

INSPECTION REPORT

Lycée Français International

Report published in April, 2014

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT Lycée Français International

Location	Oud Metha
Type of school	Private
Website	www.lfidb.net
Telephone	04 336 8552
Address	P O Box 2226, Dubai
Principal	Christophe Troucat
Curriculum	French
Gender of students	Boys and Girls
Age / Grades or Year Groups	3-18 / Maternelle - Terminale
Attendance	Good
Number of students on roll	1935
Largest nationality group of Students	French
Number of Emirati students	0
Date of the inspection	20th to 23rd January 2014

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The context of the school

Lycée Français International is located in Oud Metha. The four sections of the school are Maternelle (three to six years), Primaire (six to 11 years), Collège (11 to 15 years) and Lycée (15 to 18 years). The school had increased its population since the previous inspection. There were 1935 students at the time of the inspection. The majority of students were in Maternelle and Primaire. This was the first year the school had a Terminale class, the final year of school. Class sizes ranged from 25 to 29 children in Maternelle with an average of 25 students in each class in the other sections.

The main nationalities of the students were French and Lebanese. There were over 40 nationalities represented in the school. Twenty students had been identified as having a special educational need.

The school followed the French National Curriculum. French was the language of instruction in almost all subjects, with English and Arabic in the other subjects. Students at the end of Troisième took the Diplôme National du Brevet. This academic year will be the first year students will take the French Baccalauréat in Terminale.

Almost all teachers had a first degree and a minority had a teaching qualification. Approximately 32 per cent of the teachers were new to the school in this academic year.

Overall school performance 2013-2014

Good

Key strengths

- Outstanding attainment and progress in English in all sections.
- The good progress of students in French, mathematics and science in all sections.
- The outstanding personal responsibility shown by students across the school.
- The strong partnerships with parents.

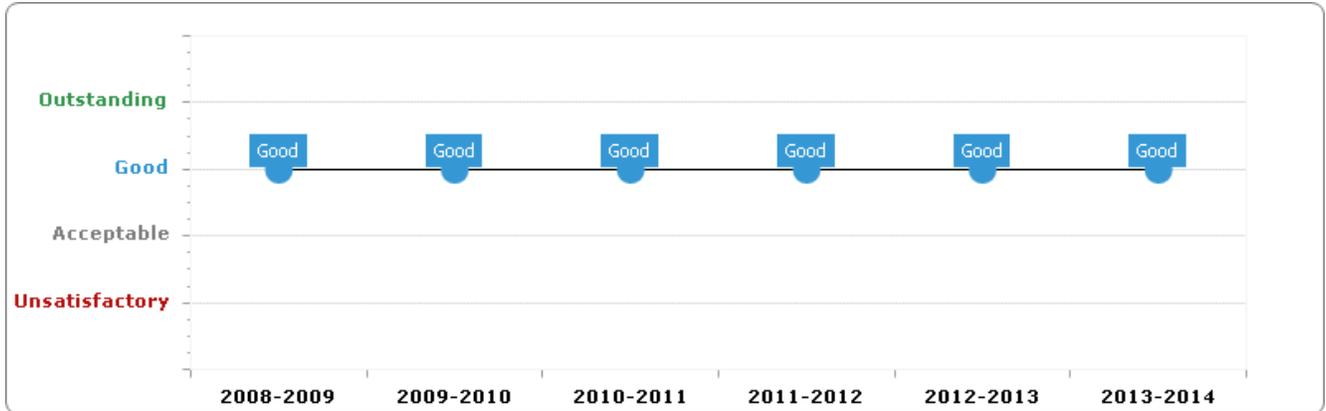
Recommendations

- School leaders should encourage a culture in which teachers take more responsibility for improving their own teaching practice and sharing good practice across subjects and sections, such as through lesson observations.
- Improve teaching, especially in Arabic, by:
 - planning lessons imaginatively which match the range of abilities and the needs of all students;
 - providing more independent and active learning in all lessons.
- Review the arrangements for health and safety of staff and students.
- Ensure that the school policy and procedures for special educational needs operate more effectively in lessons.

Progress since the last inspection

- Students' good progress in Islamic Education in Collège.
- Students' outstanding progress in English in Maternelle.
- The drop in students' progress in Arabic as a first language and Arabic as a second language in Primaire.
- The quality of the new building, classrooms and facilities.
- The improved information communication technology (ICT) in classrooms.

