

INSPECTION REPORT

Greenfield Community School

Report published in April 2014

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT Greenfield Community School

Location	Green Community
Type of school	Private
Website	www.gcschool.ae
Telephone	04-8856600
Address	Green Community (Dubai Investment Park) P.O.Box 282627
Principal	Angela Hollington
Curriculum	IB
Gender of students	Boys and Girls
Age / Grades or Year Groups	4-18 / KG 1 to Grade 12
Attendance	Acceptable
Number of students on roll	1116
Largest nationality group of students	European
Number of Emirati students	13 (1%)
Date of the inspection	10th March to 13th March 2014

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The context of the school

Greenfield Community School is located in the Green Community, Dubai. It opened in 2007 and, at the time of inspection had an enrolment of 1116 students aged from four to 18 years. The school follows the International Baccalaureate (IB) curriculum and is one of only five schools in the world to be authorised in the four IB programmes, which are the Primary Years Programme (PYP), Middle Years Programme (MYP), Diploma Programme (DP) and IB Career Certificate (IBCC). English is the language of instruction and Arabic, German, French and Spanish are also offered. Students in Grade 12 take examinations in IBDP and IBCC.

The school was led by the Principal, the Heads of Primary and Secondary, Dean of Students, Grade level coordinators and curriculum leaders for the Primary, Middle, Diploma and IBCC programmes. Of the 123 teachers, about 85% have professional teaching qualifications. Seventeen per cent of teachers are new to the school in this academic year. Six Arabic-speaking classroom assistants support teaching in Kindergarten (KG) classes and five Arabic-speaking assistants support students across the school. Students are grouped into 52 classes with smaller numbers of students in Grade 11 and 12 classes. Eighty-five nationalities are represented in the school with 50 languages being spoken. About 16% of the students spoke Arabic as a first language with 67% speaking English as a second language. Of the total student population about one percent of them were Emirati.

Overall school performance 2013-2014

Good

Key strengths

- Strong partnerships between key stakeholders;
- Outstanding attainment in both mathematics and Islamic values in KG;
- Outstanding personal responsibility and community and environmental responsibility in KG and PYP;
- Students take responsibility for and show independence in their learning;
- Outstanding curriculum design in DP and quality of support in MYP and DP.
- Outstanding health and safety in KG and PYP.

Recommendations

- School leaders should ensure there is improvement in teaching and learning and assessment in Islamic Education and Arabic to improve students' attainment and progress;
- Raise attainment and progress:
 - In English in PYP and in DP writing and composition;
 - In science in DP;
 - In mathematics in reasoning and problem-solving throughout the school.
- Improve attendance across all phases and punctuality of DP students to lessons.

