

INSPECTION REPORT

The Millennium School

Report published in January 2013

Knowledge and Human Development Authority

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GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT The Millennium School

Location	Al Qusais
Type of school	Private
Website	www.gemsmillenniumschool.com
Telephone	04-2988567
Address	PO Box 32446, Dubai
Principal	Mr. Michael Guzder
Curriculum	Indian (CBSE and CBSE-i)
Gender of students	Boys and Girls
Age / Grades or Year Groups	3-17 / Kindergarten 1 to Grade 12
Attendance	Acceptable
Number of students on roll	2850
Students' nationalities	Indian, Pakistani
Number of Emirati students	0 (0%)
Date of the inspection	24th to 27th September 2012

Contents

The context of the school.....	3
Overall school performance 2012-2013	4
Key strengths	4
Recommendations	4
Progress since the last inspection	5
Trend of overall performance.....	5
How good are the students' attainment and progress in key subjects?.....	6
How good is the students' personal and social development?	7
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?	8
How good are the students' attainment and progress in key subjects?.....	9
How good is the students' personal and social development?	10
How good are the teaching, learning and assessment?	10
How well does the curriculum meet the educational needs of students?	11
How well does the school protect and support students?.....	12
How well does the school provide for students with special educational needs?.....	12
How good are the leadership and management of the school?	13
What are the views of parents, teachers and students?.....	14
What happens next?	15
How to contact us	15

The context of the school

The Millennium School is situated in Al Qusais. The school opened in September 2000. The school had a total roll of 2,850 students, aged three to 17 years at the time of inspection.

The school followed the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE-i) curriculum in eight grades and planned to complete its implementation in Grades 4 and 8 during the next academic session. Students were entered for a variety of national and international examinations which included AISSCE (All India Senior Secondary Examination) in Grade 12 and AISSE (All India Secondary School Certificate Examination) in Grade 10.

There were 151 teachers, excluding the principal and a senior management team. All teachers in the school had appropriate teaching qualifications. They were supported by 13 teaching assistants. Students were grouped into 86 classes. The student population was almost all of Indian nationality. About one per cent had been identified by the school as having some form of special educational need. Those students received learning support from class teachers and specialist staff. Most other students who needed additional support in specific subjects attended catch-up classes offered in the self-enhancement programme in the afternoons. At the time of the inspection, the Principal was in his seventh year in the school and 20 teachers were newly appointed.

Overall school performance 2012-2013

Good

Key strengths

- High levels of attainment in mathematics, English and science in the senior school;
- The outstanding behaviour of students, including their positive relationships with all staff members;
- An extended curriculum with significant opportunities for students to fully develop their interests and potentials;
- The caring ethos of the school and the regular celebration of the multicultural nature of the school community;
- The vision of the senior management team which provided a clear focus for further improvements.

