

# INSPECTION REPORT

## United International Private School

Report published in April, 2014

## GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT United International Private School

Location	Al Muhaisnah
Type of school	Private
Website	www.uips.ae
Telephone	04-2543888
Address	P O Box 60817, Dubai
Principal	Eunice P. Orzame
Curriculum	Philippine
Gender of students	Boys and Girls
Age / Grades or Year Groups	3-16 / Kindergarten 1-Grade 10
Attendance	Good
Number of students on roll	1792
Largest nationality group of students	Filipino
Number of Emirati students	0
Date of the inspection	24th to 27th March 2014

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## The context of the school

Located in Muhaisnah 4, United International Private School provided education for 1792 students from Kindergarten 1 to Grade 10. This was a slight increase from the previous year. The school had this year celebrated 22 years of education provision serving mainly Filipino families living in Dubai. There were no Emirati students enrolled in the school. At the time of the inspection, the school had identified 74 students as having special educational needs of which 27 students were gifted or talented particularly in the sports of basketball and badminton. The school followed the K-12 Basic Education Curriculum of the Department of Education of the Philippines (BEC) in the Kindergarten and Grades 1,2,7 and 8, and the Revised Basic Education Curriculum (RBEC) in Grades 3-6 and Grades 9-10. Students took the International Benchmark Test (IBT) in Grades 3 to 10. Students also participated in cyclical international assessments. There were 77 teachers employed at the school most of whom held appropriate teaching qualifications.

## Overall school performance 2013-2014

Acceptable

### Key strengths

- Good attainment and progress in English and Filipino in all phases;
- Students' outstanding self-reliance and very positive attitudes to school and each other;
- The school's constant encouragement and reinforcement of strong values, which led to outstanding community and environmental responsibility in the elementary and high school phases;
- Good teaching in the high school phase;
- The positive impact of the partnership with parents and the community on school improvement.

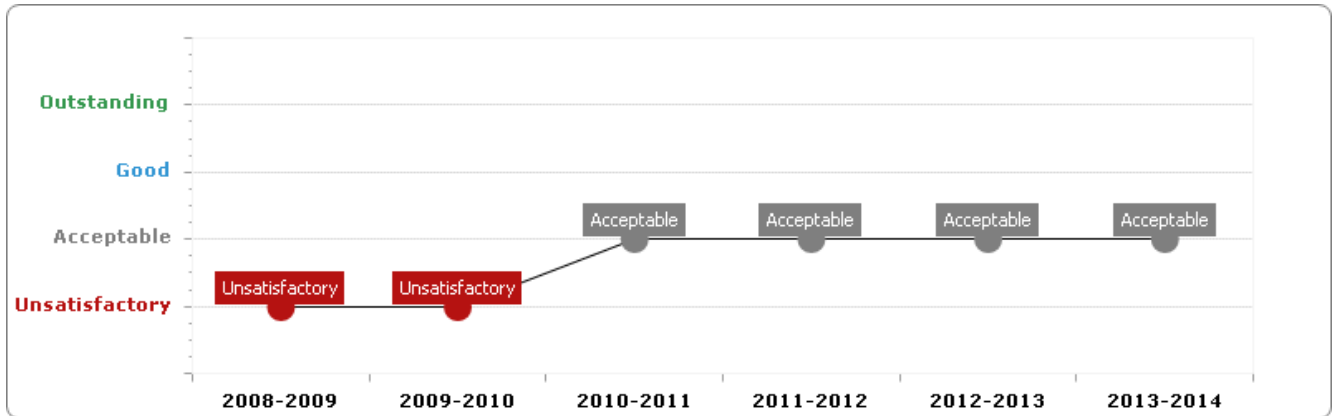
### Recommendations

- Raise attainment in all key subjects by making full use of staff expertise in the first period of the school day.
- Ensure all groups of students, including those with special educational needs, make good progress by using accurate assessment of their knowledge and understanding to modify daily curriculum planning.
- Strengthen teachers' subject knowledge in mathematics in lower elementary grades and in science education throughout the school.
- Further develop teachers' understanding of the new curriculum, including the assessment requirements, particularly in the Kindergarten, to ensure that activities are not too difficult for some or too easy for others.
- Improve the effectiveness of self-evaluation and improvement planning by taking full account of the information gained from accurate data analysis, observations of lessons and the setting of clear measurable targets.

## Progress since the last inspection

- Students' attainment in Islamic education was good in the elementary phase.
- Students' attainment in English and mathematics was good in the Kindergarten. English was good in the elementary phase.
- Students' progress in mathematics was good in the Kindergarten.
- Students' community and environmental responsibility was outstanding in the elementary and high phases.
- Students' attainment in science in the high school had declined and was now acceptable.