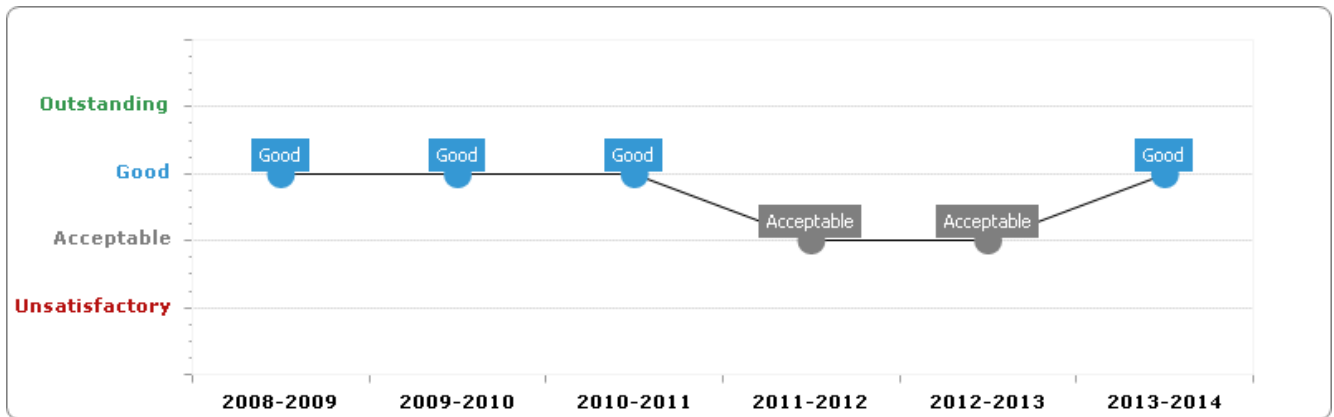
Progress since the last inspection

There have been improvements in a range of subjects in various parts of the school. This has been seen in English and mathematics in KG and MYP, and in science in MYP.

There has been an improvement in teaching, learning and assessment in MYP and DP.

School self-evaluation has improved.

Trend of overall performance



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

	KG	PYP	MYP	DP
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	Acceptable	Unsatisfactory	Not Applicable
Progress	Not Applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Not Applicable
English				
Attainment	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Progress	Good	Acceptable	Good	Acceptable
Mathematics				
Attainment	Outstanding	Good	Good	Acceptable
Progress	Good	Good	Good	Acceptable
Science				
Attainment	Good	Good	Good	Acceptable
Progress	Good	Good	Good	Acceptable

[Read paragraph](#)

	KG	PYP	MYP	DP
Quality of students' learning skills	Good	Good	Good	Good

[Read paragraph](#)

How good is the students' personal and social development?

	KG	PYP	MYP	DP
Personal responsibility	Outstanding	Outstanding	Good	Good
Students' understanding of Islamic values and their local, cultural and global awareness	Outstanding	Good	Good	Good
Community and environmental responsibility	Outstanding	Outstanding	Good	Good

[Read paragraph](#)

How good are teaching and assessment?

	KG	PYP	MYP	DP
Teaching for effective learning	Good	Good	Good	Good
Assessment	Good	Good	Good	Good

[Read paragraph](#)

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

	KG	PYP	MYP	DP
Curriculum quality	Good	Good	Good	Good
Curriculum design to meet the individual needs of students	Good	Good	Good	Outstanding

[Read paragraph](#)

How well does the school protect and support students?

	KG	PYP	MYP	DP
Health and Safety	Outstanding	Outstanding	Good	Good
Quality of Support	Good	Good	Outstanding	Outstanding

[Read paragraph](#)

How good are the leadership and management of the school?

	Whole school
Quality of leadership	Good
Self-evaluation and improvement planning	Good
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 Islamic Education, students' attainment was good in PYP and acceptable elsewhere. Most students demonstrated knowledge about the Pillars of Islam such as praying and Hajj. They knew about the Prophet's Seerah and they discussed examples of behaviour expected of a good Muslim and its effects on the society. The skill of reciting Quran was weak. Attainment in Arabic as a first language was good in PYP and acceptable elsewhere. Listening comprehension was strong in all phases. Writing and reading skills had improved. However, writing as well as knowledge and application of grammar were still relatively weaker. Attainment in Arabic as an additional language was acceptable in PYP but unsatisfactory in MYP. Most students in PYP had developed reasonable listening skills but significantly fewer had these skills at an appropriate level in MYP. Students used familiar greetings and simple phrases in short conversations in PYP but this was weaker in MYP. Writing skills were underdeveloped overall. In English, attainment was good in the Kindergarten and acceptable across all other phases. Reading, speaking and listening skills generally matched age-related expectations. Students' writing skills were not as good as their other skills and this did not improve as students moved through the school. Weaknesses in comprehension adversely affected the performance of students in PYP. In KG, attainment in mathematics was outstanding. It was good in PYP and MYP and acceptable in DP. In KG the children were challenged to be curious and to enjoy and apply their number work. Most students in PYP were developing a good knowledge of mathematical inquiry using familiar contexts. In MYP students could communicate their mathematical understanding of complex and abstract concepts. Attainment was good in science in KG, PYP and MYP and acceptable in DP. Students' understanding of science had improved across the school, particularly in MYP. At DP students comprehension of science and their written recording of it, was relatively weak.

