

INSPECTION REPORT

Buds Public School

Report published in February 2014

Knowledge and Human Development Authority

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GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT Buds Public School

Location	Al Muhaisnah
Type of school	Private
Website	www.budsdxb.ae
Telephone	04-2888143
Address	P.O. Box 12861, Dubai
Principal	Mr. Alexander Coates Reid
Curriculum	CBSE
Gender of students	Boys and Girls
Age / Grades	3-18 / Kindergarten 1 - Grade 12
Attendance	Outstanding
Number of students on roll	766
Largest nationality group of students	Indian
Number of Emirati students	0
Date of the inspection	7th to 9th October 2013

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The context of the school

Buds Public School is located in the district of Al Muhaisnah. The school opened in 1987 and, at the time of the inspection, had a total enrolment of 766 students, aged three to 18 years. This is an increase of 13 per cent from the previous year.

The school follows the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) curriculum. All students are entered for the CBSE examination at the end of Grade 12, but may also elect to sit for the examination at the end of Grade 10.

The school employed 36 teachers, almost all of whom were qualified teachers. They were supported by six teaching assistants, mostly in the Kindergarten and Grade 1. Thirteen teachers have joined the school during the last year. Students were grouped in 26 classes. Six different nationalities were represented among the student population. Thirty two students had been identified by the school as having some form of special education need.

At the time of the inspection, the school had recently appointed a new principal.

Overall school performance 2013-2014

Acceptable

Key strengths

- Students' good levels of personal responsibility evident throughout the school;
- Teaching, attainment and progress in English and mathematics in the Kindergarten;
- The clear direction for improvement provided by the Principal;
- The positive relationships between parents and the school;
- Students' good understanding of Islam in the primary, middle and secondary phases.

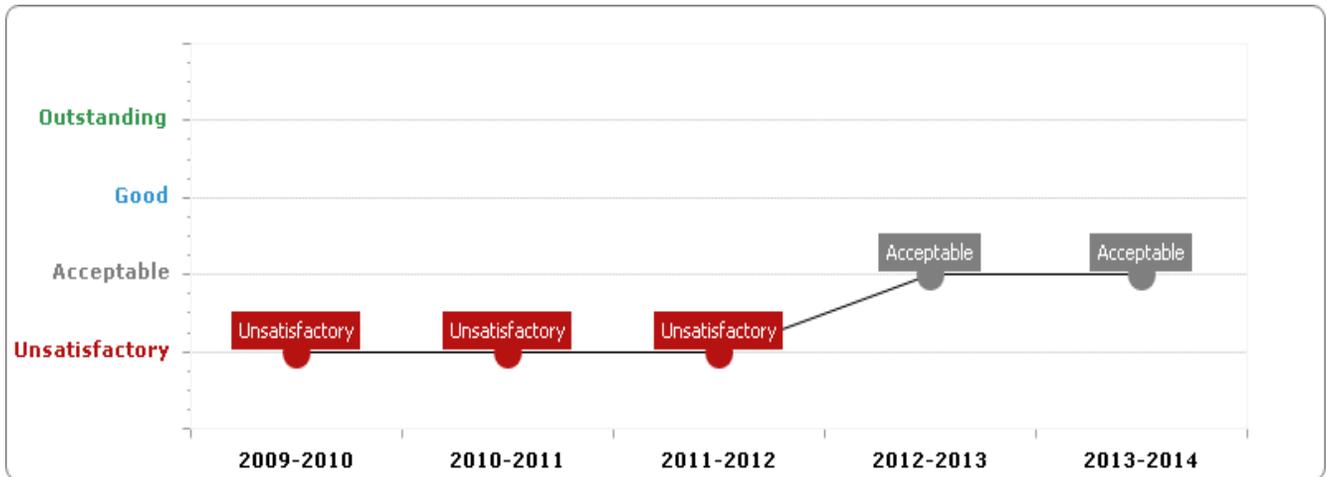
Recommendations

- Ensure that monitoring of teaching focuses rigorously on the impact of teaching on students' learning and that teachers are provided with clear guidance and targets which are linked closely to the school's priorities for improvement.
- Develop teachers' use of effective questioning to assess students' level of understanding and use this information to support the least able and further challenge for those who are ready to move on in their learning.
- Raise students' attainment in key subjects by developing their ability to think, work things out for themselves and make connections between past knowledge and their need for deeper understanding.
- Effectively implement the newly created special educational needs policy to ensure that the needs of all students are identified, planned for and addressed and that their progress is tracked against specific learning targets.
- Ensure provision for Arabic as a second language and Islamic Education meets requirements.
- Improve curriculum provision by:
 - the implementation of real-life connections;
 - the linking of different subjects;
 - the provision of a greater range of regular opportunities for students to extend their learning beyond the school day.

