

INSPECTION REPORT

Jebel Ali Primary School

Report published in April 2013

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT Jebel Ali Primary School

Location	Jebel Ali
Type of school	Private
Website	www.jebelalishool.org
Telephone	04-884-6485
Address	P O Box 17111, Dubai
Principal	Jonathan Dean Price
Curriculum	UK
Gender of students	Boys and Girls
Age / Year Groups	4-11 / Foundation Stage - Grade 6
Attendance	Outstanding
Number of students on roll	662
Largest nationality group of Students	UK
Number of Emirati students	less than 1%
Date of the inspection	18th to 20th March 2013

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The context of the school

The school is on two sites in Jebel Ali Village and is a not for profit organisation. The number on roll had declined a little since the previous year. Students came from 44 different countries. The school taught the English Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum in the Reception classes and the English National Curriculum elsewhere. Foundation Stage children and students from five to seven years of age were taught on one campus and students aged from seven to eleven were taught on another situated within a kilometre.

Overall school performance 2012-2013

Good

Key strengths

- Students' outstanding attainment and progress in English, mathematics and science;
- Students' outstanding personal and social development;
- Outstanding practice in the assessment of students' progress;
- Outstanding arrangements for students' health and safety and for their guidance and support;
- Outstanding quality in most aspects of leadership and management.

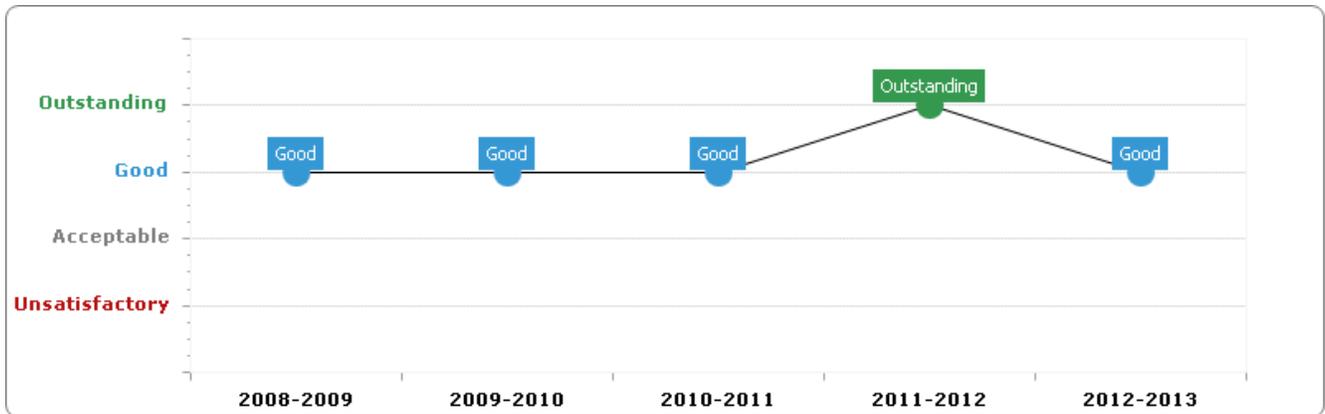
Recommendations

- Improve students' attainment and progress in Islamic Education and Arabic;
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning in the primary phase, especially in Islamic Education and Arabic;
- Review the Islamic Education curriculum for all students;
- Improve the accuracy of school self-evaluation.

Progress since the last inspection

- Staff had worked hard to improve provision for Islamic Education and Arabic but the changes had not led to improved students' progress;
- There was increased effectiveness in the assessment of students' learning in most subjects;
- The governors' communication with parents and knowledge of the school's overall performance had improved;
- There was successful integration of information and communication technology (ICT) within lessons.

