

INSPECTION REPORT

United International Private School

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Knowledge and Human Development Authority

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GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT United International Private School

Location	Al Muhaisinah
Type of school	Private
Website	www.uips.ae
Telephone	04-2543888
Address	PO Box 60817, Muhaisinah, Dubai
Principal	Eunice P. Orzame
Curriculum	Philippine
Gender of students	Boys and Girls
Age / Grades or Year Groups	3-16 / Kindergarten to Grade 10
Attendance	Good
Number of students on roll	1,550
Number of Emirati students	0 (0%)
Date of the inspection	Monday 20th to Thursday 23rd February 2012

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The context of the school

The United International Private School, located in Muhaisinah, serves a student community that is predominantly from the Philippines. A small number of students were from Iran, Pakistan, India, France and Germany. There are no Emirati students. At the time of the inspection the roll was 1,550 students. The school serves both girls and boys between the ages of three and 15 years. The current year saw an intake of 525 new students. The school offers a Philippine curriculum leading to a diploma qualification at Grade 10.

There were 70 teachers on the staff including the Principal and a senior leadership team. At the time of the inspection, the Principal was in her first year in office. Most of the teachers held a teaching qualification. Four teaching assistants gave support in the Kindergarten classes.

Overall school performance 2011-2012

Acceptable

How has the school progressed since the last inspection?

The overall performance of United International Private School was acceptable. It had several important strengths. These included the outstanding attitudes and behaviour of students at all phases and the positive relationships between students and their peers and teachers. A committed senior leadership team had ensured that all teachers understood the need for improved teaching strategies. Progress was seen in the number of teachers beginning to implement improved teaching methods though this was not consistent across all subjects. Less progress was made in Islamic Education and Arabic as an additional language than in other key subjects.

The governing body, which had been expanded to include representation from parents and the community, ensured that the school was accountable for its performance. Students had more opportunities to apply what they had learned in different contexts, especially in English and mathematics. A review of the curriculum had taken place. There were, however, limited opportunities for choice and independent learning, especially in the Kindergarten. Assessment procedures were used to monitor the results of tests, but there were no procedures to support further student improvement. The school had developed a detailed self-evaluation document as well as action plans. However the accuracy of judgements made as part of this process were not always secure.

Key strengths

- Good attainment in Filipino, English and mathematics in high school;
- Improved progress in English and mathematics in primary;
- Outstanding attitudes and behaviour throughout the school;
- Improved quality of teaching seen in some key subjects, especially English and mathematics;
- Excellent celebrations of other cultures whilst retaining respect and pride for their own.

Recommendations

- Continue to improve attainment in Islamic Education;
- Draw on the good teaching practice seen in some subject areas, so that teaching is consistently good across the school;
- Further develop the curriculum to provide for greater choice and independent learning opportunities, especially in the Kindergarten;
- Make full use of assessment data to set targets for students so that they understand their next steps for learning;
- Develop provision for special educational needs including a review of the admissions policy and diagnostic processes;
- Develop more accurate school self-evaluation and school improvement planning.

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

	KG	Primary	High
Islamic Education			
Attainment	Not Applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Progress	Not Applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Arabic as a first language			
Attainment	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Progress	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Arabic as an additional language			
Attainment	Not Applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Progress	Not Applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Filipino			
Attainment	Good	Good	Good
Progress	Good	Good	Good
English			
Attainment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good
Progress	Acceptable	Good	Good
Mathematics			
Attainment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good
Progress	Acceptable	Good	Good
Science			
Attainment	Acceptable	Good	Acceptable
Progress	Acceptable	Good	Acceptable

Attainment in Kindergarten was good in Filipino and acceptable in English, mathematics and science. In primary, attainment was acceptable in Islamic Education, Arabic as an additional language, English and mathematics but was good in Filipino and science. In high school, attainment was good in English, Filipino and mathematics, and acceptable in Islamic Education, Arabic as a second language and science. In Arabic as an additional language, most students understood class instructions in Arabic and responded with short, appropriately constructed sentences. In both Arabic and English, writing skills were under developed. Filipino and English language students had strong speaking and listening skills but the development of speaking Filipino was limited because English was used as the language of instruction. High school students studying mathematics could effectively use trigonometric principles to calculate the height of a school building or measure the distance to an inaccessible object. In science, Kindergarten students could recognise different animals and name where they lived. Students in the high school were confident in applying mathematical equations when solving physics problems.

