

INSPECTION REPORT

The Private Religious Institute

Report published in April 2013

Knowledge and Human Development Authority

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GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT The Private Religious Institute

Location	Academic City
Type of school	Private
Website	www.rid.ae
Telephone	04 368 8532
Address	PO Box 74544, Academic City, Dubai
Principal	Ahmed Mohammad Noor Saif Al Mohairy
Curriculum	MoE
Gender of students	Boys
Age / Grades	11 - 18 / Grade 6 to Grade 12
Attendance	Good
Number of students on roll	122
Largest nationality group of Students	Emirati
Number of Emirati students	122 (100%)
Date of the inspection	7th January to 8th January 2013

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The context of the school

The Private Religious Institute is situated in Academic City and, at the time of the inspection, had a total enrolment of 122 students. All were Emirati, aged 11 to 18 years. The school followed the Ministry of Education curriculum and students sat the relevant Ministry examinations. There was supplementary provision for Islamic Education and Arabic.

The school was organised into two cycles and, for the purposes of this report, these were Cycle 2 (Grades 6 to 8) and Cycle 3 (Grades 9 to 12).

There were 19 full-time teachers, the Principal, Vice-Principal and administration team. All teachers in the school had appropriate teaching qualifications. Students were grouped in nine classes. The school was located in a new building in Academic City having recently moved from Al Satwa.

Overall school performance 2012-2013

Acceptable

Key strengths

- Good attainment in all key subjects across the school;
- The positive staff-student relationships;
- The enriched curriculum in Islamic Education and Arabic;
- The high quality accommodation.

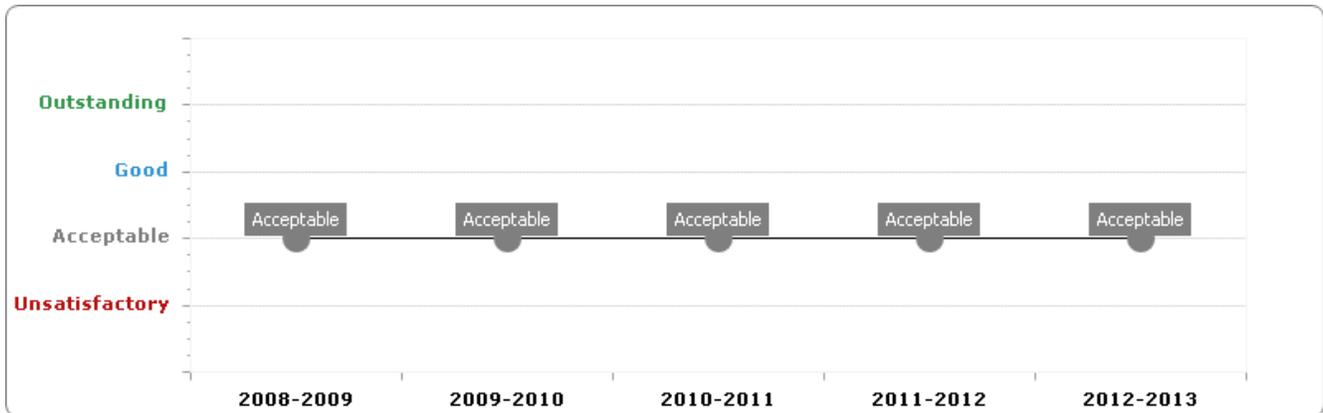
Recommendations

- Continue to implement strategies to improve teaching and learning, with an emphasis on meeting the different needs of all students;
- Continue to develop students' enquiry skills and provide opportunities for critical thinking and independent working;
- Use assessment information more effectively to plan learning tasks that are appropriately challenging for students;
- Review the curriculum to ensure it has a clear rationale and allocates appropriate time to all of the subject areas thereby allowing students to make better progress;
- Develop and expand approaches to self-evaluation to ensure more effective and efficient processes that lead to improvement.
- Develop greater links with the wider community, including other schools, to enhance the educational experiences of all students.

Progress since the last inspection

- The school had made some progress developing teaching strategies to meet the needs of all groups of students but there was still considerable work to be undertaken;
- The school had begun to use assessment data to inform lesson planning, teaching and curriculum modification. However, more work was required to ensure consistency across all of the school;
- The school had introduced teaching strategies which were helping to develop students' enquiry skills and their independence in learning across the curriculum but these were not yet being consistently applied across all classes and stages;
- The school had made good progress in implementing measures to monitor and evaluate the progress of improvement plans and the meeting of targets with relation to their impact on students' outcomes;
- The school now successfully engaged parents in curriculum development activities, thereby enabling them to participate more fully in the students' learning.

