

# INSPECTION REPORT

## Greenfield Community School

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Knowledge and Human Development Authority

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## GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT Greenfield Community School

Location	Green Community
Type of school	Private
Website	www.gcschool.ae
Telephone	04-885-6600
Address	PO Box 282627, Green Community (Dubai Investment Park)
Principal	Angela Hollington
Curriculum	IB
Gender of students	Boys and Girls
Age / Grades or Year Groups	4-18 / Kindergarten to Grade 12
Attendance	Acceptable
Number of students on roll	992
Number of Emirati students	14 (1%)
Date of the inspection	Monday 5th to Wednesday 7th March 2012

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## The context of the school

Greenfield Community School is located in the Green Community, Dubai. The school opened in 2007. The school had 992 students, aged from four to 18 years at the time of inspection. This is an increase of 28 per cent from the previous year.

The school followed the International Baccalaureate (IB) curriculum. The IB Diploma Programme (DP) was introduced in September 2011. Students from Kindergarten to Grade 5 were in the Primary Years Programme (PYP), from Grades 6 to 10 in the Middle Years Programme (MYP) and in Grades 11 and 12, the DP and the International Baccalaureate Career-related Certificate (IBCC). English was the language of instruction and Arabic, German and French were also provided.

The school was led by the Principal, the Head of Secondary, Head of Primary and curriculum leaders for the Primary, Middle and Diploma Programmes. The 97 teachers had professional teaching qualifications. Twenty per cent of the teachers were new to the school at the start of the year. Arabic-speaking classroom assistants supported teaching in all Kindergarten classes. Students were grouped into 46 classes, with smaller numbers of students in Grade 11 and 12 classes. Eighty one nationalities were represented in the school. Twelve per cent of the students spoke Arabic as a first language. About half the students were learning English as an additional language. Fourteen students, about one per cent, were Emirati.

## Overall school performance 2011-2012

Acceptable

## How has the school progressed since the last inspection?

Greenfield Community School provided an acceptable quality of education, with some good features. It had experienced rapid expansion and responded to this with increased resources, additional staff members and new systems. Students' personal development and arrangements for their protection and support were good across the school. Teaching and learning were good in all PYP classes and acceptable in the MYP and DP phases. The curriculum was acceptable in the MYP and good in the rest of the school. Leadership was acceptable overall with a new structure for sharing leadership through subject and grade leaders. Some of these posts had not been filled and other key staff lacked sufficient time to carry out these roles and

strengthen the monitoring of teaching and learning. Governance was good, but limited by the lack of direct representation of parents.

The school had planned an extensive programme to address the recommendations from the previous report. This included the introduction of Arabic-speaking teaching assistants in kindergarten classes and this had improved children's progress in Arabic. The implementation of other actions was at an early stage and the outcomes were less evident. Consequently, attainment still needed improvement, particularly in the MYP.

## Key strengths

- Children in the Kindergarten made good progress in English, mathematics and science and PYP students made good progress in most subjects;
- Students' personal and social development was good across the school;
- Teaching and learning through inquiry was good in the Kindergarten and from Grades 1 to 5;
- The school had good systems and procedures for students' protection and support.

## Recommendations

- Accelerate students' progress in mathematics in the PYP, in Arabic as an additional language, science and mathematics in the MYP and in English, mathematics and science in the DP;
- Improve teaching, especially in the MYP and DP sections of the school;
- Strengthen the MYP curriculum to provide sufficient challenge for all students, opportunities for collaborative and independent learning and critical thinking;
- Provide middle managers with time and resources to lead and monitor improvements in the curriculum and teaching and to raise standards in the MYP and DP sections of the school.

