

# INSPECTION REPORT

## Emirates International School - Meadows

Report published in March 2013

## GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT Emirates International School - Meadows

Location	Emirates Hills
Type of school	Private
Website	www.eischools.ae
Telephone	04-362-9009
Address	Meadows 4, P.O. Box 120118 Dubai
Principals	David Hicks and Carmel Platt
Curriculum	UK/IB
Gender of students	Boys and Girls
Age / Grades or Year Groups	3-19 / Kindergarten to Grade 13
Attendance	Acceptable
Number of students on roll	1,567
Largest nationality group of Students	Arab
Number of Emirati students	24 (2%)
Dates of the inspection	25th to 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 Emirati students?.....	10
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

The Emirates International School - Meadows is located in the Meadows area, Emirates Hills. A private school, it offers education to boys and girls aged three to 19 years, from Kindergarten to Grade 13. At the time of the inspection there were 1,567 students on the roll. Over 80 nationalities were represented. Less than two per cent of the students were Emiratis.

Students followed the three programmes of the International Baccalaureate (IB) continuum of education and in Grade 11 students also took the International General Certificate of Education (IGCSE). In the post-16 phase, students followed the IB Diploma Programme, which the school was fully authorised to teach. The school was seeking full authorisation for the IB Primary Years Programme (PYP) and the Middle Years Programme (MYP).

There were 153 teachers, all of whom had appropriate qualifications, and 29 teaching assistants. There were two Principals, for the primary and high school phases respectively.

## Overall school performance 2012-2013

Good

### Key strengths

- The students' good attainment and progress in English, mathematics and science in the primary and secondary phases, and improvements in their attainment and progress in these subjects in the post-16 phase;
- The outstanding attitudes to learning displayed by students in the secondary and post-16 phases;
- The overall quality of care and support for students' health, safety, and personal and academic development;
- The improvements brought about by teachers under the leadership of the senior management team.

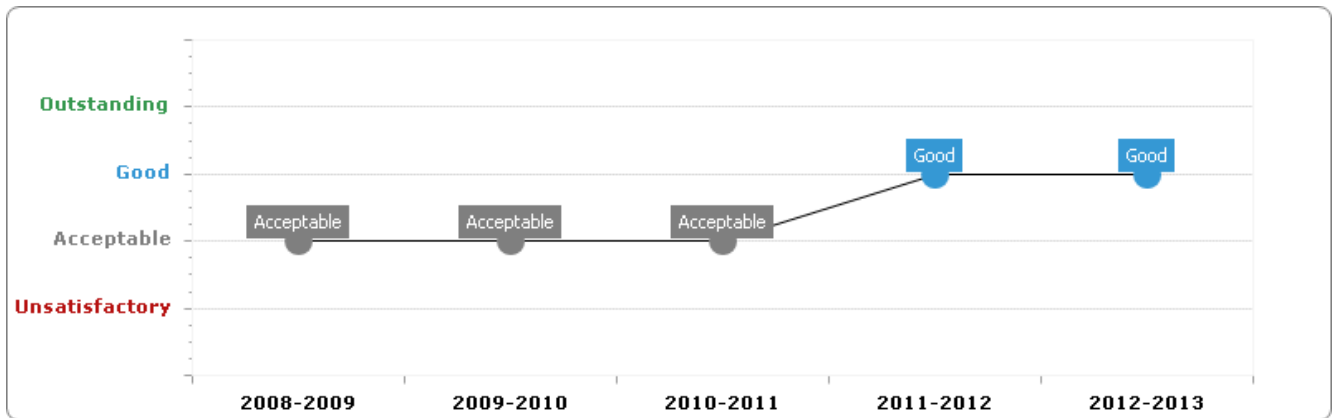
### Recommendations

- Improve the progress of students, including those with special educational needs, in Islamic Education and in Arabic;
- Assess the progress of children in the Kindergarten more systematically;
- Improve the curriculum in the Kindergarten by making learning experiences more child-centred, especially in English and science.

## Progress since the last inspection

- Students' attainment and progress in English, mathematics and science had improved in the post-16 phase. Attainment and progress in Islamic Education and Arabic in all phases remained broadly the same as the previous inspection;
- The quality and consistency of teaching and learning had improved, particularly in the post-16 phase;
- Improvements had been made in the use of assessment information to ensure that learning tasks met the needs of all students, but further work needed to be done;
- Senior staff members were successful in communicating details about the curriculum more clearly to parents and teachers, but further work needed to be done;
- Variation in the quality of leadership from middle managers had been reduced, though some inconsistencies remained.

