

# INSPECTION REPORT

## Jumeirah English Speaking School

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Knowledge and Human Development Authority

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## GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT Jumeirah English Speaking School

Location	Al Safa
Type of school	Private
Website	www.jess.sch.ae
Telephone	04-3945515
Address	PO Box 24942, Al Safa, Dubai
Principal	Ruth Mary Burke
Curriculum	UK
Gender of students	Boys and Girls
Age / Grades or Year Groups	3-11 / Foundation Stage 1 to Year 6
Attendance	Outstanding
Number of students on roll	705
Students' nationalities	UK
Number of Emirati students	7 (1%)
Date of the inspection	15th to 17th October 2012

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## The context of the school

Jumeirah English Speaking School (JESS) is located in the Al Safa district and caters for students from three to 11 years of age.

Children study the Foundation Stage curriculum initially and then the English National Curriculum after two years in school.

The school is the partner school of JESS Arabian Ranches to which many students transfer at the age of 11 years. Both schools have the same Director of Education and Governing Body. At the time of the inspection, the Headteacher was on maternity leave and the Deputy Headteacher was the Acting Headteacher.

## Overall school performance 2012-2013

Outstanding

## Key strengths

- This well established and popular school had continued to ensure high academic standards;
- Students had outstanding attitudes to learning which contributed extensively to their outstanding progress;
- Exciting learning opportunities provided by the outstanding teaching and curriculum ensured that all students made the best of themselves;
- There were outstanding arrangements for students' safety, care and guidance;
- All aspects of outstanding leadership ensured that the positive learning ethos was at its centre.

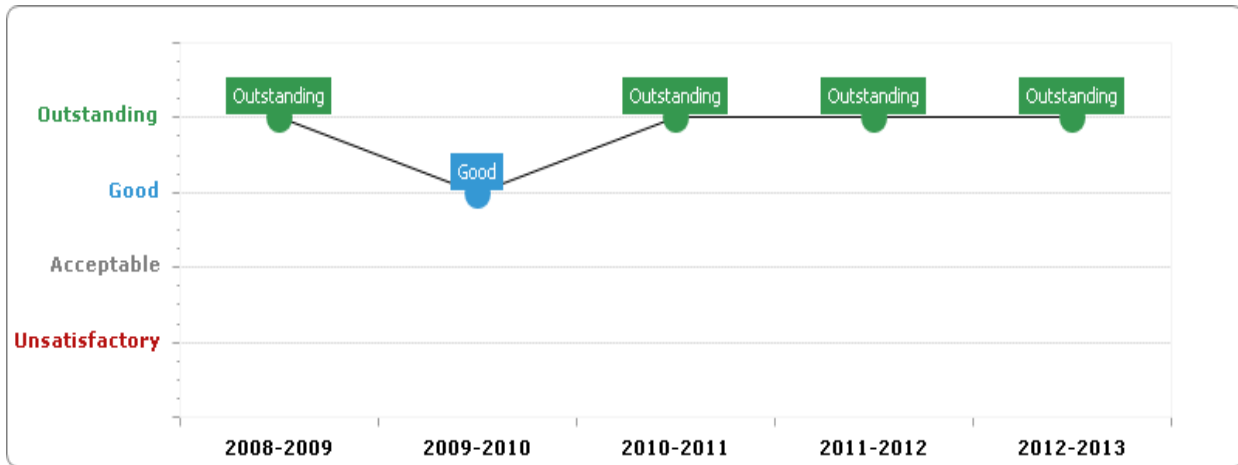
## Recommendations

- Ensure that improvements in Islamic Education and Arabic attainment are built on in upper primary by embedding improvements in teaching quality;
- Extend the current outstanding practice in tracking students' progress in the main subjects to all other subjects;
- Further develop the curriculum by encouraging a wider application of English and mathematics skills across all subjects.

## Progress since the last inspection

- The school had made good progress in developing the range of teaching and learning strategies and was using better assessment information to make small but significant gains in attainment in Islamic Education and Arabic;
- There was more challenge for higher attaining students in English, mathematics and science in particular;
- The school had succeeded in maintaining all of its outstanding provision and outcomes.

## Trend of overall performance



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

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

[Read paragraph](#)

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

	Foundation Stage	Primary
Attitudes and behaviour	Outstanding	Outstanding
Understanding of Islamic values and local, cultural and global awareness	Outstanding	Outstanding
Community and environmental responsibility	Outstanding	Outstanding

[Read paragraph](#)

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

	Foundation Stage	Primary
Teaching for effective learning	Outstanding	Outstanding
Quality of students' learning	Outstanding	Outstanding
Assessment	Outstanding	Outstanding

[Read paragraph](#)



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

	Foundation Stage	Primary
Curriculum quality	Outstanding	Outstanding

[Read paragraph](#)

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

	Foundation Stage	Primary
Health and Safety	Outstanding	Outstanding
Quality of Support	Outstanding	Outstanding

