

# INSPECTION REPORT

## The Indian International School

Report published in January 2013

Knowledge and Human Development Authority

## GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT The Indian International School

Location	Silicon Oasis
Type of school	Private
Website	<a href="http://www.ihsdxb.com/dso">www.ihsdxb.com/dso</a>
Telephone	04-3423909
Address	PO Box 106, Dubai
Principal	Mrs Geetha Murali
Curriculum	Indian(CBSE)
Gender of students	Boys and Girls
Age / Grades	3-10 / Kindergarten 1 to Grade 5
Attendance	Good
Number of students on roll	1,073
Largest nationality group of Students	Indian
Number of Emirati students	0
Date of the inspection	10th to 13th December 2012

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## The context of the school

The Indian International School is situated in the Silicon Oasis district of Dubai. The school opened in April 2011 with Kindergarten and Grade 1 classes. At the time of inspection, there were classes from Kindergarten through to Grade 5. The students in Grades 2 to 5 had been at the school for approximately five months. The school followed the CBSE International (CBSE-i) curriculum from Grade 1 onwards.

There were 44 classes in the school. Sixty per cent of the students were in the 27 Kindergarten classes. Almost all students were of Indian nationality, and nine other nationalities were represented by 17 students on the roll. Most students had English as their second language. There were no Emirati students. Approximately 25 per cent of the students in the primary phase had arrived in the UAE in the past six months. Three per cent of students had been identified by the school as having some form of special educational need. These students received learning support in withdrawal sessions with specialist staff and also during normal lessons.

There were 66 full-time teachers, including the senior leadership team. Almost half of the teachers had joined the school in the current academic year, with a minority in their first year of teaching. The Principal had been in post since the school opened.

## Overall school performance 2012-2013

Acceptable

### Key strengths

- Students were well motivated, displayed good behaviour and had an enthusiastic attitude to learning;
- Relationships between the students themselves and all adults at the school were good;
- There was a strong emphasis on healthy lifestyles and access to a range of physical activities for all students;
- There were good links with parents and the community.

### Recommendations

- Improve attainment and progress in all key subjects by developing effective and appropriate teaching strategies to engage and challenge all groups of learners;
- Improve assessment systems and ensure that teachers use accurate information regarding students' attainment and progress which is benchmarked against international standards;
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning by ensuring that teachers maximise opportunities for students to extend critical thinking and enquiry skills, as required by the curriculum;
- Ensure the school's self-evaluation, including the monitoring of teaching for effective learning, is more accurate and linked closely to the quality of students' experiences and educational outcomes.

## Progress since the last inspection

This was the first inspection of the school.

## Trend of overall performance



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

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

[Read paragraph](#)

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

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

[Read paragraph](#)

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

	KG	Primary
Teaching for effective learning	Acceptable	Acceptable
Quality of students' learning	Acceptable	Acceptable
Assessment	Acceptable	Acceptable

[Read paragraph](#)

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

	KG	Primary
Curriculum quality	Good	Good

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

	KG	Primary
Health and Safety	Good	Good
Quality of Support	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
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 in all subjects was acceptable. In Islamic Education, students could recite the Qur'an but did not always apply Tajweed rules correctly and clearly pronounce all the letters. They understood Prophet Mohammad's (PBUH) Seerah and could apply Islamic concepts to real-life situations. Students' listening and writing skills in Arabic were in line with expectations but their reading and speaking skills were weaker, particularly for students in the upper grades. In English, Kindergarten children listened attentively, although writing exercises were often limited to simple tasks matching single words. In primary, extended and creative writing was rarely found before Grade 5 and little use was made of the library and other resources to encourage a love of reading. In mathematics, primary students were good at using number and solving real-life problems but they were not confident in collecting, analysing and presenting data. In science, students were able to relate their knowledge of biology topics, such as environment and habitats, to real-life examples. Practical skills were developing but most students did not yet understand principles of prediction and fair testing.

Progress in all subjects was acceptable. Students' progress in Qur'an recitation and Fiqh was acceptable, but their knowledge of Hadith was underdeveloped. In Arabic, most students were developing a reasonable pronunciation. Children's speaking skills improved steadily through Kindergarten. In primary, too much emphasis was placed on written grammar and so not enough progress was being made in speaking English and creative writing. More able students were not consistently given mathematics tasks that challenged them, which limited their progress. In science, students gained deeper understanding of the biology topics as they revisited them; this was less evident in some aspects of physics and chemistry. Students did not use their existing knowledge well in practical activities. In all key subjects, students with special educational needs made acceptable progress. They did well when they were given targeted one-to-one support out of lessons but they were not always supported effectively in classes.