Trend of overall performance



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

	Cycle 2	Cycle 3
Islamic Education		
Attainment	Good	Good
Progress	Good	Good
Arabic as a first language		
Attainment	Good	Good
Progress	Good	Good
Arabic as an additional language		
Attainment	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Progress	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
English		
Attainment	Good	Good
Progress	Acceptable	Acceptable
Mathematics		
Attainment	Good	Good
Progress	Good	Good
Science		
Attainment	Good	Good
Progress	Good	Good

[Read paragraph](#)

How good is the students' personal and social development?

	Cycle 2	Cycle 3
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?

	Cycle 2	Cycle 3
Teaching for effective learning	Acceptable	Acceptable
Quality of students' learning	Acceptable	Acceptable
Assessment	Good	Good

[Read paragraph](#)

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

	Cycle 2	Cycle 3
Curriculum quality	Acceptable	Acceptable

[Read paragraph](#)

How well does the school protect and support students?

	Cycle 2	Cycle 3
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	Good
Self-evaluation and improvement planning	Acceptable
Partnerships with parents and the community	Acceptable
Governance	Good
Management, including staffing, facilities and resources	Good

[Read paragraph](#)

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

Students' attainment in the key subjects was good in both cycles. The majority of students could progress explain key Islamic concepts and Hadith well. They had, however, limited understanding of their responsibilities as Muslims within the school and the community. Students were attaining well in listening, speaking and reading in Arabic but were less secure in creative writing. Attainment in English was good throughout the school. Reading and speaking skills were stronger than writing skills. In mathematics, most students were able to use equations, for example, to understand the geometry of a circle, or calculate logarithmic values. They were less confident in applying their learning to real-world scenarios. As students moved through the school they were increasingly confident with practical aspects of science. Whilst they were developing research skills, lack of access to information and communication technology (ICT) limited opportunities.

Students' progress in most key subjects was good overall. In Islamic Education, the majority of students made good progress during lessons in Holy Qur'an recitation skills. However, they made insufficient reference to the Holy Qur'an and Hadeeth to support their points of view. In Arabic lessons, most students made good progress as measured against their learning objectives. However, they were not confident in applying grammatical rules at an age-appropriate level. In English, most students made acceptable progress in listening, reading and speaking. Creative and extended writing skills were not well developed. Most students progressed well in mathematics and moved from single to multi-step calculations as they moved up the grades. Their problem-solving skills were less well developed and a minority were not skilled in handling data. Students were able to carry out simple practical science activities. However, teachers often gave too much guidance to students so that they were not able to decide for themselves how to develop these activities. Students with special educational needs made at least acceptable progress.

[View judgements](#)

How good is the students' personal and social development?

Most students behaved well in class and around the school. They were courteous and respectful to one another, staff and visitors. Students demonstrated positive attitudes towards healthy living and followed the school's advice about keeping fit and healthy. Attendance was good and almost all students arrived in good time for lessons and attended assembly. Students had a clear understanding of Islamic values, and had a good local, cultural and global awareness. They appreciated the heritage and local traditions of the UAE and could explain their relevance to people in Dubai. Students were knowledgeable about a variety of cultures.

They understood their responsibilities as members of a school community and took on key roles around the school and on the buses. The student voice was influential. They had a positive work ethic. Students sometimes took the initiative and made independent decisions. They took care of their surroundings and were aware of important environmental issues.

[View judgements](#)

How good are the teaching, learning and assessment?

Teaching for effective learning was acceptable in both cycles. Teachers knew their subjects well, planned using clear objectives and included a variety of activities and ideas to engage students. Positive relationships between teachers and students and between students themselves ensured that students quickly engaged in learning. Teachers gave clear introductions and guidance to help all students learn well, but students did not have sufficient opportunity to work at their own pace. Teachers used questions regularly in lessons to promote students' understanding but too often these required short answers and did not deepen students' understanding sufficiently. Skills of enquiry were underdeveloped across the curriculum. In science, for example, although students had opportunities to carry out practical work, these were often short activities that did not involve students in making decisions about what they wanted to find out and how they planned to do so. Across key subjects, teaching was variable in its impact on learning. It was stronger in Islamic Education and Arabic where teachers used a variety of teaching strategies and students were more active while they were learning. In English and mathematics, students were not given enough opportunity to discuss their learning and think through important ideas for themselves. Activities to relate learning to the interests of students in the wider world were limited in mathematics but stronger in Islamic Education and Arabic.

The quality of students' learning was acceptable in both cycles. Most students had positive attitudes to learning. Although teachers guided students effectively to complete shorter tasks, there were too few opportunities for the students to develop the skills of independent learning. Most students enjoyed working together to clarify or deepen their understanding, but there were not enough opportunities to learn through collaboration. Real-world contexts, that increased students' enthusiasm and gave them opportunities to apply what they had learned, were strong features in Islamic Education and Arabic, but less typical in other parts of the curriculum. The use of ICT to accelerate learning, acquire skills for the world of work and raise students' interest and enthusiasm were not regular features of learning in lessons.

