

INSPECTION REPORT

Jumeira BaccaLaureate School

Report published in April 2014

Knowledge and Human Development Authority

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GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT Jumeira BaccaLaureate School

Location	Jumeirah First
Type of school	Private
Website	www.jbschool.ae
Telephone	04-3446931
Address	Street 53B off Al Wasl Road, Jumeira 1
Principal	Andrew Homden
Curriculum	UK/IB
Gender of students	Boys and Girls
Age / Grades or Year Groups	KG-Grade 12/3 to 18 years
Attendance	Outstanding
Number of students on roll	850
Largest nationality group of Students	Emirati
Number of Emirati students	178
Date of the inspection	20th to 22nd January

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The context of the school

Jumeira Bacculaureate School is a Taaleem school situated off Al Wasl Road in Jumeira 1. It opened in September, 2010 with about 80 students on the roll. At the time of inspection there were 850 students from 72 different nations. The largest national group was Emirati with just over one fifth. Over one-third of the students learned Arabic as a first language. Almost one-third were registered as having some type of special educational need. The student population had grown significantly over a short period of time.

The curriculum in the Kindergarten was the English Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). In the primary phase students followed the National Curriculum of England and Wales for English and Mathematics, plus the International Primary Curriculum for other subjects. The middle phase students followed the International Bacculaureate Middle Years Programme (MYP) whilst older students worked towards the International Bacculaureate Diploma (DP), and BTEC. The school had ensured that the transition between phases and curricula was seamless. Assessments were validated externally by International Schools' Assessment. Staffing had increased, with thirteen new teachers being appointed across the Kindergarten and Primary phases, and a further fourteen subject specialists in MYP.

Overall school performance 2013-2014

Good

Key strengths

- The outstanding attitudes and behaviour of students leading to exemplary interactions in school;
- The high quality of support for all students in school, including students with additional needs, leading to positive academic and personal outcomes;
- The active engagement of the parents and the community in the life of the school;
- The effective support, challenge and strategic direction provided by the governors to the school leadership;
- The school's vision and strategic drive for continuous improvement.

Recommendations

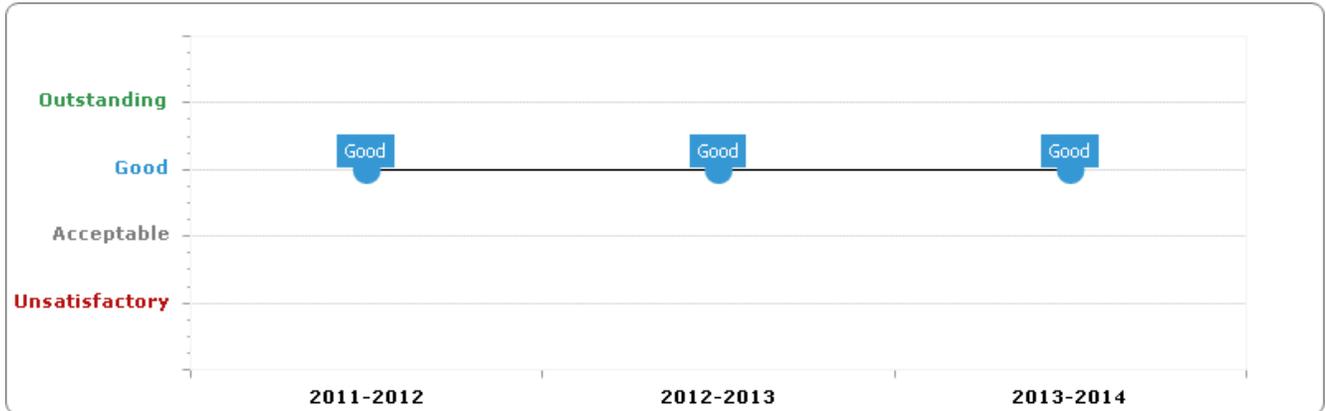
- Improve attainment and progress in Islamic Education and Arabic by:
 - sharing exemplary practice available in other parts of the school;
 - raising expectations in lessons.
- Develop students' enquiry and critical thinking skills by:
 - ensuring lessons promote consistently students' independent learning skills of critical thinking, enquiry and investigation, particularly in phases 1 and 2;
 - using formative and summative assessment information more effectively to guide students' next step in learning.
- Review the curriculum by extending its breadth and balance to include a global dimension to reflect the needs of different nationalities in the school.