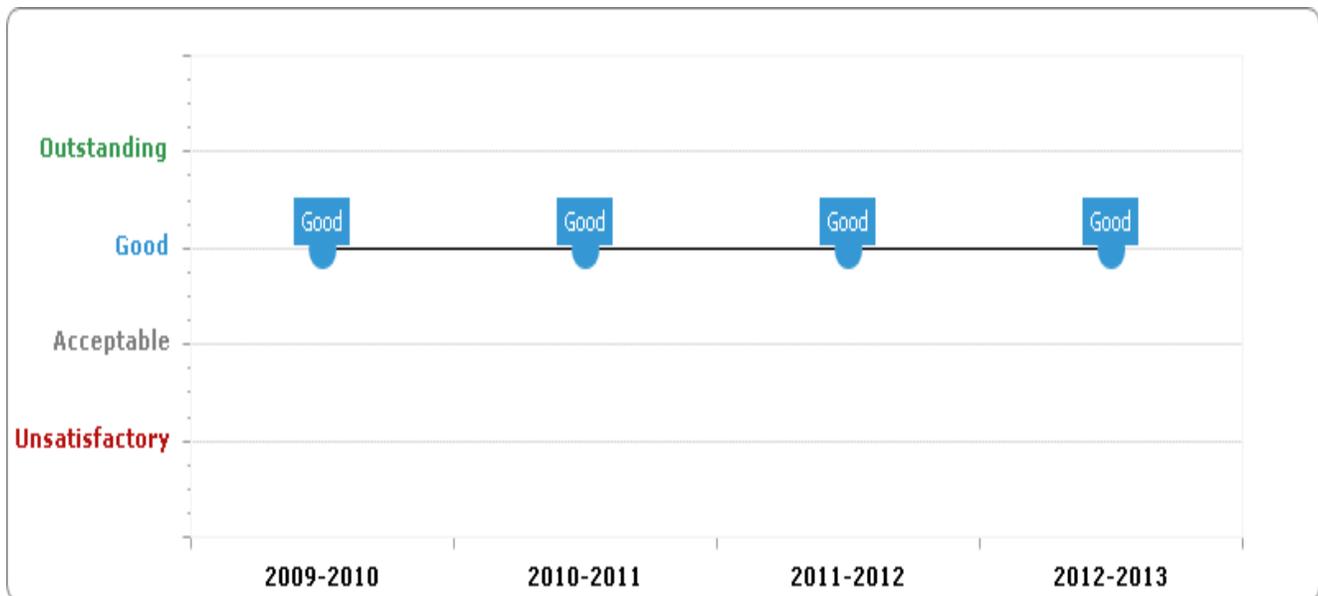
Recommendations

- Improve the attainment and progress of students in Arabic;
- Develop a clear, shared understanding of effective teaching and learning and ensure its delivery at all levels;
- Modify the curriculum for students with special educational needs and monitor their progress accurately;
- Ensure that all students with special needs are promptly and accurately identified;
- Build on the current system of self-evaluation to identify strengths and the developmental needs of the school, with an emphasis on improving teaching and learning.

Progress since the last inspection

- The school had not yet managed to improve attainment and progress in Arabic in Grades 1 to 8;
- The school had improved teaching and learning strategies which enabled students to work more collaboratively;
- Whilst the school had begun to develop whole-school systems to identify all students with learning difficulties and other special needs, it had not been wholly successful in its efforts. Some students had not been identified and the support for others was not fully sufficient.

Trend of overall performance



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

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Islamic Education				
Attainment	Not Applicable	Good	Good	Good
Progress	Not Applicable	Good	Good	Good
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	Acceptable	Acceptable
Progress	Not Applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
English				
Attainment	Good	Good	Good	Outstanding
Progress	Good	Good	Good	Good
Mathematics				
Attainment	Good	Good	Good	Outstanding
Progress	Good	Good	Good	Outstanding
Science				
Attainment	Good	Good	Outstanding	Outstanding
Progress	Good	Good	Outstanding	Outstanding

[Read paragraph](#)

How good is the students' personal and social development?

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

[Read paragraph](#)

How good are the teaching, learning and assessment?

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

[Read paragraph](#)

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

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Curriculum quality	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding

[Read paragraph](#)

How well does the school protect and support students?

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

[Read paragraph](#)

How good are the leadership and management of the school?

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

[Read paragraph](#)

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

Students' attainment in the key subjects varied, but was mostly good. Particular strengths in Islamic Education included a good of knowledge of Islamic concepts and The Holy Qur'an. Recitation rules required a greater emphasis. In English, students demonstrated good writing, speaking, listening and reading skills in the Kindergarten, primary and middle phases and outstanding skills in the secondary. High quality discussions were a feature at all phases. In mathematics, most students' attainment was above average. They were confident in applying their mathematical competence in a wide variety of real life contexts. Attainment was outstanding in science in the middle and secondary phases. High quality enrichment activities encouraged students to devise their own investigations and offer hypotheses. In the Kindergarten and primary classes students developed good knowledge and understanding, but were less skilled in asking questions, planning investigations and discussing ideas. Arabic in the primary was acceptable because most students knew the basic grammar rules, and could read with acceptable expression. However, in the other phases, extended writing was poorly developed and limited by a weak vocabulary. The speaking skills of students of Arabic as an additional language lacked confidence and accuracy.

Students' progress in most subjects was good. Students had made good progress in gaining knowledge and understanding of Islamic etiquette, morals and values but needed to develop the skills of using The Holy Qur'an and Hadeeth to support their opinions. Whilst progress was generally acceptable in Arabic in all phases, students had not made sufficient progress in speaking and written expression. Progress in English was good, although the challenge for the most able was inconsistent. At times, progress in English and mathematics both subjects was inhibited by an over reliance on worksheets. Progress was outstanding in science in the middle and secondary phases because of a strong emphasis on challenge, group work and investigation. Progress in the Kindergarten and primary phases was hindered by the number of students in some of the classes. Students with special educational needs made acceptable progress.