In Islamic Education and Arabic as a first language, progress was good in PYP and acceptable across other phases. Most students made steady progress in learning information about basic principles of Islam. They also quickly gained knowledge about the rules of speaking, eating and Islamic behavior in public places. They steadily increased their knowledge about types of food and Halal and Haram drinks. In Arabic as a first language, students made good progress in listening and responding. Students in primary classes made steady progress in free writing. In Arabic as an additional language, students' progress was acceptable. Most students were developing a reasonable range of vocabulary and steadily improving their listening comprehension skills, particularly in PYP and to a lesser degree in MYP. Progress in reading and writing was slower especially in MYP. In English, progress was good in the Kindergarten and in the MYP, and acceptable in PYP and DP. Most students who joined the school with little or no English quickly developed an acceptable range of speaking, listening, reading and writing skills. Progress in PYP was impeded because the pace of learning was occasionally too slow. Progress in mathematics was acceptable in DP and good elsewhere. Challenging lesson objectives and well planned lessons supported the development of good mathematical

understanding and stimulated good progress. Weak reasoning skills limited progress in the upper phases. Students made good progress when given opportunities to consider different solutions to complex problems. Progress was good in science in KG, PYP and MYP and acceptable in DP. Progress was best in lessons in which there were clear learning objectives and opportunities for students to learn in a variety of ways. Self-assessment and reflection helped students speed up their own progress. Progress in practical skills was strengthened by a focus on scientific method across the school.

[View judgements](#)

Quality of students' learning skills

Learning skills were good across the school. Complex presentations at the end of each unit of work showed the well-developed communication skills of students and their ability to learn independently. Collaboration in a range of settings allowed students to be self-reliant in their learning and work towards common goals. High levels of student engagement were a feature of most lessons. Students could make appropriate connections between their studies and extend them to real-life contexts. Critical thinking, research and inquiry were evident in an appropriate range of lessons. Students used ICT skilfully for research and presentation. In a minority of lessons, students did not take enough responsibility for their own learning. English as additional language (EAL) learners were occasionally not effectively engaged.

[View judgements](#)

How good is the students' personal and social development?

The personal responsibility shown by students was outstanding in KG and PYP and good in MYP and DP. Behaviour in all phases reached the highest standards. Students demonstrated positive attitudes and a sense of commitment to all aspects of school life. There were positive and respectful relationships between students and teachers, and students and their peers. Younger students showed an excellent understanding of healthy living. Senior students were aware of the importance of a healthy lifestyle such as keeping fit, but did not always make healthy food choices. Attendance over the last term was good in PYP and MYP and acceptable elsewhere. The punctuality of senior students to lessons needed improvement.

Student understanding of Islamic values and their cultural and global awareness was outstanding in KG and good in other phases. The children in KG had a clear understanding of the Muslim way of life and culture in Dubai. They appreciated the international community in their school and in Dubai. Students in other phases had good knowledge and appreciation of the Islamic values and their impact on their own life both now and in the future. They had a good understanding of UAE culture and traditions and were also aware of other cultures in their community.

Students' community and environmental responsibility was outstanding in KG and PYP and good in MYP and DP. There was a strong work ethic and sense of enterprise throughout all phases. The Student Council in PYP had developed and implemented projects which reflected high levels of care and consideration for the needs of the local and wider community. Students were encouraged to develop key life skills through enterprising and well-planned projects. Conservation and sustainability in the wider world was evident in the students' participation in environmental projects particularly in KG and PYP.

[View judgements](#)

How good are teaching and assessment?

Teaching for effective learning was good in all phases of the school. Teachers had a good knowledge of their subjects and of how children learn. The majority of lessons were imaginatively designed. Teachers used a variety of teaching strategies. Positive relationships between teachers and students enabled constructive dialogue within lessons. Critical thinking skills and enquiry based learning were evident in the majority of lessons. In the best lessons, teaching strategies and support effectively met the learning needs of students. Teaching was good in most subjects, but some further improvement was needed in Arabic as an additional language and Islamic Education. In a few lessons, the pace was too slow and a lack of challenge limited student progress. Provision for the most able was not always sufficiently effective.

