

INSPECTION REPORT

JSS Private School

Report published in January 2013

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT JSS PRIVATE SCHOOL

Location	Al Safa
Type of school	Private
Website	www.jsspsdubai.com
Telephone	04-3446419
Address	PO Box 126721, Dubai
Principal	Chitra Sharma
Curriculum	CBSE
Gender of students	Boys and Girls
Age / Grades or Year Groups	3-14 / Kindergarten 1 to Grade 9
Attendance	Good
Number of students on roll	1,038
Largest nationality group of Students	Indian
Number of Emirati students	0
Date of the inspection	19th to 22nd November 2012

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The context of the school

The JSS Private School is located in Al Safa. The school opened in April 2011. It follows an Indian Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) curriculum. At the time of the inspection, there were 1,038 students on roll. Forty two per cent of the students were enrolled in the Kindergarten. Since opening, the roll had more than doubled in size. Almost all students were from Indian families. School attendance last term was good.

The Principal had been in post since the school's formation. Because of the rapid increase in enrolment in the past year, a large number of new teachers had been hired. Seventy-eight per cent of the teachers had worked in the school for one year or less, and 24 per cent had less than one year teaching experience. The majority of teachers had recognised teacher qualifications.

The school had identified 18 students as having special educational needs. Support for them included a special education teacher, counsellor and remedial education classes offered during the extended learning programme.

Overall school performance 2012-2013

Acceptable

Key strengths

- The good behaviour and positive attitudes towards work displayed by students throughout the school;
- The extended learning programme for students in Grades 3 to 9 and the extensive community links;
- The good arrangements that ensured students' health, safety and security in the school;
- The good partnership and communication with parents.

Recommendations

- Improve the quality of learning by ensuring that teachers plan structured opportunities for students to think, discover, share and enquire, especially in the Kindergarten and the primary;
- Develop more effective systems for tracking students' attainment and progress, and use the data to ensure that teaching meets the needs of students of all abilities;
- Ensure greater continuity and progression in the curriculum to support students' knowledge, skills, and personal and social development;
- Ensure that leaders at all levels evaluate the school's work with greater accuracy and take prompt action to remedy identified weaknesses.

Progress since the last inspection

This was the school's first inspection.

Trend of overall performance



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

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Islamic Education				
Attainment	Not Applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Progress	Not Applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Arabic as a first language				
Attainment	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Progress	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Arabic as an additional language				
Attainment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Progress	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
English				
Attainment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good	Good
Progress	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good	Good
Mathematics				
Attainment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good
Progress	Unsatisfactory	Acceptable	Good	Good
Science				
Attainment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good
Progress	Unsatisfactory	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good

[Read paragraph](#)

How good is the students' personal and social development?

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Attitudes and behaviour	Acceptable	Good	Good	Good
Understanding of Islamic values and local, cultural and global awareness	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Community and environmental responsibility	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

[Read paragraph](#)

How good are the teaching, learning and assessment?

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Teaching for effective learning	Unsatisfactory	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good
Quality of students' learning	Unsatisfactory	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good
Assessment	Unsatisfactory	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good

[Read paragraph](#)

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

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Curriculum quality	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good

[Read paragraph](#)

How well does the school protect and support students?

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Health and Safety	Good	Good	Good	Good
Quality of Support	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

[Read paragraph](#)

How good are the leadership and management of the school?

	Whole school
Quality of leadership	Acceptable
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?

Attainment was mostly acceptable. It was good in the secondary school in English, mathematics and science, and good in middle school English. In Islamic Education, most students had acceptable recitation and memorisation skills, and an adequate knowledge of Tawheed, the Pillars of Islam and values, such as modesty. In Arabic, most students had adequate listening and speaking skills, but writing skills were limited to copying and printing. In the middle and secondary phases, the majority of students were more confident in their usage of the English language. In mathematics, most students in the secondary phase could find their own solutions to prove mathematical theorems. In science, students moved steadily from learning through observation to learning through experimental work.

