

His Highness Shaikh Rashid Al Maktoum Pakistani School Inspection Report

Kindergarten to High School

Report issued February 2011

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Explanation of the inspection levels used in the report

Outstanding – exceptionally high quality of performance or practice.

Good – the expected level of quality for every school in Dubai.

Acceptable – the minimum level of acceptability required for Dubai. All key aspects of performance and practice in every school should meet or exceed this level.

Unsatisfactory – quality not yet at the level acceptable for schools in Dubai. Schools will be expected to take urgent measures to improve the quality of any aspect of their performance or practice that is judged at this level.

His Highness Shaikh Rashid Al Maktoum Pakistani School was inspected in November 2010 as part of the regular inspection of all schools in Dubai. The inspection covered key aspects of the work of the school at all stages. It evaluated students' achievements, the effectiveness of the school, the environment for learning, the school's processes for self-evaluation and capacity for improvement. There was a particular focus on students' progress in Islamic Education (for Muslim students), Arabic, English, mathematics and science.

Basic information about the school

Located in Al Qusais, His Highness Shaikh Rashid Al Maktoum Pakistani School is a private school providing education for boys and girls from Kindergarten (KG) to high, aged four to 18 years. The school follows the Pakistani Federal Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education curriculum. At the time of the inspection, there were 1313 students on roll. The student attendance reported by the school for the last academic session was unsatisfactory.

As part of the inspection process, Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau analysed responses to on-line questionnaires issued to parents. Most parents were happy with the education provided and thought their children's progress in Islamic Education and English was good. The majority thought progress was acceptable or better in mathematics and science but felt dissatisfied with progress in Arabic. Almost all parents were satisfied with the teaching and thought that students enjoyed lessons. The majority felt that extra-curricular opportunities were good though a few would have liked more. Most parents were satisfied with resources, behaviour and the fairness in school. Most wanted more advice on post-school choices. The majority thought students were helped to make healthy choices, although a few were critical of the canteen food. Most parents considered their children safe, that communication was good and that concerns were addressed. The majority were satisfied with the homework set, the reporting system and with parental involvement. Most considered the school well-led and that inspection led to improvement. Parents said the strengths of the school were teaching,

behaviour and leadership but some wanted better school hygiene and improvements to transport.

How well does the school perform overall?

Overall, His Highness Shaikh Rashid Al Maktoum Pakistani School provided an acceptable standard of education. The majority of students attained well in the Pakistani Federal Board examinations. Since the last report, standards in the Kindergarten had improved, particularly in Islamic Education and English. Although attainment had improved in Arabic in the high school, in other parts of the school attainment had declined. Kindergarten facilities had improved significantly since the last report and building work was in hand to improve accommodation and facilities for older students. Attention to health and safety issues had resulted in a cleaner, safer school although the building work on site was not securely fenced. Resources and curriculum in the Kindergarten had improved but overall, there were insufficient teachers and resources to meet the students' needs.

Attainment and progress in Islamic Education were good across the school. By the high school, most students could memorise and recite The Holy Qur'an and had an excellent understanding of how to relate what they were learning to their lives. In Arabic, only a few primary students had an acceptable vocabulary, but almost all older students could read fluently. In English the youngest children showed good phonic and listening skills and most students in the school could communicate comfortably and understand texts well. In mathematics, Kindergarten students could count accurately and the majority of older students demonstrated acceptable understanding of mathematical concepts. In science students had a sound knowledge of facts but could not demonstrate practical or investigative skills. Students' understanding of Islam and civic and environmental issues was good. Attitudes and behaviour, although commendable, was judged acceptable rather than good owing to poor rates of attendance. Teaching, learning and assessment were acceptable throughout the school. Although they had good subject knowledge, teachers did not actively engage students in lessons or provide appropriate work for different levels of ability. Students could not demonstrate the ability to work cooperatively in groups or use technology to further their learning. The school curriculum was acceptable and enabled students to progress across all areas of study. Arrangements for health and safety and the protection and support of students were acceptable but there was no system for tracking students' progress as they passed through the school. The leadership team offered clear direction and worked in co-operation with teachers, parents and governors to effect improvements throughout the school. The team had drawn up action plans which had resulted in good progress in addressing the problems identified in the last report. However, the school was not fully staffed and the level of resourcing was unsatisfactory.