## Trend of overall performance



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

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
<b>Islamic Education</b>				
<b>Attainment</b>	Not Applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
<b>Progress</b>	Not Applicable	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable
<b>Arabic as a first language</b>				
<b>Attainment</b>	Not Applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Not Applicable
<b>Progress</b>	Not Applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Not Applicable
<b>Arabic as an additional language</b>				
<b>Attainment</b>	Not Applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Not Applicable
<b>Progress</b>	Not Applicable	Good	Acceptable	Not Applicable
<b>English</b>				
<b>Attainment</b>	Acceptable	Good	Good	Outstanding
<b>Progress</b>	Acceptable	Good	Good	Outstanding
<b>Mathematics</b>				
<b>Attainment</b>	Good	Good	Outstanding	Good
<b>Progress</b>	Good	Good	Good	Good
<b>Science</b>				
<b>Attainment</b>	Acceptable	Good	Good	Outstanding
<b>Progress</b>	Acceptable	Good	Good	Outstanding

[Read paragraph](#)

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

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Attitudes and behaviour	Good	Good	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?

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Teaching for effective learning	Good	Good	Good	Outstanding
Quality of students' learning	Good	Good	Good	Outstanding
Assessment	Acceptable	Good	Good	Outstanding

[Read paragraph](#)



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

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Curriculum quality	Acceptable	Good	Good	Outstanding

[Read paragraph](#)

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

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Health and Safety	Good	Good	Outstanding	Outstanding
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
Partnerships with parents and the community	Outstanding
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 mixed across the key subjects and phases of the school. Attainment in Islamic Education and in Arabic was acceptable. Attainment in English and in science improved from acceptable in the Kindergarten to good in the next two phases, but it was outstanding in the post-16 phase. Attainment in mathematics was good, apart from the secondary phase, where it was outstanding. Most Muslim students in the primary phase knew the five pillars of Islam and pillars of faith. In the secondary and post-16 phases, most students had understanding of Hadeeth, Seerah, Fiqha and Islamic values and morals, in line with expectations. Qur'an recitation skills were weaker than the other skills. In Arabic as a first language, students had well developed listening and speaking skills. Their reading and comprehension skills were acceptable, but their writing skills were the weakest. In Arabic as an additional language, the majority of students were good at listening and reading. Extended writing and speaking were both areas for development. Most children in the Kindergarten showed appropriate attainment in English. In the primary, secondary and post-16 phases, most were exceeding expected levels of attainment. In mathematics, in the Kindergarten and primary phases, most children could work with numbers proficiently. Most students in the secondary phase and a majority in post-16 showed attainment which exceeded expectations in algebra, calculus and geometry. In science, Kindergarten children had acquired acceptable understanding of water and air travel in their studies. Students in the primary and secondary phases showed good attainment in topics such as chemical compounds and electricity. Post-16 students showed outstanding attainment in their sophisticated studies of chemistry, physics and biology.

Students' progress was also mixed. In Islamic Education and Arabic as an additional language it was good in the primary phase and in mathematics it was good in the secondary phase. Good progress in Islamic Education classes was evident in students' learning about Hajj and Islamic etiquettes. In the upper grades, progress in understanding Seerah and Islamic law was less strong. In Arabic as a first language, students' listening and reading comprehension skills were developing well. Limited progress was evident in communicating using standard Arabic and in writing. In Arabic as an additional language, students made better progress in learning new words than in using them for effective oral and written communication. Progress in English was good in the primary and secondary phases, but more varied in the Kindergarten. Most students in the post-16 phase made better than expected progress in English. Progress of Kindergarten children in mathematics was good because of the emphasis on practical work linked to everyday life. A majority of students in the other phases made better than expected progress, for example in solving problems. Progress in science improved as students moved up the grades; they met their learning objectives at an increasingly brisk pace.

