

INSPECTION REPORT

The Elite English School

Report published in January 2013

Knowledge and Human Development Authority

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GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT The Elite English School

Location	Deira
Type of school	Private
Website	www.eliteenglishschool.com
Telephone	04-2688244
Address	PO Box 51212, Dubai, UAE
Principal	Mrs. Vatsala Mathai
Curriculum	CBSE
Gender of students	Boys and Girls
Age / Grades or Year Groups	3-18 / Kindergarten 1 to Grade 12
Attendance	Good
Number of students on roll	1066
Students' nationalities	Indian
Number of Emirati students	0 (0%)
Date of the inspection	24th September to 27th September 2012

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The context of the school

The Elite English School is situated in Deira. During the inspection there were 1,066 students aged three to 18 years; an enrolment increase of 13 per cent from the previous year. An additional grade level, grade 12, had been introduced. The school followed the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) curriculum of India. After Grade 10, students took the All India Secondary School Examinations (AISSE).

Most students were Indian. There were also Pakistani and Filipino students and a few non-Arab African, Russian and South African students.

There were 60 full-time teachers including the senior leadership team. Slightly more than half the teaching staff had a teaching qualification. One-third of teachers were new to the school and in two key subject areas, all teachers were new. Thirty-eight students had been identified as having special educational needs. There were four separate classrooms for students with special educational needs (SEN). There was a teaching assistant in each Kindergarten class. More than one-third of students were in primary classes and nearly one third were in Kindergarten.

Overall school performance 2012-2013

Acceptable

Key strengths

- Good attitudes and behaviour of students in primary, middle and secondary school;
- Good science teaching in upper primary, middle and secondary school;
- Active parental involvement in the school.

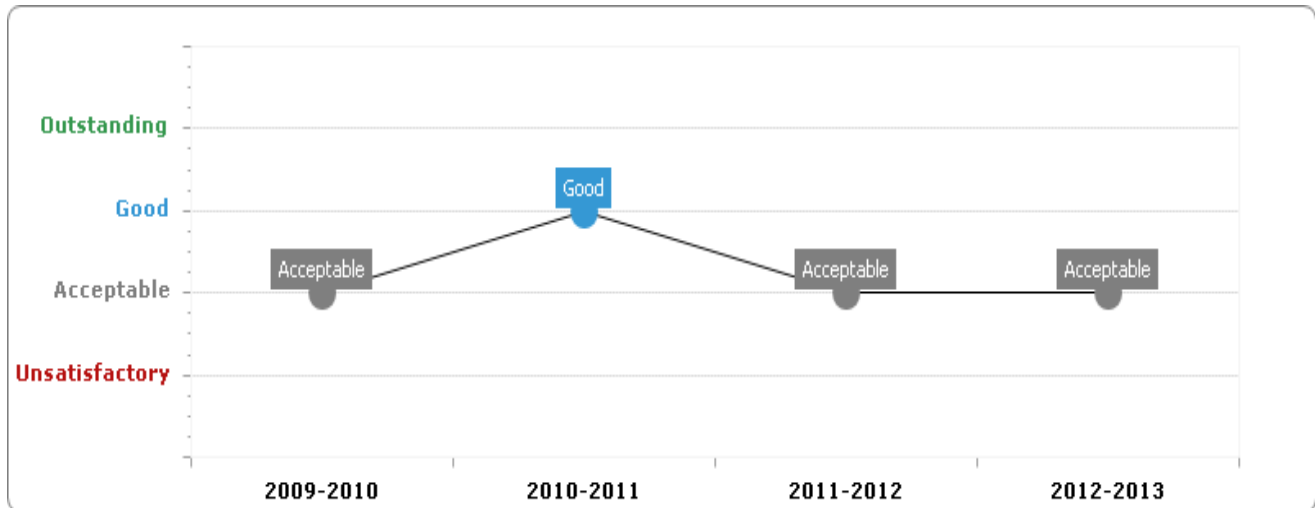
Recommendations

- Address weaknesses in teaching, learning and assessment in Arabic as an additional language, to help raise attainment and improve students' progress;
- In Kindergarten, develop and implement a curriculum which is characterised by child-initiated activity and which provides regular opportunities for children to learn through play;
- Improve teaching, learning and assessment across all phases;
- Develop systematic self-evaluation processes to identify key priorities and identify professional development needs of all staff;
- Provide targeted professional development for teachers with measurable outcomes to help improve teaching practice in the school.

Progress since the last inspection

- There had been insufficient significant improvement in students' attainment and progress;
- The school was now compliant with regulations regarding the time allocated to Islamic Education and Arabic;
- Three recommendations from the last inspection had not been fully addressed;
- Support for students with special educational needs required further development in mainstream classes.

Trend of overall performance



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

	KG	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	Unsatisfactory	Acceptable	Good	Good
Progress	Unsatisfactory	Acceptable	Good	Good
Mathematics				
Attainment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good	Good
Progress	Unsatisfactory	Acceptable	Good	Good
Science				
Attainment	Unsatisfactory	Good	Good	Good
Progress	Unsatisfactory	Good	Good	Good

[Read paragraph](#)

How good is the students' personal and social development?

