

INSPECTION REPORT

Lycée Français International

Report published in April 2013

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT Lycée Français International

Location	Oud Metha
Type of school	Private
Website	www.lfidb.net
Telephone	04 336 8552
Address	P.O. Box 2226, Dubai
Principal	Christophe Troucat
Curriculum	French
Gender of students	Boys and Girls
Age / Grades	3-17 / Maternelle to Première
Attendance	Outstanding
Number of students on roll	1,686
Largest nationality group of Students	French
Number of Emirati students	less than 1%
Date of the inspection	Monday 25th to Thursday 28th February 2013

Contents

The context of the school.....	3
Overall school performance 2012-2013.....	4
Key strengths	4
Recommendations	4
Progress since the last inspection	5
Trend of overall performance.....	5
How good are the students' attainment and progress in key subjects?.....	6
How good is the students' personal and social development?	7
How good are the teaching, learning and assessment?	7
How well does the curriculum meet the educational needs of 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?.....	12
What are the views of parents, teachers and students?.....	14
What happens next?	15
How to contact us	15

The context of the school

Located in Oud Metha, the school had increased its student roll and, at the time of the inspection, there were 1,686 students from maternelle to première. There were 493 children in the maternelle (three to six years), 816 in the primaire (six to 11 years), 333 in the collège (11 to 15 years) and 44 in the lycée (15 to 18 years). This was the first year that the school had a première class in the lycée. Class sizes were an average of 25 students.

Students came from over 40 nationality groups. The largest single group comprised French nationals, followed by Lebanese and Egyptians. A total of 19 students had been identified with special educational needs. No students had been identified as having special gifts or talents.

The school followed the French National Curriculum for most subjects. The teaching of Islamic Education and Arabic followed the UAE Ministry of Education curriculum. Students took the Diplôme National du Brevet at the end of their troisième year, before they left the collège. Older students in the lycée were prepared for the baccalauréat examination.

Almost all of the teachers had first degrees and/or teaching qualifications. Approximately 20 per cent of teachers were new to the school this year.

Overall school performance 2012-2013

Good

Key strengths

- The good attainment and progress of students in most subjects, and their outstanding performance in English;
- The excellent behaviour and attitudes of students, as well as their positive relationships with other students and adults;
- The effective teaching across the school that resulted in students developing good learning skills and a strong work ethic;
- The good quality of care that ensured students' emotional and physical well-being;
- The combined sense of purpose among leaders at all levels that enabled the school to retain its integrity and its various qualities.

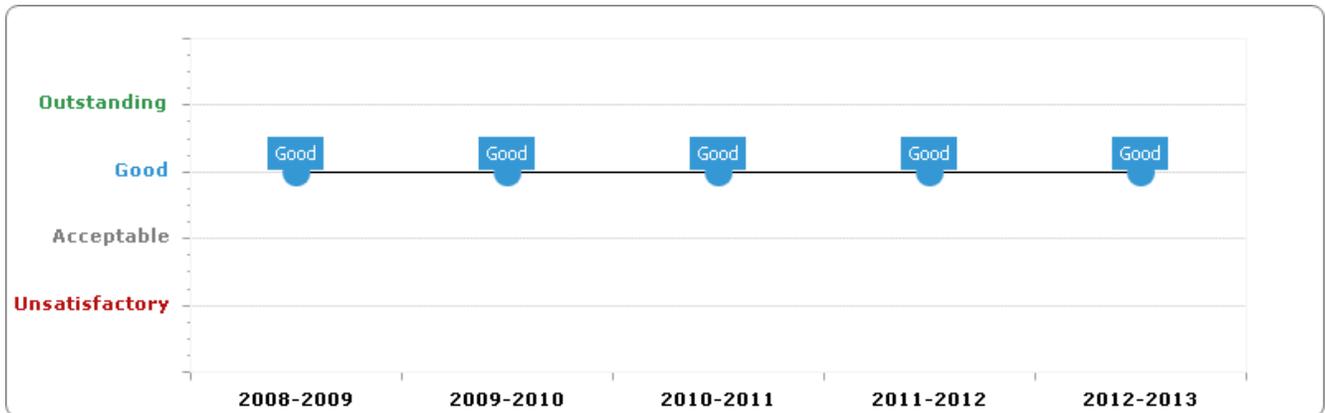
Recommendations

- Improve progress in Islamic Education and Arabic in the collège and the lycée by ensuring that teachers have higher expectations of students and are more flexible in their teaching;
- Improve the consistency in teaching by using assessment data routinely to plan work that is suitably challenging and which meets the individual needs of students;
- Establish rigorous and comprehensive procedures for identifying students with special educational needs and providing more systematic support;
- Maximise opportunities for students to interact with local and global communities, and to involve all stakeholders more in decision-making for the school's development;
- Accelerate the plans to equip the school with up-to-date technology to support both teaching and students' skill development.

