

INSPECTION REPORT

Al Rashid Al Saleh Private School

Report published in April 2013

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT Al Rashid Al Saleh Private School

Location	Oud Metha
Type of school	Private
Website	www.alrashed-alsaleh.com
Telephone	04-337-6126
Address	Oud Metha, P.O. Box 4458 Dubai
Principal	Sister Samira Ayoub Botrus
Curriculum	MOE
Gender of students	Boys and Girls
Age / Grades or Year Groups	4-19 / Kindergarten to Grade 12
Attendance	Acceptable
Number of students on roll	2,496
Largest nationality group of Students	Arab
Number of Emirati students	287 (11%)
Date of the inspection	4th to 7th February, 2013

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The context of the school

Al Rashid Al Saleh Private School is a non-profit school, located in Oud Mehta, Dubai. There were 2,496 students, aged four to 19 years, grouped into 86 classes. Forty per cent of the students were in Cycle 1. Approximately 82 per cent of the students were from Arab countries and just over eleven per cent were Emirati nationals.

The UAE Ministry of Education (MoE) curriculum was followed and students sat MoE examinations. The language of instruction was primarily Arabic.

Just over four hundred and fifty students, approximately 18 per cent of the roll, had been identified by the school as having some form of special educational need. Two hundred and eighty eight students were regarded as gifted and talented by the school. There were 132 full-time teachers who had a range of teaching and academic qualifications. Teachers were suitably deployed. The Principal had been at the school for over 30 years.

Overall school performance 2012-2013

Good

Key strengths

- The outstanding personal and social development of students in Cycle 3;
- The excellent relationships between the students and adults;
- The outstanding provision for health and safety at the school;
- The high level of commitment and support given to the school by the governors and parents.

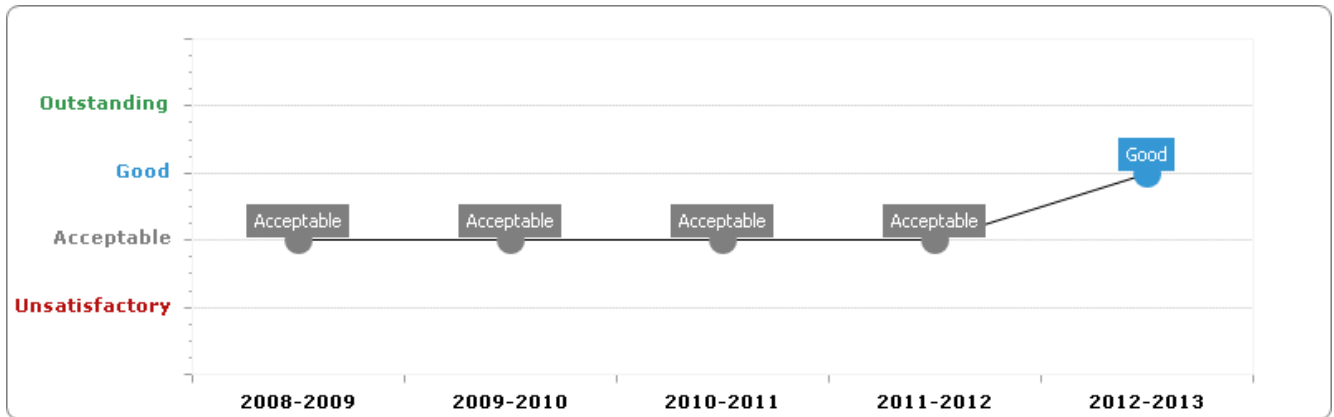
Recommendations

- Raise attainment to good in all key subjects in all phases;
- Further develop teacher's understanding of how young children learn in the Kindergarten phase;
- Improve the use of differentiation in all phases to meet the needs of all groups of students;
- Make better use of assessment data across all phases to track attainment and progress, inform teaching and benchmark performance against international standards;
- Improve the identification of and provision for students with special educational needs.

Progress since the last inspection

- The improvement in students' attainment and progress in Cycle 1 Islamic Education;
- The progress in improving the quality of teaching and students' learning in Cycle 1;
- The improvements in the leadership, management and governance.