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Attitudes and behaviour	Acceptable	Good	Good	Good
Understanding of Islamic values and local, cultural and global awareness	Unsatisfactory	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable
Community and environmental responsibility	Acceptable	Good	Good	Good

[Read paragraph](#)

How good are the teaching, learning and assessment?

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Teaching for effective learning	Unsatisfactory	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Quality of students' learning	Unsatisfactory	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Assessment	Unsatisfactory	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

[Read paragraph](#)

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

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Curriculum quality	Unsatisfactory	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

[Read paragraph](#)

How well does the school protect and support students?

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Health and Safety	Good	Good	Good	Good
Quality of Support	Good	Good	Good	Good

[Read paragraph](#)

How good are the leadership and management of the school?

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

[Read paragraph](#)

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

In Kindergarten, attainment was unsatisfactory in all key subjects except mathematics, which was acceptable. Children in Kindergarten were given low level work which lacked challenge and relevance. This work was often repeated without noticeable benefit to their development. At the primary stages, attainment in key subjects was acceptable but primary school science was good. In middle and secondary years, attainment was good except in Islamic Education where it was acceptable and Arabic as an additional language where it was unsatisfactory.

Progress in Kindergarten was unsatisfactory. Teachers provided insufficient challenge in lessons. In the primary and later stages, teachers in Islamic Education did not use real-life situations effectively to help ensure better progress. In Arabic, students' speaking skills showed minimal progress over time and writing was limited to single words or simple sentences, with little progress in independent or extended writing. In English, mathematics and science, in the primary school, the pace of lessons was too slow and the level of challenge was insufficient to ensure good progress. In middle and secondary school, tasks were more challenging and teachers' expectations were appropriate. Students with special educational needs made good progress in their withdrawal groups but their progress was not sustained when integrated in classrooms.

[View judgements](#)

How good is the students' personal and social development?

Attitudes and behaviour were acceptable in Kindergarten and good across the rest of the school. In a few Kindergarten classes students were unruly and lacked self-discipline. Attendance was good in all phases except Kindergarten where punctuality and attendance were unsatisfactory. Relationships between students and staff were generally positive and most students had a good attitude to work. Most students also made healthy food choices and were aware of healthy life-styles. Students in the primary school had a good awareness of the influence of Islamic values and an appreciation of local traditions and culture. This understanding was acceptable in the other phases where it was at a basic level. Most children knew about their own culture but often this was in isolation from other cultures and the context of Dubai.

Children in Kindergarten co-operated when asked to help in class but did not always complete tasks effectively. Civic and economic awareness was enhanced through the student council and community initiatives led by the students. Students contributed actively and responsibly to the life of the school through volunteer activities. They took care of the school environment by planting, keeping all areas of the school clean, and understanding the importance of recycling and improving environmental sustainability.

[View judgements](#)

How good are the teaching, learning and assessment?

Teaching was unsatisfactory in Kindergarten where most teachers lacking an understanding of how young children learn. Teaching was acceptable in the other phases though, across the school, the quality of teaching was inconsistent. Most teachers had good subject knowledge but not all lessons were planned well. Kindergarten teachers were not always clear about the purpose of lessons to ensure that children reached expected goals. Teachers used information and communications technology and visual aids for more effective learning. A few teachers used a range of teaching strategies; however there was also over reliance on textbooks for instruction. In a few subjects, such as science, there were opportunities for independent, active learning but teachers' management of lessons did not allow students to be active in their learning. Inquiry and critical thinking were not routinely incorporated in lessons. In a few subjects the level of challenge was appropriate and teachers' questioning was productive for learners. In other classes challenge was insufficient to ensure students' progress. Teaching of students with special educational needs was good in the withdrawal groups but mainstream lessons failed to build on the progress made. Teaching in other subjects including art, physical education, social studies, dance and computer skills was acceptable.

The quality of students' learning was unsatisfactory in Kindergarten and acceptable in the other phases. Most students had a positive attitude towards learning and were attentive and engaged. They could work for short periods without teacher intervention. In Kindergarten, a lack of opportunities to explore independently and learn through play slowed learning significantly. There were greater opportunities for independent learning and productive group work in the other phases. Students could make connections to the real world when this was incorporated into learning. Students occasionally found out things for themselves but there were few occasions when critical thinking was a part of learning. There were insufficient opportunities for investigation and students' use of information and communications technology was limited.

Assessment was unsatisfactory at Kindergarten and acceptable at the other phases. Teachers had some knowledge of students' strengths and weaknesses. Assessment was not used productively in Kindergarten in lesson planning to meet the needs of all learners. Assessment information was gathered but not used well enough to track students' progress and provide appropriate lesson objectives. Most teachers assessed through class questioning and observations of class work and gave oral feedback. Feedback on written work was minimal and did not always provide next steps in learning. Students were rarely involved in self-assessment or peer assessment.

