

# INSPECTION REPORT

## Greenfield Community School

Report published in April 2013

## GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT Greenfield Community School

Location	Green Community
Type of school	Private
Website	www.gcschool.ae
Telephone	04-885-6600
Address	Green Community, P O Box 282627, Dubai
Principal	Angela Hollington
Curriculum	IB
Gender of students	Boys and Girls
Age / Grades	4-18 / Kindergarten 1 - Grade 10
Attendance	Acceptable
Number of students on roll	1045
Largest nationality group of Students	European
Number of Emirati students	13 (1%)
Date of the inspection	18th to 21st March 2013

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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 1045 students, aged from four to 18 years at the time of inspection. The school followed the International Baccalaureate (IB) curriculum. The MYP authorisation was scheduled for April 2013. 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 Diploma Programme (DP) and the International Baccalaureate Career-related Certificate (IBCC). English was the language of instruction and Arabic, Spanish, German and French were also provided.

The school was led by the Principal, the Head of Primary and Secondary, Dean of students, Grade level co-ordinators and curriculum leaders for the Primary, Middle and Diploma & IBCC Programmes. The 103 teachers had professional teaching qualifications. Thirty seven per cent of the teachers were new to the school at the start of the year. Six Arabic-speaking classroom assistants supported teaching in all Kindergarten classes and five specialised Arabic assistants supported the curriculum across the school.

Students were grouped into 46 classes, with smaller numbers of students in Grade 11 and 12 classes. Eighty three nationalities were represented in the school with 36 languages. Twelve per cent of the students spoke Arabic as a first language. About half the students were learning English as an additional language. Twelve students, about one per cent, were Emirati.

## Overall school performance 2012-2013

Acceptable

### Key strengths

- The good attainment and progress in almost all subjects in Kindergarten and Primary;
- All aspects of personal and social development were at least good across school;
- Teaching, learning and assessment were consistently good in Kindergarten and Primary;
- The positive outcomes of good leadership in PYP.

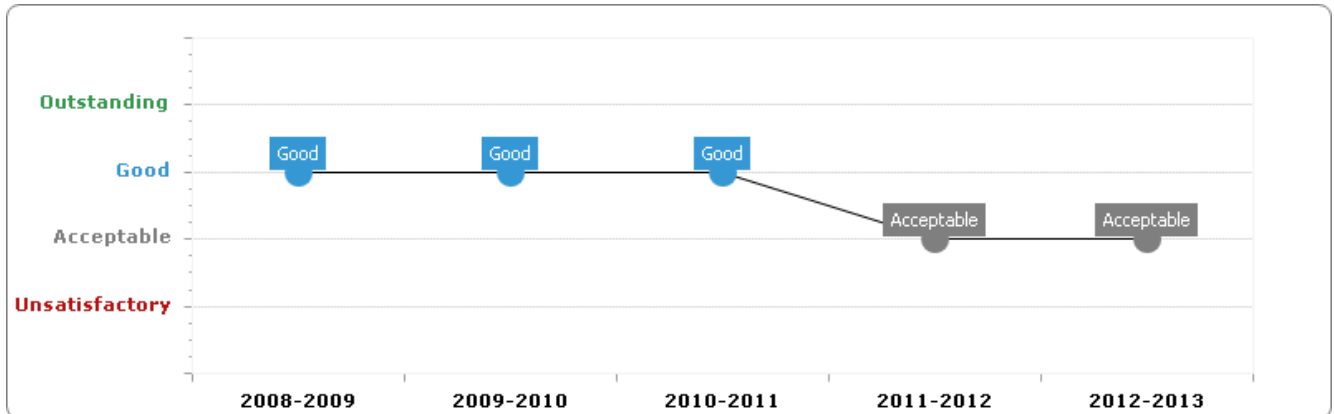
### Recommendations

- Continue to raise attainment and progress in all phases, particularly in MYP and DP;
- Improve teaching, learning and assessment in MYP and DP by:
  - continuing to strengthen the use of inquiry during lessons;
  - raising the level of intellectual rigour in MYP and DP;
- Further implement the written curriculum, particularly in MYP, and comply with the Ministry of Education requirements for Arabic;
- Ensure self-evaluation is based on an accurate analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the school.

## Progress since the last inspection

- The better progress in Islamic Education in DP, in Arabic as an additional language in MYP and mathematics in PYP;
- The better attainment in English and mathematics in PYP;
- The outstanding personal and social development in Kindergarten;
- The improved leadership, partnerships with parents and the community, and management of facilities.