Trend of overall performance



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

	KG	Cycle 1	Cycle 2	Cycle 3
Islamic Education				
Attainment	Acceptable	Good	Good	Good
Progress	Good	Good	Good	Good
Arabic as a first language				
Attainment	Acceptable	Good	Good	Good
Progress	Acceptable	Good	Good	Good
English				
Attainment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good	Good
Progress	Acceptable	Good	Good	Outstanding
Mathematics				
Attainment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good	Good
Progress	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good	Good
Science				
Attainment	Acceptable	Good	Good	Good
Progress	Good	Good	Good	Good

[Read paragraph](#)

How good is the students' personal and social development?

	KG	Cycle 1	Cycle 2	Cycle 3
Attitudes and behaviour	Good	Good	Good	Outstanding
Understanding of Islamic values and local, cultural and global awareness	Good	Good	Good	Outstanding
Community and environmental responsibility	Good	Good	Good	Outstanding

[Read paragraph](#)

How good are the teaching, learning and assessment?

	KG	Cycle 1	Cycle 2	Cycle 3
Teaching for effective learning	Acceptable	Good	Good	Good
Quality of students' learning	Acceptable	Good	Good	Good
Assessment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good

[Read paragraph](#)

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

	KG	Cycle 1	Cycle 2	Cycle 3
Curriculum quality	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good	Good

[Read paragraph](#)

How well does the school protect and support students?

	KG	Cycle 1	Cycle 2	Cycle 3
Health and Safety	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Quality of Support	Acceptable	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	Good
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?

Attainment was acceptable in Islamic Education in Kindergarten and good in the other phases. In Cycles 2 and 3 the students demonstrated an understanding of Islamic values such as the difference between the Makki and Madani Surahs of The Holy Qur'an, and were able to provide appropriate examples of each. In Arabic as a first language, most students in Kindergarten were working in line with expectations with regard to subject content. All students, in all cycles, demonstrated well-developed skills in speaking, reading, and dictation. Cycle 3 students showed advanced ability in analysing literary texts. The language skills of Kindergarten children were less well developed. In English, in Kindergarten and Cycle 1, students were generally stronger at speaking and listening than reading or writing. In mathematics, in Cycles 2 and 3, students applied their mathematical skills and knowledge to meet challenges, solve problems, and think critically. The attainment of science was acceptable in Kindergarten and good in Cycles 1 to 3. Across the school, students' knowledge of science was stronger than their ability to apply their knowledge to unfamiliar situations.

Progress was good in Islamic Education and Arabic as a first language, except in Kindergarten where it was acceptable. In English, Kindergarten children made acceptable progress from low starting points on entry. Students made acceptable progress in mathematics in Kindergarten and Cycle 1, and good progress in Cycles 2 and 3. In mathematics, younger students had difficulty in the application of key concepts to practical situations, whereas older students enjoyed success in projects related to real world situations. In science, practical activities, project assignments and available examination results showed good progress in all phases.

[View judgements](#)

How well does the school provide for Emirati students?

In almost all key subjects, in all phases, attainment and progress of Emirati students were the same as those of other students. Kindergarten children mainly joined the school with little English language proficiency and little or no pre-school experience. However, Emirati students were well-integrated, and in the better lessons, individual learning needs were met through effective planning of lessons. Attendance was good. Poor punctuality had an adverse impact on the students' engagement in learning. For example, lateness to morning assemblies reduced some student's involvement in celebrations of UAE culture and heritage. Engagement in lessons and homework was acceptable in all phases for most students. Emirati parents made good use of the school's open door policy and feedback from formal reports to become involved in their children's education. The school also provided special weekend workshops for Emirati families. These helped parents develop their awareness of teaching methods and supported their children's learning.

How good is the students' personal and social development?

