

# Emirates International Private School Jumeirah Inspection Report

Kindergarten to Grade 13

Report published May 2010

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## Explanation of the inspection levels used in the report

**Outstanding** - exceptionally high quality of performance or practice.

**Good** - the expected level of quality for every school in Dubai.

**Acceptable** - the minimum level of acceptability required for Dubai. All key aspects of performance and practice in every school should meet or exceed this level.

**Unsatisfactory** - quality not yet at the level acceptable for schools in Dubai. Schools will be expected to take urgent measures to improve the quality of any aspect of their performance or practice that is judged at this level.

Emirates International School in Jumeirah was inspected in February 2010 as part of the regular inspection of all schools in Dubai. The inspection covered key aspects of the work of the school at all stages. It evaluated students' achievements, the effectiveness of the school, the environment for learning, the school's processes for self-evaluation and capacity for improvement. There was a particular focus on students' progress in Islamic Education (for Muslim students), Arabic, English, mathematics and science.

## Basic information about the school

Emirates International School is located in Jumeirah and is a private school providing education for students, from Kindergarten (KG) to Grade 13, aged four to 18 years. The school successfully combined an International Primary Curriculum (IPC) alongside the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IB-DP). Since the previous inspection, an Executive Principal had been appointed with overall responsibility for the primary and secondary schools. At the time of the inspection, there were 1,819 students on roll, with 996 in the primary school and 823 in the secondary school. The student attendance reported by the school for the last academic session was good.

Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau (DSIB) analysed responses to on-line questionnaires completed by parents. Almost all parents agreed that their children liked school and were making good progress in English and mathematics. Most parents agreed that their children were expected to work hard and become independent and responsible individuals, and were making good progress in Arabic and science. Similarly, most parents agreed that their children were cared for, were treated fairly at school and that there was a good range of enjoyable activities provided. A majority of parents agreed that the school was good at consulting them on decisions, but a few disagreed that this was the case. Almost half of the parents did not know how the school had responded to the recommendations of the previous inspection report.

## How well does the school perform overall?

The overall performance of the school was good. The school performed effectively in almost all key aspects of its work and delivered well on its promise to parents. The school's leadership team was committed to high standards of attainment for all students. They had recognised the importance of continuing to improve assessment procedures and tackling subject areas where students underperformed. Students from Kindergarten (KG) upwards demonstrated good attainment overall in the key subjects. Most students reached the expected standards for the International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) and IB. Students' behaviour and attitudes were consistently good, leading to a strong sense of enjoyment and engagement in classrooms. Students across primary and secondary phases showed good or outstanding civic and Islamic understanding. Their economic and environmental understanding was outstanding.

Teaching and learning were good, but there were missed opportunities across the age ranges to support English language learners. The curriculum was good and skilfully blended a number of international aspects, leading from the International Primary Curriculum to IGCSE and on to the IB-DP. Extra-curricular activities remained a great strength of the school. Arrangements for health and safety were good, and the campus was well maintained, clean, secure, and offered a welcoming environment to the diverse student and staff body. Evacuation procedures were compliant with regulations. Relationships between staff and students were very positive; transition points were managed effectively and there was careful management of punctuality and attendance. Systems for tracking students were well developed.

Leaders and managers had taken the school forward significantly since the previous inspection and acted with focus on the DSIB recommendations. Self-evaluation processes had had clear impact. For example, the best practices in teaching and learning were shared systematically, the use of data improved, and the curriculum constructively reviewed. Importantly, the board had enabled the Executive Principal to successfully implement new systems of accountability and drive the improvements that were required. Plans to develop a parent advisory body and involve students in self evaluation were well underway. Facilities and resources were of a high quality, used with enjoyment by teachers and students alike. The Executive Principal was properly focused on securing high quality international teachers.

## Key features of the school

- The improvement since the last inspection in the consistent provision of good teaching;
- The good attainment in Arabic, English and science;
- The good teaching and learning across the school;
- The highly developed civic, economic and environmental understanding;
- The students' pride in their school and the harmonious international relationships they enjoyed;
- The supportive parents who were keen to be involved in the life of the school.

## Recommendations

- Raise attainment and progress in mathematics;
- Further develop teaching and learning through focused professional development and sharing best practice across the primary and secondary schools;
- Ensure that best practice in assessment is embedded across all phases;
- Establish a coherent approach to support better all English language learners;
- Involve parents and students in self-evaluation processes;
- Implement distributive leadership to encourage and enable effective leaders at all levels.