Progress since the last inspection

- Students' performance in Islamic Education and Arabic had improved, but not enough to raise attainment significantly;
- There had been some improvement in lessons to provide work that met the individual needs of students, but this was not yet consistent enough;
- The governing board had not done enough to show that they respected the opinions of parents, students and teachers;
- The school had a new building that improved some of its specialist facilities and classrooms;
- The school had been successful in upgrading its facilities and resources, although they were not all fully functional.

Trend of overall performance



How good are the students' attainment and progress in key subjects?

	Maternelle	Primaire	Collège	Lycée
Islamic Education				
Attainment	Not Applicable	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable
Progress	Not Applicable	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable
Arabic as a first language				
Attainment	Not Applicable	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable
Progress	Not Applicable	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable
Arabic as an additional language				
Attainment	Not Applicable	Good	Acceptable	Not Applicable
Progress	Not Applicable	Good	Acceptable	Not Applicable
French				
Attainment	Good	Good	Good	Good
Progress	Good	Good	Good	Good
English				
Attainment	Good	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Progress	Good	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Mathematics				
Attainment	Good	Good	Good	Good
Progress	Good	Good	Good	Good
Science				
Attainment	Good	Good	Good	Good
Progress	Good	Good	Good	Good

[Read paragraph](#)

How good is the students' personal and social development?

	Maternelle	Primaire	Collège	Lycée
Attitudes and behaviour	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Understanding of Islamic values and local, cultural and global awareness	Good	Good	Good	Good
Community and environmental responsibility	Good	Good	Good	Good

[Read paragraph](#)

How good are the teaching, learning and assessment?

	Maternelle	Primaire	Collège	Lycée
Teaching for effective learning	Good	Good	Good	Good
Quality of students' learning	Good	Good	Good	Good
Assessment	Good	Good	Good	Good

[Read paragraph](#)

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

	Maternelle	Primaire	Collège	Lycée
Curriculum quality	Good	Good	Good	Good

[Read paragraph](#)

How well does the school protect and support students?

	Maternelle	Primaire	Collège	Lycée
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	Good
Self-evaluation and improvement planning	Good
Partnerships with parents and the community	Good
Governance	Good
Management, including staffing, facilities and resources	Good

[Read paragraph](#)

How good are the students' attainment and progress in key subjects?

Students' attainment was mostly good. It was acceptable in Islamic Education and Arabic in the collège and lycée, but outstanding in English in most phases. In Islamic Education, the majority of students had good recitation skills, especially in upper primaire. Students memorised different Hadeeth but could not easily apply Hadeeth concepts to real life. Their awareness of Islamic etiquettes and morals was underdeveloped. In Arabic, students had competent listening skills. Students with Arabic as a first language spoke well colloquially, but less accurately in standard Arabic; other students spoke adequately but pronunciation was variable. Writing skills in Arabic were underdeveloped. In French and English, most students spoke confidently and read fluently. In writing, spelling and grammar were generally accurate. Their levels of ability in English were impressive for their ages. In mathematics, students developed good number skills in maternelle and primaire. Older students' proficiency in mental agility enabled them to solve increasingly complex problems. Students acquired scientific understanding and language at an early age and undertook simple investigations. In the collège and lycée, students were good in planning investigations independently.

Students' progress mirrored their attainment and was mostly good. In Islamic Education, progress was better in primaire than elsewhere because students developed more confidence in recitation of the Qur'an. In Arabic, they made better progress in speaking, listening and reading skills than in writing. In primaire, students acquired good vocabulary and grammar; older students however, did not develop enough accuracy with these skills. Progress in French was mostly good, including writing and especially when there were opportunities for students to develop their independent written work. Students gained strong oral skills in English, supported by their early start in maternelle; writing skills were also strong because they used it in other subjects. Students cultivated effective mathematical skills because they learned to apply them to real-life situations. Similarly, in science, students were able to strengthen their knowledge and skills through practical use. Students with special educational needs made good progress in English, mathematics and science, and acceptable progress in other subjects.