## Trend of overall performance



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

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

[Read paragraph](#)

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

	Kindergarten	PYP	MYP	DP
Attitudes and behaviour	Outstanding	Good	Good	Good
Understanding of Islamic values and local, cultural and global awareness	Outstanding	Good	Good	Good
Community and environmental responsibility	Outstanding	Good	Good	Good

[Read paragraph](#)

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

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

[Read paragraph](#)



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

	Kindergarten	PYP	MYP	DP
Curriculum quality	Good	Good	Good	Good

[Read paragraph](#)

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

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

[Read paragraph](#)

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

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

[Read paragraph](#)

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

In Islamic Education, most students could explain the pillars of Islam, Islamic values, and morals. They linked their understanding of concepts and morals to the Islamic sources such as Qur'an verses and Hadiith in line with expectations. However, this was better in PYP than in MYP and DP. In Arabic as a first language, listening, speaking and reading skills were good in PYP and acceptable for most students in MYP and DP. The writing skills were acceptable across the school. In Arabic as an additional language, most students in PYP could say a few sentences about themselves. Most students in MYP had limited reading and writing skills. Attainment in English was acceptable in Kindergarten, MYP and DP. It was good in PYP. Children developed their listening and speaking skills well in Kindergarten, but skills in reading were not as strong. In PYP, listening and speaking skills were well developed. Reading comprehension and writing had improved significantly. In MYP, students continued to communicate well during group discussions and listened carefully to the views of others. However, too much emphasis on the mechanics of English, developed in isolation from writing, led to a lack of creativity. Reading was below expected levels and students had a limited awareness of the role of literature. In mathematics, attainment was good in Kindergarten and PYP and acceptable in MYP and DP. The majority of Kindergarten and PYP students exceeded international expectations in areas of mathematics such as number, 2-D and 3-D shapes and measurement. Most students in MYP and DP achieved in line with curriculum expectations in their studies of topics such as geometry, quadratic equations, Pythagoras's theorem and differentiation. Attainment in science was good in Kindergarten and PYP, and acceptable in MYP and DP. Students developed good inquiry skills at an early age and controlled their own investigations. In the older classes, students' attainment was in line with curriculum expectations.

In Islamic Education, the progress of the majority of students in understanding Islamic principles, values and morals was above expectations in PYP. Arab students in PYP and the majority of students in MYP and DP had weak recitation skills. In PYP, the majority of students taking Arabic as a first language made good progress in improving their listening, speaking and reading skills. Progress in writing was acceptable across the school. Most students taking Arabic as an additional language made acceptable progress improving their listening and speaking skills, whilst progress in writing was limited. Progress in English was good in Kindergarten and PYP and was resulting in higher attainment. Students from the whole range of language backgrounds rapidly acquired listening and speaking skills. However, students with special educational needs made slower progress because work was not well matched to their needs. In MYP and DP, progress in mathematics was acceptable because students of different abilities were not always challenged sufficiently and teaching lacked rigour. In science, progress was good in Kindergarten and PYP, acceptable in MYP and good in DP. Students developed a deeper understanding as they revisited topics. Students at

the end of MYP and DP had broadened their understanding of scientific concepts. The progress of students with special educational needs was acceptable in almost all subjects.

[View judgements](#)

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

Attainment and progress for Emirati students were good in English, mathematics and science in Kindergarten and PYP. This was in line with their peers. Children began well in developing their speaking and listening skills in English as a result of effective teaching. Arabic skills also developed well in Kindergarten partly as a result of the work of Arabic speaking teaching assistants although development of Arabic skills was more erratic and slower elsewhere in school. In PYP, progress in Islamic Education was slower than for the non-Arabic speakers group due to the quality of teaching.

In MYP, Emirati students' attainment and progress were acceptable overall. This was because, whilst improving, opportunities to develop higher level skills, such as inquiry and critical thinking were too inconsistent. The large proportion of Emirati students identified as having special educational needs made acceptable progress. The behaviour and attitudes to learning of Emirati students were outstanding in Kindergarten, where students treated each other with sensitivity and care, and good elsewhere. In the main, these attitudes supported their learning well. However, whilst improving, attendance and punctuality were worse than those of other students. The curriculum reflected the culture of Emirati students well and Emirati parents made an excellent contribution to National Day. All other aspects of provision were similar to those of the majority of students.

