

## INSPECTION REPORT

# Jumeirah English Speaking School - Arabian Ranches

Report published 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](mailto:info@khda.gov.ae), [www.khda.gov.ae](http://www.khda.gov.ae)

## GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT Jumeirah English Speaking School - Arabian Ranches

Location	Arabian Ranches
Type of school	Private
Website	www.jess.sch.ae
Telephone	04 3619019
Address	PO Box 24942, Arabian Ranches, Dubai.
Principal	Robert David Stokoe
Curriculum	UK
Gender of students	Boys and Girls
Age / Grades or Year Groups	3-18 / KG 1-Grade 13
Attendance	Outstanding
Number of students on roll	1,357
Number of Emirati students	11 (less than 1%)
Date of the inspection	Monday 24th to Thursday 27th October 2011

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## The context of the school

Located in Arabian Ranches, Jumeirah English Speaking School is a not-for-profit school serving the immediate community in Arabian Ranches and beyond. Jumeriah English Speaking School (JESS) provided education for students from the Foundation Stage (from 3 years old) to Year 13 (18 years old).

The school followed the National Curriculum for England to the end of Key Stage 4. In the sixth form the school offered the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IBDP). At the time of the inspection there were 1,357 students on roll, including 13 Emirati students. There were 115 teachers and 19 assistants on staff.

## Overall school performance 2011-2012

Outstanding

## How has the school progressed since the last inspection?

The school provided an outstanding quality of education within a highly supportive, warm and purposeful learning environment. Outstanding leadership ensured a common sense of purpose, with all staff highly committed to providing the best possible opportunities for students. Children made outstanding headway in the Foundation Stage and this rate of progress was sustained in most subjects throughout the school, due to high quality teaching. As a result, student's learning was outstanding and their levels of attainment were outstanding in most respects. Relationships across the school were excellent and students' behavior was outstanding. The outstanding curriculum included many links to the UAE and successfully promoted students' understanding of Islam and local traditions; at the same time supporting their learning in Islamic Education and Arabic. Students appreciated the multi-cultural nature of Dubai and had a strong awareness of its position within the wider world.

The school had made excellent progress in implementing the recommendations of the last report. Provision for Islamic Education and Arabic had been significantly improved and as a result students were making better progress. More challenging targets had been set for students taking the General Certificate of Education (GCSE) and results had risen to outstanding levels in English, mathematics and science. Assessment systems had been refined and the quality of the curriculum had further improved.

## Key strengths

- Students' outstanding progress in English, mathematics and science;
- Student's outstanding personal and social development;
- Outstanding teaching, learning and assessment, underpinned by an outstanding curriculum including improved provision for Islamic Education and Arabic;
- Outstanding attention to students' health and safety, coupled with high quality support for their academic and personal development;
- Outstanding leadership and management which had successfully driven improvement.

## Recommendation

- Embed the highly effective teaching strategies evident in most lessons in Islamic Education and Arabic in order to accelerate progress and further raise attainment in these two subjects.

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

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

Attainment in Islamic Education and Arabic was acceptable across the school. There were strengths in the way student's related Islamic concepts to everyday life, but their recitation skills were relatively weak. In Arabic, students were developing their listening and speaking skills well, but were less confident in reading and writing. Due to their outstanding attainment in the Foundation Stage, students entered Year 1 with confident skills for subsequent work in reading, writing and number. Their scientific inquiry skills were

also very well established. Across the school, students could speak, listen, and read English with impressive confidence, expression and conviction. They acquired a rich vocabulary and the technical skills that enabled them to write maturely across a wide range of genres. By the end of the primary phase, students were confident in all aspects of mathematics. They used reasoning and logic to solve problems that connect different areas of mathematics. Students in Year 13 were able to manipulate and explore complex mathematical models, and understand how they are used in real-world contexts. Attainment in science was outstanding in all phases. Students had a fascination for the world around them and ably carried out experimental investigations to test out their ideas.

In Islamic Education and Arabic as an additional language, students were making good progress in the primary school and acceptable progress in other phases. Students studying Arabic as their first language were making acceptable progress across the school. For those studying Arabic as an additional language, reading and writing were developing at a good pace in the Years 1 to 4, with almost all students making good progress particularly in spelling and identifying letters. Progress in the Foundation Stage and the primary and secondary phases was outstanding in English, mathematics and science. In Years 12 and 13, students were making outstanding progress in English and science and good progress in mathematics.

