

INSPECTION REPORT

Repton School Dubai

Report published in April 2013

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT Repton School Dubai

Location	Nad Al Sheba
Type of school	Private
Website	www.reptondubai.org
Telephone	04 426-9393
Address	P.O. Box 300331, Dubai
Principal	Mr. Jonathan Hughes D'Aeth
Curriculum	UK/IB
Gender of students	Boys and Girls
Age / Grades or Year Groups	3-18 / Kindergarten 1 to Year 13
Attendance	Outstanding
Number of students on roll	2,195
Largest nationality group of Students	UK
Number of Emirati students	212 (10%)
Date of the inspection	25 th to 28 th February 2013

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The context of the school

Repton School, Dubai is a private school located in Nad Al Sheba, providing education for boys and girls from Foundation Stage to post-16, aged three to 18 years. Approximately ten per cent of students were Emirati. Sixty three nationalities were represented among the student population.

The school follows the National Curriculum of England and Wales, from Foundation Stage to Year 11 and the International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma programme at Post-16. Students sat a variety of external examinations, including the International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) in Year 11 and the IB Diploma exams in Year 13.

At the time of the inspection there were 2,195 students on roll. There were 204 teachers, all of whom had teaching qualifications.

Overall school performance 2012-2013

Good

Key strengths

- Foundation Stage children made outstanding progress and achieved high standards in English, mathematics and science;
- Relationships across the school were outstanding and students behaved extremely well;
- Health and safety arrangements were outstanding;
- The partnership with parents was excellent;
- The Head Teacher's excellent leadership was a significant factor in improving the school's effectiveness.

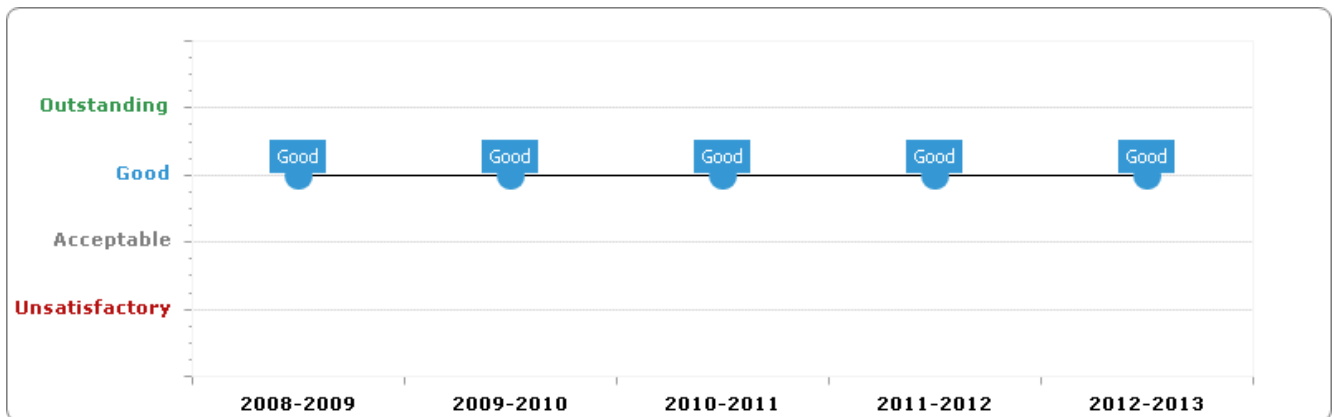
Recommendations

- Further accelerate students' attainment in Islamic Education and Arabic;
- Ensure continuity in assessment systems to track student's progress, especially between the primary and secondary phases;
- Improve curriculum continuity between the Foundation Stage and Year 1 and across the primary-secondary transition;
- Refine self-evaluation by providing a summary of the students' attainment and progress as they move up through the Years;
- Improve communication between the governing board and parents, so that parents are more aware of the reasons behind strategic decisions.

Progress since the last inspection

- Primary students' progress in Islamic Education and Arabic as an additional language had improved. At the secondary level, attainment and progress in mathematics had risen to outstanding levels and had improved in the Post-16 phase. Progress in Post-16 science had also improved.
- Assessment remained outstanding in the Foundation Stage and had improved in the other phases;
- Across the school, procedures to ensure students' health and safety had risen from good to outstanding;
- The quality of support for students had remained good in the Foundation Stage and had risen in the other phases.