## Trend of overall performance



## How good are the students' attainment progress and learning skills?

	Kindergarten	Elementary	High
<b>Islamic Education</b>			
Attainment	Not Applicable	Good	Acceptable
Progress	Not Applicable	Good	Good
<b>Arabic as a first language</b>			
Attainment	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Progress	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
<b>Arabic as an additional language</b>			
Attainment	Not Applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Progress	Not Applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable
<b>Filipino</b>			
Attainment	Good	Good	Good
Progress	Good	Good	Good
<b>English</b>			
Attainment	Good	Good	Good
Progress	Good	Good	Good
<b>Mathematics</b>			
Attainment	Good	Acceptable	Good
Progress	Good	Good	Good
<b>Science</b>			
Attainment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Progress	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good

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	Kindergarten	Elementary	High
Quality of students' learning skills	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good

[Read paragraph](#)

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

	Kindergarten	Elementary	High
Personal responsibility	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Students' understanding of Islamic values and their local, cultural and global awareness	Good	Outstanding	Outstanding
Community and environmental responsibility	Good	Outstanding	Outstanding

[Read paragraph](#)

## How good are teaching and assessment?

	Kindergarten	Elementary	High
Teaching for effective learning	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good
Assessment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

[Read paragraph](#)



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

	Kindergarten	Elementary	High
Curriculum quality	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Curriculum design to meet the individual needs of students	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

[Read paragraph](#)

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

	Kindergarten	Elementary	High
Health and Safety	Good	Good	Good
Quality of Support	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

[Read paragraph](#)

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

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

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## How good are the students' attainment and progress?

Attainment in Islamic Education was good in the elementary phase and acceptable in the high school. Most students had a clear knowledge of key Islamic concepts such as the pillar of Islam, pillar of faith, prayer and Zakat; high school students were less secure. In Arabic as an additional language, attainment was acceptable. Most students recognised and could read familiar words and phrases; however, speaking and writing skills were limited. Across the school, attainment in English and Filipino was good. The focus on writing and particularly grammar had ensured that students were attaining levels above expected international standards. Attainment in mathematics was good in Kindergarten and High and acceptable in Elementary. Students generally had good number and mental arithmetic skills and used mathematical language well but elementary students were not secure in all skills. Attainment in science was acceptable in all phases. Students' knowledge was strong, but their understanding of processes such as testing hypotheses and investigation was relatively weak. Topics were often too detailed for the students. This resulted in misconceptions because the underlying basic concepts were not understood well enough.

Progress in Islamic Education, English, Filipino and mathematics was good throughout the school. When studying Islamic concepts, all students made good progress though this was more marked in the elementary phase. Knowledge about how to apply Islamic values in their daily lives and recitation skills were underdeveloped. Progress was particularly strong in the English lessons where connections to real-life applications were made. Cross-curricular development of language skills such as those in ICT lessons also contributed to students' good progress. In Filipino lessons, there were no differences in the progress for students who spoke a regional dialect and those who spoke Filipino as a mother tongue. Although good overall, progress was not consistent across all aspects of mathematics. A weakness was in the development of geometry measures, data and chance, and reasoning skills. Students had less opportunity to acquire these skills than those of number and algebra. Most students made expected progress in Arabic as an additional language in the development of listening and reading skills. However, their progress in writing skills was very slow. Progress in science was acceptable in Kindergarten and the elementary phase and good in the secondary phase. Often the activities provided for students were time-consuming but too simple and did not enhance their understanding. In the high school, the rate of progress increased when students had opportunities to develop their thinking skills by collaborating practically to solve problems, for example to explain scientifically why some heavy objects float while lighter objects sink.

[View judgements](#)

## Quality of students' learning skills

Students' learning skills were acceptable in Kindergarten and the elementary phase, and good in the high school. When given appropriate tasks, children in the Kindergarten and students in the elementary phase enjoyed learning together and often helped each other to succeed. However, some independent activities were either too easy or too difficult for them and this hindered their ability to develop good learning skills. In the high school, students responded positively to opportunities to work collaboratively on practical tasks, such as deciding on the materials needed to build models of weather recording equipment. In most lessons students made only limited use of ICT for learning. Students across the school made good connections between their learning and the world beyond school such as budget planning, and environmental and health issues.