Progress since the last inspection

- Teaching, attainment and progress in mathematics and English in the Kindergarten had improved.
- Students' attitudes and behaviour throughout the school were still good.
- Support for students with special educational needs remained unsatisfactory.
- Students' community and environmental responsibility in the secondary phase was good.
- Results in CBSE examinations for Grade 10 and 12 students had improved.

Trend of overall performance



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

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

[Read paragraph](#)

	Kindergarten	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Quality of students' learning skills	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

[Read paragraph](#)

How good is the students' personal and social development?

	Kindergarten	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Personal responsibility	Good	Good	Good	Good
Students' understanding of Islamic values and their local, cultural and global awareness	Acceptable	Good	Good	Good
Community and environmental responsibility	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good

[Read paragraph](#)

How good are teaching and assessment?

	Kindergarten	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Teaching for effective learning	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Assessment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

[Read paragraph](#)

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

	Kindergarten	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Curriculum quality	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Curriculum design to meet the individual needs of students	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

[Read paragraph](#)

How well does the school protect and support students?

	Kindergarten	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Health and Safety	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Quality of Support	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

[Read paragraph](#)

How good are the leadership and management of the school?

	Whole school
Quality of leadership	Acceptable
Self-evaluation and improvement planning	Acceptable
Parents and the community	Good
Governance	Acceptable
Management, including staffing, facilities and resources	Acceptable

[Read paragraph](#)

How good are the students' attainment and progress?

Children's attainment in English and mathematics in the Kindergarten was good. Children demonstrated knowledge and understanding above the school's own curriculum and international standards. Most of the children were able to identify sounds associated with two letter words and count in sequence up to 50. They could accurately record answers to simple addition with correct formation of numerals. Elsewhere in the school and in most subjects, students' attainment was acceptable. In the middle and secondary phases, the majority of students could understand many of the values of Islam from the Holy Qur'an and Prophets' lives. However, across the school the memorisation of the Holy Qur'an was less well developed. Most students had a basic knowledge of Islamic concepts such as the pillars of Islam and the pillars of faith. The language skills of primary phase students studying Arabic as an additional language were in line with expectations based upon their years of study. In the middle and secondary phases, attainment was unsatisfactory with only a few students achieving at a suitable level in all key skills of the language. In English, students across the school demonstrated the expected levels of attainment in listening and reading. Writing was the weakest skill with few opportunities for independent writing. In mathematics, knowledge of number and the four operations developed well. However, students' conceptual understanding was weaker. Secondary students had secure mathematical knowledge and a good grasp of mathematical language. Results in the CBSE examinations for Grade 10 and 12 had improved in the last year. In science, there were weaknesses in the Kindergarten and in the middle phase because of the lack of opportunities in the curriculum for the development of enquiry skills. Grade 10 students continued to excel in the CBSE exam but the first group to be entered for these exams in Grade 12 had disappointing results.

Students' progress was acceptable in most subjects across the school, except in the Kindergarten in English and mathematics where it was good, and in learning Arabic as a second language where it was unsatisfactory in the middle and secondary phases. Students in the primary phase made better progress than their counterparts in the middle and secondary phases in developing their Arabic vocabulary and oral reading skills. Almost all students made acceptable progress in explaining key Islamic concepts compared to their starting points. However, their progress with the recitation of the verses of the Holy Qur'an was slow. Across the school, students did not have enough opportunities for extended writing, this was evident both in Arabic as a second language and in English. In mathematics, students' progress in conceptual understanding and the links between different strands of mathematics was weaker than the progress made in the acquisition of knowledge. Students' progress in science was acceptable in all phases of the school but was uneven with better progress in the secondary phase following slower progress in the

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middle phase due to less effective teaching. In all subjects, the progress of students with special educational needs was unsatisfactory because their specific needs were not well identified.

