

INSPECTION REPORT

Al Shorouq Private School

Report published in April 2013

Knowledge and Human Development Authority

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT Al Shorouq Private School

Location	Jumeirah 1
Type of school	Private
Website	www.ashorouq.ae
Telephone	04-3440765
Address	PO Box 11656, Al Wasl Road, Dubai
Principal	Fadwa Amin Hattab
Curriculum	MOE
Gender of students	Boys and Girls
Age / Grades or Year Groups	3-18 / Kindergarten to Grade 12
Attendance	Good
Number of students on roll	2,125
Largest nationality group of Students	Emirati
Number of Emirati students	892 (42%)
Date of the inspection	6th to 10th January 2013

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The context of the school

Al Shorouq Private School, in operation since 1986, is located in Jumeirah 1. At the time of inspection, the school had 2,125 students, slightly fewer than last year. Forty two per cent of the students were Emiratis, while 43 per cent were Arab expatriates. The remainder were of non-Arab nationality. The school provided education for students between 3 and 18 years of age. The school had identified 119 students with a special educational need, half of whom were categorized as gifted and talented. Mixed gender classes included all classes from Kindergarten up to Grade 4. From Grade 5, boys and girls were segregated.

The school delivered the Ministry of Education curriculum with Arabic as the main language of instruction. Most assessment information emanated from internal testing and teachers' observations. From Grade 6 onward, external Ministry of Education tests were administered on a trimester basis.

The number of teachers had increased by 15, to 131. Ninety-five teachers had appropriate teaching qualifications. Seven Kindergarten teaching assistants were employed. The student-teacher ratio was 16 students for every teacher.

Overall school performance 2012-2013

Acceptable

Key strengths

- Students' good attainment and progress in Islamic Education and their good progress in mathematics and science in Cycle 3;
- The good attitudes and behaviour of students across all phases and their good understanding of Islamic values and their local, cultural and global awareness;
- The well-established procedures for ensuring the health and safety of students at all times;
- The good engagement of parents and the school's established links with the community.

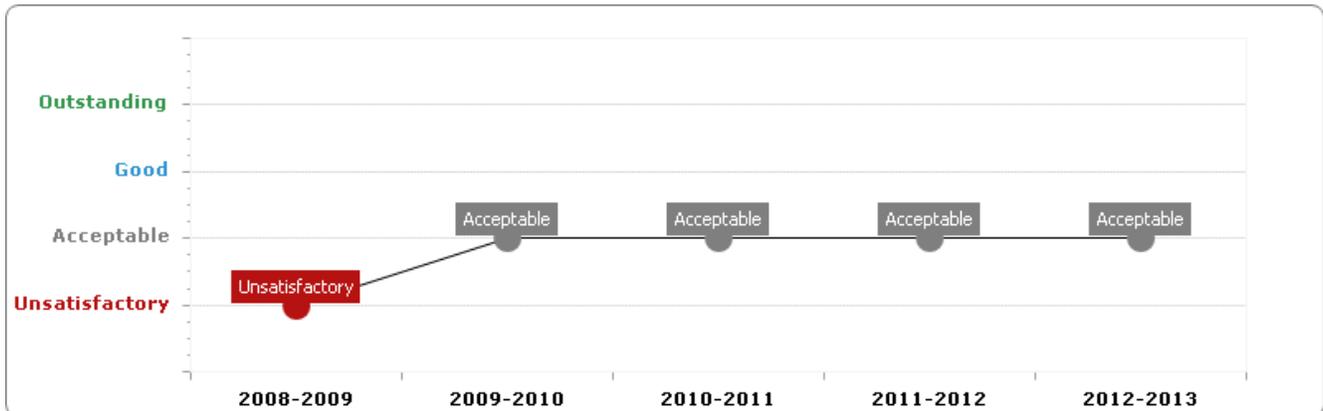
Recommendations

- Raise the attainment of Kindergarten children in English;
- Set high expectations of students and develop their independent learning skills;
- Analyse assessment data more accurately and use it to modify the curriculum to meet the needs of all groups of students;
- Improve the identification of students with special educational needs and provide appropriate individual support to them;
- Produce comprehensive, valid and reliable self-evaluation information and to use it to improve the quality of teaching and learning.