Trend of overall performance



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

	Maternelle	Primaire	Collège	Lycée
Islamic Education				
Attainment	Not Applicable	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable
Progress	Not Applicable	Good	Good	Acceptable
Arabic as a first language				
Attainment	Not Applicable	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable
Progress	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Arabic as an additional language				
Attainment	Not Applicable	Good	Acceptable	Not Applicable
Progress	Not Applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Not Applicable
French				
Attainment	Good	Good	Good	Good
Progress	Good	Good	Good	Good
English				
Attainment	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Progress	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Mathematics				
Attainment	Good	Good	Good	Good
Progress	Good	Good	Good	Good
Science				
Attainment	Good	Good	Good	Good
Progress	Good	Good	Good	Good

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	Maternelle	Primaire	Collège	Lycée
Quality of students' learning skills	Good	Good	Good	Good

[Read paragraph](#)

How good is the students' personal and social development?

	Maternelle	Primaire	Collège	Lycée
Personal responsibility	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Students' understanding of Islamic values and their local, cultural and global awareness	Good	Good	Good	Good
Community and environmental responsibility	Good	Good	Good	Good

[Read paragraph](#)

How good are teaching and assessment?

	Maternelle	Primaire	Collège	Lycée
Teaching for effective learning	Good	Good	Good	Good
Assessment	Good	Good	Good	Good

[Read paragraph](#)

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

	Maternelle	Primaire	Collège	Lycée
Curriculum quality	Good	Good	Good	Good
Curriculum design to meet the individual needs of students	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

[Read paragraph](#)

How well does the school protect and support students?

	Maternelle	Primaire	Collège	Lycée
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	Good
Self-evaluation and improvement planning	Good
Parents and the community	Good
Governance	Good
Management, including staffing, facilities and resources	Good

[Read paragraph](#)

How good are the students' attainment and progress?

Attainment was mostly good across the school and outstanding in English. It was acceptable in Arabic and Islamic education in the Collège and Lycée. Most students showed appropriate knowledge and understanding in Islamic Education, but their Qur'an recitation skills were underdeveloped in Collège and Lycée. In Arabic as a first language, listening and reading skills were well developed for the majority of students. Basic writing skills were secure for younger students but less developed for older students who also lacked confidence in speaking using standard Arabic. In Arabic as an additional language, most students were able to understand a good range of familiar words and short sentences, particularly the younger students, and many could hold simple conversations. Reading was limited and writing was weak. French was spoken fluently across all sections, and reading and writing were good in most phases. In English, most students demonstrated skills above international standards; their speaking skills were consistently high. Problem-solving in mathematics was mostly good but not as strong in Primaire. Younger students understood number, shape and space well. Older students understood geometry and complex number work. However, interpretation of data was limited. In science, investigation was developed from an early age. Older students used computer technology effectively to develop understanding of investigation and research.

Progress was very similar to attainment. It only differed in Collège where progress in Islamic Education was good and in Primaire where progress in Arabic was acceptable. In Islamic Education, students did well in Primaire and Collège but recitation skills and the application of rules were not developing well; this was particularly so in the Lycée. In Arabic as a first language, students were making strong progress with reading and learning vocabulary but less so in using it to communicate ideas independently, orally or in writing. Students of Arabic as an additional language made steady progress in learning new words and expressions. Developing students' communication skills was slow. In French, oral fluency, reading and writing were developed well throughout all sections. Across the school, there was strong progress in all English language skills, particularly speaking. Problem-solving was the most developed skill in mathematics. Scientific understanding improved most effectively because students were developing skills of practical investigations.

[View judgements](#)

Quality of students' learning skills

Students' learning skills were good across the school. Students enjoyed their school work and came to school ready to learn. In Maternelle, children developed independence well. Older students conscientiously assumed responsibility for improving their work and did so with maturity. Students collaborated purposefully when working in groups and pairs. They were confident in explaining their learning when given the opportunity to do so, expressing their ideas clearly and eagerly. This was especially the case in English

language classes. Students applied their learning to real-life contexts such as understanding and explaining the greenhouse effect. However, making connections between learning in different subjects was not as well developed. In the majority of lessons, critical thinking and problem solving were apparent but not consistently across all sections and subjects. In a minority of lessons, particularly in Arabic, learning was mainly passive with few opportunities for students to develop learning skills. This occurred where teaching was over-directive and students' involvement was limited.

[View judgements](#)

How good is the students' personal and social development?

Students' personal responsibility was outstanding. Behaviour across the school was exemplary. Students were polite and respectful to adults and to each other. Their attitude to school was strongly positive. They responded well to set work and challenge, and were on task in lessons. Students listened attentively to their peers and teachers and were considerate of the opinions of others. Students showed pride in their achievements and that of others. Most showed a good understanding of healthy food and lifestyle but this was not the case for a few. During the inspection, attendance was good.

Students demonstrated a good understanding of the values of Islam and their influence on life in Dubai. They could make connections between everyday life in Dubai and the Islamic culture. Older students could identify changes over time in Dubai and the UAE, and related these to the multicultural nature of Dubai. Students could describe their own cultures and a range of cultures from around the world. Their understanding of the cultural heritage of the UAE and Emirati traditions was adequate.