[Read paragraph](#)

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

	Whole school
Quality of leadership	Outstanding
Self-evaluation and improvement planning	Outstanding
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 outstanding in the majority of subjects. It was acceptable in Islamic Education and Arabic but had improved. In Islamic Education, students could explain the five pillars of Islam well but The Holy Qur'an recitation skills were less well developed. Speaking and listening skills in Arabic as an additional language were more advanced than those of reading and writing. All aspects of English were strong; students were particularly astute listeners. In mathematics, students were equally proficient in all aspects of number, shape, space and measure and data handling but their use of mathematical language was variable. In science, students had an outstanding knowledge of life and living processes, materials and their properties and of forces. They had a good and improving application of scientific method and scientific vocabulary.

Students' progress was also outstanding in the majority of subjects; they made good progress in Islamic Education and Arabic. In Islamic Education, students acquired a good understanding of the Seerah but made slower progress in recitation. Progress in speaking and listening in Arabic was good but progress was slower in writing. Younger students made good progress in all aspects of Arabic as an additional language, but older ones made slower progress in writing. In English, students amassed a wide vocabulary and used it effectively in their extended writing. In mathematics, Foundation Stage children made fast progress in calculating and shape, space and measurement while older students made good progress in using and applying mathematics. In science, students made outstanding progress in using the senses to explore the world and good progress in designing investigations. Students with special educational needs made outstanding progress.

[View judgements](#)

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

Emirati students were fully integrated into the life of the school. Their attainment was at least good in the main subjects and, in English, it was outstanding. They made mostly outstanding progress in these subjects. They mixed easily with others and enjoyed school. They played a full part in lessons and their behaviour was excellent. They engaged well in lessons and tried hard. They worked very well in groups of other students during tasks and took increasing responsibility for their own learning. They knew what to do to improve their work. Their attendance and punctuality were outstanding. Emirati students completed their homework responsibly and attended after-school clubs as other students did. Reports to parents were regular, informative and helpful and parents attended meetings with teachers for more detailed information. Parents were involved in school life and made a valuable contribution to their children's understanding of Islamic values and Emirati customs.

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

Students' personal and social development was outstanding. Staff-student relationships were the cornerstone of the school's excellent ethos. Mutual trust and respect abounded. Behaviour in lessons and around school was exemplary. Students were mature, thoughtful and very responsible. Most took a very mature stance on healthy eating and exercise. Attendance was outstanding. Through extensive curriculum opportunities, students developed an outstanding knowledge of Islamic values and although they may not have fully recognised it, lived them out in their time in school. Older students recognised how the values influenced life in Dubai. They knew the history of Dubai and why it had developed and prospered. Students had a good understanding of their own culture but some younger ones with a mix of backgrounds were uncertain about their 'home' country heritage. Students took full advantage of the many opportunities to take community responsibility. Foundation Stage students managed their own resources commendably; older students organised charity events and made school improvement recommendations. They took pride in their school and looked after it extremely well. This attention to the environment extended beyond the school site.

[View judgements](#)

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

Teaching for effective learning was outstanding. Almost all teachers had excellent subject knowledge. They inspired students, had high expectations of them and valued their achievements. Teachers were skilful at explaining the purpose of new learning and setting it in context. They planned a range of exciting play and practical activities and used high quality resources to enhance learning and deepen understanding of the abstract. Time was used well in most lessons. Working collaboratively or independently, students were increasingly encouraged to take risks and so grew in confidence. Teachers' adept questioning skills enabled students to reflect on their learning. A minority of teachers did not empower students to be sufficiently independent learners. In a few lessons, the objectives were unclear and lacked challenge. Teaching in lessons seen in physical education, humanities and music was very strong.

The quality of students' learning was outstanding. Almost all students were excited by learning and developed the skills to be successful learners. They displayed energy and enthusiasm working either independently or with their classmates. They were active in their thinking and in their responses to questions. In the best lessons, they determined the direction and approach to learning. In most lessons, they saw the relevance of their learning in the real world. They could explain their ideas and ask for clarification when necessary. Although most could practise what they had learnt in a few lessons, they were unable to apply their learning to new and relevant problems. They could reflect on what had been

learnt and most knew how to improve their work. From the youngest to the oldest students, their use of technology to discover and research was excellent and they enjoyed sharing their new information with their friends.

Assessment was outstanding. Assessment of children on entry to the Foundation Stage was used accurately to plan activities matched to their stage of development. In the primary phase, most teachers used assessment data very well to set challenging targets for students and to track their progress. Students were increasingly involved in assessing their own learning and used teachers' oral and written feedback to help them to improve their work. Regular monitoring was used to identify individuals and groups of students who met or exceeded their targets and to provide additional, focused support as required. End of phase tests enabled comparisons with international benchmarks. School leaders were able to identify trends in the quality of teaching and the effectiveness of the curriculum. The system for measuring the progress of students with special educational needs was good but not fine-tuned enough to their individual abilities.