Progress since the last inspection

The school had improved the following aspects to outstanding:

- The progress of students in mathematics in Kindergarten;
- The curriculum design to meet the individual needs of students in Grades 11 and 12;
- The quality of support in school.

Trend of overall performance



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

	kindergarten	Primary	MYP	DP
Islamic Education				
Attainment	Not Applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Progress	Not Applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Arabic as a first language				
Attainment	Not Applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Not Applicable
Progress	Not Applicable	Good	Acceptable	Not Applicable
Arabic as an additional language				
Attainment	Not Applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Not Applicable
Progress	Not Applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Not Applicable
English				
Attainment	Good	Acceptable	Good	Good
Progress	Good	Good	Good	Good
Mathematics				
Attainment	Good	Acceptable	Good	Good
Progress	Outstanding	Good	Good	Good
Science				
Attainment	Good	Good	Good	Good
Progress	Good	Good	Good	Good

[Read paragraph](#)

	kindergarten	Primary	MYP	DP
Quality of students' learning skills	Good	Good	Good	Good

[Read paragraph](#)

How good is the students' personal and social development?

	kindergarten	Primary	MYP	DP
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?

	Kindergarten	Primary	MYP	DP
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?

	kindergarten	Primary	MYP	DP
Curriculum quality	Good	Good	Good	Good
Curriculum design to meet the individual needs of students	Good	Good	Good	Outstanding

[Read paragraph](#)

How well does the school protect and support students?

	kindergarten	Primary	MYP	DP
Health and Safety	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Quality of Support	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding

[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	Outstanding
Management, including staffing, facilities and resources	Good

[Read paragraph](#)

How good are the students' attainment and progress?

Attainment in Islamic Education and in Arabic was acceptable across the school. Most students were able to explain the five Pillars of Islam and the steps required to perform the group prayer appropriately in Primary. Students in all grades had a clear understanding of Islamic values and the manners expected of a good Muslim. The Holy Qur'an recitation skills were still developing. Most students displayed knowledge and skills in line with curriculum expectations. Listening skills were the strongest skill. Reading was within expectations while the use of standard Arabic in oral communication amongst the older students was limited. Writing was the weakest skill. A common feature in Arabic as an additional language was the strong listening skills of most of the students across all phases. Students were able to use familiar greetings in short conversations. Listening and responding was slightly better in Primary. Most students across the school could read pre-learned simple sentences or phrases. Writing skills were under-developed overall. In Primary, attainment in English and mathematics was acceptable, and in science it was good. In MYP and DP, attainment in English, mathematics and science was good. By the secondary years, students had steadily built on their skills in English. They were confident speakers, able to access a wide range of advanced texts and write competently in a variety of genres. In Kindergarten, children had developed a good understanding of positional language and its use, whilst primary students could identify the characteristics of prisms using mathematical language. Students in MYP and DP applied their skills of enquiry confidently over a variety of contexts. In science, attainment was good because students were provided with opportunities to make connections to solve real life issues. Primary students applied skills such as predicting, observing and drawing conclusions whilst in MYP and DP students planned, designed and carried out individual investigations in response to clear learning objectives.