[View judgements](#)

How good is the students' personal and social development?

Student's attitudes and behaviour were outstanding. They demonstrated self-reliance with a strong commitment to school life. Relationships with other students and staff members were respectful and courteous. They demonstrated positive attitudes towards healthy living and followed the school's advice on keeping fit and healthy. Attendance for the most recent term was good overall, although attendance was not as good in the Kindergarten. Students had outstanding knowledge of Islamic values, local culture and a global awareness. Almost all students exhibited a positive attitude towards the heritage and local traditions of the UAE and could explain their relevance to people in Dubai. Students described many aspects of a variety of cultures and could provide details and examples. They compared and contrasted them with their own culture. Students' community and environmental responsibility was outstanding; they were highly responsible in carrying out assigned duties in and outside their classes. Students were aware and proud of their personal skills. They were very resourceful, creative and successful in developing their own projects. Students took pride in their school and showed a strong sense of community. They took very good care of their school, ensuring there was minimal litter in classrooms or within the school grounds.

[View judgements](#)

How good are the teaching, learning and assessment?

Teaching was good overall, with some examples of very effective teaching seen in all phases of the school. The positive rapport between teachers and students ensured a productive learning environment in most classes. Teachers had good subject knowledge and used it well to probe the understanding of students. Effective questioning skills engaged most students well. Teachers had high expectations for students' achievement. In the best lessons there was challenge, lively pace and opportunities for independent learning. Lessons were well-planned and the purpose of activities was clear, although a summary of the lesson was not always done. Tasks and resources were used well to promote interest and stimulate thinking. There were missed opportunities to make use of information and communication technology (ICT) in some lessons although it was a strong feature of project work. Teachers planned to accommodate the different learning styles of students, but those with special educational needs were sometimes overlooked. There were particular strengths in the teaching of science, but Arabic teaching needed improvement.

The quality of learning of students was good. The students were keen and interested in their lessons. These positive attitudes were reflected in attentiveness and a willingness to engage in activities in lessons and after-school events. Students showed increasing skills as learners, especially the oldest students, who often took responsibility for their own learning. Students supported each other well and were willing to lead presentations. When they worked together as a team they were collaborative and respectful of each

other's points of view. When given the opportunity, students showed high levels of creativity in producing projects which had cross-curricular themes.

The quality of assessment procedures was good. The comprehensive collection of data about individual students permitted an effective process for recording their achievements and monitoring progress. An extensive tracking process enabled the school to ensure that students continued to progress above expectations. The assessment data was the basis for informative progress reports for parents. There was a focus upon the identification of basic skills for Kindergarten children. When given the opportunity, older students were accurate in assessing their own learning and that of others. In project work, ongoing assessment of students' learning was done with them using rubrics. Assessment information was not consistently used to plan alternative strategies for teaching students with special educational needs. In almost all instances, the marking of work was routinely completed, but supportive comments to indicate how students might improve their work were not always evident.

[View judgements](#)

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

The curriculum was outstanding in all phases. Staff members ensured that the curriculum was modified and regularly reviewed in the non-CBSE-i grades to ensure continuity and progression. The curriculum provided almost all students with access to a wide range of opportunities. There was scope to further modify the curriculum to ensure it fully catered for students with particular needs, including some more able students. Teachers used curriculum mapping and syllabus tracking to ensure that students were given good depth and range of topics. Cross-curricular links were well planned between subjects in all phases. Good organisation ensured a smooth transition between the different school phases. Children in the Kindergarten benefited from learning Arabic. Attractive and informative wall boards and table displays provided a wealth of information and avenues for informal learning. The school had a strong ethos of being connected to its community through its various curricular and co-curricular programmes. Talks and visits by community members enriched students' learning horizons. Students with special educational needs benefited from being fully involved in these activities.

[View judgements](#)

How well does the school protect and support students?