[View judgements](#)

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

The school constantly reviewed its outstanding curriculum to ensure the continuity of its quality and embrace new ideas. Planning across year groups ensured very consistent learning for all ability groups. There was a strong focus on basic literacy, numeracy and life skills, although occasionally these were taught too separately and not learned enough in context. However, in general, the curriculum throughout the school was rich, diverse, interactive and related to the real world. In the Foundation Stage, children learned very well through the opportunities to investigate, experiment and learn for themselves. Such successful approaches continued in all year groups. The use of mobile technology was increasingly second nature for students as a learning tool in all subjects. Information and communication technology, music and sport were key features of the curriculum; less visible was the impact of art. The curriculum was liberally enhanced by an extensive programme of activities, visits and visitors, which ranged from a snowboarding club to a visit from a camel farmer.

[View judgements](#)

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

Health and safety arrangements were outstanding. Effective policies and procedures were in place and personal safety education was an integral part of the school curriculum. Spacious, well-equipped, attractive learning spaces, appropriate class sizes and a wealth of indoor and outdoor resources enhanced the learning experiences of all students. Fire drills were held regularly; any shortcomings were noted and promptly acted upon. The school placed a high priority on planned maintenance. It provided high levels of care to all students. Experienced medical staff provided a strong input to the curriculum; the emphasis was on well-being as well as treatment.

Relationships throughout the school were excellent and contributed to a very supportive environment for learning. Attendance, punctuality and behaviour were outstanding because the school was a caring, supportive and exciting place to be. Students had every confidence in the staff and knew that there was always an adult to turn to if the need arose.

[View judgements](#)

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

This inclusive school welcomed students of all abilities. Their knowledge, skills and understanding were assessed thoroughly as soon as they started school and learning experiences were planned for their next stage of development. An experienced specialist team supported teachers in helping students overcome their learning difficulties. They used a range of resources, strategies and outside agencies, and involved parents in supporting their children. Consequently, almost all students made at least good and often outstanding progress from their starting points in most subjects and in their social and emotional well-being.

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

All aspects of leadership and management were outstanding. The Acting Headteacher had confidently stepped into the leadership role and was exceptionally well supported by the experienced Director. She worked very productively with other senior leaders, new in post, to develop and continue the school's vision. This was indicative of the school's very good capacity to improve further. Internal promotion of high calibre candidates brought continuity to school improvement. Staff mentoring and support ensured shared values and expectations. Senior leadership was open-minded, evaluative and focused on further improvement. Leadership was very well distributed and middle leaders, by leading from the classroom, were vital contributors to the leadership of the school.

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Through its action plan, the school had responded successfully on the previous inspection recommendations. The development plan had a range of priorities that focused the school's energies on further improvement. It was based on rigorous self-evaluation involving all teaching staff. The actions planned were very well reasoned but their success criteria were not always measurable or sharply focused enough on the outcomes for students. There were excellent channels of communication across the school and the wider community. Scrupulous monitoring of and support for teaching underpinned the school's determination to ensure a consistency of approach and quality in classrooms.

Parents were committed and very appreciative supporters of the school. Communication between home and school was such that parents felt full partners in their children's education. Parents helped in school and, through the Parents' Group, raised significant funds to improve facilities and resources to help keep JESS at the forefront of educational development. The school had outstanding links with local and more distant communities, productive links with the partner school and offered workshops for other schools to share expertise.

The governors were long serving and very well organised. They used their skills very well in the school's service. Besides being excellent supporters, they were also critical friends. They held the school to account for its outcomes through, for instance, performance review. As parents themselves, they were in close touch with other parents' views. They supported the Director, agreed the school's strategic direction and allocated resources in its pursuit of excellence. They were also governors of the partner school and had firm strategic oversight of both schools.

Staff were carefully selected and were very well qualified and deployed. The mature site featured attractive, functional buildings; swimming pools and sports areas; a library and ICT suite and spacious classrooms with shared learning areas. Well chosen resources fully supported the extended curriculum and ICT was imaginatively used by staff and students as a vital tool for learning.

[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	249	51%
	Last year	216	42%
Teachers	31		55%
Students	There were no senior students in the school		

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

The parents were extremely supportive of the school and had few concerns. They thought that their children made good progress and received a good education, although a few had some concerns over progress in Arabic. Parents felt that their children really enjoyed school. Parents knew a lot about the school because communications were very good. They were up-to-date with details of their children's progress because of the quality of reports and parent-teacher meetings. Parents and teachers were pleased with behaviour at the school and they generally agreed that the children had a good understanding of Islam. They agreed strongly that children knew what to do to improve and could use technology well. Extra-curricular sessions were fully appreciated as were the levels of care and the fair treatment the school provided. Support for students with special educational needs was highly valued. Teachers and parents agreed that the school was well led.

## 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.

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## 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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