Progress in Islamic Education and Arabic was broadly acceptable across the school. Students were developing their understanding the Pillars of Islam and the significance of the Islamic practices was acceptable. However, progress was inadequate in developing Qur'an recitation skills. Progress in Arabic as a first language was good in Primary where the majority of students were making steady progress in listening and speaking skills. In MYP, progress in writing skills was slower. In Arabic as an additional language, students across all phases developed a reasonable range of vocabulary in line with expectations. In MYP, progress in learning vocabulary was steady but students' use of it to communicate their ideas in new contexts was limited, both orally and in writing. Students made good progress in English, mathematics and science. The good progress students made in all aspects of English, from the time they joined the school, underpinned the attainment of above expected levels later in their school lives. This progress also gave them a sound foundation for learning across the curriculum. Children in Kindergarten made outstanding progress in assimilating and applying their mathematical knowledge in a variety of contexts. In science, progress was good as a result of the opportunities to conduct investigations

collaboratively and demonstrate their learning in a variety of ways. Mapping of sequential scientific skills supported progress through the phases. Clearly stated learning objectives helped students to reflect on and plan for further development in MYP and DP.

[View judgements](#)

Quality of students' learning skills

Students had very positive attitudes, were engaged in their lessons and eager to participate. They could articulate their learning and usually say what they needed to do to improve further. When working in groups, students were harmonious and collaborated well to achieve common goals. There was a particularly high level of collaboration in secondary science classes, with students thinking, hypothesising and predicting in contexts applicable to their world. For example, work on convection and radiation was directly applied to heating and cooling in traditional Islamic buildings. Many students could make this type of meaningful connection with other learning and with their own lives. Older students applied enquiry skills well in many science and English lessons and used a range of IT to support their learning. Students in the primary phase were not so able to find things out for themselves and generally relied more on teacher direction. In Arabic and Islamic Studies, students were eager to work independently, but teaching did not always encourage this approach.

[View judgements](#)

How good is the students' personal and social development?

Personal responsibility was outstanding across the school. Students had mature, responsible and very positive attitudes to school life. Attendance was outstanding and students were self-disciplined in their work ethic, responding very well to adult advice and support. Older students demonstrated a keen sense of responsibility for their own learning. Playtimes were harmonious times of relaxation. Behaviour was excellent throughout the school. There were warm and respectful relationships between staff and students and between students themselves. Attitudes of courtesy and consideration were the norm. Students had an excellent understanding of how to live healthy lives.

Across all school phases, the students demonstrated a good understanding of the impact of Islamic values on the modern life in Dubai. They had a clear understanding of Emirati traditions and heritage. In addition, they demonstrated a strong appreciation and respect for life in Dubai's multi-cultural society and explained how living in Dubai added to their experiences. They showed very positive attitudes towards some cultural

differences but their deeper understanding of each other's culture and worldwide heritage needed further development.

Students' community involvement and environmental responsibility were good across all school phases. Students participated in a good range of activities related to their social and personal development such as charity work to support children in war zones. Across all phases, students were also involved in a variety of environmental activities such as the recycling points project in all the classrooms and run by young students, and the battery collections led by older students. The students' voice and school presence in the community was beginning to establish itself although the students' local community involvement was still under developed.

[View judgements](#)

How good are teaching and assessment?

Teaching was good. Teachers had secure subject knowledge, explained lesson objectives carefully and questioned students comprehensively to check their understanding. Imaginative planning and a meaningful context motivated students and promoted active participation in their own learning. Resources were used effectively, including the successful use of students' own electronic devices in some lessons. Teachers' interactions with students were frequently outstanding. A range of approaches was used to interest students and meet individual needs. The most skilful teaching provided good challenge to all groups of students to accelerate learning, but this was not consistent throughout the school. Collaborative work was used well in lessons to share and extend learning. Many teachers consciously developed students' critical thinking and enquiry skills. This was particularly strong in the secondary classes in which students' active, independent learning was focused on conceptual understanding. Teaching was weaker in Arabic and Islamic Studies because lessons were not consistently well planned to ensure that time was used well, and that students participated actively to make better progress in their learning.

Assessment was good. The school had effective assessment systems and processes to monitor students' progress. Detailed information was analysed carefully to ensure students were making at least expected progress over time. However, more use could be made of this data to track progress towards key milestones such as end of key stages. The reliability and validity of assessment data in Arabic and Islamic Education did not yet match that of other subjects because there were no external examinations or moderation. Students were increasingly involved in assessing some aspects of their own and their peer's

work to extend their learning. Teachers in most subjects had a good knowledge of their students' strengths and weaknesses and used this to plan learning and give appropriate support. However, assessment data was not being used as precisely as it could be to guide students' next steps in learning and accelerate their progress. There were some very good examples of marking being used for effective feedback, but this was not yet consistent throughout the school.