Progress since the last inspection

- The students' attainment and progress in Arabic as a first language in Kindergarten and Cycle 1 had improved to a good standard;
- There were improved attitudes and behaviour of Kindergarten children and the students in Cycles 1 and 2;
- There were improvements in teaching, learning, and the curriculum in the Kindergarten, as well as in the school's staffing, facilities and resources;
- There was improved partnership with parents and the community;
- There had been insufficient progress in school self-evaluation, improvement planning and in the identification, provision and outcomes of students with special educational needs.

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	Good	Good	Good	Good
Progress	Good	Good	Good	Good
Arabic as a first language				
Attainment	Good	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable
Progress	Good	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable
Arabic as an additional language				
Attainment	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Progress	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
English				
Attainment	Unsatisfactory	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Progress	Unsatisfactory	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Mathematics				
Attainment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good
Progress	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good
Science				
Attainment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Progress	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	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	Good
Understanding of Islamic values and local, cultural and global awareness	Good	Good	Good	Good
Community and environmental responsibility	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

[Read paragraph](#)

How good are the teaching, learning and assessment?

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

[Read paragraph](#)

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

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

[Read paragraph](#)

How well does the school protect and support students?

	KG	Cycle 1	Cycle 2	Cycle 3
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	Unsatisfactory
Partnerships with parents and the community	Good
Governance	Acceptable
Management, including staffing, facilities and resources	Acceptable

[Read paragraph](#)

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

Attainment in almost all key subjects was acceptable, except in Islamic Education where it was good and in Arabic where it was good in Kindergarten and Cycle One. The majority of students demonstrated good understanding of Islamic principles and concepts and had good application skills. In Arabic, most students were more secure in listening and reading skills than speaking and writing. Attainment in English was unsatisfactory in the Kindergarten. Children's speaking skills and vocabulary knowledge were underdeveloped. In all the other phases, students listened and read competently, although the less able students lacked confidence. Speaking skills were adequate but their responses were brief; their writing was well-structured but lacked expression and breadth of vocabulary. In mathematics, students' understanding of numbers and mathematical operations was generally secure, although mental arithmetic skills were underdeveloped. Students' ability to investigate and apply their mathematics was weak in the lower and middle school, but stronger in Cycle Three. In science, students had theoretical knowledge, but their investigative and independent learning skills were less developed.

Progress was good in Islamic Education across all cycles. In Arabic, progress was good in the Kindergarten and Cycle One and in mathematics and science in Cycle Three. Elsewhere, it was generally acceptable, but progress in English in the Kindergarten was unsatisfactory. In Islamic Education, the majority of students exceeded the expected progress level in Fiqh and acts of worship. In Arabic, students made progress in developing their Arabic vocabulary and oral reading skills. In Cycles 1 to 3 English, progress was varied. Less able students relied too much on other students and teachers' direction resulting in slower than expected progress. In mathematics, students made fast progress in using numbers, whereas the development of their problem-solving skills was slower. In science, students' practical skills did not develop adequately through Cycles One and Two, but in the individual sciences and the scientific stream in Cycle Three students made good progress from their starting points.

[View judgements](#)

How well does the school provide for Emirati students?

Emirati students' attainment and progress was acceptable overall. Their performance was good in Islamic Education and in Arabic across the first two phases. Girls outperformed boys. In Cycles Two and Three Emirati students performed significantly below other students in examinations, especially in mathematics and science. Attendance and punctuality across the school were good. In the majority of lessons students showed good attitudes towards learning and were keen to be involved, but lessons did not always engage students fully. Girls enjoyed their homework tasks and extra-curricular projects but the boys were less enthusiastic. The curriculum provided good opportunities to support Emirati traditions and culture. Reports to parents

varied in quality across subjects. Curriculum choices available to Grade 11 and 12 students were restricted to the science stream. In some cases this affected their preparation for tertiary education. Parents were fully involved in their children's education and one member of the Board of Governors was Emirati.