Key features of the school

- Good behaviour and relationships at all levels throughout the school;
- Students demonstrated good understanding of Islam and there were strengths in Islamic Education and English;
- The quality of leadership and governance had improved and were good;
- Improvement in provision for the Kindergarten and of shaded areas for activities;
- Limited range of teaching strategies across the school;
- Insufficient staff to cover the timetable adequately.

Recommendations

- Raise standards of attainment, particularly in Arabic in the primary school;
- Improve rates of attendance;
- Improve teaching standards by developing better teaching strategies that cater for the needs of all students;
- Introduce monitoring and assessment procedures and use the information gained to track students' progress and raise standards of attainment;
- Provide sufficient staffing and resources for the needs of the school.

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

Attainment and progress in Islamic Education were good across the school. In Grades 1 to 5, almost all students made good progress in their understanding of the Pillars of Islam, fasting and prayer. In Grade 6 to 8, most students had an excellent understanding of how to relate what they were learning in school to their daily lives. In Grade 9 most students had good knowledge about the life of Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) and that of his companions and followers. They could also recite the Hadeeth. Across the school most students were able to recite and memorise The Holy Qur'an with only a few errors. However, almost all students did not apply the recitation rules correctly.

Attainment and progress in Arabic as an additional language were unsatisfactory in primary, acceptable in middle, and good in the high school. Most students had good listening skills; they understood instructions and could follow them. In Grades 1 to 5, only a few students had an acceptable vocabulary and they could only answer questions in single words or short phrases. In Grade 6 to 8, the majority of students were able to read familiar words with acceptable fluency. In Grade 9 almost all students could read fluently with only a few errors in

the pronunciation of some letters. Across the school most students' skills in extended writing were underdeveloped. They were able to write only a few words or sentences.

Attainment and progress in English was good in comparison to the Pakistani FBSE Standard and results showed improvement over time. Kindergarten children could recognise the alphabet and use phonics accurately. Almost all students from Grades 1 to 12 could read, write, speak and use words in sentences accurately. Students from Grade 1 onward were familiar with English grammar. Students enjoyed their lessons, participated actively in them, conversed comfortably in English and understood it well. The majority of students from middle to senior school could comprehend texts. They could analyse poetry and write letters and stories independently.

Attainment and progress in mathematics were acceptable throughout the school. In the Kindergarten, children could recognise and write digits and numbers and could count accurately. The students could also describe and differentiate shapes. The majority of students in the primary section worked at an appropriate level. They were able to place the digits in the right place and some students in Grade 3 could solve division problems accurately. In the middle school, girls could solve problems using brackets and some boys were able to manipulate decimals. The most encouraging progress was seen in the high school, where some students understood mathematical principles and could solve trigonometry problems and quadratic equations.

Attainment and progress in science was acceptable throughout the school. In Kindergarten children learned about healthy eating and the world around them. Primary students could memorise facts and their books showed acceptable progress. Grade 7 students understood the composition of food and Grade 8 understood the nervous system and could identify parts of the brain. High school students showed sound knowledge of basic scientific facts. Grade 9 boys studying biology understood characteristics of plants and their generation and in chemistry the principles of chemical bonding. Most Grade 10 girls understood organic compounds and by Grade 12 they understood the structure of benzene and facts about aromatic hydrocarbons. Students throughout the school had few opportunities for practical or investigative work.

How good is the students' personal and social development?

Students' attitude and behaviour were acceptable. Students were well behaved, polite and courteous and good behaviour prevailed throughout the school. They were respectful and responded well to the teachers, greeting them amiably around the school. Students were aware of how to eat healthily and the majority demonstrated enthusiasm for exercise and reported participating in sporting activities. Most students were punctual in school, but rates of attendance were unsatisfactory

Students' civic understanding, their understanding of Islam and their appreciation of local traditions and culture were good across the school. Most students demonstrated a positive approach to their roles and responsibilities; for example, as members of the school houses and student council. Most students demonstrated a strong understanding of Islam's values and their impact on contemporary society in Dubai and the wider world. Most students could give good examples of how Dubai and the UAE had changed and developed and they demonstrated extensive knowledge of Dubai's landmarks. Most students were able to talk confidently about the positive and negative aspects of the nature of Dubai's multi-language and multi-cultural society

Almost all students had a good understanding of the economic foundations of Dubai and were aware of the difficulties caused by recession and the fact that things were improving. Younger students understood this at a simpler level and almost all commented on the environmental problems of traffic and air pollution. Almost all students were aware of the need for conservation and valued Dubai's clean environment.