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

Attitudes and behaviour were good; in Kindergarten, they were outstanding. Students were happy at school, showed self-control and were courteous to one another, to teachers and to other adults. They understood the importance of healthy living. Attendance and punctuality were good. In classrooms, they were courteous and respectful in their peer reviews. Students' understanding of the influence of Islamic values and their local, cultural and global awareness were good in all phases except Kindergarten where they were outstanding. Students had a well-developed understanding of the impact of Islamic values on the modern life of Dubai. They also showed strong appreciation of their own culture, other cultures and how the diversity of Dubai enriched their lives. This appreciation, especially of the heritage and culture of the UAE including food, clothes and celebrations, was much stronger in Kindergarten than in the other

phases. Most students had an age-appropriate understanding of the environmental problems challenging Dubai and how rapid growth had influenced its development and values. Several students saw the need for solar energy to power desalination plants and were concerned about the problems of keeping Dubai 'green'. Many had generously raised money to help those less fortunate than themselves.

[View judgements](#)

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

Teaching was good overall in Kindergarten and in PYP, and acceptable in the MYP and DP. Subject knowledge was strong in most areas of the school. Knowledge about how children learn was better for younger students. A particular strength was the way in which students used rubrics to reflect on their work and identify next steps in learning. Teachers asked open questions which helped students to develop their thinking skills. Teaching was improving in MYP and DP, especially in science, but remained too inconsistent in meeting the needs of all students, for example the more able and those with special educational needs. In some lessons in MYP and DP, a narrow range of teaching strategies was used which failed to engage students' interests and provided few opportunities to develop critical thinking and inquiry skills. These lessons lacked intellectual rigour. In PYP, teaching in Islamic Education was unsatisfactory for Arab students due to a lack of subject knowledge, but was good for non-Arab students. In Arabic, expectations were occasionally too low.

Learning was good in Kindergarten and in PYP. Students worked hard and responded with concentration to challenging tasks. Elsewhere, learning was acceptable. Throughout the school, students had positive attitudes to their work. For example, Grade 4 and 5 students enthusiastically presented their summative assessments to an audience of parents. Most performed with confidence and flair. Students were beginning to assume responsibility for their work. They engaged in meaningful collaboration. They connected their learning well to real life, for example recognising that finding ways to resolve conflicts during group work was a skill for life. In a minority of lessons, especially in MYP, students' critical thinking and inquiry skills were limited by lack of opportunity. In a small minority of lessons, students were restless when there were few opportunities to participate actively.

Assessment was good in Kindergarten and PYP and was acceptable in MYP and DP. Assessment processes for younger students were effective and used well to monitor students' progress, especially in English. This information was also used to plan lessons that closely matched students' needs and interests. In some areas, there were frequent opportunities for peer- and self-assessment, raising expectations of what students could achieve. The quality of oral feedback was good and helped students to improve their work

but written feedback was more variable in quality. Assessment for older students was improving, but was not always accurate. There were limited opportunities for peer- and self-assessment in MYP, for example in some science and mathematics lessons. The analysis of data to inform self-evaluation was underdeveloped across school.

[View judgements](#)

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

The curriculum was good across the school. Its rationale was firmly based on the school's goals and the IBO mission statement. It was broad and balanced across the school and there was some choice for students, particularly in the DP and IBCC. Transition arrangements had been strengthened to prepare students better for the next phase of their education, particularly between Grades 5 and 6. The curriculum was regularly revised as part of the collaborative planning process in PYP and MYP and reviewed annually by curriculum leaders. The on-going development of the IB programmes resulted in a challenging curriculum with cross-curricular links that met the needs of all students well. Inquiry in most classrooms provided many good opportunities for independent learning and research. A wide variety of electives, extra-curricular activities, inter-school sports and field trips enriched the offerings for students and increasing numbers of activities were being directed by students. A growing number of links with the community, particularly those involving the IBCC, enhanced learning. The curriculum did not fully comply with the requirements of the MoE for Arabic in both MYP and DP.

[View judgements](#)

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

Arrangements to ensure the students' health and safety were good. Students were well supervised as they left school at the end of the day. The premises were well maintained and in good condition. Students received good quality medical care from the well-equipped clinic. Child protection policies were in place and most teachers and students understood the steps to follow if a problem arose. However, because of the nature of the design of the school, there were areas where students gathered without supervision. In some of the areas of the school floors were slippery and were dangerous when wet or sandy. Almost all staff had good relationships with students and managed behaviour very well. The use of students to resolve conflicts through peer mediation and encouragement to try to come up with their own solutions had proved to be successful. The school had effective systems to promote attendance but this was inconsistent across all groups of students.