How good is the students' personal and social development?

Behaviour was good throughout the school. Students were courteous to adults and helpful to their classmates. In almost all lessons students' attitudes towards learning were positive. Students were aware of healthy food, and generally opted for healthy snacks. They participated in a variety of sporting activities outside the school day. Attendance and punctuality were good. Most students exhibited a good understanding of Islamic values and local and global cultures. They understood the impact of Islamic values on the modern life of the residents of Dubai. They had good awareness of the differences between the many nationalities living in Dubai and how an atmosphere of respect and appreciation prevailed. Students demonstrated pride in their identities, cultures, traditions and lifestyles. Students were proud of their school and some contributed to the community through volunteer activities such as litter collection and visiting the aged. Students had a positive work ethic and enjoyed the activities provided for them but a few lacked initiative. They often collaborated on creative projects to enhance their learning. They showed age-appropriate understanding and appreciation of the need for environmental protection. The school led a few local initiatives involving students from other schools that resulted in improved awareness of conservation.

[View judgements](#)

How good are the teaching, learning and assessment?

Teaching was mostly acceptable across the school. It was unsatisfactory in Kindergarten English because teachers had a restricted understanding of age-appropriate teaching techniques, for example to develop letter sounds when speaking. Overall, teachers were beginning to try new methods and use interesting resources, but these methods were not prevalent across the school. At times, the resources chosen were unsuitable and did little to support learning. A minority of teachers asked skillful questions to elicit in-depth responses and to assess students' understanding. However, in most lessons across the school, apart from Cycle 3, teachers over-directed their students. This limited the scope for students to think for themselves, to reflect on their work and to work independently. They did not plan lessons using assessment data and with the students' outcomes in mind. Expectations were often too low, especially for the most able students.

The quality of students' learning was acceptable in the Kindergarten, Cycle One and Cycle Two. Learning was good in the upper phase of the school. Overall, students generally enjoyed their work and sustained concentration in lessons. They were mostly keen to improve but some remained passive learners. Group

work showed mixed success. Students co-operated well at times, but too often the more able students led and other students copied from them. While students were making links between learning and the real world, there were some missed opportunities. With the exception of Cycle Three, students did not have enough opportunities to work on their own, learn in their own ways or think for themselves. In science, students did not investigate or find things out for themselves often enough.

The assessment of learning was acceptable across the school. Regular examinations and tests provided comprehensive information on the progress of whole classes and individual students. This data was analysed by the school and issues such as the disparity in achievement between boys and girls, Emiratis and others, had been identified, although not fully addressed. Diagnostic tests to inform teachers of the strengths and weaknesses of individual students were under development. Teachers had some knowledge of their students' strengths and weaknesses. Workbooks were marked regularly, but insufficient commentary was provided to help students improve. The rich source of assessment data was not effectively used in lesson planning to meet the needs of all students. Students were encouraged to evaluate their learning, although this was at an early stage of development.

[View judgements](#)

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

The curriculum was acceptable in all phases. Kindergarten teachers had improved the curriculum since the last inspection to include better provision of subjects and activities. This was enhanced by appropriate visits, special events and visitors. New subject coordinators in all subjects had reviewed the curriculum and compared it to international curricula. It included a good range of extra-curricular activities such as music, art and sport, but there were a few inconsistencies between provision for boys and girls in certain grades. The curriculum closely followed that of the Ministry of Education course books. Additional resources to support more activities in classes had been acquired. The use of video clips and material from other sources had been developed in lesson planning, but the curriculum was still too rigid and did not fully meet the needs of all learners. Some teachers made use of real life examples, but the curriculum did not demand enough of the students in terms of independent work, critical thinking and investigative skills.

[View judgements](#)

How well does the school protect and support students?