The school had seven Emirati students in the Foundation Stage and primary school and six in the secondary and Post-16 phases. Across the school, the attainment and progress of those students who had been at the school for more than a year were generally in line with the outcomes for other students. They were fully integrated into school life. The oldest Emirati students were world scholar winners in the UAE for their persuasive writing.

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

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Attitudes and behaviour	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Understanding of Islam and appreciation of local traditions and culture	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Civic, economic and environmental understanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding

Attitudes and behaviour were outstanding. Students and adults interacted in a calm and trusting atmosphere that was informal but learning-focused. Attendance was outstanding. Students had an excellent understanding of the components of a healthy lifestyle and could explain the impact of personal choices on their own well-being. Older students had a broad and mature understanding of the impact of Islamic values on life in the UAE. They could explain the interconnectedness of environmental, economic and social issues and the effects of these on Dubai's development over time. Students shared their thorough knowledge of the local culture and language gained through many experiences within the school curriculum, contacts with Ministry of Education schools and local visits and community activities. Emirati and non-Emirati students felt a strong sense of belonging and appreciation of their school and Dubai as safe and enriching places. Students of all ages demonstrated inquiring and open-minded attitudes towards the different cultural communities around them and towards the wider world.



## How good are the teaching, learning and assessment?

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

Teaching was highly effective throughout the school. It had improved appreciably since the last inspection, especially in the secondary and post-16 phases, as well as in Islamic Education and Arabic. Confident and knowledgeable teachers presented new learning adeptly so that students knew exactly what was expected of them. Thorough and imaginative planning gave a secure platform for learning, motivated all groups of students very well and ensured a buoyant momentum to learning. The excellent rapport between students and adults created an atmosphere in classrooms that was generally very conducive to effective learning. Teachers had high expectations of students and provided ample opportunities for open-ended and independent learning, although occasionally a lack of differentiation meant that the most able students were not challenged. The creative use of resources and cross-curricular features reinforced learning. Excellent questioning skills and use of praise promoted high levels of students' engagement and developed effective thinking skills. Outstanding specialist teaching was seen in art, music, drama and physical education lessons.

Students of all ages had outstanding attitudes towards learning. They were very self-disciplined and self-motivated, and had considerable respect for one another. Their collaborative skills were excellent. They communicated openly and maturely with each other; they greatly valued each other's opinions and ideas. Students were very capable of drawing direct links between their learning and real life. Independent learning was an intrinsic part of many lessons. Students were extremely capable of exploring new learning at their own pace and on their own terms.

The quality of assessment was outstanding. Systems for recording students' performances in all subjects were robust and comprehensive. The progress of individual students was carefully monitored and the analysis of data is thorough, even though it did not always provide a cohesive overview. Teachers took

swift action to support those who were underachieving and to provide extra challenge when necessary. Assessment information was used skillfully in most lessons to guide questioning and to challenge students. The use of assessment to differentiate work for students was mostly very good yet there was some inconsistency. In lessons, teachers provided accurate feedback; there were excellent guidelines for marking students' work that were applied across the school, done especially well in English.

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

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

The curriculum was outstanding in all phases. Personalised education encouraged subject leaders and teachers to tailor content and approaches to meet the needs of students. The Islamic Education and Arabic programmes had been redesigned to support interactive teaching and learning in the four skills of listening, speaking reading and writing. At Foundation Stage the curriculum incorporated a excellent balance of child-initiated play and teacher directed activities. At post-16, the IB curriculum provided a challenging and balanced education. Skills required in the IB had prompted the integration of more enquiry and independent research into the earlier stages of the curriculum, together with an increased emphasis on sustained reading and writing. In all phases, key subjects were supplemented by high quality courses in the arts and physical education. Cross-curricular and cross-phase links, as well as an extensive programme of community contacts, expeditions and participation in local and global activities constituted a rich and stimulating plan for learning.

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

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Health and Safety	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Quality of Support	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding

The provision for the health and safety of students was outstanding. It was underpinned by a strong inclusive school ethos, a cohesive school community and a collective visible effort by students, staff and parents to help ensure their own safety and the safety of others. Frequent and open dialogue with parents through a range of formal and informal channels, and wide-ranging opportunities for students to raise concerns and issues helped the school to remain fully informed about issues that might have been

concerning students and their families. Prompt and effective actions by staff included readily available support from a range of professionals within the school and outside in the wider community. This effectively helped to ensure the health, safety and well-being of students and also helped beyond outside school. Student or family concerns, building maintenance issues, evaluation of safety procedures such as fire drills and management of medicines all benefitted from this focused and thorough approach. The teaching of health-related issues was integrated into the curriculum so that students and their families could better understand issues affecting their health and well-being. Most students ate healthy food. Almost all were extensively involved in regular exercise, typified by a weekly exercise session popular with students, parents and staff.

