

INSPECTION REPORT

Dubai Police Kindergarten - Deira Branch

Report publication in May 2012

Knowledge and Human Development Authority

P.O. Box 500008, UAE, Tel: +971-4-3640000, Fax: +971-4-3640001, info@khda.gov.ae, www.khda.gov.ae

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT Dubai Police Kindergarten - Deira Branch

Location	Deira
Type of school	Private
Website	None available
Telephone	04-2387391
Address	PO Box 1493, Deira, Dubai
Principal	Ebtesam Mubarak
Curriculum	Ministry of Education
Gender of students	Boys and Girls
Age / Grades or Year Groups	3 to 5 years / Kindergarten 1 and Kindergarten 2
Attendance	Acceptable
Number of students on roll	67
Number of Emirati students	67 (100%)
Date of the inspection	Monday 19th to Tuesday 20th March 2012

Contents

The context of the school.....	3
Overall school performance 2011-2012.....	3
How has the school progressed since the last inspection?.....	3
Key strengths	4
Recommendations	4
How good are the students' attainment and progress in key subjects?.....	5
How good is the students' personal and social development?.....	6
How good are the teaching, learning and assessment?.....	7
How well does the curriculum meet the educational needs of students?	8
How well does the school protect and support students?.....	8
How good are the leadership and management of the school?.....	9
What are the views of parents, teachers and students?.....	11
What happens next?.....	12
How to contact us.....	12
Our work with schools.....	13

The context of the school

Located in Al Waheidah, Dubai Police Kindergarten – Deira Branch, is a private school providing education for boys and girls aged three to five years from Kindergarten 1 to 2. The school follows a Ministry of Education curriculum.

At the time of inspection there were 67 children on roll. The children were all Emirati and spoke Arabic as their first language. All teachers in the school were adequately qualified and deployed effectively.

Overall school performance 2011-2012

Acceptable

How has the school progressed since the last inspection?

Dubai Police Kindergarten, Deira, provided an acceptable quality of education for its children. Children showed good personal and social development, and attendance was good. The school ensured children were kept safe and healthy through high levels of supervision and effective strategies to protect them. Most teachers had improved their understanding of how young children learn but this was still work in progress.

Whilst attainment was good in most subjects and had improved, progress was mostly acceptable due to low levels of challenge in lessons and the limited range of teaching strategies suitable for young learners. Notable progress was made by children from low starting points in English. Similarly, in science, children made good progress due to increased exposure to science investigations which enabled them to develop scientific skills. Strategies to improve attendance had been successful and children attended regularly and most arrived on time to school. However, children with special educational needs had not been identified. Importantly, school leaders showed a commitment to, and the capacity for, further improvement.

Key strengths

- The children's good attainment and progress in English and science;
- Children's positive behaviour and attitudes;
- The school had outstanding arrangements to ensure children's safety and security;
- The caring community ethos in the Kindergarten.

Recommendations

- Raise attainment and progress in mathematics;
- Improve teaching, learning and assessment by:
 - continuing to improve teachers' understanding of how young children learn;
 - planning precise learning outcomes for each learning activity ensuring outcomes are linked to standards of attainment;
 - improving the observational skills of teachers and support staff of planned tasks to better inform them what children can do and what they cannot do;
 - ensuring information and communication technology (ICT) is used by both teachers and children to support teaching and learning;
- Identify less able and more able children and provide them with appropriate learning programmes that support good progress;
- Improve self-evaluation to ensure judgements are accurate and well referenced to sources of evidence, in order to identify what needs to be improved.

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

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

Attainment in Islamic Education, Arabic, English and science was good whilst it was acceptable in mathematics. In Islamic Education, children were able to recite and memorise short verses of the Qur'an. They understood and applied Islamic values to their daily lives. Children attained well in Arabic with good pronunciation and effective application of alphabetical knowledge when sounding new words. Children entered the school with little spoken English but, by the end of Kindergarten 2, attainment was above expected levels in listening, speaking and reading. Their handwriting skills were well developed but the independent, personal writing was weak. In science, investigational skills had improved whilst, in mathematics, most children used numbers to ten confidently but their measuring and problem-solving skills were underdeveloped.

Children's progress in English and science was good and it was acceptable in Islamic Education, Arabic and mathematics. Those experiencing difficulties in learning made acceptable progress overall. In most lessons, acceptable progress was associated with low levels of challenge and this restricted progress of all children and especially those who were capable of attaining good levels. Progress was also impeded by a lack of opportunities to develop skills in learning when teachers spoke too much.

How good is the students' personal and social development?