Students demonstrated a strong sense of community responsibility. Class representatives took seriously their role to represent student opinion. Students provided suggestions to school leaders and were confident these were considered carefully. They took part in planning school events. However, much of this was prompted by the school curriculum, from teachers or through extra-curricular activities, rather than from students. They had a strong work ethic and a solid understanding of environmental issues through class work, but they were not primarily responsible for initiating environmental projects or links with the local community.

[View judgements](#)

How good are teaching and assessment?

Teaching was good throughout the school. Most teachers had good subject knowledge which enabled them to present work well, respond to students' questions and promote depth in discussion. However, in a minority of lessons, teachers did not fully understand how children learn. Most lessons were well planned

using appropriate and varied strategies. A few teachers used information communication technology (ICT), such as interactive whiteboards, as a resource to support learning. Open questions promoted lively discussion and debate, particularly in English where discourse was of high quality. When there was probing questioning, there was active participation and rapid progress. In many lessons, there were good opportunities for students to develop critical thinking and problem solving skills. However, in a few lessons, work was not planned to meet the needs of all students and the most able were not sufficiently challenged. In these lessons, particularly in Arabic, teaching was dull and prescriptive, leading to limited learning and slow progress.

Assessment was good. The school had effective assessment systems and processes in place to collect information about students' progress. Regular meetings between teachers led to close tracking of the progress of individual students. Assessments were accurate and were recorded regularly. Teachers knew the strengths and weaknesses of students. The most effective assessment practice included students' assessment of their own work. When teachers provided guidance, areas for development and next steps for improvement, students were more assured learners. The quality of written marking was more variable and was sometimes less useful to students. Advice about how to improve was not a common feature of students' written work. The analysis and use of assessment data to inform lesson planning and to meet the needs of all learners in lessons, were inconsistent. Target-setting in order to raise expectations of students was at an early stage of development. Ongoing assessment during lessons was a weak feature of lessons in Arabic.

[View judgements](#)

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

The quality of the curriculum was good in all phases. The French national curriculum was broad and balanced, with good continuity and progression, in line with French ministry requirements. The curriculum was reviewed regularly to ensure all national curriculum adaptations had been made and that students were well prepared for next stages in learning. The bi-lingual teaching and learning in French and English benefited students in cross-subject and cross-cultural understanding and language development. Strong links of mutual benefit with other schools enhanced curriculum provision. A broad range of enrichment and extra-curricular activities motivated students. Students in Troisième enjoyed and benefited from work placements as part of their connection to the community and work. This was the first year the school had offered the three fields of the general Baccalauréat in Terminale.

Curriculum design to meet the individual needs of students was acceptable. In a few lessons, there were adjustments to the curriculum to meet students' needs. However, this was not the case in all aspects of curriculum provision across subjects. Recent curriculum initiatives included complementary pedagogical

activities (APC) and personalised support programmes (PPRE). In a few subjects, the curriculum was almost wholly designed from textbooks and not adapted to individual students' needs in lessons. Narrow delivery of the curriculum did not promote higher order thinking. Those students identified as needing support could not always successfully access the curriculum.

[View judgements](#)

How well does the school protect and support students?

Arrangements to ensure health and safety for students were good. Recent new buildings and regular maintenance had created a well-maintained and spacious environment. The care and welfare of students were the primary concern of the school. The promotion of healthy living was taken seriously and the new canteen and additional sports hall had enhanced this provision. Healthy living was promoted across the school. A programme for awareness-raising on anti-bullying had taken place, primarily through workshops which involved parents, teachers and students. This co-operative approach with stakeholders was highly beneficial to all. General supervision, bus and clinic procedures were secure. However, the school had been less pro-active in addressing fully the issues surrounding fire evacuation and student movement to cars at the end of the school day.

The support for students was also good. Teachers knew their students well. There was respect and trust between staff and students. Behaviour management was clearly defined and understood by all. The school kept thorough records on attendance and punctuality. Student registers were taken in most lessons. Parents were contacted when students were not at school. Students knew how to seek support for personal and academic needs. Older students were provided with opportunities to obtain advice and discuss their further education and careers.

[View judgements](#)

How good are the leadership and management of the school?

All aspects of leadership and management were good. Senior leaders were dedicated and had a strong commitment to providing quality education for all. School leaders worked with parents, teachers, students and other stakeholders in developing a shared vision for the school. Relationships and communication between levels of leadership were effective. The roles of leaders were defined and efficient leadership teams helped ensure quality outcomes. There had been improved outcomes in a few key subjects and sections. However, not all school leaders were fully involved in planning for whole-school improvement or were equally active in leading change.

School leaders had not ensured enough improvement in teaching practice in all subjects and sections to raise outcomes for all learners. The school had good capacity for further improvement.