Trend of overall performance



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

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Islamic Education				
Attainment	Not Applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Progress	Not Applicable	Good	Good	Acceptable
Arabic as a first language				
Attainment	Not Applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Progress	Not Applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good
Arabic as an additional language				
Attainment	Not Applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Not Applicable
Progress	Not Applicable	Good	Good	Not Applicable
English				
Attainment	Outstanding	Good	Good	Good
Progress	Outstanding	Good	Good	Good
Mathematics				
Attainment	Outstanding	Good	Outstanding	Good
Progress	Outstanding	Good	Outstanding	Good
Science				
Attainment	Outstanding	Good	Good	Acceptable
Progress	Outstanding	Good	Good	Good

[Read paragraph](#)

How good is the students' personal and social development?

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Attitudes and behaviour	Outstanding	Outstanding	Good	Good
Understanding of Islamic values and local, cultural and global awareness	Outstanding	Good	Good	Good
Community and environmental responsibility	Outstanding	Good	Good	Good

[Read paragraph](#)

How good are the teaching, learning and assessment?

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Teaching for effective learning	Outstanding	Good	Good	Good
Quality of students' learning	Outstanding	Good	Good	Good
Assessment	Outstanding	Good	Good	Good

[Read paragraph](#)

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

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Curriculum quality	Outstanding	Good	Good	Good

[Read paragraph](#)

How well does the school protect and support students?

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Health and Safety	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
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
Partnerships with parents and the community	Outstanding
Governance	Good
Management, including staffing, facilities and resources	Good

[Read paragraph](#)

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

In Islamic Education, most students had appropriate knowledge and understanding of Islamic concepts and principles. They knew the difference between Zakah and Sadaqah, the months of the Hijri Calendar and the events connected to each month. Their recitation and memorisation skills were improving in the primary phase, although students did not consistently make links between Islamic principles and everyday life. In Arabic as a first and as an additional language, most students had adequate listening skills. Arab students understood standard Arabic appropriately, and non-Arab students could understand basic instructions. The students' knowledge of grammar was adequate but writing was the weakest skill. In English, listening and speaking skills were outstanding in all phases. Children in the Foundation Stage used a wide vocabulary and children in the Reception year made an excellent start to reading and writing. In the later phases, students were very confident in analysing texts and extracting information. Most students' writing was imaginative and well-structured. They had good understanding of grammatical rules, spelling and punctuation, although some students did not always apply them in their writing. In mathematics, most of the Foundation Stage 2 children had clear understanding of numbers and basic understanding of simple calculation. Students throughout the school could calculate quickly and used the four mathematical operations accurately. In the senior school, most students could solve increasingly complex problems and developed insights into their application in the real world. Attainment in science in the Foundation Stage was outstanding. Children talked confidently about previous experiences, for example, of observing mini-beasts and using simple tools like magnifying glasses with great confidence. Their scientific knowledge had developed very well. Throughout the school, students showed age-appropriate skills of predicting, developing fair tests, making accurate observations and drawing valid conclusions.

In Islamic Education, progress by the majority of students was good. Most students were developing their recitation and memorisation skills effectively. Their progress in relating Islamic principles to real life was less secure. Progress in improving listening and speaking skills was good for the majority of students taking Arabic as an additional language, whilst it was acceptable for most students taking Arabic as a first language. Progress in writing was slow across the school. Children in the Foundation Stage made outstanding progress in gaining early literacy skills in English. Primary students made good progress in their knowledge of letter sounds and spellings. As students moved up through the years, they made good progress in reading and writing. In the Foundation Stage children made outstanding progress in mathematics. Progress was inconsistent in the lower primary phase but increased in the upper primary classes. Throughout the secondary phase, students made outstanding progress and laid the foundations for the challenges of the IB-DP programme, in which the rates of progress were good and improving each year.

In the Foundation Stage, all aspects of science, including knowledge, understanding of concepts, problem solving and manipulative skills, developed rapidly, as did the careful recording of findings in words and pictures. At the secondary level, students showed an increasing ability to explain experimental predictions and scientific phenomena such as the rates of reaction in collision theory.

[View judgements](#)

How well does the school provide for Emirati students?

Emirati students' attainment and progress was generally in line with that of their peers, but it varied according to individual students. In the primary phase attainment was sometimes slightly below that of other nationalities but not for the group as a whole. In the secondary phase, attainment was broadly in line with that of their peers. Their attainment was higher in the IGCSE English literature classes than in English language skills. Emirati students in the primary phase made good progress in most subjects, including Islamic Education, but not in Arabic. They made better progress in English than other students with English as an additional language. They also made outstanding progress in mathematics in upper secondary school with their progress slightly higher than that of the whole cohort. In many cases they exceeded their targets by a greater margin than the cohort as a whole. When Emirati students achieved well, it was usually due to the high expectations of their teachers, outstanding teaching and the relevance of the curriculum to their interests. Emirati students had positive attitudes to learning and the determination to do well.