Students' attitudes and behaviour were good in Kindergarten, Cycle 1 and Cycle 2 and outstanding in Cycle 3. Students throughout the school showed respect and consideration for each other and their teachers. They helped each other in class and often used more able students as informal mentors. Older students, in particular, took responsibility for their own learning. Students had a clear understanding of what constituted a healthy lifestyle. However they were not always able to meet these expectations as the choice of available snacks was not always healthy. Attendance was good during the previous term. However, punctuality was poor because many students arrived late for assembly. Students' understanding of Islamic values and local, cultural and global awareness was good in Kindergarten, Cycles 1 and 2, and outstanding in Cycle 3. Students were well aware of Islamic values and were tolerant towards others. They had a good level of understanding of UAE culture and heritage and could articulate well the features of their own and other cultures. Students were well aware of Dubai's population diversity and understood its origins and the advantages to the Emirate's prosperity. Older students demonstrated all these aspects to a high level. Students' community and environmental responsibility was good in Kindergarten, Cycles 1 and 2 and outstanding in Cycle 3. The students understood their responsibilities as members of the school community. They planned campaigns to make their school clean and tidy. They all contributed to the wider community, but girls more so than boys. They raised funds for Dubai Cares, helped the elderly and took part in the recycling club and activities for the conservation of energy and water. Almost all students could explain how Dubai had developed and understood the reasons for the changes. Students understood the sustainability of resources and the need for conservation. This was a notable strength in Cycle 3.

[View judgements](#)

How good are the teaching, learning and assessment?

Teaching for effective learning was acceptable in Kindergarten, and good in the other phases. Most teachers had secure knowledge of their subjects and how to ensure good learning. Their planning for lessons was consistent and well structured, including some planning for differentiation. Teachers had a very positive rapport with students which resulted in enthusiastic participation in lessons. Teaching was strongest in the older classes where some imaginative planning and creative use of resources met students' needs very well. This enabled them to think critically and develop good enquiry skills. Teaching was weaker in the Kindergarten because teachers did not fully understand how young children learn best. There was evidence, throughout the school, that teachers knew their students' strengths and weaknesses. However, there was insufficient use of student assessments, or information about prior learning, to guide teaching and meet individual students' learning needs in lessons.

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The quality of students' learning was acceptable in the Kindergarten, and good in the other phases. Students had positive attitudes towards learning, were confident to interact with each other and keen to explain what they were doing. Learning was strongest in Cycles 2 and 3 because students took more responsibility, collaborated well and could think critically. However, a few lessons were too teacher-led and based around a set text. This prevented students from developing more advanced learning skills. When learning related to the real world, students were very enthusiastic and made good or better progress. Information and communications technology (ICT) resources were insufficiently employed by students to enhance learning in other subjects.

Assessment was acceptable in the Kindergarten, Cycle 1 and Cycle 2, and good in Cycle 3. Regular tests provided information on the progress of whole classes and individual students. This data was analysed by the school. Differences in achievement between various ability groups had been identified and dealt with better in Cycle 3. These were not fully addressed in other phases. The use of diagnostic test results to inform teachers of the strengths and weaknesses of individual students were inconsistent. The results of tests were not used by teachers to provide students with clear improvement points. Workbooks were marked regularly, but there were insufficient comments to explain to students how to improve. Available data was not effectively used in lesson planning to meet the needs of all students. Opportunities for students to evaluate their own learning were evident in Cycle 2 and Cycle 3.

[View judgements](#)

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

The quality of the curriculum was acceptable in the Kindergarten and Cycle 1 phases. It was good in Cycles 2 and 3. Based on the UAE Ministry of Education curriculum, it was broad and well balanced. Written plans for skills and knowledge development supported good progression across grade levels. The curriculum was reviewed each year between school terms. The curriculum and teaching were modified, based on the needs identified in assessment results. Departmental teams and school leaders explored ways of adding extra-curricular activities and bringing a thematic focus across grade levels and subjects. Teachers in the upper grades were beginning to develop opportunities for independent research. Recent curriculum improvements included a focus on critical thinking. A growing number of extra-curricular activities were provided for students. The school had many productive links with local schools and outside organisations.

[View judgements](#)

How well does the school protect and support students?

