

INSPECTION REPORT

JSS PRIVATE SCHOOL
Report published in February 2014

Knowledge and Human Development Authority

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT JSS PRIVATE SCHOOL

Location	Al Safa
Type of school	Private
Website	www.jsspsdubai.com
Telephone	04-3446419
Address	P.O.Box 126721, Dubai
Principal	Mrs. Chitra Sharma
Curriculum	CBSE
Gender of students	Boys and Girls
Age / Grades	3-14 / Kindergarten 1 - Grade 10
Attendance	Good
Number of students on roll	1532
Largest nationality group of Students	Indian
Number of Emirati students	0
Date of the inspection	23rd to 26th September 2013

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The context of the school

JSS Private School opened in April 2011. It is located in Al Safa and follows an Indian Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) curriculum. At the time of the inspection, the roll was 1,532 students, an increase of around 50 per cent compared to the previous year. Students were organised into four phases from Kindergarten 1 up to Grade 10. Three quarters of the students were in the Kindergarten and primary phases. Almost all students were from Indian families.

There were 139 teachers, including the Principal and a Vice-Principal. Most of the teachers had recognised teacher qualifications. Around half had been employed in the school for less than one year. The school had identified 67 students as having special educational needs, including gifted and talented students. Support for students experiencing learning difficulties included a special education teacher, two counsellors and an assistant teacher.

Overall school performance 2013-2014

Acceptable

Key strengths

- Good attainment in mathematics and science in the primary, middle and secondary phases;
- The positive attitudes and behaviour of the students, and the way in which they fulfilled the many responsibilities they were given;
- The quality of teaching of special educational needs in the learning centre;
- Effective arrangements for promoting healthy lifestyles and ensuring that students were safe, and improvements in the quality of support for students;
- The growth and development of the school since its establishment, under the leadership of the Principal and support from the governing body.

Recommendations

- Match learning tasks and activities to the needs of different groups of students more effectively, and improve the students' learning skills;
- Improve assessment by giving more detailed written feedback to students on their strengths and areas for improvement;
- Ensure greater continuity and progression in the curriculum, and modification for groups, to meet the needs of all groups of students more effectively;
- Focus the gathering and analysis of data and information more clearly to identify specific aspects of the school's work which need to be improved, and target improvement activities more closely on those aspects.

Progress since the last inspection

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in the Kindergarten had improved. In all phases, students were benefiting from more opportunities for investigation and higher-order thinking, particularly in English, mathematics and science. More remained to be done in this regard.
- Attainment and progress in mathematics and science had improved in some phases.
- There had been some improvement in the way in which teachers monitored the attainment of individual students, but progress was not tracked effectively enough. Teaching did not always meet the needs of students of all abilities. Higher attaining students did not always face suitably challenging tasks.
- The curriculum still did not provide sufficient continuity and progression in students' knowledge, skills and personal and social development.
- Senior leaders and the governing board were increasingly evaluating the school's work. Some staff with leadership roles at other levels had not fully developed an accurate view of work in the areas for which they had responsibility.

Trend of overall performance



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

	Kindergarten	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	Not Applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Progress	Not Applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
English				
Attainment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good	Good
Progress	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good	Good
Mathematics				
Attainment	Acceptable	Good	Good	Good
Progress	Acceptable	Good	Good	Good
Science				
Attainment	Acceptable	Good	Good	Good
Progress	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good	Good

[Read paragraph](#)

	Kindergarten	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Quality of students' learning skills	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good

[Read paragraph](#)

How good is the students' personal and social development?

	Kindergarten	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Personal responsibility	Acceptable	Good	Good	Good
Students' understanding of Islamic values and their local, cultural and global awareness	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good
Community and environmental responsibility	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good	Good

[Read paragraph](#)

How good are teaching and assessment?

	Kindergarten	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Teaching for effective learning	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good
Assessment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good

[Read paragraph](#)

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

	Kindergarten	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Curriculum quality	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good
Curriculum design to meet the individual needs of students	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good

[Read paragraph](#)

How well does the school protect and support students?

	Kindergarten	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Health and Safety	Good	Good	Good	Good
Quality of Support	Good	Good	Good	Good

[Read paragraph](#)

How good are the leadership and management of the school?

