiencies. Phase leaders and heads of departments had been given authority and autonomy to make the changes in order to move the school forward. However, the leaders had not been wholly successful because some teachers did not understand how young people learn and what represents good teaching. There had been some improvements to teaching and learning but these were not consistent across the school. Under the leadership of the management team the school had an acceptable capacity to improve.

Procedures for self-evaluation and improvement were acceptable and had improved since the last inspection. Self-evaluation was becoming more accurate and was used to determine which aspects of the schools' work needed to improve. Performance management was not yet fully effective but procedures were in place to evaluate teaching and learning. These were being used to determine the effectiveness of the provision.

Partnerships with parents and the community were good. Parents spoke positively about the welcoming nature of the school and the frequent opportunities they had to consult with teachers. The school had effective arrangements for reporting to parents who were kept informed of their children's progress. Links with the local community required further development.

Governance was acceptable and the school's partnership with the Board of Governors was a supportive one. The board was broadly representative of the school community. Members of the board had not held the school sufficiently to account for its performance and needed to become more actively involved in the day to day operation of the school.

The management of staffing, facilities and resources was acceptable. Management of the daily school routines ensured the effective operation of the school. Staff were suitably qualified and deployed appropriately. Frequency of staff training had increased but did not yet fully address the needs of both teaching staff and classroom assistants in the Kindergarten. The facilities were well maintained and clean. Access into and within the school premises was appropriate for all students. Each classroom had been enhanced by the addition of ICT facilities although learning resources in the Kindergarten and early primary were inadequate.

[View judgements](#)

How well does the school provide for students with special educational needs?

Provision for students with special educational needs varied from good in the Resource Centre to acceptable in the main school. In the Resource Centre, all students had detailed individual education plans that were monitored regularly and progress was measured. The staff had appropriate level of expertise to meet these students' needs with a focus on ensuring these students have good skills to become independent adults. Consequently most students made good progress in the key areas of learning. This was not the case in the main school. A minority of teachers provided appropriate support through the use of materials and the 'buddy system' and students made acceptable progress. In other classes, students with special educational needs were given work similar to their peers. This was often too difficult for them and support was limited. Consequently, progress for these students was slow. The range of enrichment opportunities for gifted and talented students was limited and they did not make the best possible progress.

What are the views of parents, teachers and students?

Before the inspection, the views of parents, teachers and senior secondary students were surveyed. Key messages from each group were considered during the inspection and these helped to form judgements. A summary of the survey statistics and comments from those who responded to the survey follows:

Responses to the surveys			
Responses received	Number		Percentage
Parents	This year	272	28%
	Last year	113	18%
Teachers	43		69%
Students	54		72%

*The percentage of responses from parents is based on the number of families.

The following statements were based on the survey response at the time of the inspection. The above response figures are the most up-to-date and accurate available prior to publication.

Approximately 38% of parents, 20% students and 70% of teachers responded to the questionnaires. Most parents who responded were very happy with the quality of education their children were receiving. They felt the school kept their children safe and most felt their children were happy in their learning and were making good progress in most subjects. However, a significant number felt their children were not making good progress in Arabic as an additional language. Teachers felt that they were providing a good education for the students and that they provided them with good support. Students who responded wanted the school to arrange more outings and to introduce after school activities. A small minority felt that they would benefit from more detailed feedback from their teachers as to how they could improve their work

What happens next?

The school has been asked to prepare and submit an updated action plan to DSIB within two months of receiving the most recent report. This plan should address:

- Recommendations from DSIB;
- Areas identified by the school as requiring improvement;
- Other external reports or sources of information that comment on the work of the school;
- Priorities arising from the school's unique characteristics.

The next inspection will report on the progress made by the school.

Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau

Knowledge and Human Development Authority

How to contact us

If you have a concern or wish to comment on any aspect of this report you should contact:

inspection@khda.gov.ae

Copyright © 2014

This report is for internal use only and for the self-evaluation purposes of the school.
It should not be used for commercial purposes or in connection with a prospectus or advertisement.