The quality of support was outstanding. Excellent relaxed but purposeful relationships pervaded the school. Students showed mutual respect for their peers and adults in and out of the classroom. Students of all ages had excellent self-discipline so it was very rare for teachers to intervene and challenge inappropriate behaviour. Staff members knew their students well. The mentoring time in the secondary phase at the beginning of the day was used productively. Students were given excellent guidance and knew what they needed to do to improve. Students received very good support in planning for their futures after they left school, but the lack of a career specialist meant this work was not fully developed. The school had detailed knowledge of individual students' special needs. They were given excellent advice about effective strategies, which were acted upon by almost all teachers. The management of attendance and punctuality had improved and was outstanding. Electronic registration in the secondary school had raised expectations regarding time-keeping.

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

	Whole school
Quality of leadership	Outstanding
Self-evaluation and improvement planning	Outstanding
Partnerships with parents and the community	Outstanding
Governance	Outstanding
Management, including staffing, facilities and resources	Outstanding

The leadership of the school was outstanding. The Executive Principal played a crucial role in sustaining a shared vision across the school. There was a common commitment to ensure all students achieve as well as they could, reflected in the school's maxim 'Achieving Excellence Together'. Leaders at all levels had

high expectations and shared a determination to drive improvement. Within a collegiate working environment, colleagues were supportive of one another and staff at all levels felt valued and empowered to try out new ideas and offer their suggestions for improvement. This was exemplified in the very good headway made in improving provision for Islamic Education.

Self-evaluation was outstanding and involved students, staff, parents and governors. All aspects of the school's provision were systematically and rigorously reviewed. This provided a comprehensive and accurate picture of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. All reviews were centred on how the school's provision had an impact on students' academic achievement or personal development. Students' progress and the quality of teaching and learning were closely monitored. Analytical appraisal of all aspects of the school's performance had led to excellent improvement, especially in respect of the recommendations of the last inspection report.

The partnership with parents and the community was outstanding. Communication between home and school was excellent. In addition to first class formal communication through newsletters, the school's website and written reports, there were ample opportunities for informal contact. As parents accompanied their children into school, they were confident to raise and minor concerns in the knowledge that would be swiftly addressed. Links with the community were mutually beneficial. The school drew on the skills and expertise of local business personnel who were often invited to talk to students about their activities. The Principal and other staff were often consulted by government departments, international organisations and other schools. The school sustained highly effective links with the immediate neighbourhood and was a frequent venue for a wide range of community activities.

Governance was outstanding. Governors, almost all of whom were parents of children who attended or had previously attended the school, made an excellent contribution to self-review. They kept a close eye on all aspects of the school's performance, gaining insights through the analysis of performance data and gathering first-hand information through their visits to school, consulting parents and inviting leaders to make presentations on various topics. Strategic planning was high quality and benefitted from the wide range of skills and experience of the board members.

The management of staffing, facilities and resources was outstanding. Wide ranging and effective management systems and procedures ensured the smooth running of the school. The spacious campus was safe, clean and well maintained. Staff were very well qualified and experienced, and were deployed highly effectively. The campus facilities were extensive and provided a wide range of good quality resources to support learning across all subjects and the extensive extra-curricular activities.

## 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	234	29%
	Last year	199	25%
Teachers	35		35%
Students	90		21%

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

About one third of parents responded to the survey, a slightly higher rate than last year. About a third of the teachers and a minority of students responded to their surveys. Most parents and students indicated a high level of satisfaction with the quality of education available at the school and believed that progress was strong in English, mathematics and science. In contrast, more than a few parents and students indicated that progress was less than good in Arabic, especially Arabic for native speakers. Both Muslim and non-Muslims students thought they were developing a good understanding of Islam. Students praised the school's multi-cultural nature. All teachers paid tribute to the leadership of the school in ensuring staff awareness of and following of, the school's core values. They felt encouraged to offer their ideas and empowered to try out new strategies in the common quest for excellence in teaching and learning. Parents, teachers and students were positive in their views of the school's provision across a range of aspects.

## 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](mailto: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.

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