[View judgements](#)

How good is the students' personal and social development?

Positive relationships between all members of the school led to a harmonious community. Behaviour was excellent, apart from occasional problems on the buses. Students were considerate and helped each other freely. Mostly, students were pro-active in class; they were keen to show their knowledge and took pride in their achievements. Students' presentation of their work was excellent. They embraced the school's

جهاز الرقابة المدرسية في دبي

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promotion of active and healthy lifestyles. They ate wisely for the most part and many took advantage of the school's varied sports facilities. Attendance was outstanding, and punctuality was very good. Students understood and appreciated the expectations of living within an Islamic society. They had good knowledge and understanding of the culture of Dubai and identified the features that had changed over time. Students' deeper understanding of local tradition and heritage was developing. They were well aware of their own cultures and traditions, and could provide details and examples in support of their knowledge. Students had a good sense of responsibility, especially within the school community. Student councillors spoke passionately about the role that they had in representing the views of students and in defending them in academic meetings or directly to teachers. They played an active part in planning and organising school events, such as a 'kermesse' and sponsored runs. However, students rarely took the initiative in starting projects. They had limited links with the local community, although a few had been involved in a recycling project and had extended it to involve the collection of old batteries. Students were suitably aware of sustainability and conservation, and displayed a positive work ethic.

[View judgements](#)

How good are the teaching, learning and assessment?

Teaching was good throughout the school. There were positive learning environments in most classrooms. Teachers had good subject knowledge and planned their lessons thoroughly. Most teachers started lessons by reviewing previous work and clarifying learning objectives. A range of strategies were used to motivate students but occasionally teachers did too much for the students which resulted in some passive learning in class. Most teachers used questioning effectively to assess students' understanding and linked that to their formal assessment and progress at the end of lessons. They supported students well but did not consistently ensure that work in lessons was matched to the learning needs of all students, especially the more able students. Lessons were most effective when there was a brisk pace, a sharp sense of purpose and the opportunity for students to learn in context.

Students had good learning skills. They enjoyed learning and worked well independently and collaboratively when given the opportunity to do so. Most students were able to present their ideas articulately and with confidence. They made links to real-life examples easily and naturally built on skills learned in previous lessons. Students' use of information and communication technology was limited, except in science and mathematics, in which it was used skilfully in the higher classes. Critical thinking skills were encouraged from an early age, with very young students undertaking risk assessments; these skills developed well in the older classes with evaluations of arguments and opinions. Practical and investigative skills were given a high priority especially in the collège and lycée parts of the school.

جهاز الرقابة المدرسية في دبي

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Effective systems for evaluating progress meant that teachers understood students' developing needs. Assessment data collated by the school was accurate but not always analysed effectively by teachers to influence teaching or deduce how students could learn more successfully. The school did not have a clear enough overview of students' progress. Assessment was most effective in mathematics because students understood their own strengths and how to improve their weaknesses. Older students accessed the school's computer software at home which strengthened their learning in mathematics even further. Written work was marked systematically and most students received helpful guidance about how to improve key areas of their work.

[View judgements](#)

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

The curriculum was good across all phases of the school. The French National Curriculum was broad and balanced and teachers responded quickly to new guidelines from the French Ministry. As such, most new requirements were met, such as in the recent changes to art history in the collège and the new programmes in the lycée. The Proviseur and subject co-ordinators worked well together to review the curriculum regularly and improve it in the majority of key subjects, especially in the collège. Some teachers enhanced the curriculum to provide opportunities for students to tackle challenging tasks and think critically, for example in history and literature in the lycée. An innovative part of the curriculum was a bilingual element in different parts of the school. English was taught specifically in maternelle and there were split-language lessons in cinquième and sixième. In science, there was a bilingual programme that helped students learn technical terms in two languages. The school had improved the range and variety of its extra-curricular activities that boosted students' engagement and success in their learning, especially in sport.

[View judgements](#)

How well does the school protect and support students?

