

# INSPECTION REPORT

## Ambassador Kindergarten

Report published in February 2014

## GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT Ambassador Kindergarten

Location	Al Mankhool
Type of school	Private
Website	www.ambassadorkg.com
Telephone	04-3799333
Address	P O Box 126924, Dubai
Principal	Sangita Pitale
Curriculum	Indian
Gender of students	Boys and Girls
Age / Grades or Year Groups	3-5 / Kindergarten 1 - Kindergarten 2
Attendance	Acceptable
Number of students on roll	430
Largest nationality group of Students	Indian
Number of Emirati students	0
Date of the inspection	9th to 11th December 2013

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## The context of the school

The Ambassador Kindergarten is a private Kindergarten (KG), located in Al Mankool. It provides education for boys and girls from KG 1 to KG 2, aged 3 to 5 years. The Kindergarten opened in 2012. At the time of the inspection, it had a roll of 430 children. Almost all children were from Indian families. There were no Emirati children. The Kindergarten had identified a few children who had a special educational need.

The Kindergarten followed a curriculum, taught in English which was strongly influenced by the UK Foundation Stage guidance. There were six KG1 classes and eleven KG2 classes.

There were 17 full-time class teachers, supported by 17 assistant teachers and a number of nannies. Enrichment sessions were delivered by part-time specialist teachers. All teachers had suitable academic qualifications, but the majority did not have specific early years teaching qualifications. A part-time special needs co-ordinator supported by assistant teachers and nannies provided additional support to individual children.

The recently appointed principal, together with an external consultant 'executive head' and newly appointed middle managers formed the leadership team.

## Overall school performance 2013-2014

Acceptable

### Key strengths

- The broad and balanced curriculum that is enhanced by a well-resourced and stimulating learning environment;
- The positive learning ethos that results in children developing strong language and social skills;
- Dedicated leaders and middle managers committed to implementing change;
- The effective partnership with parents that supports children's learning;
- Confident children who are happy and safe.

### Recommendations

- Raise attainment in mathematics and science by:
  - improving the accuracy and consistency of assessment information;
  - using this information routinely in teachers' planning to meet the needs of all children.
- Raise the quality of the acceptable teaching to match that of the best by:
  - identifying more specific learning outcomes for lessons to help focus teachers' questioning;
  - introducing more challenge to activities to increase progress and promote critical thinking.
- Improve the effectiveness of monitoring by senior and middle leaders to reduce inconsistencies in practice.

## Progress since the last inspection

This was the first inspection of the school.

## Trend of overall performance



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

	Kindergarten
Islamic Education	
Attainment	Not Applicable
Progress	Not Applicable
Arabic as a first language	
Attainment	Not Applicable
Progress	Not Applicable
Arabic as an additional language	
Attainment	Not Applicable
Progress	Not Applicable
English	
Attainment	Good
Progress	Good
Mathematics	
Attainment	Acceptable
Progress	Good
Science	
Attainment	Acceptable
Progress	Acceptable

[Read paragraph](#)

	Kindergarten
Quality of students' learning skills	Good

[Read paragraph](#)

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## How good is the students' personal and social development?

	Kindergarten
Personal responsibility	Good
Students' understanding of Islamic values and their local, cultural and global awareness	Good
Community and environmental responsibility	Acceptable

[Read paragraph](#)

## How good are teaching and assessment?

	Kindergarten
Teaching for effective learning	Acceptable
Assessment	Acceptable

[Read paragraph](#)



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

	Kindergarten
Curriculum quality	Good
Curriculum design to meet the individual needs of students	Acceptable

[Read paragraph](#)

## How well does the school protect and support students?

	Kindergarten
Health and Safety	Good
Quality of Support	Acceptable

[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	Good

[Read paragraph](#)

## How good are the students' attainment and progress?

Attainment in English was good. Children had good speaking and listening skills for their age. They readily understood and responded to everyday classroom language. More able children spoke very well but a minority had less confidence. Most children read well. They could sound out letters and were increasingly able to recognise simple words and sentences. Writing, including handwriting, was good. Most children could form letters correctly and the majority could write simple words. More able children were able to write simple phrases and sentences. Attainment in mathematics was acceptable. Most children were on track to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of their second year in Kindergarten. The majority of children could add single digit numbers with accurate notation and also recognise simple shapes. Attainment in science was acceptable. Most children achieved the age-related expectations and a few children exceeded expectations. When appropriately questioned, children were eager to engage in predicting outcomes and drawing conclusions about what they had observed. However, such practice was not observed often during the inspection.