Trend of overall performance



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

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Islamic Education			
Attainment	Not Applicable	Acceptable	Not Applicable
Progress	Not Applicable	Acceptable	Not Applicable
Arabic as a first language			
Attainment	Not Applicable	Acceptable	Not Applicable
Progress	Not Applicable	Acceptable	Not Applicable
Arabic as an additional language			
Attainment	Not Applicable	Acceptable	Not Applicable
Progress	Not Applicable	Acceptable	Not Applicable
English			
Attainment	Outstanding	Outstanding	Not Applicable
Progress	Outstanding	Outstanding	Not Applicable
Mathematics			
Attainment	Outstanding	Outstanding	Not Applicable
Progress	Outstanding	Outstanding	Not Applicable
Science			
Attainment	Outstanding	Outstanding	Not Applicable
Progress	Outstanding	Outstanding	Not Applicable

[Read paragraph](#)

How good is the students' personal and social development?

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Attitudes and behaviour	Outstanding	Outstanding	Not Applicable
Understanding of Islamic values and local, cultural and global awareness	Outstanding	Outstanding	Not Applicable
Community and environmental responsibility	Outstanding	Outstanding	Not Applicable

[Read paragraph](#)

How good are the teaching, learning and assessment?

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Teaching for effective learning	Outstanding	Good	Not Applicable
Quality of students' learning	Outstanding	Good	Not Applicable
Assessment	Outstanding	Outstanding	Not Applicable

[Read paragraph](#)

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

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Curriculum quality	Outstanding	Good	Not Applicable

[Read paragraph](#)

How well does the school protect and support students?

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Health and Safety	Outstanding	Outstanding	Not Applicable
Quality of Support	Outstanding	Outstanding	Not Applicable

[Read paragraph](#)

How good are the leadership and management of the school?

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

[Read paragraph](#)

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

Students' attainment was acceptable in Islamic Education and Arabic but outstanding in English, mathematics and science. In Islamic Education, students had acceptable levels of knowledge of key Islamic concepts. However, the Qur'an application of Tajweed and recitation rules was weak. In Arabic as a first and additional language, most students' listening skills were in line with expectations. Students were able to express basic ideas using a reasonable range of familiar words. However, speaking skills were less well developed in both subjects. Students' English speaking and listening skills were very well developed. Students could read and understand increasingly complex texts according to their ages. They read extensively for pleasure. There were some inconsistencies in writing throughout the school. In mathematics, Foundation Stage children could reliably count from 1 to 20. A majority could count well beyond 20 and could place numbers in order. Primary students had excellent understanding of numbers and could handle complex problems. They could explain their reasoning and the methods they used. In science, most students attained above age-related international standards in their knowledge and understanding of living things, materials and forces.

Students' progress was acceptable in Islamic Education and Arabic but outstanding in English, mathematics and science. In Islamic Education, most students progressed at an acceptable level in lessons and from their starting points except in the Qur'an recitation rules. In Arabic as a first and additional language, students made sufficient progress in handwriting and understanding grammar, but their extended writing skills were less well developed. In English, from the early stages, students' command of all language skills developed rapidly. There was sophisticated structure and fluency in speaking by the later years. In mathematics, the progress of Foundation Stage children exceeded the curriculum expectations, particularly in numeracy. Primary students continued to make exceptional progress through the phase, especially in problem solving. In science, almost all students made outstanding progress in investigating the world and acquiring the scientific language to describe, explain and apply their understanding.

[View judgements](#)

How good is the students' personal and social development?

Students' attitudes and behaviour were outstanding. Students had very positive and responsible attitudes and their behaviour was excellent in and out of the classrooms. Students played together very well. They were courteous and polite and responded very well to adults. They were self-disciplined, and could resolve difficulties without undue fuss. Relationships with other students and with staff members were very respectful. Students had excellent understanding of healthy living by making good food choices, taking

regular exercise and taking part in sporting activities. Levels of attendance were high and almost all students arrived at school promptly. The students had excellent understanding of the influences of the Islamic values across the school. They could trace many of the city's social aspects to it, for example, the high security levels, the dress codes in malls and the different Islamic events. They were able to explain in details the Islamic forms of worship, such as the Friday prayer, Hajj and fasting during Ramadan. They could also name mosques in Dubai and UAE. They knew well about the Islamic architecture of Dubai. They also demonstrated a high respect of their own culture and other cultures as well. Their understanding of the UAE's culture and history was strong and they could state clearly some of the differences between the past and present. Students had an excellent work ethic and good understanding of their responsibilities as members of the school community. They were well aware of various environmental issues in Dubai and could suggest possible ways of reducing pollution in the city.