The provision for health and safety of students was good throughout the school. The clinic was well organised. Systems were in place to monitor the frequency of students' visits to clinic. There were detailed health records and routine medical checks were carried out. A healthy lifestyle was effectively promoted

across the school. Buildings were well maintained and repairs were effected swiftly by the internal maintenance team. Fire drills were frequently held and emergency exits were clear. Transportation was orderly and well supervised. However, seat-belts were not always used by students and the bus assembly area lacked appropriate ventilation. All staff members were aware of the child protection policy and the required steps necessary to ensure students welfare.

The quality of support for students was acceptable. Good staff and student relationships were observed throughout the school. Newly enrolled students were well supported in settling into school routines and older students received helpful guidance on their next stages of education. Positive links with parents to ensure continuity of care from home to school were developed by social workers. Behaviour concerns were quickly resolved. Student tracking records were in place with academic progress recorded and results regularly reported to parents. Attendance and punctuality were well managed.

[View judgements](#)

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

The systems for identification and support of students with special educational needs were at an early stage of development. Student identification was limited to a narrow range of categories and support was limited. Individual education plans for students with special educational needs were unavailable. Modified classroom strategies with work to meet students' specific learning needs were inconsistent. When present, such strategies ensured that students' progress was the same as that of their peers. Resources to support these students within their classrooms were limited.

How good are the leadership and management of the school?

Leadership was acceptable. The school's senior leaders knew the school well. They had clear aims and goals to meet the major challenges facing the school. However, their instructional leadership was still developing. The schools leadership roles were clear and responsibilities were effectively delegated. Middle managers had a growing capacity to improve aspects of the school. The changes introduced to leadership in the Kindergarten had led to improvements in provision and in some children's progress.

Self-evaluation and improvement planning were unsatisfactory. School leaders' understanding of how to gather evidence and make accurate judgements was underdeveloped. This resulted in a descriptive

document that lacked sufficient evaluation. School leaders made regular lesson observations, but inaccurate judgements on the quality of teaching and learning were often made. The school produced long and detailed improvement plans. However, their implementation lacked precision. Improvements in provision had not raised students' attainment.

Partnerships with parents and the community were good. The parents' council was well aware of its role and responsibilities. Parents were supportive of the school. They appreciated the school's open door policy. The school invited parents to observe lessons, talk to teachers and to track their children's personal and academic development. Parents' voices were valued and they influenced developments in the school. The school's reports to parents on their children's achievements were regular. The school had established several links with neighbouring schools.

School governance was acceptable. The board of governors had balanced representation with members of various backgrounds and fields of expertise. It was aware of the school's major challenges and priorities. It met frequently but it lacked cohesion. There were some initiatives and contributions that were not planned by the whole board but which provided some support to the school. Although the board confirmed that they held the school managers accountable for outcomes, it did not have a significant impact on school improvement.

The school had effective day-to-day management systems and ensured that all students were well cared for and protected. Additional qualified teachers were appointed and the school provided seven teaching assistants in the Kindergarten. The school had limited new admissions at some levels. However, some classes in the Kindergarten and Cycle One were overcrowded. The school had invested in more resources, particularly computer technology. Computer laboratories were well equipped with enough machines for all students. Learning resources in the Kindergarten required further improvement. Although the school premises were well maintained, some classrooms were small, not well-lit, and did not provide appropriate learning environments.

[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	51	4%
	Last year	98	7%
Teachers	50		36%
Students	87		24%

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

Only four per cent of parents responded to the survey, less than last year. Higher percentages of teachers and students responded to their surveys. Most parents and students indicated broad satisfaction with the quality of education at the school and believed that progress was good in almost all subjects, particularly Islamic Education and Arabic. A majority of parents and students considered behaviour as good, while the rest had some concerns about minor bullying. While teachers thought that students were highly involved in the community, both parents and students indicated otherwise. Most parents and students viewed the communication levels between school and home positively. Most students and a significant majority of parents indicated that students received good support from their teachers. Most parents and almost all teachers confirmed that the school's leaders listened to their opinions, and involved them in decision making. Most parents and students thought that the school cared well for its students. Almost all parents and teachers and most students confirmed that the school was well led and were satisfied with the quality of education provided by 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.

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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