Progress in English was good. Children's abilities in English when they began Kindergarten were very varied. Helped by the routine exposure to English as the language of instruction, they developed a good vocabulary and understanding, especially of the spoken word. Writing skills developed well, especially handwriting and formation of simple words. Progress in mathematics was good. Children made good use of the many practical resources to develop number and measurement skills, and to reinforce their knowledge of shape and size.

Progress in science was acceptable. A minority of children made better than expected progress and demonstrated high levels of skill in applying their knowledge to unfamiliar learning contexts. Children with special educational needs made similar progress to their peers.

[View judgements](#)

## Quality of students' learning skills

The quality of children's learning skills was good. In both year groups, children showed a high level of enjoyment as they tackled their activities and most were capable of maintaining a strong engagement with their work, even when working independently. They were willing to co-operate on activities such as making a fireman's hose from rolled up newspaper and, when given the chance, would collaborate in group or class tasks. Children took good advantage of opportunities to make connections between areas of learning. For example, they studied features of goats before reading the Three Billy Goats Gruff and the Trolls' bridge was linked to the practising of the mathematical positional language of 'over and under'.

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Children had the chance to use computer resources such as interactive white boards and iPads, but the challenge of providing consistent and equitable use of these resources was still being addressed.

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## How good is the students' personal and social development?

Children's personal and social development was good. Most children had positive attitudes towards the Kindergarten. They behaved well in lessons and around the Kindergarten. They followed daily routines well and showed respect towards adults and each other. They were confident and spoke well. Relationships between teachers and children were courteous and respectful. Children followed healthy routines through, for example, yoga and swimming. They were sensitive to feelings of others and responded well. Attendance during inspection was good. Children's understanding of Islamic values and their local, cultural and global awareness were good. Children were able to describe some features of Islamic society like the mosque, dress, customs and celebrations. They often took the initiative with Islamic greetings. Children participated in events that celebrated the heritage and union of UAE. Children talked about symbols and customs of UAE such as its flag and animals, and they recognised a range of landmarks in Dubai. KG 2 children were introduced to the Arabic language through weekly sessions delivered by a language specialist. Community and environmental responsibility was acceptable. Parental involvement in Kindergarten activities was positive and mothers participated in recent celebrations. Children had a positive work ethic. They were able to concentrate and use their imagination to create designs and patterns using a variety of resources. Their involvement in environmental projects was limited.

[View judgements](#)

## How good are teaching and assessment?

The quality of teaching was acceptable. Most teachers were able to plan activities that interested and engaged their classes. There were variations in the effectiveness with which they used these activities to promote learning. In most lessons, teachers made imaginative use of a wide range of resources linked to current themes such as plant growth. This helped children to link their learning to the real world. Most teachers had enough oversight of group activities to understand how much progress their children were making. However, teachers and other staff did not intervene enough to extend children's learning through questions and guidance. Some lesson plans identified differentiated tasks to match children's full ability range, but these were not always sufficiently challenging for more able children. Critical thinking was not a regular feature of lessons. Specialist teaching in enrichment areas such as yoga, dance and swimming was

good. Teachers' relationships with their classes were warm and encouraging, and promoted sufficient confidence in children to seek clarification or offer enthusiastic responses to questions.