[View judgements](#)

How good are the teaching, learning and assessment?

Teaching was of outstanding quality in the Foundation Stage and good in the primary phase. Teachers generally knew their subjects well, although their subject knowledge was less secure in Islamic Education and Arabic. The best teachers understood their students' needs, had high expectations of them and made learning exciting. They used a variety of resources and strategies to engage students in active learning and used time efficiently. Explanations were clear and their questions required students to explain their ideas and justify their answers. In such lessons, learning had real and relevant purposes, and motivated students to want to learn more. In Islamic Education and Arabic, the teachers' expectations of students were too low. Questions were mainly closed, with limited opportunities for thinking or dialogue. The teachers talked too much whilst the students listened passively. Consequently, progress by students was limited. Teaching in ICT, physical education and music was a strength of the school.

The quality of students' learning was outstanding in the Foundation Stage and good in the primary phase. Positive attitudes prevailed in almost all lessons and students were enthusiastic about learning. Most students were aware of their strengths and areas for improvement. They regularly reflected on the qualities needed to be successful learners. Almost all students demonstrated excellent listening skills and could concentrate well. They could follow instructions and take initiative equally well. Most students talked confidently about what they had learned and why it was important in their lives. Whilst they worked well independently, they especially enjoyed working with classmates and learning together. From the youngest to the oldest, they shared resources and took turns. Such collaborative learning opportunities were limited in Islamic Education and Arabic lessons. Most students used ICT confidently to extend their learning and deepen their understanding. They also enjoyed finding things out for themselves.

The assessment of learning was outstanding across the school. Systems and procedures for monitoring students' attainment and progress were well-established and had improved. Students were involved in assessing their own learning and the skills they had used. The tracking of progress over time was effective and accurate. Test results and assessment data were analysed and used to evaluate the effectiveness of teaching and of the curriculum. Most teachers used assessment information well to plan for the needs of all students. Students with additional needs were identified and expectations were matched to their abilities. The use of assessment information was less effective in Islamic Education and Arabic. Teachers' assessment of learning during lessons was constructive and contributed to students' self-assessment. In students' workbooks, the marking was generally good but not consistently so.

[View judgements](#)

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

The quality of the curriculum was outstanding in the Foundation Stage and good in the primary phase. The broad and balanced curriculum had a clear rationale that met the school's aims. The review process allowed teachers, students and parents to contribute to the development of the curriculum. There was good curriculum provision in the majority of key subjects. Transition arrangements were well planned and implemented between the key stages. The integrated curriculum approach greatly enhanced students' experiences in the key subjects and emphasised links to real-life situations. The curriculum for Islamic Education and Arabic was broadly acceptable. However, the Islamic Education curriculum and timetable for Arab Muslim students needed further review. There was an excellent range of extra-curricular activities, in particular the performing arts and the broad range of sports. There was a wide variety of enrichment activities, including visitors and visits that were linked to the planned curriculum. In addition, students benefited from the opportunity to travel for recreational purposes, for example, skiing trips to Europe.

[View judgements](#)

How well does the school protect and support students?

The school's health and safety arrangements were outstanding. The school was a very safe place and staff members cared for all the students. They had very effective policies and procedures that ensured students were safe at all times. Students enjoyed high levels of supervision in the school. The school's premises and equipment were kept in excellent condition. Students received excellent care from the nurses in the school. The school promoted healthy lifestyles through the monitoring of students' healthy food and providing various sporting and leisure activities. All staff members and students were fully aware of the child protection policy.

