

# INSPECTION REPORT

## Jebel Ali Primary School

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Knowledge and Human Development Authority

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## GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT Jebel Ali Primary School

Location	Jebel Ali
Type of school	Private
Website	<a href="http://www.jebelalischool.org">www.jebelalischool.org</a>
Telephone	04 8846485
Address	PO Box 17111, Jebel Ali, Dubai
Principal	Jonathan Dean Price
Curriculum	UK
Gender of students	Boys and Girls
Age / Grades or Year Groups	4-11 / Kindergarten to Grade 6
Attendance	Good
Number of students on roll	654
Number of Emirati students	1 (less than 1%)
Date of the inspection	Monday 26th to Wednesday 28th March 2012

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## The context of the school

Located in Jebel Ali Village, Jebel Ali Primary School educates 654 boys and girls between the ages of four and eleven years. The school operated on two nearby sites, with the Foundation Stage class and Years 1 and 2 situated less than a mile from the school's original site which accommodated Years 3 to 6.

The school followed the English National Curriculum and students sat the standard assessment tasks at ages seven and eleven.

The school employed 49 teachers, including the school's senior leaders, almost all of whom held relevant degrees or teaching qualifications. These were supported by twenty teaching assistants. Eight teachers and one teaching assistant joined the school in the current school year. Eighteen students were enrolled to take Arabic as a first language, and one was an UAE national.

## Overall school performance 2011-2012

Outstanding

## How has the school progressed since the last inspection?

Jebel Ali Primary School provided an outstanding quality of education, in line with its aspiration to develop the talents of its students within a stimulating and supportive learning environment. It had many important strengths, including students' outstanding attainment and progress in English, mathematics and science, and their personal development. Teaching was outstanding and highly effective in developing the students' learning skills. Students also benefited from the strong support provided by their teachers. The curriculum met the needs of almost all the students very well. Leadership and management throughout the school was effective. The strong commitment of staff and the partnership with parents made a strong contribution to the high standards achieved by students.

The school had made significant progress in meeting the recommendations of the previous inspection. Improvements in the curriculum and quality of teaching in Arabic enabled students to make faster progress, while less progress was made in improving the quality of students' progress in Islamic Education. The school had a good capacity to improve still further.

## Key strengths

- Students' outstanding attainment and progress in English, mathematics and science;
- The students' exceptional personal qualities, and their attitudes, sense of responsibility and behavior;
- The outstanding quality of teaching which enabled students to enjoy learning and do their best;
- The high quality of support provided for students, especially those with special educational needs;
- The outstanding leadership throughout the school that promoted an inspiring learning environment for students.

## Recommendations

- Continue to improve attainment and progress in Islamic Education and Arabic;
- Develop more systematic and rigorous self-evaluation to improve outcomes for students still further;
- Strengthen the role of governors to provide greater challenge and accountability for the school in its curricular and academic life.

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

	Foundation Stage	Primary
<b>Islamic Education</b>		
<b>Attainment</b>	Not Applicable	Acceptable
<b>Progress</b>	Not Applicable	Acceptable
<b>Arabic as a first language</b>		
<b>Attainment</b>	Not Applicable	Acceptable
<b>Progress</b>	Not Applicable	Good
<b>Arabic as an additional language</b>		
<b>Attainment</b>	Not Applicable	Acceptable
<b>Progress</b>	Not Applicable	Good
<b>English</b>		
<b>Attainment</b>	Outstanding	Outstanding
<b>Progress</b>	Outstanding	Outstanding
<b>Mathematics</b>		
<b>Attainment</b>	Outstanding	Outstanding
<b>Progress</b>	Outstanding	Outstanding
<b>Science</b>		
<b>Attainment</b>	Outstanding	Outstanding
<b>Progress</b>	Outstanding	Outstanding

Attainment of students was outstanding in both phases in English, mathematics and science. Students showed high levels of knowledge and understanding for their age and were achieving standards well above the expected international benchmarks. Reading and writing skills were strong at all ages. Students at all stages demonstrated very good computational skills and were adept at analysing and interpreting

numerical information. Across the school, students developed a strong awareness of the world around them and, from an early age, demonstrated highly effective skills of enquiry and investigation. Attainment was acceptable in Islamic Education and Arabic. In Arabic, non-native speakers used simple words and phrases appropriately, and their writing skills were adequately developed. Native speakers showed acceptable skills of writing, but their oral skills were more limited. In Islamic Education, younger students were able to recite collectively, while those older had an acceptable knowledge of the life of the Prophet.

Students' progress was outstanding in both phases in English, mathematics and science. Students' reading and writing skills advanced rapidly year by year, as did their abilities to develop reasoning and problem-solving skills in mathematics. Improvements in their understanding of scientific enquiry and their ability to communicate their scientific thinking were rapid across both phases. Progress in Arabic was good. Students built on their previous knowledge well to learn new language skills, although progress in extended writing was limited by the restricted opportunities available to them. Progress in Islamic Education was acceptable. Students developed the rules of recitation of The Holy Qur'an at a satisfactory rate. Across the school, progress of students with special educational needs was at least good, and often outstanding.