[View judgements](#)

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

Students' personal responsibility was outstanding in all phases. Their behaviour and attitudes towards others in school and towards their learning were exemplary. Students were positive and attentive. They worked well both independently and in groups. They developed their sense of responsibility by giving presentations and leading the teaching in weekly revision sessions. They planned and delivered regular morning assemblies which emphasised good attitudes, behaviour and relationships. Healthy living was promoted throughout the school and most had a good understanding of the importance of diet and exercise. Attendance was good but a few students, particularly those arriving by private cars, were persistently late to school.

Students' understanding of Islamic values and local, cultural and global issues was good in the Kindergarten and outstanding in the elementary and high school phases. Students demonstrated a clear understanding of Islamic values and their impact on contemporary society in Dubai and the wider world. They could explain how Dubai helped the poorer countries in the wider world. Students had an excellent understanding of the traditions, culture and heritage of Dubai and they were aware of the importance of other cultures in Dubai society. Students could talk and describe their own cultures and could provide many details and examples of local and international art and of differences in traditional dress.

Children in Kindergarten had a good understanding of community and environmental responsibility; this was outstanding in the elementary and high school phases. Kindergarten children readily took responsibility for keeping their classrooms tidy and, through science, understood the impact things such as litter could have on the environment. Older students talked enthusiastically about their charity work and their contribution to the local environment in their clean-up drive. Students from the elementary and high school phases

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demonstrated a very good knowledge of how they could have a positive impact, for example, through the recycling cans campaign. Students in higher grades played a significant role with the management of younger students in the school. For example, the YUM (Young UIPS Marshal) group escorted Kindergarten students to and from school gates and the cadet force helped with the duty system.

[View judgements](#)

## How good are teaching and assessment?

Teaching was acceptable in the Kindergarten and elementary phase, and good in the high school. Respectful relations between teachers and students ensured a positive learning environment throughout the school. Improved planning in the Kindergarten had led to better quality activities but these were not always effective in helping children to take their next steps in learning. In the high school, particularly in English, mathematics and Islamic Education, teachers used their subject knowledge to good effect. Teachers' subject knowledge was less secure in mathematics in the lower elementary grades and in science throughout the school and resulted in students' slower progress. In the better lessons throughout the school, effective questioning probed students' understanding and ensured that students were required to think deeply about their learning. However, not all lessons provided students with appropriate levels of challenge. In these lessons, planning was too generic and not tailored to meet the needs of all groups of students in the class.

Assessment was acceptable. The school had a system in place to monitor achievements of students that used both internal assessments as well as external examinations in the key subjects. Analysis of data and the sharing of results with key staff in order to plan for improvement in attainment, progress and teaching, were underdeveloped. Teachers generally had a good knowledge of students' strengths and weakness but did not make consistent use of this information when planning lessons. The use of assessment information to provide advice to students on how they could improve remained inconsistent.

[View judgements](#)

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

The curriculum quality was acceptable in all phases. It was reasonably broad and balanced with the addition of curricular offerings in ICT, mathematics, research and journalism since the last inspection. The curriculum was reviewed annually but the analysis and sharing of monitoring information was underdeveloped. As a result, improvements in the provision for subjects and for students' personal development were limited. There was a varied range of extra-curricular academic; cultural sports clubs and community links provided opportunities to meet the needs and interests of all learners. Cross-curricular links were having a positive

impact in some subjects, for example English, but were limited in other subjects. The curriculum did not consistently provide good opportunities for independent learning and research.

The curriculum design to meet the needs of students was acceptable across all phases of the school. Provision for gifted and talented students was an emerging strength. Opportunities were offered for these students to further develop their talents and gifts to the benefit of other students in the school. This also served as valuable preparation for the proposed Philippine curriculum changes envisaged for Grades 11 and 12. The Learning Support programme provided essential intervention and support for identified special educational needs students in Grades 1 to 3 for whom the lack of reading skills was a substantial barrier to success in accessing the curriculum. The modification of the curriculum to provide students with a learning enhancement programme was less successful.

[View judgements](#)

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

The provision for health and safety was good across the school. The school was clean, well maintained and secure. Students' health and incident records were regularly updated. Medicines were securely stored. The school clinic participated in health education programmes and offered First Aid training to students and staff. Policies and procedures, including child protection, were clear and well documented. Fire drills were carried out at appropriate intervals and fire-fighting equipment was regularly checked. Ramps provided access to buildings for those with mobility difficulties. At the time of the inspection, shading was being erected on the basketball court. The management of traffic on arrival and departure of students remained an aspect for improvement. Although school staff were on duty each morning to manage vehicle movements, students leaving cars and buses often walked between vehicles and were at risk.