Assessment was good throughout the school. Teachers recorded and tracked students' progress effectively. Efficient assessment procedures, including analysis, provided accurate data on student achievement, next steps in learning and curriculum planning. The majority of staff used assessment findings to plan lessons to meet the needs of students. Methodical assessment procedures in the Kindergarten enabled children's levels of attainment and progress to be determined accurately. Regular opportunities for self-assessment and reflection made students aware of their strengths, weaknesses and areas for improvement. The majority of teachers in most subjects gave constructive written and oral comments and targets for improvement. The quality of marking was not consistent throughout the school. Assessment practice was weakest in some classes of Islamic Education and Arabic as an additional language.

[View judgements](#)

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

Curriculum was good throughout the school. The comprehensive International Baccalaureate programme provided a strong rationale for the curriculum which was broad and balanced across the phases and coherently planned from KG1 to grade 12. Thorough documentation enabled effective review and interdisciplinary planning. In a few subjects, curriculum planning had not had a positive impact for learners

because their needs were not fully met. Most units of work had appropriate real-world links. Extra-curricular activities had been enriched by numerous activities initiated by students such as caring for the environment, helping others and sports.

Curriculum design to meet the needs of all students was good in KG, PYP and MYP and outstanding in DP. The curriculum was designed to ensure differentiation met the needs of students including both special educational needs (SEN) and English as an additional language (EAL) students. Curriculum design to support the gifted and talented was not as evident. Curriculum review had ensured that there were options in MYP and DP to match students' talents, interests and aspirations. The IBCC in grades 11 and 12 offered a strong and challenging vocational choice for phase 4 students not wanting to follow the pathway of DP.

[View judgements](#)

How well does the school protect and support students?

The school's arrangements for the health and safety of students were outstanding in KG and PYP and good elsewhere. There were thorough Health and Safety procedures and policies in place, supported by detailed documentation and record keeping. The buildings and school facilities were well maintained and provided a secure environment. Effective arrangements were in place for school transport. Fire equipment was checked regularly and fire evacuation procedures were in place and regularly practiced. Medical care for all students, led by a team of specialist staff, was good. The Child Protection policy was detailed and there were effective arrangements for communication of this policy to all staff. There was a range of healthy food options in the cafeterias. Awareness of a healthy lifestyle was not as evident in MYP and DP as in lower grades.

The quality of support was good at KG and PYP and outstanding at the other phases. The relationships between staff and students were courteous and considerate. The student behaviour policy set high expectations and was effectively implemented. There were good systems to monitor the well-being and personal development of students. Systems to improve attendance and punctuality had led to marginal improvements. School policy supported the inclusion of students with special educational needs. The school provided counselling and guidance staff to respond to personal matters and career options for older students.

[View judgements](#)

How good are the leadership and management of the school?

The quality of leadership was good. Leaders had a shared vision for school improvement. They were clear on the direction and the necessary actions to bring about improvement. They had actively taken on data-gathering, analysis, evaluation and the development of processes to bring about improvements in teaching, assessment and learning. There was highly effective communication and shared responsibility between all

school leaders. The school leaders were fully accountable for school improvement, especially in middle management. Staff and students knew what was expected of them. However, leadership of a few subjects was weak and here improvement was not evident. School leaders had a good capacity to secure further improvement.

Self-evaluation and improvement planning were good. Self-evaluation was systematic and an essential part of development planning which had led to improvement in key aspects of the school including assessment, teaching, and learning. Improvement plans were based on careful and thoughtful analysis. They contained much detail, however it was not always clear about how improvement would be measured. Professional development had been accurately identified for many staff through an effective performance management system. However, this had not been the case for staff who needed more targeted and specific professional development. School leaders had focused on the previous inspection recommendations and significant progress had been made in addressing each of them.