[View judgements](#)

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

Students had mature and sensible attitudes with some self-reliance. Their relationships with each other and the staff were respectful. Behaviour was generally positive but some primary students behaved poorly in lessons. Most students demonstrated positive attitudes towards healthy living. They initiated healthy eating campaigns in school and in shopping malls to promote health and fitness, and fight obesity. Attendance was good and almost all students arrived in good time for lessons. Students were responsible in carrying out assigned duties in and outside their classes. The students' council was selected, not elected,

but their views were representative of the broader student body. Students could name some features of an Islamic society and could respond to Islamic greetings. Most students demonstrated kindness, friendship and co-operation when interacting with each other. They recognised aspects of UAE culture, local tradition and heritage and, in general, appreciated the importance of Islamic values in Dubai. Most students were developing their skills of active citizenship through a range of school activities, such as assemblies. Students, especially older students, participated in environmental activities. Most students understood the importance of environmental sustainability appropriate to their age. They participated in the DEWA energy conservation award. The Green Patrol, a group consisting of students from all grades, ensured that the campus was clean at all times and participated in recycling campaigns.

[View judgements](#)

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

Teaching was acceptable throughout the school. Most teachers had adequate subject knowledge but their understanding of how students learn was inconsistent. Lesson planning was detailed and mostly included differentiated work. However, the tasks set for different ability groups did not always provide sufficient challenge. The teaching of students with special educational needs was good outside the classroom but there was insufficient focused support in lessons other than that given to less able students. Teachers did not always provide specific learning objectives in lessons, so that students were not always sure how their work related to what they had done before. Many English and Arabic lessons demonstrated that teachers were insecure in their understanding of phonics and pronunciation; there were too few opportunities for extended writing. Few science lessons involved practical work that gave students opportunities to test and hypothesise. Most teachers used targeted questions to clarify understanding but teaching was dominated by too much teacher talk. Only a minority of teachers encouraged group work, discussion and presentation. Students had few opportunities to learn information and communication technology (ICT) through all subjects, although a majority of teachers used data projectors effectively to introduce or emphasise new learning. The teaching seen in other subjects, including physical education, swimming, ICT and art, was acceptable. Teaching assistants were deployed effectively in a minority of lessons.

Learning was acceptable. Younger students had more opportunities than older students to work in groups and interact more productively with adults. The majority of students relied on teachers to direct their learning. Students responded well to the better taught enquiry based independent learning lessons, as their creative and critical thinking abilities were challenged. Students acquired knowledge from a variety of sources, for example worksheets, in addition to their notebooks. Learning was inconsistent across the school because students did not always know exactly what was expected of them. Students were given

some opportunities to apply their knowledge and learning to real life. Their skills in problem solving, critical thinking and high order investigations were inconsistent across grades and in different subjects. Students' independent learning skills and use of ICT were underdeveloped across the school.

Assessment was acceptable. Although teachers had begun to use internal assessments and knew their students well, there had been insufficient time to measure progress effectively as they were not benchmarked to international standards. The school had completed assessments and was waiting for the results of ASSET (Assessment of Scholastic Skills through Educational Testing) tests. Assessment information was gathered effectively across the school; however, the impact of teachers' analyses of such data to inform planning or identify appropriate learning objectives was inconsistent. Assessment information was shared regularly with parents and students along with the guidelines for self-assessment. Teachers' marking was inconsistent and the lack of written constructive comments did not provide students with sufficient information on how they might improve. The school did not track the attainment and progress of specific groups of students effectively.

[View judgements](#)

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

The curriculum was good. Its aim to provide a global dimension was supported by a generally broad and balanced syllabus. Professional development of teachers was central to helping them deliver the ambitious curriculum efficiently. Teachers worked together to ensure a smooth transition between phases. Review of the curriculum was carried out every year and the school had acted upon feedback received from parents and students. There was enough challenge in the curriculum for most students, for example through the EBIL lessons, although opportunities to develop independent enquiry skills were not always exploited fully. Links between the different subjects were an important feature and helped students see the relevance of work done. Taekwondo, aerobics and music were already included in the normal week's timetable. There were good links with the community outside the school and these were being extended to include the younger age groups.