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

Attainment and progress in Islamic Education were acceptable across the primary school, while both were good in the secondary school. In the lower grades, the majority of students knew the five pillars of Islam and most demonstrated acceptable levels of knowledge about Allah's creation and His greatness. In Grade 5, most students had acceptable knowledge about Prophet Mohammed's life (PBUH) and other Islamic personalities. In Grade 6, students linked faith with morals but their Qu'ranic recitation was below average, particularly among the non-speakers of Arabic. In the secondary school, most students in the lower grades explained facts about significant events such as the Battle of Badr. In Grades 12 and 13, students could recite The Holy Qur'an confidently and correctly and could explain the verses.

The overall progress and attainment in Arabic were good throughout the whole school, with outstanding progress in Grade 13. In the primary stage, the attainment of most Arabic-speaking students was acceptable. However, the girls' progress was better than that of the boys. In the secondary school, most students could discuss and defend their views according to expectations. They also understood poetic vocabulary and used this in meaningful sentences, although their reading was less well developed. Students in Grade 13 were well balanced bilingual speakers; they were capable of speaking Arabic as fluently as they spoke English. The progress and attainment of the non-Arabic speaking students were inhibited by the over-use of English in Arabic lessons.

Progress and attainment in English were good across all phases, with rapid progress achieved in the acquisition of English in the KG. Many children, including those who entered with little or no English, quickly learned to read and write letters with accuracy and to speak with clarity. Almost all children listened well. By the end of primary, almost all students demonstrated well-developed speaking, listening, reading and writing skills which they applied competently to different genres. A majority of Grade 6 students demonstrated high levels of inferential skills when encountering texts for the first time. Grade 7 students spoke eloquently and analysed poetry thoughtfully; older students wrote confidently for a range of purposes and analysed texts critically. At IGCSE level, students attained above international expectations, overall. Similarly, at Grade 13, IB attainment was good.

Attainment and progress in mathematics were good in the KG. Children made good gains and were able to use mathematical skills and ideas in everyday contexts such as play and problem solving. In the primary years, attainment and progress were acceptable. Grade 2 students showed clear understanding of reflective symmetry. In Grade 6, students accurately identified and measured angles and applied that knowledge to the environment outside the classroom. In the secondary school, students' attainment and progress were good. However, students in the lower grades did not progress at the same rate as those working on their IGCSE. Most of these students attained above the appropriate benchmarks. Grade 11 students understood mean, mode and median concepts and were able to provide definitions in context. Post-16

students' attainment and progress were acceptable. Students demonstrated the ability to solve trigonometric equations and draw sine, cosine and tangent functions from memory.

In science, attainment and progress were good across all phases but, in physics at IB level they were only acceptable. KG children identified 'good' and 'bad' foods whilst Grade 1 students classified animals and explained their key differences. They named the key features of insects using correct scientific vocabulary. Grade 5 students understood the basic functions of the human brain and their impact upon learning and Grade 6 students could describe mechanical and chemical digestion. In Grade 7, students suggested real-life applications for knowledge of acidity and alkalinity, such as in the treatment of jellyfish stings. Grade 11 students manipulated variables during a controlled experiment to investigate the effect of temperature on the anaerobic respiration of yeast and explained their findings using data and graphs. Grade 12 students could deduce the Lewis structure of molecules and ions, and could give complex answers to questions about repulsion theory and dative bonding.

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

Students' attitudes and behaviour were good throughout all phases of the school. Students were well disciplined and keen to learn. They loved their school. Relationships amongst their peers and with their teachers were characterised by respect. Attendance was good and students were punctual in coming to school. Transitions between lessons in primary were prompt, but less so in secondary as a result of the current nine-period day.

Civic and Islamic understanding was good throughout the school and outstanding in the KG, where children demonstrated high levels of civic understanding. Students throughout the school took responsibility and older students provided effective coaching and mentoring to younger ones, for example with the Green Team. Students respected Islam and appreciated living in Dubai. They were aware of its success story and they talked in an informed manner about the recently discovered oil field off Dubai's coast.

Economic and environmental understanding was outstanding from the KG to Grade 13. Students understood fully the economic stages that Dubai had gone through. They identified the main sources of capital and discussed these confidently at a high level. Students provided accurate examples of how the economic recession affected the world and Dubai, and could offer thoughtful solutions. They were aware of most of the global and local environmental issues such as pollution, water desalination, preservation of habitats and biodiversity, and the responsible use of energy. They discussed these issues knowledgeably. Their participation in a number of projects and activities, particularly in the environmental club, enabled them to suggest credible ideas to improve life in Dubai.