Progress was mainly unsatisfactory in Kindergarten mathematics and science because of the children's lack of understanding and application of concepts. It was acceptable in Kindergarten English and all key subjects across all phases in primary. In lower primary, most students developed their knowledge of Islamic rituals appropriately. Most primary students made acceptable progress in improving their Arabic and English listening and speaking skills, and applying correct forms of verbs and nouns. Progress was good in middle and high school in a majority of the key subjects. Progress was faster when students had opportunities to apply their learning to real-life contexts, including the writing of informal letters, diaries and news reports, as well as the testing of hypotheses. Students with special educational needs made acceptable progress overall.

[View judgements](#)

How good is the students' personal and social development?

Students' attitudes and behaviour were acceptable in the Kindergarten and good in the primary, middle and secondary phases. Students had positive attitudes and were eager to learn. They were respectful to their teachers and each other. Relationships with staff and others were almost always cordial. Almost all students were punctual to class and attendance was at least 96 per cent in the last full term. Students had adequate knowledge about the influence of Islam on local society; they were able to describe some aspects of local culture linked to Islam. Students in the Kindergarten demonstrated respect when they recited the UAE national anthem. Older students had basic knowledge about local traditions and heritage; they understood the significance of December 2nd 1971. Most students had better knowledge about their own cultures. Students' responsibility toward community, work, and the environment was acceptable across all phases. Students were aware of their responsibilities as a part of the school community, and their involvement with the wider community was beneficial. They put effort into their school work and

were aware of the personal work requirements needed to achieve their academic and career goals. Students were aware of the environment and the need to keep it clean. They participated in various activities such as assemblies and the JSS Extended Learning Programme. They knew the importance of planting trees. In lessons that were related to Dubai and climate change, they discussed issues such as global warming, the greenhouse effect, the depletion of the ozone layer, and the need to protect planet Earth.

[View judgements](#)

How good are the teaching, learning and assessment?

The quality of teaching was unsatisfactory in the Kindergarten, acceptable in the primary and middle phases, and good in secondary. Teachers had good subject knowledge but their understanding of how students learn was variable. The most skilled teachers had high expectations and planned for all students to make consistent progress. In the lower grades, expectations were often the same for all students regardless of what they had already achieved. In the best lessons, a variety of strategies and resources enabled students to learn from each other. Teachers used skilful questioning to encourage students to think for themselves. In the lower grades, questions did not consistently promote higher order thinking and in too many lessons teachers talked too much, reducing the time available for students to apply their learning. The quality of teaching in non-key subjects was varied.

The quality of students' learning was unsatisfactory in the Kindergarten, acceptable in the primary and middle phases, and good in the secondary phase. Most students were enthusiastic about learning but attitudes and behaviour, which were generally good, deteriorated when expectations were too low. Although most students embraced opportunities to work together, in the lower grades this was less evident. Most of the younger students did what was asked of them, but they rarely had opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning. They were too reliant on their teachers and a minority had difficulty working independently. Students enjoyed explaining what they were doing, but they were not aware of their strengths and targets for development; nor did they know how to improve their work. Although most students made connections between their learning and the real world, this was inconsistent across grades. Students rarely carried out research in school.

Assessment was unsatisfactory in the Kindergarten, acceptable in the primary and middle phases, and good in the secondary. Assessments systems which monitored students' achievements were validated externally to facilitate international comparisons. The tracking of students' progress over time, and in particular the assessment of skills development, was less effective. Teachers' awareness of individual students' strengths and weaknesses was lacking in the Kindergarten and lower grades. The most skilled

teachers used assessment information to identify what each ability group would achieve and adapted their plans when necessary. However, this was not managed effectively, and some students struggled with their work while others found it too easy. Students' involvement in assessing their own learning was not well-established. A majority of teachers provided useful verbal feedback to students on how to improve their work. Written guidance was generally positive, but it was rarely constructive. Although data were analysed, an accurate picture of the effectiveness of teaching and the curriculum for meeting the needs of all students was not available to school leaders.

[View judgements](#)

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

Curriculum was acceptable in most phases; it was good in the secondary phase. The school followed the Indian CBSE curriculum in Grades 1 to 9 and prepared students for the CBSE Board Examination. In addition to the key subjects, a range of subjects were offered to students in the primary, middle and secondary phases, including French, Hindi, music, dance, art, yoga, value education, social studies and physical education. In Kindergarten 2, the children were offered Arabic classes, and parents of Grades 1 and 2 children were given materials to support Arabic. The curriculum was regularly reviewed by the senior management team and modifications were made. The curriculum provided a wide range of enrichment activities through the assemblies and the JSS Extended Learning Program, which consisted of extra-curricular activities, games and clubs for students. Transition arrangements in the middle and the secondary phases were in place and ensured that students had smooth progression between different phases. The planned curriculum was not consistently adapted to meet the needs of all students, and did not always provide appropriate challenge.