The arrangements for the health and safety of all students were outstanding. There was excellent support of students boarding and leaving the buses and around the school. The school site was very secure and the buildings were maintained and cleaned to a very high standard. The doctor and nurses provided excellent first aid care, and carried out regular health checks and vaccinations. They were active in promoting healthy life styles and in encouraging healthy eating. There was staff training in child protection policy and procedures. Emergency evacuation procedures were practised and all fire-fighting equipment was regularly checked. The school had excellent record-keeping procedures for students' health and safety.

The quality of support for students was acceptable in the Kindergarten and good in Cycles 1, 2 and 3. The welfare of students was a high priority. Relationships between staff and students were characterised by mutual respect. There were clear expectations about expected behaviour. Behavioural issues were infrequent and well managed. There were clear expectations shared with parents about the need for punctuality and good attendance. However, many students arrived late for morning assembly. There were no established procedures and strategies to use assessment information to identify and provide for students with special needs. The advice and guidance available to senior students was good and carefully personalised. This enabled the students to make informed choices about further education.

[View judgements](#)

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

Limited progress had been made in the identification and support for students with special educational needs. The school had begun to identify and support students in Arabic, English and mathematics whose performance in diagnostic tests came below grade expectations. The school had made good progress in meeting the needs of its gifted and talented students. However, no children in the Kindergarten had been identified as having additional learning needs requiring extra support. The school did not have reliable strategies for identifying students who may have had specific learning needs. In most classes teaching and learning materials did not meet the needs of students of all abilities.

How good are the leadership and management of the school?

The overall quality of leadership was good. The Principal was highly regarded and provided focused leadership to the school. The senior leadership team had clear roles and responsibilities, including that for sections of the school's self-evaluation and school improvement plan. School leaders were unified in their commitment to achieving high standards in all areas of the school. The school's aims and mission statement had been reviewed and underpinned the school's development. Overall, the school's leaders showed the capacity to carry through further improvements.

Self-evaluation and improvement planning were good. There were effective whole school self-evaluation procedures, including the regular use of questionnaires and other methods to survey students, parents and teachers. There was regular observation of teachers by managers and team leaders, all of whom had received trained in lesson observation and feedback. Performance management was improving teaching quality and was linked with professional development needs. There had been progress in addressing the main recommendations of the previous inspection report.

The school enjoyed good partnerships with its parents and the local community. The school communicated with the parent body through its website and electronic and traditional mail. Parents were highly supportive of the school. They participated in some of its activities, such as special Family Days and information workshops. The Parents' Council members worked with the school's governors to improve opportunities for the children. The majority of parents believed that they received good information from the school. They valued the staff's concern for their children's safety and welfare.

Governance was good. The Governors took their responsibilities very seriously and held the Principal to account for school improvements. The governors involved representatives from all stakeholders for the majority of their meetings, including students and members of staff. The governing body met regularly. They supported and provided professional challenge to the Principal and other leaders for the school's performance.

Management, including staffing facilities and resources was good. School procedures and routines were effective. There were sufficient numbers of qualified teachers who were deployed effectively. Incentives to retain experienced staff and improved staff training had proved effective. The school premises were well-maintained and all areas for learning were accessible to students, including those with additional needs. Some classrooms did not have enough space for the number of students in them, an issue recognised by the leaders. There had been a significant improvement in technology resources as classrooms had projection facilities.

[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	292	21%
	Last year	184	13%
Teachers	78		46%
Students	90		19%

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

About a fifth of the parents and students and a minority of the teachers responded to the surveys. Of those who responded, almost all of the parents and students felt that students were making good progress in the key subjects. A majority of students enjoyed life at school and, along with a majority of parents, agreed that the behaviour of most students at the school was good. Less than half of the students felt they were actively involved in community projects. Almost all parents and most students agreed that teaching and learning in the school were good and that most teachers made sure the students knew how to improve. Less than half the students and a majority of teachers indicated that students could choose from a wide range of subjects, topics or activities. A majority of parents and minority of students indicated that students could choose from a range of interesting extra-curricular clubs and activities. Almost all survey respondents agreed that the students were well looked after and safe at the school, and reported that the school was well led. A majority of parents, teachers and students stated that the school leaders listened to their opinions about the school. However, only half of parents and students thought that they were involved in decision-making.

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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