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

	Foundation Stage	Primary
Attitudes and behaviour	Outstanding	Outstanding
Understanding of Islam and appreciation of local traditions and culture	Outstanding	Outstanding
Civic, economic and environmental understanding	Outstanding	Outstanding

Students demonstrated exemplary behaviour and excellent attitudes to learning. They showed great respect and valued and supported one another. Students exhibited a high level of independence and self-reliance. They were very much aware of the importance of adopting a healthy lifestyle. Their punctuality was commendable and their attendance was good. Students demonstrated an excellent level of understanding of Islam and its impact on the lives of people in the UAE. They could talk about the attributes of good Muslims and could explain the importance of living up to the teachings of Islam in their everyday life. Students showed an outstanding knowledge of the basic features of Emirati culture. They were also aware of Dubai as a city of people with multi-cultural backgrounds. Students thought that living

in Dubai provided them with rich social experiences. They participated effectively in school life and activities, and the student council enabled them to experience democracy in action. Students showed an exceptional economic understanding and spoke knowledgeably about the previous economic challenges of Dubai and the factors that helped it move forward. They could relate the diverse cosmopolitan nature of Dubai's society to the employment opportunities. Students demonstrated a high level of awareness of sustainability and knew about the major environmental challenges facing Dubai and the world.

### How good are the teaching, learning and assessment?

	Foundation Stage	Primary
Teaching for effective learning	Outstanding	Outstanding
Quality of students' learning	Outstanding	Outstanding
Assessment	Outstanding	Outstanding

The quality of teaching was outstanding across the school. In the best lessons, in both phases, highly motivating teaching resulted from teachers' secure grasp of their subjects and their clear understanding of how children learn. Sequences of lessons were well-planned with a range of teaching strategies, interesting activities and links to real-life situations. Teachers excited and engaged children through lessons and themes which were well planned and meticulously presented. Teachers knew their children very well, and met their needs very effectively. They were very well supported by professional and competent teaching assistants and learning support staff. Resources were deployed effectively to support and enhance learning. Teaching was particularly strong in English, mathematics and science as well as other subjects such as sport, music, and information and communications technology (ICT). Teaching in Islamic Education was acceptable and teaching in Arabic was better, especially in Key Stage 2. The links between subjects in many lessons offered relevance to real-life situations in Dubai and beyond. In a few lessons, however, the content was too dominated by the teacher and, as a result, students had fewer opportunities to demonstrate their learning.

Learning was outstanding in both phases. The youngest children had very positive attitudes to learning and were inquisitive and curious. Students across the school worked very well independently and when they were involved in child-initiated activities inside and outside the classrooms. They interacted well with the many enrichment activities offered by the school. Students took increasing responsibility for their own

learning and progress as they moved up the school. Students were keen and willing learners, and readily did what their teachers asked. They developed increasingly mature and considerate collaborative skills when working with their peers. Almost all students applied themselves well, worked hard and persevered.

Assessment was outstanding in both phases. In the Foundation Stage, children's progress in all areas of learning was carefully recorded and tracked. Teachers used assessment well to plan activities for children's different needs. Across the school, teachers had a thorough knowledge of their students' strengths and weaknesses. As a result, they interacted well with individuals to move them on to their next stages of learning. In primary, assessment information was used effectively to plan lessons, address individual needs and highlight the performance of students over time. Marking in books was regular although it was stronger in English and mathematics where teachers provided students with clear guidance on how the work could be improved. Target setting was particularly strong in English, mathematics and PSHE. The school made increasingly good use of available data to track students, analyse groups and check progress.

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

	Foundation Stage	Primary
Curriculum quality	Outstanding	Good

The curriculum was outstanding in the Foundation Stage and good in the primary phase. It met the school's aims to provide a broad, balanced, relevant, challenging and practical curriculum for children. A well-developed and comprehensive planning and review process successfully involved a wide range of staff. Continuity and progression in education, from Foundation Stage to Year 1 and from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2, enabled a smooth transition between stages. In the primary phase, the curriculum for Islamic Education had been reviewed and updated to meet the needs of students while provision for the few Arab Muslim students in this phase required further improvement. Cross-curricular links and opportunities for problem solving and enquiry-based activities were excellent. Independent learning, research and critical thinking opportunities were evident throughout the school, particularly in English, mathematics and science. The wide and varied range of curricular enrichment activities, particularly in sport and music, and the after-school clubs provided students with a particularly rich educational experience.