	Kindergarten
Attitudes and behaviour	Good
Understanding of Islam and appreciation of local traditions and culture	Good
Civic, economic and environmental understanding	Good

Children were self-disciplined and demonstrated good behaviour. They showed respect to each other and adults. Although children had positive attitudes to learning, they had few opportunities to be responsible and be self-reliant in most lessons. They had a good understanding of healthy living and made sensible food choices. Children's attendance and punctuality were good. They had a good understanding of Islam because teachers provided themselves as good role models of Islam each day. Most children had a deep understanding about Emirati heritage and local tradition. Their understanding about multi-cultural Dubai was limited. Most children could name jobs they would like to have in the future. Children knew about the important landmarks of Dubai, such as the Burj Khalifa, the metro railway and shopping malls. Most children were aware of the need to keep Dubai clean and tidy; however, there were limited opportunities for them to be involved with environmental projects.

How good are the teaching, learning and assessment?

	Kindergarten
Teaching for effective learning	Acceptable
Quality of students' learning	Acceptable
Assessment	Acceptable

Most teachers knew their subjects well but there was an inconsistent understanding of how young children learn. This meant that lessons in Islamic Education, Arabic and mathematics were often uninspiring and lacked pace. In most lessons, planning did not identify learning activities that were linked to precise curriculum standards. Planning did not always take into account children's starting points. This meant that the learning needs of the higher and lower attaining children were not met well enough to enable overall good progress. Where progress was acceptable, teachers often spoke too much in lessons and did not always allow children to ask questions or give them enough time to answer. Most teachers gave too few opportunities for children to find things out themselves. However, this was a developing feature of science lessons. The use of ICT by teachers and children to promote learning was very limited.

Most children enjoyed lessons and were keen to learn. They interacted well with their teachers and enjoyed answering questions. Teachers did not always understand the strategies needed to develop independent learners. This meant that children were often too dependent on adults for support and guidance. When progress was good, most children worked in groups and shared their ideas and understanding. In mathematics, children rarely had the opportunity to find things out for themselves and this restricted critical thinking and skill development. A few children made links in their learning but this was a weakness overall.

The quality of teachers' assessment of children's attainment and progress was acceptable. Teachers were gathering assessment information but did not use this well to inform future lesson plans or to identify children's next steps in learning in each aspect of the curriculum. Assessments focused on children's acquisition of knowledge and insufficient attention was given to their understanding and their development of learning skills. Assessment information was not used consistently to identify those children who needed more support and those who would benefit from a greater degree of challenge. Parents valued the monthly progress report on their child but this was not clear about what children had to do next to improve their learning. Some teachers gave good immediate feedback to children to encourage good work.

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

	Kindergarten
Curriculum quality	Acceptable

The curriculum was acceptable. Teachers had taken some positive steps to improve aspects of several subjects since the last inspection. The curriculum was based on Ministry of Education guidance with several enhanced features. It was broad but the length of the working day did not give sufficient time to develop each aspect fully, such as the expressive arts. Greater continuity and progression was now built in to several programmes of study, for example in science. An increased number of visits and visitors to the school had enhanced children's learning experiences. Visits to places of interest provided good opportunities for children to improve their knowledge of their heritage and culture, to increase their vocabulary and to observe scientific features first-hand. There was a strong focus on children adopting a healthy life-style. Teachers did not give children enough opportunities in class to learn through planned play activities, to investigate, compare and contrast, solve problems and work with partners. Children had very few opportunities to use ICT to support their learning.

How well does the school protect and support students?

	Kindergarten
Health and Safety	Outstanding
Quality of Support	Good

Provision for ensuring children's health and safety was outstanding. There were effective procedures in place to supervise children on buses. However, aspects of children's safety in the car park were compromised by a few inconsiderate drivers of private cars. Procedures for the safe storage of medicines were very good. The school nurse regularly screened children to ensure their well-being. Any accidents were recorded and parents informed, and the administration of medication meticulously noted. Emergency evacuation drills were held regularly and fire-fighting equipment was suitably maintained. The campus was secure and monitored carefully. The building, whilst long-standing, was well maintained and clean, and was accessible to anyone with a physical disability. Strong links with the Dubai Police ensured that

staff, children and parents knew about the importance of securing children's personal safety. The staff had not set down their good child protection practice in a written policy statement.

Overall, the quality of support for children was good. Teachers knew children well as individuals and took great care in supporting their personal and social development. The few instances of behaviour concerns were managed appropriately. Parent meetings, regular progress reports in Arabic and English and newsletters, ensured purposeful links between the Kindergarten and children's homes and families. A few children experiencing difficulties in their learning and several who had particular talents had been identified. However, further steps needed to be taken to diagnose any specific barriers to learning and to put in place individualised plans to support and challenge children across the range of ability. Very good steps were taken to check up on absences and, as a result, attendance had steadily improved.