[View judgements](#)

## How well does the school provide for Emirati students?

A very small proportion of the school's students were Emirati. As with their peers, progress and attainment varied from individual to individual and across different subjects. Overall, the progress and attainment of Emirati students were in line with the levels of their peers at each phase. Like their peers, Emirati students benefited from good teaching and positive relationships among students and between students and teachers. The school was successful in developing their knowledge and understanding of a range of cultures, including the history and values of the UAE. Emirati students therefore learned to value their own culture and those of others.

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

Students' behaviour and attitudes toward learning were consistently good in the Kindergarten and primary phases. In the secondary school and the post-16 phase, these aspects were outstanding. Students enthusiastically took on responsibilities such as those of prefects or members of the peer support team, in which they gave advice and assistance to other students. They benefited from many opportunities to learn about healthy lifestyles. Attendance was acceptable overall, but good in the secondary and post-16 phases. Students demonstrated clear understanding and appreciation of Islamic values. Non-Muslim students were aware of many Islamic practices such as the Friday prayer, Hajj and Ramadan. They knew about the Islamic architecture of Dubai and could link many of its social aspects to the influence of Islam, such as the peaceful and stable environment, the dress code in shopping malls, and the different Islamic events. Students across all phases had positive work ethics. They had their own creative ideas and enjoyed developing projects. Their loyalty and commitment to the school was strong. They knew the value of taking personal responsibility across all levels in the school and their contributions to the community were regular. They took leading roles in environmental projects, especially in recycling and energy conservation, which affected other students' daily lives positively.

[View judgements](#)

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

Teaching was good from the Kindergarten to the secondary phase and outstanding in the post-16 phase. Teachers had well developed knowledge of the subjects they taught. Specialist knowledge helped those in the post-16 phase to provide exceptional challenge to the older students, which helped students learn more. Lesson planning was undertaken collaboratively and focused clearly on what students were to learn. Teaching was often organised to promote collaboration among students and to allow them to develop and communicate their ideas. Teachers matched tasks to the needs of individuals and groups well. Questioning

by teachers often required students to give explanations rather than recall facts. On the few occasions when teaching was less effective, students' progress was restricted by too much teacher talk and the presentation of tasks which lacked purpose and context. There was evidence of high quality teaching in non-key subjects, including humanities, art, music, physical education and computing.

The quality of students' learning was good from the Kindergarten to secondary phase and outstanding in the post-16 phase. Students were attentive and enthusiastic learners across the school. From an early age, they were encouraged to explain to their peers what they had learned. These discussions helped them to consolidate and extend their learning. They benefited from opportunities to see connections between different areas of learning and the applications to real life. For example, statistical skills taught in mathematics were linked to the demographics taught in geography lessons. Information and communication technology was used extensively to support and enhance learning in most subjects. Examples included mathematics, when dynamic presentations helped students to understand concepts, and physical education, when students used video to evaluate their own performances. Critical thinking, reflection and enquiry skills were strong across most of the school. For example, in the best science lessons, students designed their own experiments; consequently they learned more than the curriculum expectations.

The assessment of learning was acceptable in the Kindergarten, good in the primary and secondary phases and outstanding in the post-16 phase. Teachers in the Kindergarten and primary phases aligned their approaches to the IB-PYP to ensure consistency and increased accuracy of assessment in these phases. All teachers in the school gathered assessment data to track the progress of individual students. In the post-16 phase a thorough programme of assessment and review had produced accurate and comprehensive data which teachers analysed. Their analysis helped them to provide outstanding support and feedback to all students. Overall, most students knew their strengths and weaknesses and were aware of what they needed to do to improve their work. Self-assessment and peer assessment were evident in almost all post-16 lessons and, in most classes, in the primary and secondary phases.

[View judgements](#)

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

The curriculum was acceptable in the Kindergarten, good in the primary and secondary phases, and outstanding in the post-16 phase. This profile reflected the stages of implementation of the different IB programmes. All phases had breadth and balance, and transition between the phases was facilitated by good communication between curriculum leaders. Regular review was a feature of each phase, and students and parents were beginning to be involved in this process. Provision for all groups of students was enhanced by the growing use of inquiry activities throughout each phase. Cross-curricular links were

particularly strong because of the 'Theory of Knowledge' component of the IB-DP and the interdisciplinary links in the MYP. Opportunities for independent learning, research and critical thinking existed in many classrooms, through skillfully designed, collaborative group research and problem solving. The curriculum was enriched in all phases by extensive extra-curricular activities. A creativity, action and service programme facilitated student-led interactions with the outside community.