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

	Foundation Stage	Primary
Health and Safety	Outstanding	Outstanding
Quality of Support	Outstanding	Outstanding

Arrangements to promote students' welfare, health and safety throughout the school were outstanding and enhanced significantly by the robust and highly consistent implementation of policies, procedures and practice. Students' medical needs were met effectively through regular health checks and sharing of relevant information. Students' choices for lunches and snacks were mainly healthy, reflecting the objectives and prominence of health education in the curriculum. School premises were clean, well maintained and spacious, providing safe indoor and outdoor accommodation and facilities for all students, including those with special educational needs. The Headteacher took responsibility for child protection. Students reported that they felt safe and that they were aware of staff with whom they could discuss any specific concerns should the need arise.

The school's support for all students was outstanding, largely due to increased staffing and recent innovations such as enhanced support and challenge for groups of gifted and talented students. Students with special educational needs were identified very quickly and, with additional levels of support within class and through expert withdrawal teaching, made at least good progress. Individual education plans and learning profiles were informative and shared with students and parents. Parental involvement was strong and included the training of parents to help students who required further practice in reading. All staff were highly skilled and sensitive in their management of students and their behaviour. They worked well as a team to ensure a consistency of approach. The school worked effectively and successfully with parents to bring about continuous improvements in attendance.

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

	Whole school
Quality of leadership	Outstanding
Self-evaluation and improvement planning	Good
Partnerships with parents and the community	Outstanding
Governance	Good
Management, including staffing, facilities and resources	Outstanding

Leadership throughout the school was outstanding and strongly promoted the school's mission and core values. It was highly successful in providing an educational experience focused on the needs of individual students. Staff at all levels were committed and united in their desire to help students to achieve high standards. Shared responsibility, good communication and a collaborative leadership style were evident within the school. Year group leaders provided strong leadership in developing curricular and pastoral priorities within their teams. The school had a good capacity to improve further because it held the success of the students as its highest priority.

Systems to evaluate the school's work and plan for improvement were good. Appropriate plans had been drawn up to improve the quality of education, and these identified clear priorities for future development. While the monitoring of attainment and progress of individual students was improving significantly, the rigorous evaluation of information measuring the progress of different groups of students over time was less well developed and not always fully accurate. Monitoring of teaching quality was achieved through lesson observation.

The school had formed an outstanding partnership with its parents who expressed high levels of support for the school. Communication between parents and the school was of high quality involving reporting procedures and dialogue with staff, and a parent survey. An active parents' association and good opportunities for parents to be involved in school life, further enhanced the school's relationship with its parents. Students benefited from many opportunities to be involved with life outside school through extensive sporting links with other schools, visits and trips, and in environmental and charitable initiatives and projects.

The governance of the school provided good support for its life and work. The board of governors contained much valuable expertise. Although many governors were parents they did not formally represent parents' interests, and the board did not actively seek parents' views. Governors held periodic meetings with staff to discuss contractual and other matters, and they identified annual priorities and goals for consideration by senior leaders. Governors had not shown a strong inclination to be involved in detail with the academic and curricular work of the school and, as a result, had not held the school fully to account for this area of school life.

Management, staffing, facilities and resources were outstanding. Day-to-day operation was smooth and well understood by all members of the school community. Work was very well organized although timetabling arrangements for Islamic Education required review. The school was adequately staffed and almost all teachers had appropriate qualifications and experience. The premises were very well maintained with a range of specialist facilities for high-quality, inspiring and independent learning experiences. Resources were appropriate, widely accessible and relevant to the needs of the students.

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

Before the inspection, the views of parents and teachers 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	157	22%
	Last year	240	34%
Teachers	16		37%
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 staff responded to the pre-inspection surveys. The parents responding expressed satisfaction with the life and work of the school. They particularly approved of their children's progress in English and mathematics and all felt that the teaching was good and that their children enjoyed the learning experience at school. All felt that children's behaviour was good, that the school looked after children well and kept them safe, and that the school provided high-quality learning resources. Staff who responded felt equally positive about these areas. Staff also felt that they all had good opportunities for professional dialogue with colleagues and that they were part of a professional team with a real impact on children's learning. A few parents were less positive about children's progress in Islamic Education and Arabic.

## 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](mailto:inspection@khda.gov.ae)

## Our work with schools

Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau (DSIB) inspects schools to inform parents, students and the wider community of the quality of education provided. Inspectors also give guidance to staff about how to improve the standard of education.

At the beginning of the inspection, we ask the principal and staff about the strengths of the school, what needs to improve and how they know. We use the information they give us to help us plan our time in school. During the inspection, we go into classes and join other activities in which students are involved. We also gather the views of students, parents and staff. We find their views very helpful and use them, together with the other information we have collected, to arrive at our view regarding the quality of education.

This report tells you what we found during the inspection and the quality of education in the school. We describe how well students are doing, how good the school is at helping them to learn and how well it cares for them. We comment on how well staff, parents and children work together and how they go about improving the school. Finally, we focus on how well the school is led and how staff help the school achieve its aims.

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