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

[Read paragraph](#)

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

Attainment was acceptable in Islamic Education and Arabic as an additional language. In English, mathematics and science, it was acceptable in the Kindergarten and good in the other phases, apart from English in primary, which was acceptable. Most students demonstrated suitable recitation skills of the Holy Qur'an. They had appropriate understanding of the life of the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH), Islamic concepts and values, and the impact of these on their own lives. In Arabic as an additional language, most students were able to understand the spoken word. Speaking skills were limited. Basic reading and writing were good, but wider skills of reading and writing were limited. In English, attainment in reading was positive, particularly in the secondary phase. Students could listen attentively. They were able to articulate their ideas in discussions and in writing. Some students in the primary phase had difficulty in developing their own ideas. In mathematics, most children in Kindergarten could count and recognise shapes at a level acceptable for their age. Students in other phases showed good knowledge and skills in calculation, working with shapes, and, for older students, algebra. In science, children in Kindergarten were developing an appropriate knowledge of the world around them. In the other phases, students were able to use scientific terms accurately to explain scientific concepts.

Progress in all phases and subjects followed almost exactly the same pattern as for attainment. In Islamic Education, most students were making acceptable progress for their stage. Progress tended to be better for girls than for boys. Most of the students in Arabic as an additional language made appropriate progress in listening and comprehension. Progress in writing was slower. In English, most students made good progress in relation to their starting points in listening, speaking and reading. Progress in writing independently was more variable. Most children in Kindergarten made appropriate progress in counting and shapes. Most students in other phases had similarly age-appropriate abilities, and a majority made better than expected progress in aspects such as investigating mathematical formulae. As students moved through the school, they developed good investigative skills in science. They acquired skills in using scientific apparatus to test their theoretical knowledge.

[View judgements](#)

Quality of students' learning skills

The quality of students' learning skills was acceptable in the Kindergarten, primary and middle phases; they were good in the secondary phase. Almost all students enjoyed lessons and had positive attitudes towards their class activities. When given opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning, they responded well. These opportunities were more frequent in the older students' classes, for example in science, where students were able to test and discuss hypotheses and draw appropriate conclusions.

Students were developing collaborative skills when they worked together in English, mathematics and science. They were acquiring the ability to link their learning to real life situations in all subjects. Students' learning skills were improved when they had opportunities to investigate and explore concepts for themselves. Some good opportunities for this type of learning occurred in science and mathematics. The development of critical thinking and research skills was more limited in Islamic Education and in Arabic as an additional language than in other subjects.

How good is the students' personal and social development?

Students' personal responsibility was acceptable in Kindergarten and good in other phases. Students were confident, proud of their school and displayed positive attitudes. However, when learning activities were not well planned to engage them, they were at times inattentive, particularly in Kindergarten. Relationships at all levels were good. Most students responded well to the opportunities and advice provided by the school to adopt a healthy lifestyle. Punctuality and attendance were good. Students' understanding of Islamic values, and their local, cultural and global awareness, were good in the secondary phase and acceptable elsewhere. Students' understanding of the role and values of Islam in Dubai improved as they grew older and moved to higher grades in the school. Respect for the heritage and culture in the UAE and the wider world also developed as students moved to the upper grades. Community and environmental responsibility was acceptable in the Kindergarten and primary phase and good in the middle and secondary phases. Students benefited from many worthwhile projects to protect and improve their environment. They enjoyed visits, field trips, exchange visits and links with other international agencies which enriched their learning. Their work ethic was well developed, particularly in the middle and secondary phases.

[View judgements](#)

How good are teaching and assessment?

Teaching was good in the secondary phase and acceptable in other phases. The majority of teachers in the school had good subject knowledge, and subject specialist teachers confidently challenged the older students through targeted questioning. Teachers' explanations were usually clear. Some good practice was seen, particularly in the secondary phase. The range of teaching strategies which were employed to meet the needs of all groups of students was variable across the school, as was the effective use of resources to engage learners. Teachers did not always plan learning activities sufficiently well to meet the varied needs of the learners in their class. The overuse of writing frames and worksheets reduced the opportunity for

students to develop independence in their learning. In weaker lessons, teachers were focused on the completion of an activity rather than the learning which was taking place.

The quality of assessment was good in the secondary stage and acceptable elsewhere. Staff employed a range of procedures to evaluate students' attainment, including student self-assessment and a recently introduced observation system in Kindergarten. Most teachers gave helpful oral feedback to students during lessons. This was most effective in the secondary stage. The use of written advice to provide the students with a clear indication of their next steps in learning was limited and not used effectively to promote learning.