[View judgements](#)

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

The provision for the health and safety of students was good. The policies and procedures ensured that the staff focused on safe practices. The maintenance of the school buildings was outstanding and all areas were kept immaculately clean. The supervision of students by staff at all times was good. The accessibility of buildings and deployment of available resources met the most students' needs. There was a full-time

doctor and two qualified nurses who kept good records of students' health and safety. The medical staff were pro-active in ensuring that students led healthy lifestyles. They made arrangements to provide additional physical education lessons to students who were overweight. They ran workshops to teach students to develop healthy eating habits. Students' personal records were kept safe. Fire drills were conducted regularly and fire exits were clearly indicated throughout the building. Student transport and security arrangements were outstanding. Buses were well maintained and equipped with seat belts, and were staffed by RTA-trained drivers and helpers who receive regular updates. There was a child protection policy but all staff did not clearly understand the procedures.

The school was a caring community that provided good support for all its students. The welcoming learning environment enabled both students and staff to work together in harmony and this was appreciated by parents. Students felt safe and were confident to ask for support should a concern arise. The student counsellor provided valued support for students and guidance to members of staff in addressing social and emotional issues. Students were well supervised at all times. Incidents related to unacceptable behaviour were recorded, but these were not monitored to identify trends and patterns over time.

[View judgements](#)

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

Students with special educational needs were well integrated into the inclusive school environment. Specialist staff provided good support for these students and managed the provision well. Students had individual education plans which were kept with the special educational needs educator and the counsellor. However, most teachers did not use these plans to influence their overall lesson planning. When students were withdrawn from classes for intensive one-to-one support, they made better progress. The combination of limited in-class support and withdrawal sessions enabled most students with special educational needs to make acceptable progress.

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

The leadership and management of the school were acceptable, and there was a strong capacity for further improvement. The determined leadership of the Principal had led to a good team spirit among leaders; almost all staff shared a common vision, working and training collaboratively to pursue it. The senior leadership team and other staff with management responsibilities had an evolving understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Leaders of the two phases worked with a common sense of

purpose and determination; their work was beginning to have a positive impact on key aspects of school life.

Self-evaluation and improvement planning were acceptable. The self-evaluation process took into account the views of students, parents, the governing body as well as the teaching staff. Self-evaluation and improvement planning were well organised but there were inconsistencies when comparing DSIB criteria to the school's own judgements. The self-evaluation activities generated information about the school's performance and areas for improvement. Monitoring of lesson activities was regular but did not focus adequately on the attainment or progress of students. The current improvement plan was also not focused enough on measurable actions which would impact upon learning. The task of developing leadership roles across the school was a priority and staff benefited from regular performance management reviews.

Partnerships with parents and the community were good. Parents were kept well informed about school issues through a variety of media including, for example, the school's website. Regular consultations were scheduled to discuss students' progress, and parents were able to schedule additional meetings when needed. Some parents were active in the Parents' Focus Group; they listened to the views of parents and decisions were made with student welfare as the key priority at all times. Frequent support workshops for parents were arranged through the year, along with orientation sessions for new parents and students.

Governance was good; it was supportive, informed and accessible to teachers and parents. The Board of Trustees of this non-profit making school ensured that the statutory requirements were met. Governors displayed very high interest in the work of the school and understood the need for continuous improvement. The management committee ensured adequate rigour was applied in monitoring the accountability of the school's leadership. The committee had a more direct, day-to-day involvement in ensuring in monitoring the school's development.

Staffing, facilities and resources were good overall. The range of facilities and learning resources were excellent in certain areas, for example the age-appropriate external play areas. Variation in the quality and quantity of resources in classrooms impacted on students' learning, and displays of visual and tactile resources in the many indoor spaces was inconsistent. All staff were appropriately qualified; however, the effectiveness of their deployment was under review, especially the levels of adult support in the Kindergarten. As a relatively new school, procedures and routines were well established and effective, and the maintenance of the premises was of a high quality. The library facilities were used to support students' learning under adult direction. In-house and external support for teachers through training was offered at weekends.

[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	657	66%
	Last year	The school was not inspected in 2011-2012	
Teachers	69		85%
Students	There are no upper secondary-aged students in the school		

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

Almost all parents agreed that teaching and learning were good at the school. A majority of parents agreed there was good progress in Islamic Education and most felt there was good progress in the other key subjects. Almost all parents and teachers believed that students were well behaved, well looked after and safe at the school and on school buses, and that they were respected, valued and treated fairly. Most parents were satisfied with the consultation between themselves and the school regarding their children's progress. In the comments received, a few parents expressed concerns about the limited range of extra-curricular activities and the changes in teaching staff. A majority of parents and almost all teachers agreed that students were actively involved in community projects in Dubai. In the survey, a majority of parents and almost all teachers agreed that students could choose from a wide range of subjects and topics. Most parents and all teachers were satisfied that the school was well led and a majority of parents agreed that they were involved in decision-making at the school. Most parents indicated that school leaders listened to their opinions about the school, but in written comments, more than a few did not think so.

## 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)

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