Assessment arrangements were good. Regular assessment of students through tests on entry, subsequent assessment of progress and an increasing amount of self-assessment gave teachers a clear idea of students' strengths and weaknesses. The school used their monitoring of students' progress to target support for underachievers to close the gap between their attainment and that of other students. The provision to extend more able students was not strong. The use of assessment information by teachers to ensure that teaching closely matched the needs of all students was improving across the school.

[View judgements](#)

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

The curriculum was acceptable. The school followed the Ministry of Education curriculum with a special emphasis on Islamic Education and Arabic. Effective transition arrangements were in place to provide support to students between cycles. The curriculum was reviewed regularly but did not have a clear rationale with regard to preparation for future learning. There was limited choice for students in Grades 10 to 12. Insufficient time was allocated to the teaching of English, mathematics, science and physical education. Low achievers were supported with opportunities to attend extra lessons in key subjects on a Saturday. There was a lack of independent learning, critical thinking and investigation to extend students' thinking, open new lines of enquiry or challenge their ideas. Whilst the range of extra-curricular activities had improved, there were still too few links with the local and wider community.

[View judgements](#)

How well does the school protect and support students?

Health and safety arrangements were good overall. The school had a caring ethos; the welfare of students was given high priority and parents were confident that their children were safe and secure. The school had a well-equipped clinic but had yet to appoint a full team of medical staff. The school premises and equipment were new and in an excellent state of repair. Students were well supervised throughout the day in lessons, when moving around the school and when travelling on school transport. The prefects made a very positive contribution to supervision. Healthy living was promoted through the curriculum, which included personal hygiene and guidance about healthy eating. Regular training of all teachers had raised awareness of child protection.

The quality of support for students was good. There were very positive relationships between teachers and students, and behaviour was well managed. The school had established systems that promoted good

attendance and punctuality. Teachers knew their students well and provided support for their well-being and personal development. Advice and guidance to students on future career options was limited.

[View judgements](#)

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

Students with special educational needs were welcomed to the inclusive school environment. Recently introduced systems helped teachers identify the needs of students with special educational needs, those needing support and those considered to be gifted and talented. In-class teacher support, coupled with additional lessons on a Saturday, ensured most students with special educational needs made at least acceptable progress.

How good are the leadership and management of the school?

The leadership of the school was good. The Principal and Vice Principal communicated a vision that was clear and supported by all staff members. Heads of Departments worked well as a team, with a sharp focus on consultation and collegial work. Teachers were fully involved and valued. Relationships and communication at all levels of the school hierarchy were both friendly and professional. The school's leaders demonstrated a good capacity to improve further.

Self-evaluation and improvement planning were acceptable. Self-evaluation processes were embedded in the school's improvement planning. However, whilst the school had recognised many of its strengths, it had not identified weaknesses in learning and teaching, and its curriculum provision. The school's action plan provided the staff with guidance on what was needed to ensure the recommendations of the last report were addressed. Whilst the school had made progress in tackling some of the recommendations, there remained considerable work to be undertaken on some others, such as developing students' enquiry and critical thinking skills.

Partnerships with parents and the community were acceptable. Parents spoke positively about the welcoming nature of the school and the frequent opportunities they had to consult with teachers. The school had effective arrangements for reporting to parents. They were kept informed of their children's progress

but did not receive sufficient information on next steps in learning. Links with the local and wider community were underdeveloped.

Governance of the school was good. The advisory body had a positive influence on the school but it had not ensured appropriate time for the teaching of English, mathematics, science and physical education. It had not helped the school to provide suitable provision for all students through 'Arts and Science' programmes in the senior school. Representation on the board included an appropriate range of stakeholders. The advisory body regularly sought and responded positively to the views of all stakeholders of the school.

The management of staffing, facilities and resources was generally good. Teachers were suitably qualified, many with significant experience. A small team of ancillary staff helped ensure the smooth running of the school. The school provided students with a high quality physical environment. The classrooms were large and airy. Resources were acceptable and students had access to both computer and audio laboratories which allowed them to improve their English language speaking skills. Access to ICT outside the laboratories was inadequate. Overall, the library had an acceptable variety and quantity of books. Provision of textbooks and support materials for Islamic Education and Arabic was very good.

[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	44	41%
	Last year	41	52%
Teachers	15		75%
Students	26		90%

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

A minority of parents and students responded to the survey. Most teachers responded to the survey. Almost all parents who responded felt that their children were making good or better progress in their studies. They were very pleased with the quality and frequency of school reports and knew how their children were progressing at school. Almost all parents believed that the school was well led and that their children enjoyed school. They believed that the school delivered well on its promise to parents regarding the quality of education provided to their children. Almost all students and teachers who responded to their surveys held positive views about the full range of school provision. However, a number of students felt that they would benefit from more opportunities to undertake physical education activities and to use ICT.

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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