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

	KG	PYP	MYP	DP
<b>Islamic Education</b>				
<b>Attainment</b>	Not Applicable	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable
<b>Progress</b>	Not Applicable	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable
<b>Arabic as a first language</b>				
<b>Attainment</b>	Not Applicable	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable
<b>Progress</b>	Not Applicable	Good	Acceptable	Good
<b>Arabic as an additional language</b>				
<b>Attainment</b>	Not Applicable	Acceptable	Unsatisfactory	Not Applicable
<b>Progress</b>	Not Applicable	Acceptable	Unsatisfactory	Not Applicable
<b>Language of Instruction</b>				
<b>Attainment</b>	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
<b>Progress</b>	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
<b>English</b>				
<b>Attainment</b>	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
<b>Progress</b>	Good	Good	Good	Acceptable
<b>Mathematics</b>				
<b>Attainment</b>	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
<b>Progress</b>	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
<b>Science</b>				
<b>Attainment</b>	Good	Good	Acceptable	Good
<b>Progress</b>	Good	Good	Acceptable	Good

The attainment of Kindergarten children was good in mathematics and science and acceptable in English, as a significant minority of children were new to English. Attainment in English was acceptable across the school, with writing being weaker than speaking and listening. In the PYP, students achieved well in Islamic Education and gained understanding as well as knowledge of the Muslim faith, but in higher grades attainment was acceptable. Attainment of students learning Arabic as a first language was acceptable in the MYP and DP phases. For Arabic as an additional language, attainment was acceptable in the PYP and unsatisfactory in the MYP phase. Students' skills in spoken Arabic were weak and below grade-level expectations. In mathematics, attainment was acceptable, as students did not apply their knowledge of concepts and calculation extensively. Attainment in science in the MYP was acceptable and in line with curriculum expectations, but good in the DP.

Children made good progress in the Kindergarten in all subjects and gained experience listening to Arabic and English throughout the day. Students in the PYP made good progress in Islamic Education, Arabic as a first language, English and science. Students learning Arabic as an additional language made acceptable progress in the PYP but in the MYP their progress was unsatisfactory. Progress of students in the MYP was slower than that of students in other sections of the school. Students with special educational needs made good progress in English, mathematics and science and acceptable progress in Islamic Education and Arabic.

The progress of the Emirati students was good. Their attainment was good in Islamic Education and acceptable in Arabic, English, mathematics and science. Their knowledge and understanding of Islam was age-appropriate and they could apply Islamic principles to daily life. In Arabic, they gained good understanding of the language and used it confidently. In English their progress was in line with other students for speaking, listening, reading and writing. Emirati students' attainment in mathematics and science was in line with curriculum expectations across the school.

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

	KG	PYP	MYP	DP
Attitudes and behaviour	Good	Good	Good	Good
Understanding of Islam and appreciation of local traditions and culture	Good	Good	Good	Good
Civic, economic and environmental understanding	Good	Good	Good	Good

Attitudes and behaviour were good. Students were happy at school, showed self-control, were courteous to one another and generally behaved well. They understood the importance of healthy living and how diet and exercise affect health. Attendance was acceptable, but casual approaches to punctuality resulted in loss of lesson time. Students had a good understanding of Islam and its influence on life in Dubai and the world. They appreciated the traditions, heritage and values of the UAE. The school was an international community with more than 81 nationalities represented. Most valued the diversity of the school and Dubai, as well as their own culture. Older students talked confidently about diversity and how this enriches people's lives. Students welcomed responsibility. Student councils conveyed students' concerns and suggestions to management and tried to influence decision-making. Almost all students' knew how Dubai had grown and the majority had an age-appropriate understanding of its economy. Most cared for their school and the local environment. They kept the school clean and tidy. Older students knew about global concerns about recycling, clean energy, sustainability and conservation.