Assessment was acceptable. The Kindergarten had recently introduced a comprehensive system for observing and assessing children's progress. The collections of photographs, examples of work, or 'on the spot' post-it note observations gave teachers a good overall picture of what children could do. It also provided the information to inform parents, on a weekly basis, of their children's progress through the 'My Learning Journey' books. Whilst some assessments were exemplary, others lacked analysis and the feedback to parents on where to go next, varied in its detail and usefulness. Verbal feedback to children during and after activities was useful, but lessons were usually too short to accommodate sessions to allow children to consider their own achievements. Some assessment information was used to influence lesson planning, but not in a systematic or widespread way.

[View judgements](#)

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

The curriculum quality was good. The curriculum had been recently reviewed and a new rationale developed that aligned the Indian curriculum with the Foundation Stage framework (UK). There was a strong focus on promoting literacy, mathematics and social and emotional development. Through planned, age-appropriate learning opportunities children were offered cross-curricular and enrichment activities, linked to real life experiences. In keeping with the expectations of the curriculum, regular opportunities were provided for young learners to initiate their own learning and represent their own thoughts and ideas. There was good provision for children to appreciate Islamic values and culture, as well as the Arabic language. As a result, they enthusiastically sought out opportunities to greet visitors to the Kindergarten in Arabic. The curriculum design to meet the needs of individual students was acceptable.

A recent curriculum review had led to improvements, such as more activity-based learning and a focus on learning outcomes. Teachers recognised the different abilities of groups of children and individuals, but this had not yet led to a consistency in how teaching staff provided differentiated learning experiences. Through collaborative planning, the school had begun to deliver a curriculum that promoted the 21st century skills of enquiry, innovation, investigation and problem solving.

[View judgements](#)

## How well does the school protect and support students?

The protection and support of children were good. Safety and health arrangements in Kindergarten were good. The Kindergarten building, facilities and resources were suitable to meet the educational needs of most children. The building was well maintained and clean. The premises were secure and access was monitored with restricted entry to the classrooms and playgrounds. The open playground was padded and safe. The swimming pool area had a separate enclosure and gate. Nannies were deployed in all classrooms, toilets and buses. Transport arrangements were well organised. Health arrangements were in place and medical records maintained efficiently. The Kindergarten had a full-time nurse, a part-time medical practitioner and a well-equipped clinic. The cafeteria provided healthy snacks. The Kindergarten promoted healthy living among children through activities like yoga, dance and swimming. Staff were aware of the child protection policy.

The quality of support was acceptable. Across the Kindergarten, the rapport between staff and all children was good. Most teachers were aware of each child's emotional and personal needs. The Kindergarten promoted good attendance and punctuality, but the accuracy and consistency of the daily recording of this data was an area needing development. The Kindergarten had an inclusive special educational needs policy. Improved guidelines and staff training ensured early identification and classification of this group of children. In-class support was adequate and this resulted in steady progress by most children with special educational needs. Advice for the parents of children with special educational needs was in place, but the use of evaluative information to support each child's next learning steps was still being developed.

[View judgements](#)

## How good are the leadership and management of the school?

The leadership of the Kindergarten was acceptable. The recently appointed principal worked in close collaboration with an executive head. The senior leaders and new middle managers had implemented an extensive change agenda. Their aim was to develop a child-centred Kindergarten that met the needs and aspirations of the children and parents. Although key curricular and teaching decisions were made by senior leaders and disseminated, the teaching staff were committed and open to the review process. The staff were expected to undergo extensive professional development programmes linked to the improvement plan. Important aspects of the work of the Kindergarten were being addressed through the increased roles and responsibilities assigned to the leadership team.

Self-evaluation and improvement planning were acceptable. The Kindergarten had attempted to develop comprehensive and detailed self-evaluation procedures. All staff were involved in the process led by the

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principal and senior colleagues. However, their judgements were not realistic enough because of the inconsistency of subject documentation and insufficient rigour and accuracy when evaluating data. The Kindergarten's improvement plan was generated from a limited source of information. It identified a few key targets, but did not specify time frames, responsibilities or specific expected learning outcomes. Systems for monitoring teachers' planning, their teaching and assessment practices were in their early stages of development. The analysis of children's experiences and progress were not systematic enough to improve planning for learning on a daily or weekly basis.