How good is the students' personal and social development?

Students' attitudes and behavior were outstanding in the junior years and good in the senior years. Almost all students were cooperative, respectful and helped their teachers and each other. They displayed very positive attitudes toward learning at all times. Their attendance over the last full term was outstanding, and they were punctual to school and to their lessons. Across the school most students could explain the influence of Islam on life in Dubai, such as traditional dress, local food and regular calls to prayer. They demonstrated behaviours that reflect friendship and respect for all people. They gained a good awareness of the culture and heritage of the UAE through displays, celebrations and also the Emirati Club. They could discuss the development of UAE. However, their knowledge of other cultures around the world was less secure. Staff throughout the school demonstrated commitment to the care and development of all students. Students throughout the school reflected a mature and thoughtful approach to their learning. They had a strong work ethic, applied themselves well during lessons and valued the relationships they had with their friends and teachers.

The vast majority of students made healthy choices in relation to diet and exercise, had excellent attendance records and were on time for their lessons. Students made good contributions to the life of the school through a range of responsibilities. They led projects to raise funds for the safety of children and healthy living in the community. They had a good understanding of environmental issues facing communities and promoted sustainability through, for example, recycling. Students were successful because they demonstrated a clear understanding of the value of hard work and the need to plan to support their aspirations for the future.

[View judgements](#)

How good are the teaching, learning and assessment?

Teaching in the Foundation Stage was outstanding. Teachers planned lessons that were very closely matched to children's interests and needs, motivating them to learn. Careful observations of children's stages of development ensured that lessons provided high levels of challenge. The quality of interaction between adults and children was excellent, with many teaching assistants demonstrating high levels of skills in encouraging children to express their ideas. Teachers had good subject expertise and most had a good understanding of how children learn. In the secondary phase the promotion of critical thinking had improved significantly. This remained an area for further development in the primary sector, especially in the lower age groups. Teaching in Arabic was inconsistent. In some lessons expectations were too low: in others a narrow range of teaching strategies were used which did not motivate students to learn. A significant proportion of teaching was excellent, especially in English, mathematics, science. Teaching in non-key subjects was good, for example in art across the year groups and in design technology in the secondary phase.

Learning in the Foundation Stage was outstanding. Children of all abilities were frequently excited by the activities offered. They solved problems very well, considering which strategies to use when working independently or with others. They communicated extremely confidently with adults and one another, discussing ideas, initiating activities and engaging in extended imaginative role play. Learning in the other phases of the school was good. Most students collaborated well when they had the opportunity and applied their learning well to the real world. Students across many different subjects consistently developed skills for critical thinking and independent research.

The daily assessment of learning was outstanding in the Foundation Stage. Skilful assessments of the children's progress and interests were used as a basis for planning and adults knew the children very well. Excellent modelling of language helped children to correct their own errors. In the rest of the school the assessment of learning was good.

Teachers generally knew their students' strengths and weaknesses well and used the information to plan lessons which provided good levels of challenge. Self and peer-assessment were generally used effectively. Marking and feedback during lessons were often good, although there were some inconsistencies in what students received from their teachers. Assessment information was used well to modify the curriculum and to make provision for students with special educational needs. The tracking of students' progress across the school was at the early stages. It was improving, with the introduction of a clear and useful system in the secondary school. However, limited use was made of assessment information when students transferred from one phase of the school to another.

[View judgements](#)

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

The curriculum was outstanding in the Foundation Stage and good in all other phases. In all phases it offered balance and progression in learning. In the Foundation Stage a stimulating and purposeful learning environment, coupled with well-planned cross-curricular links, resulted in excellent learning outcomes. These qualities were not fully evident in the early primary classes. Cross-curricular links were evident in several subjects in the primary phase. For example, whilst studying Ancient Egypt, students were improving their comprehension skills as they gathered information from books. Students benefited from specialist teaching in many subjects. There was a significant discontinuity in curriculum links between the primary and the lower secondary phase. At the IGCSE level there was a compulsory core of the key subjects, plus a foreign language and a broad range of options. The IB Diploma Programme met the needs of Post-16 students, giving access to a wide range of subjects at the higher or standard levels. A curriculum review following the last inspection had led to improvements in investigative approaches to science and mathematics. Improved promotion of critical thinking skills had improved the transition from the older secondary classes into the IB Diploma Programme. The enrichment programme had been developed further and had increased opportunities for students to improve their academic, personal, physical and social development.