Arrangements for ensuring health and safety overall were good across the school. The welfare and safety of students were a prime concern of the school. Although statutory fire drills were held regularly they were not evenly spread out over the school year. The buildings were cleaned regularly and well-maintained. Parents were informed and most responded to the school's directives about healthy living and what they should provide for their children in their lunch-boxes. Supervision in school and on the buses was good. However, space in front of the premises for parents to park and drop off or accompany students into school was cramped. The school found it difficult to manage a minority of parents who were too casual about the safety of their children and other children.

Teachers' rapport with students was good. Teachers managed behaviour well, so students were generally respectful and behaved extremely well. Students knew who to turn to if they needed advice on a personal or educational matters. Good careers guidance was given by outside experts on a regular basis. The management of attendance and punctuality was good.

[View judgements](#)

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

The school admitted students with special educational needs. However, the identification of individual students was not thorough or systematic enough to ensure that all needs were accurately identified. The staff lacked the expertise and the school lacked a suitably qualified member of staff to oversee provision and to train colleagues. Nevertheless, teachers took steps to ensure that work in lessons was usually appropriate for the students' needs and, in some cases a learning support assistant, provided additional guidance. As a result, progress was good overall in the key subjects, particularly in mathematics and science.

How good are the leadership and management of the school?

The school benefited from good leadership. The Proviseur, supported by the Adjoint Proviseur and other leaders, shared a common vision and succeeded in providing a full French education for the students. Leaders had clearly defined roles but their keenness to develop these roles was disadvantaged by the limited opportunities to observe classroom practice. There was a positive rapport between staff members and communication at all levels was effective. Senior leaders showed that they could maintain the school's strengths and continue to minimise any weaknesses. The school had good capacity to improve further.

The school knew itself well, although its systems for self-review were not cohesive and rigorous enough to ensure consistency in classrooms. It did, however, glean valuable information from visits from external inspectors. The school's plans for improvement were pertinent and well-focused, although not clearly linked to students' outcomes. Nevertheless, the school had made some good progress in addressing the recommendations from the previous inspection report. For example, some of the building problems had been overcome and the better teachers were using differentiation more in lessons. Attainment and progress in Islamic Education and Arabic however, were not significantly better.

جهاز الرقابة المدرسية في دبي

Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau

Parents were supportive of the school and their child's learning at home. The parents' association (APELFI) not only helped to organise school functions, but also took direct action to address issues around the school, such as the cleanliness of the toilets. APELFI was also a forum for parents' views and issued regular newsletters. Communication between home and school was good. Parents could readily meet teachers whenever necessary. The website was informative and academic reports were clear and detailed. Links with the community were acceptable but not wide-ranging enough.

The school governors were very knowledgeable about the school and directly monitored its performance. The organisation played a very active role in the school's development. For example, it provided in-house training for teachers and internal inspection visits. It had considerably improved the school's buildings in a short space of time, although the pace of change in other matters was less swift. A termly forum, (conseil d'établissement) and which included parents, teachers, students and members of the local community, was a good sounding-board for opinions. However, the governors did not take enough notice of the opinions of its stakeholders in its decision-making processes.

The operational management of the school was good on a day to day basis. Good systems ensured that the timetable worked well; activities were well organised. There was a good number of teaching staff. Almost all were suitably qualified but a significant minority did not have teaching qualifications. The new building provided a large number of extra classrooms and was shortly to overcome weakness in facilities, especially the library and the computer facilities. Similarly, congested playgrounds would be relieved by new development, although there were still not enough shaded areas. The school had excellent sports facilities and benefited from specialist tuition from the adjacent sports club.

[View judgements](#)

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	80	9%
	Last year	110	14%
Teachers	29		26%
Students	5		11%

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

Minorities of parents, senior students and teachers responded to the surveys. Generally, parents were satisfied with the school. They especially liked the progress in French, English, mathematics and science, and the good teaching and learning. They also appreciated students' excellent behaviour and relationships which stemmed from the quality of care and leadership. They expressed some concerns that included the provision for Islamic Education and Arabic, and their children's interaction with Dubai community. They believed that there were not enough extra-curricular activities, an opinion shared by students, and only limited career guidance. There were also concerns about their children's safety on buses. Teachers, parents and students considered there were weaknesses in the range of resources, including information technology, choices of subjects within the curriculum and the lack of involvement in decision-making. Most teachers thought that the last report reflected the school accurately and the majority believed that inspection had led to school improvement.

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.

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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

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