[View judgements](#)

Quality of students' learning skills

Learning skills were acceptable across all phases of the school. Most students enjoyed learning particularly in Kindergarten and secondary phases, where they were more likely to be active participants. Students of all ages worked well in groups. They shared resources and collaborated well when they had the opportunity to do so. The majority of students could think in the abstract and complete challenging activities. They related school work to real-life situations when teaching allowed. Research skills were well developed in older secondary students who used a variety of sources to produce presentations which demanded higher level understanding. Unfortunately, they also adopted the less appropriate styles of some of their teachers with long verbose expositions and the use of dense text without pauses for questions. In less successful lessons, students did not ask questions sufficiently to clarify their own understanding or take charge of their own learning. Students below Grade 9 had under-developed enquiry and research skills, and were more comfortable when closely guided by the teacher rather than having independence of thought.

[View judgements](#)

How good is the students' personal and social development?

Students' personal responsibility was good throughout the school. Relationships between staff and students at all levels were supportive and courteous. Students were highly motivated and responded positively to their teachers' encouragement, support and guidance. The students reported that they felt safe in school; they were punctual and the attendance level was high at 97.76 %. Students were very knowledgeable about making healthy food choices and about the importance of healthy lifestyles. Students demonstrated a good understanding of the importance of Islamic values in the primary, middle and secondary phases. Students appreciated the relevance and impact of these values on everyday life in Dubai and their own lives. Students spoke well about the history of Dubai and various aspects of Emirati heritage. They valued the multi-language nature of Dubai's population. Students fully appreciated and celebrated their own culture. There was a strong awareness of the diversity of cultures from around the world. This was acceptable in the Kindergarten classes. Students were aware of their responsibilities as citizens of the school, Dubai and their country of origin. They were confident in the school's channels of communication and their effect upon its development. Students had appropriate understanding of the importance of environmental sustainability appropriate to their age in the Kindergarten, primary and

middle phases. Students in the secondary phase had a well-developed understanding of environmental law around the world and participated actively in environmental projects.

[View judgements](#)

How good are teaching and assessment?

Teaching was good in Kindergarten and acceptable in all other phases. In all phases, teachers' subject knowledge was generally secure. In the Kindergarten, most teachers understood how young children learn best and used appropriate resources for the children's stage of development. They had good classroom routines and different follow-up activities appropriate to children's varying levels of ability. In other phases, particularly in Grades 1 to 4, the school had made commendable efforts to raise the quality of teaching through staff training and, in the best lessons, this had resulted in an increase in the use of activity-based learning. This was still at an early stage of implementation and the inspection team agreed with the school that the impact on attainment and progress was not yet fully evident. Teacher-dominated lessons, particularly in science in the middle phase, limited opportunities for students to deepen their understanding through discussion or independent investigation. Students' application of their learning to the real world was underdeveloped in a majority of lessons. Teachers and older students made good use of digital projection. In Grade 12, students' PowerPoint presentations were frequently of a high quality but too often they adopted a lecture style of delivery similar to that of their teachers with few opportunities for questioning and discussions. Teaching of non-key subjects was acceptable in most subjects and phases of the school.

Assessment was acceptable in all phases of the school. Sound assessment systems were in place which allowed the tracking of students' progress but the emphasis, as in the last inspection, was still on test scores. The school was using external benchmarking but sample sizes were too small to be of benefit to individual students. Teachers' questioning of students focused on factual recall and did not test their understanding. Therefore, teachers did not have sufficient information to adjust the curriculum and their teaching to ensure effective support for the least able or to provide extension activities that challenged those who were ready to take the next step in their learning. Few students received written comments on how to improve their work.

[View judgements](#)

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

The curriculum quality was acceptable across all phases. The curriculum reflected the CBSE framework. Transitions between phases were adequate. An integrated approach to learning topics was implemented well in the Kindergarten but in other phases this mostly remained at the planning level and seldom translated into action. Practical learning activities were beginning to be a more regular feature of curriculum planning, particularly in mathematics lessons in the primary phase. In the middle and secondary phases the curriculum too often remained textbook-driven. As a result, curricular opportunities to develop critical thinking, problem solving and independent learning were not developed effectively throughout the school. There was limited opportunity for provision of extended curriculum and enrichment activities across all phases. Community links were rudimentary especially at the Kindergarten, primary and middle phases. The curriculum for the teaching of Arabic and Islamic Education was not compliant with Ministry of Education requirements.

The curriculum design to meet individual needs of students was good in Kindergarten. Activities were adjusted well to take into account children's different starting points, their interests and learning styles. The oldest students had opportunities to pursue their learning, interests and aspirations, particularly at Grades 11 and 12. In other phases, curriculum design was acceptable but not planned as effectively to address the educational and personal development of all groups of students particularly for those with special educational needs.