How good are the teaching and learning?

The quality of teaching was acceptable throughout the school. Most teachers had good subject knowledge which inspired confidence in the students. In some lessons, mathematics for example, teachers were unable to apply their subject knowledge effectively to enable students to acquire skills and understanding. Lessons were well planned, well paced and lesson objectives were made clear to students. However, teachers failed to provide work directed at the needs of different levels of ability in the class so able students were insufficiently challenged and the least able were unsupported. In the majority of lessons there was too much teacher talk and not enough active participation by students. In many of the classes, for example in English and science, constructive relationships were evident. However, teachers did not make the most of this and failed to engage students in group work to increase their collaborative skills. In the best lessons students were stimulated by questioning and responded well. Teachers motivated students with praise and stars were awarded to encourage students in their efforts.

The quality of learning throughout the school was acceptable. Most students had a positive attitude towards learning, enjoyed their lessons and could work for short periods without the intervention of the teacher. They understood how current learning related to previous work. However, in mathematics the students were quite passive in the primary and middle sections. In the senior school, for example in science, the majority of the students were involved in their learning, could concentrate well and reflect on what they had learned. Students developed good note-taking skills and could also write fluently and at length. When questioned, students responded readily, though their critical and imaginative skills would have developed more with more opportunities for discussion and debate.

The quality of assessment was acceptable. Assessment was used to monitor students' achievements and to inform them and parents of how they were progressing. Books were marked regularly, but there were few constructive comments to inform students of how they could improve their work. In some subjects, for example science, useful five-minute tests towards the end of the lessons provided immediate feedback to students and teachers on what had been learned during the lesson. School examination results were carefully analysed and the data obtained was used to examine trends in attainment. The information gained, however, did not lead to planned improvement.

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

The curriculum was acceptable throughout the school; it was broad, balanced and relevant and there were no significant gaps. The curriculum for Grades 1 to 12 was based on the Pakistani Federal Board of Secondary and Intermediate Education. The Arabic curriculum and Islamic Education curriculum were compliant with the requirements of the Ministry of Education. However, the curriculum for Arabic had not been reviewed for several years. Effective changes in the Kindergarten curriculum helped meet students' needs for an active learning curriculum. Children had opportunities for enjoyment, creativity, learning through play and cooperation, as well as gaining the foundations for future learning. In the primary and middle school the curriculum was reviewed every other year. Efforts had been made to include interesting and relevant material. A new curriculum for mathematics had been introduced in Grades 1 to 8 and more challenging textbooks had been introduced. The curriculum for science enabled most students to attain high standards in knowledge but did not support practical or investigative work. In computer studies, there were opportunities for practical work and cross-curricular activities. An example of this was the data-base project for local businesses by Grade 12 students. The curriculum ensured continuity and progression across all areas of study. Regular extra-curricular activities were integrated within the teaching; for example, there were inter-House debates, art competitions, a sports day and celebrations such as Iqbal and National Day. However, there was limited provision for students requiring additional support and insufficient provision for students with special educational needs.

How well does the school protect and support students?

The quality of protection and support for students was acceptable. The school buildings provided a secure environment and the transport arrangements were safe. Buses arrived on time, were parked with care and students were well supervised. Drivers maintained lists of names and telephone numbers and seat belts were provided at the front of buses. The school environment was clean and parts had been recently painted. Attention had been given to the stairs which no longer posed a hazard. Washroom facilities for the Kindergarten were now appropriately sized and cleaned. Playgrounds and classrooms were clean and tidy. However, building work on the school grounds was not safely fenced off.

Students throughout the school were aware of the need for healthy eating. The proper health checks were carried out by the nurse and visiting doctor. Records were systematically maintained and medication was kept locked and administered only by the medical personnel. Child protection issues were dealt with by senior staff. The canteen was clean and provided healthy food. Physical exercise was a part of the school curriculum and sports were encouraged and high achievers praised. Teachers knew the students and responded positively to them. There were good relationships between teachers and students and students commented that they felt cared for in school. A teacher with designated responsibilities for social care counselled particular students. Students' behaviour was managed effectively and high school students received guidance about their future options. There were limited procedures for tracking students' overall wellbeing and academic progress.

How good are the leadership and management of the school?