[View judgements](#)

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

The written curriculum was clearly documented so that it could be shared with parents and easily accessed by teachers. Ongoing planning in the key subjects prepared students for the transition between phases – notably grade 5 to MYP and MYP to DP. The curriculum was reviewed annually and modified to accommodate growth and development within the school. The development of cross curricular links that provided opportunities for students to reach understandings through different perspectives and transfer skills between subjects was strong in MYP and developing in Kindergarten and Primary. In MYP, the curriculum required further review to enhance the breadth and balance to ensure that all subjects and learning times provided creative, physical and practical experiences for all students. Connections with the local community were not well developed and students were not involved in initiating actions.

The curriculum design was outstanding in DP and good in the rest of the school. It could be modified to support and challenge the diverse student population through the focus on open ended learning engagements in many subjects. Access to and achievement in mainstream classes for students with special educational needs was a feature. The IB diploma curriculum was creatively modified with alternative pathways and additional studies to retain rigour and accommodate the small cohort of students who did not sit for a full diploma. A diverse language programme supported the needs of the range of students who attended the school. An extensive extra-curricular programme provided enrichment for gifted and talented students, and supported students to pursue a healthy lifestyle through a variety of sports and other events.

[View judgements](#)

How well does the school protect and support students?

The school's arrangements for students' health and safety were outstanding. Procedures and systems were highly effective. Access to the campus was extremely well supervised ensuring a secure and safe environment for all. Buildings were safe and maintained to a high standard. Arrangements for the emergency evacuation of the buildings were efficient and well-rehearsed. The arrangements for the arrival and departure of students were well organised and implemented effectively. School facilities met the needs of most students although there was no elevator in either of the two main teaching blocks. Staff and students were fully aware of the school's child protection policy. The senior nurse and her staff made considerable contributions to the school's healthy lifestyle programme and kept all staff fully informed about the health and well-being of children and students.

The quality of support was outstanding. Across the school relationships between staff and students were exceptional. The character of the school came through in the knowledge and understanding the teachers had of their students and in the level of trust and respect students had for teachers. There was a comprehensive and effective behaviour policy that was embraced by all. The outstanding attendance figures demonstrated the highly effective systems for monitoring attendance and punctuality. The school's support for all students, including those with special educational needs was well developed and highly effective. Students had class tutors as a first point of contact and also benefited from access to pastoral and careers counsellors when required. Academic tracking was well established. Advice and guidance were readily available to enhance the students' personal and academic development.

[View judgements](#)

How good are the leadership and management of the school?

The leadership of the school was good. The principal and his team communicated a vision that was clear and supported by all staff members. Middle managers worked well as a team, with a sharp focus on consultation and collegial work. Teachers felt fully involved and valued. Strategic leadership roles had been created at various levels and, alongside the other school leaders, the new recruits demonstrated a good capacity to improve.

Self-evaluation and improvement planning were good overall. There was a realistic understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and measures had been taken to address them. Action plans were in place and regularly monitored at all levels. The school catered for a diverse community and occasionally some of the activities that were organised did not have the positive impact that was intended. Although there had been some progress in addressing some of the recommendations from the previous report, key

issues still remained to be addressed. For example, due to the wide international background of the students and their parents, the leaders needed to continue their efforts to explore innovative ways to accommodate the needs of different groups of parents.

The school's links with parents and the community were good. Parents played a crucial part in the life of the school. Their voice was strong and their presence was felt in school. For example, they helped the school review its priorities by offering ways forward during question time events with the leadership team and on the school social networks. Various informative workshops ran by some parents regularly took place in school. Links outside the school that broadened the experiences of students were purposeful. The school's links with the community gave students opportunities to learn about the world around them.

Governance was outstanding. Governors were supportive of the school's aims and proactive about the overall improvement. For example, they measured the quality of teaching and learning through joint lesson observations with the leadership team. Parents were represented on the governing board and attended a yearly executive board meeting. The school's leadership was fully held to account by the governors and had responded positively to the targets set for the academic year.