[View judgements](#)

How well does the school protect and support students?

Health and safety aspects and the quality of support provided were acceptable in all phases. The school took measures to ensure the safety of students on buses and in the premises. The school building, equipment in laboratories and toilets were safe, clean and well maintained. Accessibility for those who were disabled was adequate with the provision of a ramp at the entrance and specific toilet facilities. The students felt safe in school. The school monitored the health and well-being of students through reliable records. There were health talks during awareness weeks. Staff were aware of child protection arrangements and implemented them consistently.

Good teacher-student relationships were evident across the school. These relationships underpinned the confidence of students to ask for help if they needed it. Staff members knew most of their students well and provided adequate support for their personal development and well-being. Careers guidance was well established. Effective systems were in place to monitor students' attendance and punctuality. A policy for

special educational needs had been put in place but the process of identification was at an early stage of development. Formative diagnostic testing of students' specific needs was not used and observations of learning were not rigorously analysed to inform teaching and learning strategies. Individual education plans for students were too general with no clear targets. There was insufficient challenge for those who were gifted and talented.

[View judgements](#)

How good are the leadership and management of the school?

The leadership of the school was acceptable. The new Principal had a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the school. His determined leadership had led to a good team spirit among staff and students, and demonstrated a good capacity to bring about further improvements. Senior leaders carried out their key duties competently. The leadership of the Kindergarten resulted in good teaching and was a key feature of the school. Some heads of department had an over-optimistic view of the quality of teaching and student outcomes. Action plans and priorities for professional development were not yet effective in bringing about improvement.

Systems of self-evaluation were acceptable. The views of all stakeholders were considered but not always quickly acted upon. Analysis of test data was used to inform improvement planning but had not yet brought about rapid improvement. Rigorous systems of assessment were not in place. Staff had an accurate picture of students' knowledge, but not of the depth of their understanding. The improvement plan was based more on the school's vision for the future than realistic short-term achievable targets. Although appropriate to the school's priorities, action plans lacked timescales and intended impact which could be measured against improved student outcomes.

Partnerships with parents and the community were good. Parents were supportive of the school. Communication with the school was effective and they felt welcome in the school at any time. Their concerns, queries and suggestions were well received. Reporting on students' achievements was regular. Links with the community to extend students experiences were limited.

Governance was acceptable. The board was broadly representative of the school community. They had a clear overview of the school and shared a common goal to improve school facilities and outcomes for students. Their involvement in the school's progress was acceptable. However, they had not ensured that the school had met the mandatory requirements with regard to the Islamic Education and Arabic as a second language.

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The management of the school was acceptable. The school ran smoothly. The Principal was accountable for the smooth conduct of the day-to-day life of the school. There were sufficient staff with functional roles and responsibilities but job descriptions were not clear. Although most staff members had university qualifications, a few lacked the appropriate teaching qualifications and experience to meet the needs of students particularly in the teaching of Arabic. Timetabling made satisfactory use of all available areas to meet the needs of students and staff. School displays provided adequate information. The school was equipped with adequate resources for meeting the learning needs of students.

[View judgements](#)

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

The school systems to identify and support students with special educational needs were at an early stage of development and remained unsatisfactory overall. Two new specialist staff had been appointed. They had reviewed the school policy but the process of identification was at an early stage of development. Observations of students' learning were not used well enough to identify specific need. Although individual education plans were in place for some students, this was not consistent. Some teachers provided support in class, for example, through the use of amended worksheets. However, too often staff were not aware of the nature of the students' specific weaknesses and therefore were unable to provide tailored support to address students' individual needs. There was insufficient challenge for many of the more able students, particularly those who were gifted and talented.

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	34%
	Last year	142	36%
Teachers	20		54%
Students	88		60%

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

The following statements were based on the survey response at the time of the inspection. The above response figures are the most up-to-date and accurate available prior to publication.

A minority of parents responded to the survey. An average proportion of students and teachers responded. Most parents felt that the school was improving and were happy with the communication which they have with the school. Most students and teachers had positive views of the school. Most parents who responded to the survey feel they have the information needed to support their children's progress. A few parents and students expressed concern regarding the small number of enrichment activities available for students and over crowding on buses. Most teachers expressed their commitment to helping the school to improve.

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.

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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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