Arrangements for student's health and safety were outstanding. Students were safe and secure at all times. Highly effective security arrangements were in place for school transport, with closed circuit television installed on the buses. Supervision levels were extremely high. All swimming coaches had received training in life saving techniques. Detailed records were available which showed that regular fire drills took place, excellent evacuation procedures implemented and reports made on any health and safety issues. Relevant medical information and medicines were securely stored, in line with approved medical practice and shared as required. School meals were healthy and the school policy on challenging obesity influenced the menu options. Teachers, students and parents were fully aware of child protection policies and newly appointed staff members were provided with training.

The quality of support for students was good. Teachers had very good rapport with students and exemplary behaviour was a notable feature. A culture of mutual respect had inspired confidence and promoted trust among teachers and students. Both teachers and students displayed great pride in their school. Attendance and punctuality were good and parents supported the school's policy to maintain high levels. The personal development of almost all students was very effective and high quality guidance and individual support was available at all times.

[View judgements](#)

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

Whilst students with special education needs were enrolled, ineffective identification systems to identify senior students with special educational needs resulted in inconsistent provision across the school. Individual education planning was limited mainly to younger students. Support was given individually and in lessons. An acceptable level of progress was noted among those students across all key subjects. Supports were adequate and included a counsellor and one learning support teacher. Few teachers modified their teaching methods or differentiated effectively. There were well-developed systems in place for monitoring the well-being, care and personal development of the students.

How good are the leadership and management of the school?

The leadership of the school was outstanding. The Principal communicated a vision that was clear and supported by all staff members. The Head teacher provided effective management of the daily running of the school. Supervisors and Heads of Departments worked well as a team, with a sharp focus on consultation and collegial work. Teachers reported that they felt fully involved and valued. Relationships and communication at all levels of the school hierarchy were both friendly and professional. The school's leaders demonstrated a good capacity to improve further.

Self-evaluation and improvement planning were good. Systematic self-evaluation processes were well embedded in the schools' improvement planning. Whilst leaders knew their school well and recognised its strengths in attainment and curriculum, they were overly optimistic. With regard to Islamic Education, Arabic, the quality of teaching, learning and the quality of support, their evaluations were too generous. The school's action plan was detailed, but it did not fully connect success criteria to learning outcomes. The school had made progress in improving teaching and learning strategies to enable students to work more collaboratively and learn independently. However, whilst leaders had begun to establish systems for identifying students with special needs, its attempts to improve the teaching of Arabic were less successful.

Partnership with parents and the local and wider community was outstanding. There were very good levels of communication, supported by the effective Parents' Focus Group. Parents could access information using an electronic on-line platform. Parents had a wide range of opportunities to become involved in the life of the school. Purposeful links had been established with the local and wider community. Students enthusiastically and financially supported a range of charities. Parents were fully aware of the school's priorities.

Governance was good. The school's governing body was well-established, experienced and demonstrated a clear focus on high achievement and improvement. Governors at different levels enabled an appropriate balance between offering support and holding the school's leaders accountable for performance.

Staffing, facilities and resources were all outstandingly managed. Teachers were suitably qualified, many with significant experience. The ongoing development of the Kindergarten and the CBSE-i curriculum had a beneficial effect on students' experiences. Large student numbers in the Kindergarten and lower school classes had a restraining effect on teaching and learning. A large team of ancillary staff members ensured the smooth running of the school. The premises were of outstanding quality. The spacious campus was well laid out and maintained. Sports facilities were excellent. The school continued to improve its provision of ICT equipment, and was exploring how it could be used to improve students' learning.

[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	724	21%
	Last year	1223	36%
Teachers	111		73%
Students	128		5%

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

A significant minority of parents responded to the survey, but fewer than last year. Most were happy with the school, almost all agreeing that their children liked school and that they made good progress in the key subjects. Most parents felt that teaching was good and that there was a good range of extra-curricular activities. Most parents agreed that the school helped keep their children safe and healthy, that teachers cared and were concerned about their welfare. Concerns were expressed by a minority regarding the teaching of Arabic. Almost a quarter of parents and students who responded reported that they were not actively involved in community projects in Dubai. Teachers from all sections of the school completed their survey. Almost all had a very positive view of the school and believed that the relationships between staff, students and parents were outstanding. They reported that they had very good opportunities to develop professionally. A few senior students responded to their survey. Almost all held positive views about the school's provision.

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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