[View judgements](#)

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

Attention to students' health and safety was good in the Kindergarten and primary phases, and outstanding in the secondary and post-16 phases. Newly developed procedures at the start and end of each day ensured that students who were delivered and collected by parents were safe from danger. A few students did not use their seat belts properly but this changed during the inspection. Fire safety was very effectively promoted throughout the school. The premises and facilities were extremely well maintained, safe, hygienic and secure. Teachers in many curriculum areas gave students excellent opportunities to learn about the importance of living healthily. Child protection policies were robust and procedures to follow them were fully understood by all staff members.

The quality of support for students was good in the Kindergarten and primary phases, and outstanding in the secondary and post-16 phases. Teachers developed outstanding relationships with their students, who generally exhibited excellent attitudes to learning. Behaviour was well managed, and no anti-social behaviour was seen. Teachers identified the special educational needs of students well. They had developed good systems to give those students additional support when necessary in classes and during withdrawal periods. Staff members monitored students' attendance and punctuality effectively overall.

[View judgements](#)

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

Provision for students with special educational needs was good. The learning support team had developed secure systems which sensitively supported many of the students who had been identified as having special educational needs. Those with learning or behavioural difficulties were usually well supported and so made good progress. In Islamic Education and Arabic, the progress of students with special needs was not as rapid because of weaknesses in teaching. Detailed documents were available for all students which identified their individual needs and enabled the teachers who worked with them to plan to help the students learn.

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

Leadership of the school was good. The principals and other members of the senior leadership team promoted their vision for the school very effectively, and supported the staff very well to implement it. A high quality leadership training programme was helping a significant number of staff members to take responsibility for improving aspects of the school's work. There was consistency in the quality of work of middle managers, although further work was needed. The school's capacity to improve was evident.

The quality of self-evaluation and improvement was good. Through a wide range of processes, almost all leaders had an accurate picture of the strengths and weaknesses in their areas of responsibility. The quality of teaching and learning was monitored closely and, as a result, there had been improvements in many aspects. A few middle leaders had an incomplete understanding of the curriculum standards and attainment results in their areas.

Partnership with parents and the community was outstanding. Parents had a wide range of opportunities to be involved in activities and events. A parent advisory board contributed to decision-making in the school. The curriculum review team included parent and student representatives. Staff members were helping parents to build up their understanding of the curriculum, but a few parents remained confused about curriculum developments. Communication with parents was regular and helpful. The school had productive links with a wide range of other schools and organisations in the community.

Governance of the school was good. There was no parent representative on the board of governors, but the board and its director responded well to issues as they arose. They were closely involved in leading the improvement of the school. They supported the leadership team well and exercised accountability in appropriate ways.

Management of the school was good. Daily routines worked smoothly. Almost all teachers were well qualified and able to face the challenges of modern teaching and learning. Resources were generally in good supply, and the provision and use of information technology had improved significantly. School facilities were of high quality overall.

[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	141	13%
	Last year	187	16%
Teachers	53		33%
Students	90		22%

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

Only a few parents responded to their survey, a lower rate than last year. Around one-third of the teachers and a fifth of the senior students responded to their surveys. Most parents and students were, on the whole, satisfied with the quality of education. While parents were broadly positive about their children's progress in English and mathematics, they were less positive about progress in other key subjects. Most were satisfied about communication from the school. They reported that their children enjoyed school, were treated fairly, and that the quality of teaching and learning was good. A significant minority of parents had concerns about how the school dealt with bullying and the quality of guidance for their children. Senior students' opinions were generally positive, but a few disagreed that their progress was good in mathematics. Students were less positive about the curriculum choices available to them and the support provided to students with special needs. Only a minority of students agreed that the school's leaders listened to their opinions about the school. Teachers' views on the different aspects of the school were overwhelmingly positive.



## What happens next?

The school has been asked to prepare and submit an updated action plan to DSIB within two months of receiving the most recent report. This plan should address:

- Recommendations from DSIB;
- Areas identified by the school as requiring improvement;
- Other external reports or sources of information that comment on the work of the school;
- Priorities arising from the school's unique characteristics.

The next inspection will report on the progress made by the school.

**Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau**

**Knowledge and Human Development Authority**

## How to contact us

If you have a concern or wish to comment on any aspect of this report you should contact:

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



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