Self-evaluation was a regular part of school improvement planning with key priorities identified. Improvement plans were positive and based on an accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. External inspections added more information beneficial to the school. School leaders had accurately identified professional development needs through performance management systems. However, this had not always translated into action that had led to improved teaching practice. Training of staff was not sufficiently directed at meeting students' developmental needs. The school had made some progress addressing the recommendations of the previous inspection. Improvements had been made in progress in Islamic Education in Collège and in attainment and progress in English in Maternelle. The use of assessment data to plan work that provided more challenge and met the needs of all students, had not been sufficiently well addressed.

Parents were actively involved in the school community and in their child's learning. Communication between school and home was open and productive. Parents were able to meet teachers informally as well as formally. School reports were specific and comprehensive. The school website was informative. The Parents' Association (APELFI) had a visible impact on many aspects of school life. There were relevant links with the local community, local schools and internationally which provided constructive and engaging educational experiences for students. However, a few parents had concerns about their child's progress in one or two key subjects. Some parents felt that their opinions were not considered and they were not part of school decision-making.

The board of governors played an active role in supporting the school's vision and mission. It monitored the school's decisions and actions, and was involved in school review, strategy and action for improvement. The board regularly sought the views of stakeholders, including school leaders and parents. School buildings and resourcing had improved significantly although resourcing still needed to be a priority. The board needed to hold school leaders more accountable for improved teaching practice and improved student outcomes.

The school provided good management and a smooth and efficient day to day operation. The new building provided good learning spaces for students. There was an additional gymnasium and library. Staff were well deployed across subjects and sections. There were teaching assistants for each class in Maternelle. However, a significant number of teachers did not have a teaching qualification and class sizes in a number of Maternelle classes were greater than expected for this age group.

Resources in all three libraries were not sufficient to meet the needs of all students across a wide range of ages, interests and academic levels. Resources in classrooms were adequate. Specialist classrooms, such as art and music, were not sufficient in size or resources for the learning needs of all students.

[View judgements](#)

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

There was inconsistency in the identification and provision for SEN, including gifted and talented students. A few talented students had been identified but there was little evidence of monitoring of students with special gifts and talents. There was limited professional development for staff regarding all aspects of special needs' provision but most particularly the appropriate support needed in lessons. Support varied from teacher to teacher and within subjects. The curriculum did not always meet their learning needs. A few teachers modified activities and supported students in their learning. There were too few opportunities and resources for students to engage in tasks suited to their needs and relate learning to meaningful contexts. Identified students were given an individual education plan (IEP) with the agreement of parents, to target support. Parents were encouraged to play an active part in developing students' IEPs. The newly appointed part-time psychologist provided guidance to teachers on needs and strategies for support. This was not systematic enough to include the measurement of progress of these students.

How well does the school teach Arabic as a first language?

Across the phases, the quality of teaching Arabic as a first language was adequate. Teachers' subject knowledge was adequate and their presentation was often clear. They regularly planned activities for their lessons although learning objectives and expected outcomes were not always clear. Teaching was clear and structured but did not always give sufficient opportunities for students to work independently or to collaborate with others. In most lessons, a variety of activities were included but these did not always integrate the four skills of the language. Occasionally, teachers used questions to check understanding but did not always ensure there was sufficient opportunity to extend discussion to develop fluency further or to provoke thinking. The pace of most lessons was suitable to the age and stage of the students.

The school curriculum was based on the Ministry of Education curriculum standards but the school used an additional range of material to support learning. However, the school curriculum was not well planned and did not always offer adequate opportunities for progression in all skills. This had an impact on the teaching and learning where students were performing within very structured patterns. This was especially the case

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in reading comprehension, with very limited opportunities to go beyond a narrow and prescriptive lesson. It did not therefore provide opportunities for students to develop adequate communication skills.

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	86	7%
	Last year	87	10%
Teachers	14		16%
Students	17		19%

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

Most parents who responded to the survey were satisfied with the quality of their child's education and felt their child was making good progress in key subjects except Arabic. The majority thought their child was well looked after. Most thought teachers helped their child know how to improve. A few parents were concerned about their child's lack of use of technology for learning. A minority thought the school did not listen to their opinions or involve them in decision-making. Most parents felt that school inspection led to improvements in the school.

Teachers' responses were mostly positive. However, a minority did not believe they had the necessary support to ensure special educational needs' students make good progress. A minority thought they did not participate enough in the process of school self-evaluation and improvement planning. All teachers who responded thought that school inspection led to improvements in the school.

Students who responded thought their teachers were skilled and gave opportunities for meaningful work. They felt supported in their learning, safe and well looked after. They felt they had opportunities to participate in school leadership and that the school guided them in future education and career choices. Over half thought the school did not modify the curriculum to suit their learning needs and that the school did not listen to their opinions.

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

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