[View judgements](#)

How well does the school protect and support students?

The provision for students' health and safety was outstanding across the school. School buildings were well looked after, clean and secure. A well-maintained fleet of buses transported many students to school. Drop offs and pick-ups were carefully managed and good attention was given to pedestrian safety in car parks and access roads. The school doctor and nurses provided high quality medical care. Medicines and student files were kept securely. Lifts provided easy access for any students with physical disabilities. Fire drills were carried out and monitored regularly. Pastoral care co-ordinators worked very effectively with the medical team to support all students' welfare, and to promote healthy eating and living. Child protection procedures were rigorous and all staff members had been trained in their implementation. Teachers had very positive relationships with students. They knew students very well and supported them in their social, personal and academic needs. Attendance and punctuality were carefully monitored. Students benefitted from effective guidance in their choice of subjects, further education and careers. Senior school students had good access to specialist counseling support.

[View judgements](#)

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

The school provided good quality of support for students with special educational needs across the years. Assessment of students on admission and through the year quickly identified individuals who required additional help. Overall, individual students were well supported and included in classes or small withdrawal groups. Specialist speech and occupational therapy provision was very good. Individual education plans were used widely by teachers and learning expectations shared appropriately with parents and students. The tracking of students with special educational needs did not ensure that all students' progress was measured against their individual starting points.

How good are the leadership and management of the school?

Leadership and management were good. The Head Teacher was a leader for improvement and was held in high regard by students, teachers and parents. Under his guidance, school leaders conducted an effective review of the school's vision and core values, to address the changing characteristics of the student population. Leadership responsibilities were distributed effectively. There was a strong team spirit across the school and relationships were good. Leaders schools were working to improve communication between the phases, as they had recognised inconsistencies in the ways information about the curriculum and students' progress was shared.

Self-evaluation was good. The quality of teaching was monitored regularly, enabling good practice to be shared and any weaknesses to be addressed through in-house training or external courses. Regular reviews enabled appropriate and realistic whole-school goals to be set. The lack of a consistent approach to gathering and analysing assessment data, however, limited the ability of senior staff members to set precise targets for improving students' progress.

The partnership between parents and the community was outstanding. Parents had immediate access to curriculum information, for example, through the school's internet facility. Electronic mail messages between teachers and parents were also used effectively for two-way communication. Teachers and other staff made sure they were available at the beginning of the day to speak with parents. Parents appreciated the immediate responses to any concerns they raised. Parents felt welcome in school and informal gatherings, such as coffee mornings, were well attended. Parents' representatives for each class in the primary school provided a very useful channel of communication. The school benefitted from good links with local businesses. For example, local companies sponsored the school's entry into the annual Formula 1 design technology competition. There was a strong and useful partnership with Repton School in England.

Governance was good. The governing board played an active role in a comprehensive analysis of the strengths of the school and how to raise the school's overall effectiveness. The governors' education committee kept themselves well informed and was effective in holding leaders to account. Although there were no elected parents on the board, two were members by invitation. Parents did not feel particularly disadvantaged by this arrangement but they expressed some frustration at not being informed about some of the board's strategic decisions.

Management, including staffing, facilities and resources, was good. Effective strategies for retaining staff had led to a significant reduction in turnover. The school took care to recruit suitably experienced teachers. For example, additional well-qualified and experienced professional support staff had been recently appointed and were proving highly effective. The school was imaginatively designed and generally spacious, with ample space for formal lessons, extra-curricular activities, breaks and informal gatherings. The facilities had been improved with, for example, a new prayer room, extra science laboratories and high specification equipment for music composition. Although there were sufficient computers in designated suites, primary students did not have immediate access to computers to support their day-to-day work in classrooms.

[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	319	24%
	Last year	311	23%
Teachers	96		46%
Students	15		9%

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

Approximately a quarter of the parents responded to their survey. Less than half of the teachers and only about a tenth of the senior students responded. Parents had very positive views about the school. They highlighted strengths in the teaching, leadership, the quality of care and support for students. Teachers had extremely positive views about almost all aspects of the school. Students were almost entirely positive. They were positive about the feedback from their teachers about how well they were doing and how to improve. The older students reported that they had a wide range of choices about which subjects to study and they were satisfied with the careers advice available to them.

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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