The quality of support was acceptable across the school. Teachers knew all their students very well and were fully aware of their individual social, physical and emotional needs. Teachers had a very good rapport with students where mutual respect, trust and confidence were demonstrable. All students had access to a known and trusted teacher who provided well-informed advice and guidance about a range of issues. Support for students with special educational needs was acceptable but remained inconsistent. The quality of support for talented students ensured that they were able to further develop their talents and social skills such as taking a high profile leadership role within the school. Support for special educational needs students who had difficulty with their learning was stronger in lower grades than in upper elementary grades and the high school.

[View judgements](#)

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

There was good leadership in the school. Through effective teamwork, senior leaders had continued to improve important aspects of the school. Clearly expressed roles and responsibilities supported shared understanding across staff and students. There were good links between senior managers and teaching staff. Subject co-ordinators were fully included in the school's procedures for performance monitoring and management. Most leaders and managers demonstrated a good capacity to continue improvement but their efforts had not yet achieved consistency in the delivery of high quality teaching in all subjects and phases. Subject co-ordinators did not have sufficient time outside their teaching commitment to share their expertise and improve the quality of teaching within their area of responsibility.

Self-evaluation and improvement planning were acceptable. Senior leaders and an increased number of middle managers were involved in evaluating the quality of education offered by the school. Areas for improvement reflected the school's vision and the issues identified at the last inspection but insufficient use was made of accurate analysis of data. Performance management arrangements were in place and used to inform the staff's professional development programme. However, observations of lessons focused on teacher performance and not on the impact of this performance on student progress. As a result, the school had an over-generous view of how well it was doing. Action planning did not include clear measurable outcomes with realistic time-frames or appropriate resourcing.

Links with parents and the community were good. Parents were very supportive of the school. They were regularly kept informed of their children's levels of achievement and progress. They had good access to named members of staff should any issues arise. Parents' were listened to and contributed to the ethos of the school but were less evident supporting students learning within classrooms. Community links were impressive. Students led a range of initiatives that connected their learning to their lives and provided support to the wider communities of the UAE and their home country.

Governance was acceptable. The composition of the governing board reflected the school community and included a student representative. The Governing Board ensured that all statutory requirements were met and shared a common goal to improve school facilities and outcomes for students. The governors were visible and active in their support of the school. Plans were being made to help the school prepare for the full implementation of the K-12 Basic Education Curriculum of the Department of Education of the Philippines (BEC). The analysis of monitoring information available from the school did not enable governors to have a fully accurate view of student attainment and progress. Therefore, the governing board was not yet able to accurately measure the school's success or to hold senior leaders fully to account.

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The management of the school was acceptable. Clearly stated procedures and well-established routines helped the school to run smoothly. Almost all staff held appropriate teaching qualifications and job descriptions were clear. However, best use was not made of staff expertise in the first period of the school day when staff acted as supervisors and lessons were led by students. Valuable time for teaching and raising attainment were lost. School displays provided good quality information and promoted the ethos and values of the school, the UAE and students' Filipino heritage. The school was equipped with adequate resources for meeting the learning needs of students but the library was underused as a means of extending students' love of reading.

[View judgements](#)

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

Support for students with special educational needs was acceptable. The school, including the governing board, was committed to developing an effective special educational needs programme to cater for the needs of all students. Although improvements had been made in the availability of specialist staff, psychological assessment remained limited. The supportive environment created through the relationships between staff and students was an important contribution to the well-being of students with special educational needs. In Grades 1 to 3, students were provided with effective support through a reading intervention programme. Modification of lessons, however, was a developing concept for the majority of teachers. Students categorised as gifted and talented were provided with extension activities and mentoring to ensure that learning challenged them sufficiently. Collaboration with parents was on-going and all decisions regarding support for students were implemented with the co-operation of parents.

## What are the views of parents, teachers and students?

Before the inspection, the views of parents, teachers and senior high 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	927	59%
	Last year	584	42%
Teachers	77		100%
Students	338		97%

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

A majority of parents responded to this year's survey with a significant increase in those responding compared with last year. All teachers and almost all students responded to their surveys. Parents showed a high level of satisfaction with the quality of education provided by the school. Almost all felt their child enjoyed school and was safe while at school. Almost all felt that students made good progress in English, mathematics and science, and a majority felt that progress was good in Islamic Education and Arabic as an additional language. Almost all students were satisfied with the quality of their education and felt that they were making good progress particularly in English. A few students and parents complained about bullying. Almost all teachers were supportive of all aspects of 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.

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**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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