Partnerships with parents and the community were good. There were productive links between the school and parents including a Parents' Advisory Group and the Greenfield Community Parents. There was effective communication between home and school. Parents were extensively involved in the school. There were workshops for parents related to student behaviour and growth. Reporting was regular and informative in all areas of students' development. Links with the local community were strong and supported student learning.

Governance of the school was good. The Board of Governors supported the school well and had a positive influence on it. They actively sought the views of stakeholders and listened to their opinions and actively supported the school in its improvement plans to secure better outcomes for students. They held the school accountable but student outcomes in a few subjects and phases had not improved as a result of this intervention.

The management of the school including staffing, facilities and resources was good. Management was effective and efficient. Staff recruitment was successful; most teachers had a teaching qualification and were deployed appropriately. Premises were of good quality. There were sufficient suitable resources including information and communication technology (ICT) and areas for student learning including specialist classrooms. All areas were accessible to all students. Facilities and resources were varied, of good quality and appropriate for student needs. The timetable did not fully ensure that there was maximum learning time for students. Staff had not yet had sufficient training to support the needs of SEN students fully.

The school had a broad range of excellent resources and facilities which were used to enhance the range of teaching strategies.

[View judgements](#)

How well does the school provide for Emirati students?

There were very few Emirati students in the school. The majority of them were in PYP. They were achieving better than expected level for their age group in Islamic Education and Arabic as a first language. Their attainment and progress were generally in line with their peers in the other core subjects except in mathematics where it was lower. Their attitudes and behaviour were outstanding throughout the school. Although, their attendance was just acceptable, this was in line with other students. Some students repeatedly came late to lessons. The Emirati students demonstrated good self-resilience and showed high levels of respect for other students, staff and visitors. They engaged enthusiastically in cultural events and school daily life.

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

Inclusion and provision for special educational needs was strong in the school. There was a positive environment which promoted high expectations to ensure progress for students. The school provided opportunities for SEN students to develop appropriate skills. School leaders and teachers worked to offer support and careful nurturing of students. The needs of students had been accurately identified. Planning to meet the needs of gifted and talented students was developing. The progress of students' with SEN was managed effectively throughout the phases. Teachers modified their teaching to meet students' needs. Students' progress was evident in personal projects and other written work. Relationships and communication with parents were strong. Parents were fully involved. The timetable ensured that students had access to all areas of the curriculum.

How well does the school teach Arabic as a first language?

Most teachers of Arabic as a first language prepared appropriate plans for their lessons with clear objectives. They had secure subject knowledge and engaged many of their students in positive learning experiences. Many lessons included appropriate links between learning in Arabic and other subjects as well as with real life application. In most lessons, ICT was used by teachers to enhance learning. The quality of teaching was

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generally better in the lower grades where students were provided with good opportunities to develop their vocabulary and their understanding of standard Arabic in interesting and meaningful contexts. Teaching was most effective where students were given the opportunity to learning independently or through working with others to produce written work. In the middle and upper grades, teaching strategies were limited and were not always successful in engaging and motivating all students. The schools' curriculum for Arabic as a first language was based on the Ministry of Education expectations for the subject and it followed prescribed textbooks. However, the planned opportunities for writing, particularly in MYP and DP, were not sufficient. In addition, the curriculum for Grades 6 and 11 needed to be further enhanced. Across the school there was a lack of enrichment, and appropriate modifications to address the different learning needs of students.

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	290	38%
	Last year	197	28%
Teachers	79		72%
Students	90		73%

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

A minority of parents completed their surveys this year, a similar percentage to the previous year. A majority of teachers but a minority of students also completed their surveys. Parents were generally positive about the school. Almost all were satisfied with the quality of education offered and believed that their child was making good progress in English. However, they were concerned about lack of progress in mathematics and Arabic as an additional language. Almost all parents agreed that their child enjoyed school, was looked after and kept safe. Most parents felt that teachers provided a good education and helped improve their child's learning. Almost all teachers felt that the behaviour of students was good. Almost all students felt they made good progress in English and most thought that they were well looked after and safe in school. Over one third of students and some parents did not feel that they had had a good choice of subjects and activities.

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

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