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	Good
Governance	Good
Management, including staffing, facilities and resources	Acceptable

The leadership of the school continued to be good overall. The Principal communicated a vision of 'child-centred learning' that was clear to most staff but not understood by all. The whole school team was united in their dedication to improvement. Middle managers and teachers had responded well to professional development opportunities but the impact of this had yet to be realised. The Principal was well supported by the subject leaders. Nevertheless, not all understood how to improve progress in their subjects. Relationships amongst the staff team were a key strength with all working together to bring about improvements. With continued professional development, the school team had good capacity to improve further.

The school completed a self-evaluation document prior to inspection. However, judgements were not always accurate and the process had not involved all teachers in evaluating various aspects of the school. An understanding of how young children learn had been supported with focused professional development

and visits to other kindergartens. Some improvements were apparent as a result of this, notably in English and science. However, the monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning was not rigorous enough nor closely linked to performance management. The school has responded positively to the inspection recommendations but action planning lacked measurable success criteria and precise timelines. The result was that whilst there had been improvements in provision, these had failed to impact positively on children's progress which remained mostly acceptable. Overall, there had not been a clear enough focus on improving outcomes for children that were directly linked to precise curriculum standards.

The school enjoyed very positive partnerships with the parents and local community. Parents were supportive of the school, especially as they considered that their children were happy and fulfilled. They appreciated the welcome they received when visiting the school. Communications between home and school were regular and effective in supporting learning. Teachers were highly accessible and approachable, and quickly resolved any issues. Monthly reports on children's progress were welcomed but parents felt that more information on personal and social development was needed. Parents felt fully involved in the life of the school and their children's learning. A few parents helped at times in school.

The Kindergarten was governed by Dubai Police through the direction and support of a school management group. This group supported the school leadership well and held the school to account. Dubai Police had established good links with a parental representative group that questioned and challenged the Principal and teachers. Regular and comprehensive reports were provided by the Principal to the board and these had enabled members to track the school's progress more effectively. Nevertheless, the management group did not have a strong enough focus on ensuring quality outcomes for children.

Staffing, facilities and resources were acceptable. The well-maintained and clean building provided ample space for lessons and activities, including areas for specialist work such as a cinema, gymnasium, theatre and an extensive covered play area with large physical play apparatus. Children's work could have been displayed across the building to greater effect. There were sufficient, well-qualified teachers who were committed to improving children's learning experiences. They and their teaching assistants required further training in what the best early years practice looks like and how to achieve it. There was a good range of resources to support most aspects of the curriculum. However, there were insufficient books for children to read for pleasure and the lack of ICT was an important shortcoming in children's learning.

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	31	46%
	Last year	26	38%
Teachers	5		83%
Students	There are no upper secondary-aged students in the school		

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

A minority of parents and most teachers responded to the survey. Most parents were highly supportive of the school and positive about their children's progress in key subjects. They believed leadership, teaching and children's behaviour to be key strengths of the school. They recognised the improvements in teaching and learning in subjects such as English as a second language and science. However, a few parents reported that their children's progress in Islamic Education was not good. Parents felt that their opinions were valued and suggestions acted on by the school. They were involved in their children's learning in a variety of ways and indicated that school reports were timely and helpful. The majority of parents believed that the last inspection had led to improvements in the school. Overall, almost all parents who responded were very satisfied with the quality of education provided. Teachers were positive in their views about the key aspects of provision at the school. Teachers were less positive about the benefits of inspection for the school.

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

Our work with schools

Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau (DSIB) inspects schools to inform parents, students and the wider community of the quality of education provided. Inspectors also give guidance to staff about how to improve the standard of education.

At the beginning of the inspection, we ask the principal and staff about the strengths of the school, what needs to improve and how they know. We use the information they give us to help us plan our time in school. During the inspection, we go into classes and join other activities in which students are involved. We also gather the views of students, parents and staff. We find their views very helpful and use them, together with the other information we have collected, to arrive at our view regarding the quality of education.

This report tells you what we found during the inspection and the quality of education in the school. We describe how well students are doing, how good the school is at helping them to learn and how well it cares for them. We comment on how well staff, parents and children work together and how they go about improving the school. Finally, we focus on how well the school is led and how staff help the school achieve its aims.

Copyright © 2012

This report is for internal use only and for the self-evaluation purposes of the school.

It should not be used for commercial purposes or in connection with a prospectus or advertisement.