Progress in Kindergarten was acceptable in the majority of the key subjects. In primary, progress was good in Filipino, English, mathematics and science. Students were able to apply what they had learned to real life situations. In primary and high, progress was acceptable in Islamic Education and Arabic as an additional language because Arabic writing skills were weaker and students had limited opportunities to relate what they had learned in Islamic Education to real life contexts. At the time of the inspection, no students had been identified with special educational needs. However, students observed needing additional support in their learning made acceptable progress. In Filipino, they made good progress because there was more individualised reading instruction to improve the performance of the slower reader.

How good is the students' personal and social development?

	KG	Primary	High
Attitudes and behaviour	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Understanding of Islam and appreciation of local traditions and culture	Good	Good	Outstanding
Civic, economic and environmental understanding	Good	Good	Outstanding

Students' attitudes and behaviour were outstanding across the school. In lessons and around the school students were self-disciplined and sensitive to the needs of others. They enjoyed excellent relationships with peers and teachers, and had a strong sense of responsibility and work ethic. They made wise choices about their own health and fitness. Attendance was good in the most recent term. Students in the high school grades had excellent respect for Islamic values and they could explain the impact of them on Dubai's society. Muslims put into practice what they had learned from studying Islam. They were able to describe the key features of Emirati culture. High school students could explain the advantages of living in a multi-cultural society. The school celebrated a number of cultural events from a broad range of countries including those of the Philippines.

Students in high school undertook a number of responsibilities. They had a strong voice through the students' council. Students in primary and high school grades understood how Dubai had developed economically and how Dubai had benefited from its multi-cultural population. Students cared for their environment. They understood the importance of alternative energy sources and in the higher grades were capable of explaining sustainability and conservation.

How good are the teaching, learning and assessment?

	KG	Primary	High
Teaching for effective learning	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Quality of students' learning	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Assessment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

The quality of teaching for effective learning was acceptable across the school. The majority of teachers were confident and had appropriate subject knowledge. Most lessons were carefully planned but in too many expectations were not sufficiently high. The majority of teachers provided grade appropriate tasks. However, in a minority of lessons across all phases, the level of challenge for more able learners and support for slower learners was not consistently appropriate. Most teachers supplemented textbooks with a range of practical activities and worksheets but too often tasks were not related to real life contexts. The use of critical thinking and enquiry was not routinely part of lessons.

The quality of learning was acceptable in all phases of the school. Students were almost always motivated and enthusiastic learners. They were confident when sharing their learning with others but too often there were insufficient opportunities to do so. There was little independent research or enquiry and limited access to information and communications technology (ICT), in lessons. Despite increased opportunities for students to elaborate on their understanding, most lessons still did not challenge students to develop their critical and higher order thinking skills. Teachers often shared the objectives of lessons with students, but they did not involve students sufficiently in reviewing their own learning.

The quality of assessment was acceptable in all phases of the school. Regular diagnostic and summative assessment methods were used to identify students who were not succeeding. External assessments measured attainment against regional and international student populations. The use of assessment information to inform teaching and learning was varied. In a few better lessons teachers modified their teaching to meet individual needs but most did not. Teachers generally knew students' strengths and weaknesses, but did not set targets for improvement. Teachers regularly marked students' work, but they did not identify next steps in learning. In a few lessons, students had the opportunity to assess their own

or others work. Staff made some use of assessment data to help curriculum and lesson planning. However, this planning did not always meet the learning needs of all groups of students, particularly those who were higher achieving.

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

	KG	Primary	High
Curriculum quality	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

The curriculum was based on that of the Philippines and was acceptable across the school. It was soundly planned and it addressed the needs of most students including an enhancement program for the less able students. However, in lessons, the higher achieving students were not sufficiently challenged. There were sufficient extra-curricular choices of sport, art and music. Subject links across the school ensured a smooth transition between various phases particularly in mathematics. This year's annual curriculum review had resulted a greater time allocation for English. Opportunities for independent learning in Kindergarten were limited. An adequate range of enrichment was provided in most subject areas through the academic clubs, field trips and visiting external speakers. Personal and social development were well embedded in the curriculum.