[View judgements](#)

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

The quality of the curriculum and its design to meet the needs of individual students were good in the secondary phase and acceptable in other phases. The curriculum was reasonably broad and balanced, and based on Indian National Curriculum guidance. The Kindergarten curriculum was being developed to add new dimensions to children's learning. Activities were not always planned to ensure continuity and progression in students' learning as they grew and moved through the grades and this led to unnecessary repetition of work. Staff had made a start on the process of reviewing the curriculum in line with the recommendations made in the previous inspection report. Cross-curricular links were not developed effectively enough. Most students benefited from their chosen enrichment activities and from subject choices at various stages. The school made some adjustments to the curriculum to meet the needs of different groups of students. Higher attaining students were not always challenged sufficiently.

[View judgements](#)

How well does the school protect and support students?

There were good systems in place which focused effectively on the health and safety of the students as they travelled on school buses or moved around the school. If they became unwell, they were suitably looked after in the immaculate clinic. Students were usually well supervised at all times but sometimes the children in the Kindergarten were not well supervised as they moved around the school. The maintenance team did a good job to keep the buildings safe and hygienic. The school focused well on promoting the need to live a healthy life. Students had many opportunities to learn that a healthy lifestyle was important by attending check-ups at the clinic, learning about healthy eating and taking part in the

Health Club. Adults looked after and cared for students well. Recent training on child protection issues had made them more aware of what to do if they came across a student with a problem.

Relationships between students and all adults were good and students were polite and respectful towards visitors. Procedures for promoting attendance and punctuality were effective. Parents and staff worked well together to ensure that students attended regularly and did not miss important learning time. The school had developed good systems to ensure that students with special educational needs were identified early so that their needs could be catered for. Students who were supported in the Learning Centre received good quality support from specialist staff and made good progress. All students received much advice to support their personal and academic needs and, as they got older, to prepare for their future.

[View judgements](#)

How good are the leadership and management of the school?

The quality of leadership was acceptable. The Principal set out a clear vision for the school, and was ably assisted by the Vice Principal. They were strongly committed to improving the school and had been successful in developing a range of effective partnerships. Leadership roles were widely distributed among staff. Staff understanding of how to develop good quality teaching and learning was variable. As a result, the expectations which teachers set for students' learning were sometimes not high enough.

Self-evaluation and improvement planning were acceptable. Senior leaders involved all staff appropriately in deciding on priorities for development. Several aspects of the school's work had improved since the previous inspection. Staff employed a wide range of processes to gather information on the school's work, including monitoring the quality of lessons. The results of these monitoring activities and gathering of assessment data were not always used to identify specific aspects in need of improvement.

The partnerships with parents and the local community were good. The school had a range of ways of communicating with parents. Reports on their child's progress did not fully set out their next steps in learning. Parents were closely involved in the life and work of the school. The school enjoyed positive links with the wider community.

Governance of the school was good. The Board of Governors comprised a wide range of representatives from the local and wider community, staff members and parents. The Board valued the opinions of

stakeholders and had overseen rapid growth and development of the school since its establishment. Governors held the school accountable for most aspects of its performance.

The management of staffing, facilities and resources was good. The Principal and Vice Principal ensured that the day-to-day running of the school was done well. Most staff were well qualified, and professional development activities were offered regularly. The school campus was of good quality and was well maintained. The school premises were easily accessible to all students, including those with additional needs. Resources, including the library, were appropriate to support teaching and learning effectively.

[View judgements](#)

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

Staff who worked in the Learning Centre were well qualified and had developed good procedures for identifying students with special educational needs, including those who were gifted and talented. As a result of attending workshops, teachers had become more confident in identifying students who were having difficulties and in recognising the different categories of need. Parent were involved when students took baseline assessments on entry to school. Students with learning difficulties received good quality individual support in the Learning Centre. They enjoyed their individual sessions, worked hard and developed strong relationships with the staff in the Centre. These students learned well because activities were effectively planned to meet their individual needs. In classes, support was variable because of inconsistencies in the quality of teaching.

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	240	19%
	Last year	309	35%
Teachers	75		55%
Students	There were no senior students in the school		

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

The following statements were based on the survey response at the time of the inspection. The above response figures are the most up-to-date and accurate available prior to publication.

Parents and teachers had positive views about the school. Almost all parents thought that the school offered good quality education and that their children were well looked after and safe. High proportions of parents and teachers thought that the school was led well and that their views were listened to. Teachers were pleased to be involved in school self-evaluation and improvement activities. While almost all parents thought that their children were making good progress in English, mathematics and science, only a majority thought so about Islamic Education and Arabic as an additional language. A majority of parents felt that the school dealt well with bullying.

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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