The quality of support for students was outstanding. There were very good relationships between all staff members and students, both within the classrooms and in the playgrounds. Teachers knew their students very well and there was mutual respect and trust. The school had very good procedures for monitoring students' attendance and punctuality. Students arrived promptly to their classes, ready to work. Teachers provided comprehensive information to students on their progress. Guidance was provided to students when necessary.

[View judgements](#)

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

The school identified students with special educational needs on entry, and routinely throughout their time in school, as different needs became apparent. Well-qualified and experienced specialist teachers provided support to students and offered advice to class teachers. The expectations of students were high, but not unreasonably so. There were attainable targets sensibly agreed with the students and their parents. Students and parents were involved in developing and reviewing the individual education programmes. The students' progress was good overall, rather than outstanding, because of inconsistencies in teaching.

How good are the leadership and management of the school?

The quality of leadership was outstanding. The school had a clear sense of direction that had been effectively shared with all staff members. The senior leaders were a cohesive working group with educational values held in common. There was a good system of delegated leadership through to the middle leaders, who held teachers to account for the quality of their work and for their students' progress. There were effective systems of communications within the school. Leaders had shown an acceptable capacity for improvement and supported the attainment of high standards in most subjects.

The quality of self-evaluation and improvement planning was good. There were good evaluation procedures for most areas of the school's work. This was particularly true of the tracking of students' progress in most subjects. The school's self-evaluation document was largely accurate. Teachers' professional needs were identified and met through a good performance management system. This included the head teacher being

held to account by the governors. The school action plan was accurate, but did not show how plans were linked to improved progress and attainment.

Partnerships with parents and the community were outstanding. Parents thought very highly of the school and what it provided for their children. Parents worked hard to support the school in various ways, such as helping to support learning. The Parent Teacher Association (PTA) organised fundraising for extra equipment and social events. Communications between homes and the school were clear and reports on students' progress helped parents support learning. The school was closely involved in the local community and Dubai. Sporting links were successful and supported the school's broad curriculum.

The quality of governance was outstanding. Governance of the school retained its previous strengths. The new chairman was leading improvements by acting promptly on all the recommendations in the previous inspection report. Parental involvement in decision making was to be strengthened through the election of the chair of the PTA to the governing board. More effective communication had been established between governors and parents. Governors were better informed about the curriculum and students' achievement through school visits and through receipt of detailed reports and subsequent discussions. The school's action plans and reports were overseen by the governing body, an improvement over previous years.

The quality of management, including staffing, facilities and resources, was outstanding. The school had well-developed systems and ran smoothly. Staffing had been improved with the appointment of Islamic Education teachers directly to the school. Other teachers were well qualified and deployed. The school had excellent facilities on both sites. There were well designed outside learning opportunities for younger students. There were specialist facilities, including excellent indoor and outdoor arrangements for physical education. Nearly all subjects were well resourced and there was a wide range of musical instruments available for students to learn. There were weaknesses in the Islamic Education book supply.

[View judgements](#)

What are the views of parents, teachers and students?

Before the inspection, the views of parents and teachers 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	202	57%
	Last year	162	24%
Teachers	32		65%
Students	There were no senior students in the school		

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

A majority of parents responded to their survey, more than last year. A majority of teachers responded to their survey. Parents and teachers were positive in their opinions of the school and there was generally little difference between their views. Nearly all parents agreed that progress was good in English, mathematics and science, but a smaller proportion considered it was good in Islamic Education and Arabic as an additional language. All parents believed that teaching and learning were good and that teachers made sure students knew how to improve their work. All reported that their children were safe and looked after in school and on the buses. Nearly all agreed that students were treated fairly. Nearly all parents thought that the school's leaders listened to their opinions but a minority did not agree they were involved in decision making. All parents were satisfied with the overall quality of education provided by the school.

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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