How well does the school protect and support students?

	KG	Primary	High
Health and Safety	Good	Good	Good
Quality of Support	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

The provision for health and safety were good across all phases of the school. Students' safety on buses was carefully considered. The learning environment was very well maintained and secure. The school quickly and effectively responded to site maintenance issues. Administrative procedures by Health personnel were effective and they contributed to the schools healthy living curriculum. Chemicals and medicines were kept secure. Fire equipment including smoke detectors were well maintained. Emergency signage was appropriate and there were regular evacuation drills. The healthy menu in the canteen made a positive contribution to the schools healthy eating programme. Physical activity was encouraged during assembly and many students played sports for school teams after school and during recess. Although staff

and students understood procedures for child protection, staff had not received training to ensure that there was a consistency of approach.

Support and guidance for students were acceptable. The school's ethos of respect for others was embedded across the school and resulted in very positive and caring relationships between students and staff. Consistent application of behaviour management strategies across the school ensured that incidents of poor behaviour were rare. The school provided useful advice and guidance for older students to support them in their choice for further education. At the time of the inspection the school had no students identified with special educational needs. However, through mixed grouping in class and through the enhancement programme, all students were supported and made similar progress to their peers. There were effective systems for promoting regular attendance and good punctuality.

How good are the leadership and management of the school?

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

The quality of leadership was acceptable. The recently appointed Principal and the senior leaders were aware that further improvements were needed and demonstrated sufficient capacity to make this happen. They had clear roles and an agreed understanding of what constituted effective learning. They had achieved some success in improving students' progress in English and mathematics but had not succeeded in sharing good practice across all phases and subjects.

Self-evaluation and improvement planning were acceptable. Detailed self-evaluation and action plan documentation had been compiled, with the help of all teaching staff and subject leaders.. However, the interpretation of data and other evidence was inconsistent and resulted in poorly defined expectations in a number of key areas. Improvement plans included appropriate detailed actions but success criteria were not sufficiently focused to ensure accurate monitoring. Performance management of staff was in place and

used to inform professional development programmes. The school has made acceptable progress in addressing the recommendations of the previous report.

Partnership with parents and the community was acceptable. Communication with parents was effective and supported by regular newsletters and student diaries. Parents appreciated the schools responsiveness to concerns or problems. Two parents from each class formed the Parent Teacher Community Council. Parents enjoyed occasional school celebrations including the Family Day and valued the inclusive family ethos emanating from the school. Reports to parents were quarterly and included numerical scores but no written comments which would help inform next learning steps. The school engaged in many community projects. There were limited links with the business community to enhance students' learning.

Governance was acceptable. The governors had a clear overview of and strong commitment to the school. Their monitoring of the school's development was adequate but did not focus enough on student outcomes. Board members were broadly representative of the school community. The parent representative had initiated an increased number of consultations with parents on a range of issues.

Staffing, facilities and resources were acceptable. The day-to-day life of the school was managed very efficiently. All staff were suitably qualified and an effective programme of professional development was in place. The facilities and resources were sufficient to support the curriculum and the library was well-stocked. ICT resources had improved but students' did not use these sufficiently to improve their learning. Laboratory equipment was appropriately maintained. The Kindergarten classrooms were too small to allow for some age-appropriate activities and for children to develop independence.

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	177	15%
	Last year	309	28%
Teachers	14		20%
Students	47		51%

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

A minority of parents completed this year's survey, around half of the number compared to last year. A minority of teachers and a majority of senior students also responded. Almost all parents were satisfied with the quality of education provided by the school. A very similar percentage of students felt the same. Almost all parents replied that their child was getting the education they expected from the school. A similar high percentage of students felt the same. Many more parents responded positively this year to questions about improvements in the quality of the key subjects. Almost twice as many parents stated that their child was making good or better progress in Islamic Education and in Arabic for additional learners compared with last year. To a lesser extent improvements were noted in English, mathematics and science. Most parents found parent-teacher meetings helpful, while almost all found school reports to be regular and useful. All staff stated that the last school inspection report was accurate and that it helped improve their practice.

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.

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