## How good are the teaching and learning?

The quality of teaching throughout the school was good. Some outstanding lessons were observed. Almost all teachers had strong subject knowledge and they structured their lessons well. Teaching techniques generally encouraged students to participate and helped them develop skills of critical analysis. The best teaching was rooted in excellent management of time, promotion of scholarship, and skilled questioning which helped students understand new concepts. Generally, the teaching allowed students to achieve to the best of their abilities, whether in Arabic, English, music or science. The strongest teachers harnessed the latest classroom technologies imaginatively and knew when to intervene, when to digress, and when to encourage students to take over their roles for part of a lesson. Less effective teachers talked too much and fell back upon over-didactic lesson delivery. Weaker teachers did not plan adequately for the academic needs of all students, and not enough time was given to embed understanding in plenary sessions. Throughout the school there were missed opportunities to reinforce subject specialist vocabulary.

Students' learning was good across the school. At its best, students worked in pairs and groups to explore scientific, linguistic, historical, mathematical ideas and problems. In KG, children relished the opportunity to create date, marzipan and icing cakes, exploring language and texture with each other. In Grade 8, music, instrumentalists and non-instrumentalists came together to create a polished performance of high quality; their enjoyment was evident. Students in most primary and secondary classes demonstrated strong collaborative learning skills. Learning was less positive when students' listening was variable and where the teachers did not set tasks clearly.

Assessment was acceptable overall, with strengths in individual areas. For example, in the KG, careful observations led to systematic data collection related to skills development, and, in primary grades, skilled questioning was used to evaluate students' responses and thereby modify teaching. There was a lack of assessment information at the end of primary in mathematics and science, which meant that students' progress was not always tracked effectively. In secondary science, assessment practices were good and consistently applied by teachers so that students had a clear idea of how to improve. This quality and consistency was developing in English but remained under-developed in mathematics. Assessment practices lacked consistency overall which led to a lack of reliable whole-school data on attainment and progress. While significant improvement had been made since the previous inspection, the school understood the need for further changes. The introduction of an information management system was beginning to aid the data analysis process in secondary, but this needed to be utilised in primary to achieve a complete picture of students' attainment and progress from ages four to 18.

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

The curriculum was good, based on several international programmes including the IPC, IGCSE and IB-DP. These were linked together to achieve a broad and balanced framework. Recent work to ensure meaningful links across the curriculum had resulted in greater coherence. Effective sharing of information and good practice in key subjects including English, mathematics and science, allowed smoother transitions of students between phases. A review of the curriculum in Grades 1 to 6 had led to a few effective developments, including the move from textbook driven programmes of study to a skills-led, student centred approach. This had resulted in more active learning in classrooms, strong curricular links between IPC and the key subjects, and more effective tracking of individual students' progress. The school had begun the process of introducing appropriately related international benchmarked programmes to ensure planned progression and greater challenge. Curriculum review had further led to an increased focus on Arabic, impacting positively on attainment and progress, especially in the secondary and post-16 phases. Similarly, the introduction of 'Big Write' in the primary grades had resulted in improved writing for almost all students. The curriculum was greatly enriched by extensive activities and expeditions which offered valuable links to the wider community. Strong examples of this were the Community Action Service (CAS) projects and the International Awards programme, both greatly valued by the students. The curriculum was well contextualised for students living in Dubai.

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

The arrangements to ensure the health, safety and security of students were good. Levels of supervision were high. There were appropriate steps taken through published processes to make sure that students were safe and all staff had received training in child protection. The school premises, equipment and resources were of an adequate standard, checked regularly and well maintained. Records of health and safety procedures were up to date, and a range of risk assessments were routinely undertaken for all events and visits. Transport arrangements were monitored meticulously. Fire drills were carried each term and management were aware of the need to improve the speed of evacuation. Medical staff carried out their duties effectively and maintained comprehensive records of treatments required. They had secure systems for alerting parents where appropriate. Excellent opportunities existed for students to take part in physical activities, and there was effective monitoring of food provision to promote healthy options for students. Staff in the primary school regularly checked students' lunches and provided them with advice on healthy eating.

The school provided good support and guidance for all students. Relationships throughout were warm, positive and mutually respectful. Students' progress was tracked adequately, and they received good support for both their academic and personal well-being. The school made clear provision for careers advice, having a specialist advisor in the secondary school, and made increasingly student-centred arrangements to aid the transition between the primary and secondary phases. Staff members ensured that older students had access to a range of information to help them make important decisions on higher education in Dubai and in different parts of the world.