Management, including staffing facilities and resources was good. School procedures and routines were effective. There were sufficient numbers of qualified teachers who were deployed effectively. New appointments were beneficial to the life of the school and instrumental to the progress from the previous inspection. The school premises were well- maintained and all areas for learning were accessible to students, including those with additional needs. However, not all buildings had a lift to facilitate access for people with mobility problems. New technologies were available and students were also allowed to bring their own device to use in lessons.

[View judgements](#)

How well does the school provide for Emirati students?

Emirati students continued to make acceptable progress in Islamic Education and good progress in all other subjects. Their attainment was stable from the previous year across the phases. However, they now made outstanding progress from provision for three year olds to kindergarten in mathematics, an improvement from the previous year. As they progressed through the phases and consolidated their skills, they made better attainment and progress in the MYP and DP. Emirati girls, in particular, were very articulate and had excellent presentation skills in most key subjects. As the school had outstanding levels of support for all students, there were no major gaps between Emirati students and their peers. Their attendance was now outstanding for most. They were industrious, behaved extremely well and had mature attitudes to learning.

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

Progress of students with special educational needs was good in English, mathematics and science, and acceptable in Islamic Education and Arabic as a first and additional language. There was an extremely good system for the identification of students with special educational needs and for those who had English as an additional language. The school had experienced and competent staff to identify students who required additional support and who were fully conversant with the categories used in the process. The identification process was comprehensive and screening of every entrant to the school was carried out. The school used a range of assessment tools to ensure any diagnosis was as accurate as possible. The excellent links that the school had with parents and the open door policy meant that parents were fully informed on the needs of their children. From the initial stages of identification, parents were fully involved. From planning to implementation and monitoring, parents were active partners in the support process. The quality of provision in lessons was at least good and in some instances excellent. The comprehensive IEPs advised on and supported the modifications to the curriculum. Teachers appreciated the amount of information available and were able to support students at the appropriate level. Monitoring and tracking of progress was well embedded which facilitated the adjustment of support as appropriate. The school could accurately re-evaluate the provision as required. This was an inclusive school that provided excellent support for a broad range of needs.

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

The quality of teaching Arabic as a first language varied widely across the school. Girls responded to teaching slightly better than boys. Most teachers had secure subject knowledge and had the ability to teach Arabic as a first language appropriately. However, some had difficulty in teaching particular age groups, particularly the younger students. Teachers' interactions and instruction had a positive impact on students' language skills when students were encouraged to apply correct pronunciation and use standard Arabic. Lesson planning was adequate overall although expectations were not always sufficiently high. The curriculum was compliant with the MoE requirements. It had a clear rationale and its delivery was planned for appropriately. The Arabic department reviewed the curriculum on an annual basis. However, the Arabic curriculum was strictly based on the textbook and lacked appropriate enrichment to make it more interesting. Appropriate modifications were made to address the needs of a few students. Creating better opportunities for students to enhance their reading skills and improve their extended speaking and writing skills was a key area for improvement particularly for older middle and high students.

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	154	24%
	Last year	119	27%
Teachers	47		52%
Students	69		74%

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

Only around a quarter of parents responded to their survey. About half the teachers and three-quarters of the students responded. Survey responses from the three groups of stakeholders were generally positive. Most parents were satisfied with the education provided by Jumeira Baccalaureate School. There were few significant trends in the areas of concern; one area of note from parents was with regard to the transfer of school fees to the development of facilities, resources and teacher increment. Comments on leadership and governance were split. Some cited concerns with leadership and an equal amount praised it. This too was reflected in teacher surveys. Bullying was cited as a concern in some isolated cases but the proportion was insignificant. This was counteracted by positive comments regarding school safety and general ethos. Arabic language and Islamic Education received varied comments from the different perspectives based on the situation and background of the respondents but there were no significant trends in these areas. Overall the surveys were very positive and reflected satisfaction and a recognition that the school was growing and still developing.

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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