## How good are the teaching, learning and assessment?

	KG	PYP	MYP	DP
Teaching for effective learning	Good	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable
Quality of students' learning	Good	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable
Assessment	Good	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable

Teaching for effective learning was good in the KG and PYP and acceptable in the MYP and DP phases. Teachers had good subject knowledge of their subjects, but in the MYP a significant number lacked the experience and knowledge of how to deliver an inquiry-based curriculum successfully. In the good and outstanding lessons, especially in the PYP, students did learn through inquiry-based activities which extended their thinking. When teachers used a range of teaching methods and good quality resources, students participated in practical activities and learning was successful. Discussion and debates in lessons encouraged students to deepen their thinking, especially in the PYP. Despite some good teaching in MYP, too many lessons lacked meaningful opportunities for inquiry-based learning, solving problems or building students' critical thinking skills. In the MYP and DP phases teaching was formal; lessons lacked pace and failed to challenge students. A limited range of teaching methods was used and tasks did not always meet the wide range of students' needs.

Learning was good in all grades of the PYP and acceptable in the MYP and DP. Most students showed positive attitudes to learning and were respectful to teachers. In all grades of PYP they took responsibility for their own work, and worked well together in different groups. This enabled them to gain independence and be resourceful as they explored concepts and deepened their understanding and knowledge. They shared learning materials, built on the thinking of others, related learning to the real world, collaborated and took on leadership roles in lessons. Examples of this were seen in Arabic, English, mathematics, science, and Islamic Education. Students did not have opportunities to practise and refine these skills in MYP and DP. Consequently, their skills in analysis, enquiry, reflection and critical thinking were limited.

Assessment was good in all grades of the PYP. Teachers knew their students well and planned lessons that matched their needs and allowed them to make progress. They varied questions to meet the needs of

different students and used students' responses to assess individual progress. In the MYP assessment was acceptable. There were missed opportunities for self and peer assessment, the quality of feedback was inconsistent and assessment information was not used to match work to the wide range of students' needs. The systems for tracking students' progress had been amended but still lacked coherence and consistency across the different sections of the school.

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

	KG	PYP	MYP	DP
Curriculum quality	Good	Good	Acceptable	Good

The curriculum was acceptable in the MYP and good in the other phases. It was broad and reflected the school's mission. The transition between the PYP and MYP curriculum was not always well managed and students did not build on their skills of inquiry sufficiently. The curriculum was regularly reviewed. Teachers did not always take full advantage of the scope and sequence documents to plan lessons and adapt content sufficiently well to the needs of their students. The curriculum provided most challenge for students in the PYP, but in higher grades the planned curriculum did not always extend learning for all students or allow them to think critically. Curriculum planning in all sections of the school lacked the rigour needed to allow all students to learn successfully. There were some opportunities to make meaningful links to the community, but these were at an early stage. The school's extra-curricular activities programme was available to students in all grades.

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

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

Arrangements to ensure the students' health and safety were good. Students were well supervised as they left school at the end of the day, but supervision was less effective during the day and meant that some students arrived late for lessons. The premises were clean and maintained in good condition, ensuring safety and hygiene. Emergency routines were practised regularly. Students received good quality medical care from the staff at the well-equipped clinic. Medical supplies and confidential records were

stored securely. The school promoted healthy eating through the curriculum and the “food in school” policy.

The quality of support for students was good. The well-being of students was a high priority for all staff, and the strong homeroom system allowed students to form positive relationships with a teacher who knew them well. Most teachers managed behaviour purposefully in lessons and when concerns arose, they followed clear procedures by referring these to homeroom teachers and senior staff for resolution. Grade 10 students received extensive advice about options for courses and visits by representatives of universities provided older students with information about higher education and their future careers. Work experience for the IBCC students offered a vocational alternative to the DP. Procedures to identify, monitor and support students with special educational needs or who needed additional help were good. Their needs were met by a combination of in-class support and specialist teaching, which helped them to make good progress. Not all teachers in the MYP met the different needs of their students and this limited their learning. Attendance had improved as a result of the introduction of a computerised system, but there was insufficient attention to punctuality.

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

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

The quality of leadership was acceptable. The Principal had established systems which allowed the school to run smoothly with the significant increase in student numbers. Senior and middle leadership lacked stability, which hampered the pace of change needed to achieve the school’s priorities for improvement. The leadership structure included middle leaders and subject leaders. Most were committed to the school and were keen to implement changes in improvement plans.