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

The leadership and management of the school were good. The Executive Principal had succeeded in moving the school forward significantly since the last inspection, accelerating improvements where they were most needed. Together with the primary school principal, they had created a momentum for change, focused on raising students' attainment and eradicating inconsistent practice. Changes in the KG, developments in assessment and curriculum planning, and a measurable increase in the amount of good and outstanding teaching indicated that the school shared common purposes. However, effective teams were not yet a consistent characteristic of the school. Performance management systems were embedded and professional development was increasingly focused on ensuring high quality teaching and learning, thereby sustaining improvements across the primary and secondary phases. Senior leaders demonstrated a clear capacity to secure future successes, rooted in distributing leadership roles more widely. There was clearly an interest from middle leaders to respond further to increased responsibilities.

Self-evaluation and improvement planning were good. Documents showed that leaders knew their school well, for example in identifying where strong teaching occurred. The Action Plan was less precise in detailing the impact of staff's actions on outcomes for students, and did not fully involve the views of parents. However, all aspects of provision across the two schools had been thoroughly reviewed and enhanced since the last inspection.

The school enjoyed good partnerships with parents who were very supportive and appreciative of the school's efforts. Improved communication was perceived by parents as a real strength. Parents were involved in the life of the school and their children's learning via newsletters and the website, which served to keep families informed of curriculum matters and events. Since the last inspection, the school had actively sought to increase the role of parents through the formation of a parent advisory body. Parental and students' involvement in school self-evaluation and improvement planning was still under-developed. Parents attended primary school assemblies and welcomed those opportunities to be involved in learning. Reporting to parents on attainment and progress was regular and ensured that parents understood how their children were doing at school. The school had strong links with the local community whereby students benefited from educational visits, field trips and work placements. Visitors to the school further enriched learning experiences.

Governance was of acceptable quality. The board had responded well to the recommendations from the previous inspection. They had established a new strategic leadership model for the school and put procedures for the creation of a parent advisory body in place.

Teachers were well qualified and appropriately deployed across the primary and secondary phases, with new members bringing fresh thinking to combine well with established practitioners. Recruitment and retention of teachers continued to present challenges to the Executive Principal, who was rightly focused on securing the best international staff. The premises were spacious and attractively laid out, with generous provision for physical education, including a well maintained swimming pool. Separate play and shaded seating areas were available for all ages. Effective learning resources, including interactive whiteboards, were creatively used by most teachers, with notable examples in KG and post-16. The school had identified the secondary canteen, certain toilet facilities, and the primary library for future improvements.

## Summary of inspection judgements

In their evaluation of the overall effectiveness of the school, the inspection team made judgements about the following aspects of the school's performance.

Four descriptors are: Outstanding; Good; Acceptable; Unsatisfactory.

How good are the students' attainment and progress in Islamic Education?				
Age group:	Kindergarten	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Attainment	Not Applicable	Acceptable	Good	Good
Progress over time	Not Applicable	Acceptable	Good	Good

How good are the students' attainment and progress in Arabic?				
Age group:	Kindergarten	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Attainment	Not Applicable	Good	Good	Good
Progress over time	Not Applicable	Good	Good	Outstanding

How good are the students' attainment and progress in English?				
Age group:	Kindergarten	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Attainment	Good	Good	Good	Good
Progress over time	Good	Good	Good	Good

How good are the students' attainment and progress in mathematics?				
Age group:	Kindergarten	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Attainment	Good	Acceptable	Good	Acceptable
Progress over time	Good	Acceptable	Good	Acceptable

How good are the students' attainment and progress in science?				
Age group:	Kindergarten	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Attainment	Good	Good	Good	Good
Progress over time	Good	Good	Good	Good

How good is the students' personal and social development?				
Age group:	Kindergarten	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Attitudes and behaviour	Good	Good	Good	Good
Islamic, cultural and civic understanding	Outstanding	Good	Good	Good
Economic and environmental understanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding

How good are teaching and learning?				
Age group:	Kindergarten	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Teaching for effective learning	Good	Good	Good	Good
Quality of students' learning	Good	Good	Good	Good
Assessment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

How well does the curriculum meet the educational needs of all students?				
Age group:	Kindergarten	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Curriculum quality	Good	Good	Good	Good

How well does the school protect and support students?				
Age group:	Kindergarten	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Health and safety	Good	Good	Good	Good
Quality of support	Good	Good	Good	Good

How good are the leadership and management of the school?	
Quality of leadership	Good
Self-evaluation and improvement planning	Good
Partnerships with parents and the community	Good
Governance	Acceptable
Staffing, facilities and resources	Good

How well does the school perform overall?
Good

## Next Steps

The school has been asked to prepare an action plan indicating how it will address the main findings of the report, and to share that plan with parents. 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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