[View judgements](#)

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

The curriculum was unsatisfactory in Kindergarten and acceptable in all other phases. Continuity was ensured through adherence to the Indian CBSE curriculum. The curriculum in Kindergarten failed to provide adequately for the needs of children and did not provide for their needs in language development and understanding of the world. There were too few opportunities for exploration, investigation and play. Across other phases, the curriculum was broad and balanced. However, most students had limited opportunities to learn independently through investigation and problem-solving. The curriculum relied mostly on textbook learning. Cross-curricular links were made across a few subjects but this was not a feature of the curriculum. Subject co-ordinators completed periodic reviews with a few modifications but there was not enough rigour in checking to avoid repetition of work. The curriculum did not always allow for creativity and student-led research with independent learning and critical analysis. There was no curriculum in place for non-Islamic students during Islamic Education lessons. The curriculum for students with special educational needs was modified well to suit student needs in the specialist provision but this was less effective in mainstream lessons.

[View judgements](#)

How well does the school protect and support students?

Health and safety of students was good throughout the school. Staff understood their duty of care. There were clear and effective daily routines to ensure students were well cared for. Students felt safe at school. Transportation was orderly and well supervised, however seat-belts were not always used by students. Students with special educational needs had appropriate access to the school. The school was kept clean and tidy. There were regular fire drills and records kept. Safety equipment was maintained. However, science laboratories were not always locked to ensure students' safety. There was a full-time nurse and regular visits by a doctor. There were detailed health records of students. The school promoted a healthy lifestyle through talks and monitoring of snacks and lunches, but links in the curriculum were not clear. Child protection arrangements were understood by most staff.

The quality of support for students was good throughout the school. Most staff dealt sensitively with students' needs and concerns. Relationships were respectful. Management of student behaviour was effective in primary, middle and upper grades but less effective in Kindergarten. Teachers monitored and recorded students' progress and regularly assessed their work. There was some guidance on future education and careers for older students but this was very limited and required improvement. Checking of attendance and punctuality was well managed in most phases of the school but was not effective in the Kindergarten.

[View judgements](#)

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

Provision for students with special educational needs was positive in the withdrawal groups and special classes. However, most students spent some time in mainstream classes and in these lessons their support was far less effective. In the special classes teachers monitored students' progress carefully and demonstrated an appropriate level of expertise in relation to the special needs of their students. The good provision in the focused withdrawal groups was not built upon in other mainstream lessons. As a result, students did not make consistently good enough progress in key areas of their learning.

How good are the leadership and management of the school?

The leadership of the school was acceptable. Senior leaders carried out their key duties competently. However, a few phase level leaders and heads of department had responded to the school's priorities but had not yet succeeded improving students' progress. Senior leaders had not effectively communicated the school's vision clearly to all staff. Roles were defined but not all staff knew how these were related to the school's aims. Senior leaders such as phase leaders and heads of departments contributed to decisions but did not initiate action to address school priorities. There had been inadequate professional development for those in leadership roles. The school consulted students, parents and teachers in an informal way but there was insufficient analysis of this information to inform decisions.

Self-evaluation and improvement planning was unsatisfactory. Leaders did not have a realistic view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Staff were underdeveloped and staff professional development had not led to improvements for learners. Performance management did not inform professional development. Improvement plans did not clearly explain how successful outcomes would be shown to have been achieved. Minimal progress had been made in the implementation of all the recommendations from the previous report.

Partnerships with parents and the community were good. Parents were supportive of the school. They felt communication with the school was effective and they felt welcome in the school at any time. They stated that issues were resolved effectively. The school principal met with the Parents' Association regularly. This group was active in school community activities, social activities and fundraising. Parents stated that the regular school reports gave them a clear picture of their child's attainment and progress. However, parents were not active in key decision-making processes. There were insufficient strong links with the community

Governance was acceptable. The board of governors had a clear overview of the school. Their involvement in the school's progress was satisfactory but they had had little impact on improvement in student outcomes. The board was broadly representative of the school community. They had not held the school sufficiently to account for its performance.

Management, including staffing, facilities and resources was acceptable. Management of daily school routines ensured the regular operation of the school. Premises were adequate. Resources had improved in classrooms and specialist areas such as PE and music. There was now extensive shading in the main outdoor area. There were new information and communications technology resources in most areas of the school. However, the library had not been developed to meet the needs of the increased number of students in the school and specialist facilities for certain subjects were still too limited.

[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	113	18%
	Last year	251	25%
Teachers	19		35%
Students	61		24%

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

Only a few parents responded to the survey questions. Most had a strongly positive view of the school. They felt that their children made good progress in most key subjects, but Muslim parents were less certain about how well their children were doing in Islamic Education. Parents were also positive about teaching, leadership in the school and the quality of care provided by staff to their children. Students in Grades 10 to 12 completed the survey. Most stated that they enjoyed school and felt that they were doing well in mathematics and science. More than one third believed they were not doing well in Arabic. Around two thirds of students felt that there was an insufficient range of extra-curricular activities and clubs at the school. Teachers, like the parents, were mostly strongly positive about 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

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