[View judgements](#)

How well does the school protect and support students?

Good arrangements were in place to help keep children safe and healthy. Bus transport ran smoothly and buses were well monitored. Students were well supervised at all times. Medicines and chemicals for science lessons were stored securely. Good maintenance records were kept, and the premises were clean, hygienic and kept in a good state of repair. The school responded promptly to any safety issues. Healthy living was well promoted and students were given appropriate advice regarding their health and nutrition. An appropriate child protection policy was in place, and the school had conducted an awareness workshop. However, teachers' awareness of how to deal with any issues was not consistent and systematic.

Staff and students were polite and respectful to each other and to visitors. These positive relationships formed the basis of the school's effective behaviour policy. The school maintained high levels of attendance and punctuality. Students needing support were identified early by specialist staff who provided teachers with information and advice about how to help them. The school's entrance procedures were inclusive. Students received a wide-range of guidance about their progress, health and well-being. Staff members dealt with concerns sensitively. The school had an established complaints procedure.

[View judgements](#)

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

Support for students with special educational needs was variable but, overall, these students made similar progress to other students. The process of identification, support and monitoring of progress of students was led by a specialist team. Teachers were clear about the needs of students with special educational needs in their classes, but the extent to which they supported the progress of these students varied across the school. The assessment of the progress of students with special educational needs was data-led but the measurement of progress lacked consistency and rigour.

How good are the leadership and management of the school?

The quality of leadership was acceptable. The Principal and phase leaders were committed to the school's vision and cared about its students. Leadership roles and responsibilities at phase and departmental levels had been clearly defined. The Principal worked well with the others members of the leadership team, meeting regularly to discuss both curricular and non-curricular matters. However, phase leaders' understanding of effective teaching and learning was underdeveloped. Expectations for teachers were unclear and resulted in wide variation of teacher performance. As a result, expectations for learning were sometimes too low.

Self-evaluation and improvement planning were acceptable. The school prepared a detailed self-evaluation and action plan. Senior leaders ensured that all subject leaders and teaching staff had been involved. The action plan contained sufficient details about how improvement was to be implemented and how it would be measured. Leaders monitored teaching, learning, attainment, and progress regularly.

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The partnerships with parents and the local community were good. Parents spoke positively about the welcoming nature of the school. They reported that the school used a range of methods to keep them informed about school events and the academic progress of their children. However, reports did not specifically address students' improvement needs, which limited parents' opportunities to aid their children. Parents stated that the Parent Council made a valuable contribution to partnerships. The school had established relevant links with the wider community.

Governance of the school was good. The Board of Governors, which consisted of community representatives, staff members and parents, exerted a positive influence on the school. The governing body had good knowledge of the school and a strong commitment to it. The governors welcomed suggestions from parents and the school community. Governors held the school accountable for most aspects of its performance. The school owner and leaders listened to the board and respected its views.

Staffing, facilities and resources were good. The Principal and Headmaster managed the routine administration of the school well; the timetable functioned efficiently. There were suitably qualified staff, and professional development was offered regularly. The school campus provided a spacious learning environment, but some classrooms were too small. Kindergarten classrooms did not allow sufficient room for separate learning corners. The school premises were easily accessible to all students, including those with additional needs. Resources were appropriate and supported teaching and learning effectively. The library was adequately stocked.

[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	309	35%
	Last year	0	0%
Teachers	62		70%
Students	There are no upper secondary-aged students in the school		

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

A minority of parents and a majority of teachers responded to their surveys. Almost all parents who responded were satisfied with the quality of education available at the school and believed that their children were making good progress in the key subjects, with the exception of Islamic Education. Almost all parents indicated that their children were well looked after, safe and enjoyed life at school. Most parents and almost all teachers believed the school was well led and agreed that school leaders listened to their opinions about the school. Most parents stated that teachers made sure their children knew the steps needed to improve, and almost all teachers agreed that the school informed students about their next steps in learning.

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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