Self-evaluation and improvement planning were acceptable. Leaders monitored teaching through lesson observations, checked that actions in improvement plans were carried out and sought the views of staff through analyses of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to progress. Goals in improvement

plans did not include interim benchmarks to allow monitoring of the impact of actions through the year. Leaders acknowledged areas where the school needed improvement, but lacked a full picture of the school's performance as data was not fully analysed or interpreted. The school had initiated an appropriate range of strategies to address the recommendations from the previous inspection, but it was too early for their full impact to be seen.

Partnerships with parents and the community were acceptable. Parents received report cards several times during the year and conferences allowed them to meet teachers to discuss their child's progress. Communication between the school and parents varied and was most successful in PYP, where teachers responded to parents promptly. This contrasted with parents' experience with MYP staff. The limited programme of social events and volunteers in classrooms in PYP was a promising start for greater communication and meaningful partnerships with all parents. Links with the wider community were limited.

Arrangements for governance were good and based on accountability, support and challenge. The executive and advisory boards worked closely with leaders and supported the school well. They provided funding for resources and staff to support the school's recent rapid growth and were realistic about the need for further support with the changes in senior leadership. Executive board members played a key role in monitoring progress of actions in improvement plans and delivering professional development, for example in Arabic. The boards had no elected representatives of parents and the wider community, so lacked a sufficiently broad base.

The management of staffing, facilities and resources was acceptable. The school ran smoothly and recent timetable changes resulted in more efficient use of teaching time. Teachers held professional qualifications, but in MYP few teachers were skilled at delivering the curriculum through inquiry. In MYP and DP, middle management personnel lacked sufficient time and resources to carry out their responsibilities effectively. Facilities were good overall, but outdoor areas lacked sufficient shading. At the time of the inspection there were no catering facilities in school, although canteen areas were available for eating packed lunches.

## 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	241	37%
	Last year	146	28%
Teachers	46		47%
Students	7		8%

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

About a third of parents responded to the survey, an increase over last year. Almost half of the teachers and very few students responded to their surveys. Most parents indicated overall satisfaction with the school, but a significant few indicated dissatisfaction. Teachers held similar views. While most parents believed that progress was good in English, only about half believed it was good in Islamic Education and Arabic as a first or additional language. More than a few parents believed that progress was not good in Arabic at either level. A majority believed that progress was good in mathematics and science. Most parents believed that their children were safe and well cared for at the school, but a fifth of them did not believe their children were safe on buses. A majority of parents reported that there was a good range of subjects, clubs and activities to choose from, but a significant few disagreed. Most believed that the homework given to their children was suitable, but a fifth of them disagreed. A majority of parents believed that the school was well led, that their opinions were listened to and that they were involved in improving the school. Similarly, a majority indicated that communication by the school was effective, but more than a quarter of them disagreed. Similar opinions were given about parent-teacher meetings. Teachers were broadly supportive of the school, but more than a few reported that they were not involved in school improvement or supported in their professional development. More than half of the teachers reported that the resources provided to them were insufficient or not of good quality. A fifth of parents echoed this belief. A majority of teachers reported that inspection had led to improvements at the school. The few students who responded to the survey held less positive views about the school's provision across a range of aspects.

## 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).

## Our work with schools

Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau (DSIB) inspects schools to inform parents, students and the wider community of the quality of education provided. Inspectors also give guidance to staff about how to improve the standard of education.

At the beginning of the inspection, we ask the principal and staff about the strengths of the school, what needs to improve and how they know. We use the information they give us to help us plan our time in school. During the inspection, we go into classes and join other activities in which students are involved. We also gather the views of students, parents and staff. We find their views very helpful and use them, together with the other information we have collected, to arrive at our view regarding the quality of education.

This report tells you what we found during the inspection and the quality of education in the school. We describe how well students are doing, how good the school is at helping them to learn and how well it cares for them. We comment on how well staff, parents and children work together and how they go about improving the school. Finally, we focus on how well the school is led and how staff help the school achieve its aims.

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