The Kindergarten actively promoted a good partnership with parents. It ran workshops to acquaint parents with, for example, curricular matters so that they could support their child at home. The recently established Parents' Support Group intended to involve parents more in the Kindergarten's development, although not all parents know about it. Home-school communication was regular and effective. Weekly bulletins that summarised their child's work kept parents fully aware of their child's progress. Termly reports were detailed and lengthy but did not summarise or exemplify children's progress individually enough. Useful links with the local community included visits to a farm and visits by local artisans, such as a baker to the Kindergarten. More wide-ranging links had yet to be developed

The governance of the Kindergarten by the owners and the recently formed Advisory Board was acceptable. As the Board comprised mainly senior staff, it had a good overview of the Kindergarten but not an independent enough view. There was limited stakeholder involvement with only one parent and one community member. The Kindergarten sought and valued views of stakeholders and had set up a parents' support group to gather and channel parental opinion. However, leaders had not consulted or informed parents properly about the change to the curriculum. The owners had done well to establish this Kindergarten successfully in a short space of time. There had been serious and thoughtful investment in staffing, facilities and resources. However, there was insufficient accountability through governance to ensure that the Kindergarten was working to the best of its capacity.

The management of the school was good. Efficient procedures ensured that the Kindergarten ran smoothly on a day-to-day basis. The Kindergarten was well staffed with a high staff:child ratio and teaching staff were suitably qualified. Training had produced a coherent approach to teaching, assessment and the curriculum but had not yet ensured a consistency of practice across the two year groups. Very good facilities included ample classroom space as well as specialist areas for swimming, music, dance and yoga. The atelier and rumpus room also supported a diverse curriculum. Resources were plentiful and relevant to young children's learning, although technology was not consistently available to all children.

[View judgements](#)

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

The provision for children with a special educational need was acceptable. The Kindergarten was incrementally implementing its special educational needs policy and developing appropriate processes and procedures for those children identified. It had a clear aim: to meet all children's needs so that each makes similar progress to their other children. Teaching staff had been recently engaged in training. There was an inclusive admissions policy which involved visits and discussions with children and parents visited to clarify individual needs. Additional identification included in-class observation by teachers and supervisors during class time. Those deemed to have a learning disability were referred to the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator. Multi-disciplinary meetings with parents followed identification, particularly if children required specialist evaluation. Overall, the accuracy of identification and subsequent classification were developing features. Individual educational plans were devised in consultation with parents. These provided a broad framework for teachers but were not specific in targeting age and developmentally appropriate learning tasks. Tracking of progress was beginning to be used but did not ensure sufficiently accurate evaluation. Resources for identified children were adequate, but support in class and around the Kindergarten was variable. Too often, children were not sufficiently challenged to ensure maximum progress.



## What are the views of parents, teachers and students?

Before the inspection the views of parents, teachers and the principal 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	175
	Last year	The school was not inspected in 2012-2013
Teachers	14	82%
Students	There were no senior students in the school	

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

Over two fifths of parents responded to the survey. Most believed that the Kindergarten provided a good quality of education, although a small minority disagreed. Parents approved of their children's progress in English and mathematics, but were less sure about science. Parents strongly approved of the teaching, the level of challenge and teachers' guidance, as well as the curriculum, although they were less certain about its richness. In addition, not all parents were clear about the precise nature of the curriculum and what their children learned. For example, more than a few parents believed that their children learned Islamic Education. Almost all parents said that their children enjoyed Kindergarten and that they were safe there. They were slightly less confident about the security of buses. The majority of parents were happy with the communication with the Kindergarten, especially the individual reports and weekly updates. In their comments, a significant minority of parents expressed concern about staff turnover and the quality of teachers. Most teachers responded to the survey. They were almost all wholly positive about all aspects of the Kindergarten.



## 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](mailto:inspection@khda.gov.ae)

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