The school counsellor and home-room staff provided good pastoral support. Guidance for careers and higher education was effectively provided by senior academic staff.

[View judgements](#)

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

The school was inclusive to students with special educational needs. The school had a dedicated team of teachers for special educational needs and English as an additional language who provided good support to the many nationalities admitted by the school. Teachers taught students directly in pull-out sessions when the rest of the class was learning an additional language. There were a few support staff who provided some in-class support and the progress of all students was monitored by the specialist staff in conjunction with academic leaders. Most of the students who received support had an individual educational plan and others had advisory guidance sheets. The transitory population of the school meant that there were more students being identified every month and the school was developing more consistency in assessing students' needs before they entered. Classroom teachers provided inconsistent support for students with special educational needs; not all had sensitivity to their differing needs.

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

The quality of leadership was good. The Principal promoted a team spirit and lead a unified team of senior and middle managers, leading to a positive working ethos in school. New leaders had been appointed. Most were dynamic, communicated well and had high standards. Most of the staff showed a strong commitment and shared the same vision as the senior leaders, although new middle leaders and staff were still establishing themselves. The leadership of the PYP was strong. The Principal had devised practical activities to secure further improvement to build upon the existing strengths in PYP. The new Secondary Principal was equally driven to improve MYP and DP but he and his team were facing more complex challenges in their phase and sometimes lacked focus. Most leaders had the capacity to improve and they had some success in raising the educational outcomes of their students.

Self-evaluation and improvement plans were acceptable. The school had addressed the issues from the previous report. Priorities for improvement were identified clearly and distributed between the school leaders at all levels. These included milestones which were monitored closely through a reporting and reviewing system. However, the timeline to achieve them was sometimes too short. The quality of the

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monitoring of teaching and learning varied between departments and phases. It was more focused in PYP but lacked consistency in the secondary phase. Across school, the understanding of the DSIB framework varied, leading to inaccuracies when using data and evaluating lessons. The recommendations from the previous report had been taken seriously and signs of improvement in some aspects of the school life had been noted. For example, the attainment of students in English and mathematics in PYP and their progress in Islamic Education in DP had improved. Progress overall was slower in MYP. Opportunities for professional development were expanding and teachers had more time for planning than they had previously.

The partnership and communication with parents were good. Parents were supportive of the school and agreed that their children were happy and safe. They were regularly informed about both the academic and the personal development of their children through the school reporting system. A large number of parents attended their children's presentation in PYP during the inspection. More than a thousand parents participated in the school's International Day. The MYP team successfully engaged parents in workshops to raise awareness around self-harming and cyber-bullying. Links with local businesses and the community were improving.

Governance in school was good. A dynamic board of governors supported the leadership team well and shared the same vision for improvement. Governors were focused and passionate about providing the best education for their students. This included an advisory board made of parents and teachers, co-chaired by the Taaleem marketing director reporting back to the executive board. They had invested time and resources in securing the best learning outcomes for their students. They held the school leadership team to account but students' outcomes, particularly in MYP, remained mainly acceptable.

Staffing and resources were good. The students had now access to more shaded areas and catering facilities in the canteen. Teachers had more time for planning collaboratively. Teachers were well qualified and deployed effectively. Resources for learning such as interactive boards in lessons were regularly used. The school was introducing iPods and iPads in PYP and an e-learning expert was monitoring their impact on students' learning. Most of the sports facilities were of good quality although a few items needed to be replaced. The number of books in the library was increasing and included a variety of attractive Arabic books and magazines in the foreign languages taught in school. The science laboratories were used effectively during the inspection.

[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	192	26%
	Last year	241	40%
Teachers	75		62%
Students	74		76%

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

The majority of teachers responded to the survey. They were satisfied with most aspects of the school. Their only concerns were about their roles in decision making and the accuracy of the inspection process. About a quarter of the parents responded to the survey. Most parents were pleased with most aspects of the school, particularly teaching, learning and the safety of students at school. They were generally very positive about students' progress in the key subjects. Both Muslim and non-Muslim parents indicated that the understanding of Islam in the school was good. Most students responded to the survey. They agreed with parents about the good understanding of Islam throughout the school and were positive about their progress in Arabic and English. However, issues of concern to them were students' behaviour both inside and outside the classroom including bullying, as well as educational choices and the overall quality of the education they received.



## 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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