The leadership of the school was good. The Principal articulated a powerful vision for the school. His focus on raising standards was shared by the leadership team and the teachers. A new management structure gave responsibility to co-ordinators and enabled the school to function competently. The co-ordinators led teams of teachers in charge of effecting improvements in key areas; for example, health education. Regular planned meetings facilitated discussion and teachers were active in working towards improvement. Team leadership was spread to students. Heads of school and of houses, along with prefects, took responsibility in school, thus demonstrating shared vision and leadership.

Self-evaluation and improvement planning were acceptable. The leadership carried out a rigorous analysis of the previous inspection report. A detailed schedule was drawn up to address weaknesses. The principal and others visited kindergartens to observe best practice and took effective action to initiate necessary changes. Other concerns were addressed by building alterations and professional development workshops for teachers. Self-evaluation procedures were not in place and the teacher monitoring procedures did not yet lead to planned development programmes.

Relationships with parents were good. A parents' council met regularly with the principal to discuss concerns and offer suggestions. Parents commented that the principal always heeded their observations and acted on them swiftly, to the benefit of their children's education. Parents' consultation meetings took place three times a year and parents received written reports on their children's progress and were contacted by letter, text and telephone as appropriate. Links with the community were very strong and had enabled the school to generate funds for renovation and development. Links with other schools also brought benefits to the school; for example, workshops with other schools offered shared opportunities for developing good practice.

Governance of the school was good. A governing board, comprised of parents and members of the community, supported the school and offered significant assistance, for example with issues relating to recruitment and retention of staff. Some governors also helped with interviewing new teachers. One qualified to do so assisted in staff training. Regular minuted meetings occurred but formal accountability procedures were not yet in place.

The staffing of the school was unsatisfactory. Most of the teachers were well qualified, but there were insufficient numbers to cover the timetable. As a consequence, some classes were not taught regularly and there was consequent parental and student disquiet. Some classes were very large, owing to building work and staff shortages and some were combined, which was detrimental to student progress. Some improvements had been effected, for example the erection of canopies and Kindergarten renovations and more building work was in hand. The school was not equipped with enough resources to support learning and the library and information technology provision was insufficient for the needs of the students.

Summary of inspection judgements

In their evaluation of the overall effectiveness of the school, the inspection team made judgements about the following aspects of the school's performance.

Four descriptors are: Outstanding; Good; Acceptable; Unsatisfactory.

How good are the students' attainment and progress in Islamic Education?				
Age group:	KG	Primary	Middle	High
Attainment	Not Applicable	Good	Good	Good
Progress over time	Not Applicable	Good	Good	Good

How good are the students' attainment and progress in Arabic?				
0% of students in the school studied Arabic as a first language.				
Age group:	KG	Primary	Middle	High
Attainment in Arabic as a first language	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Progress in Arabic as a first language	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Attainment in Arabic as an additional language	Not Applicable	Unsatisfactory	Acceptable	Good
Progress in Arabic as an additional language	Not Applicable	Unsatisfactory	Acceptable	Good

How good are the students' attainment and progress in English?				
Age group:	KG	Primary	Middle	High
Attainment	Good	Good	Good	Good
Progress over time	Good	Good	Good	Good

How good are the students' attainment and progress in mathematics?				
Age group:	KG	Primary	Middle	High
Attainment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Progress over time	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

How good are the students' attainment and progress in science?				
Age group:	KG	Primary	Middle	High
Attainment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Progress over time	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

How good is the students' personal and social development?				
Age group:	KG	Primary	Middle	High
Attitudes and behaviour	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Islamic, cultural and civic understanding	Good	Good	Good	Good
Economic and environmental understanding	Good	Good	Good	Good

How good are teaching and learning?				
Age group:	KG	Primary	Middle	High
Teaching for effective learning	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Quality of students' learning	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Assessment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

How well does the curriculum meet the educational needs of all students?				
Age group:	KG	Primary	Middle	High
Curriculum quality	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

How well does the school protect and support students?				
Age group:	KG	Primary	Middle	High
Health and safety	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Quality of support	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

How good are the leadership and management of the school?	
	Overall
Quality of leadership	Good
Self-evaluation and improvement planning	Acceptable
Partnerships with parents and the community	Good
Governance	Good
Staffing, facilities and resources	Unsatisfactory

How well does the school perform overall?
Acceptable

Next steps

The school has been asked to prepare an action plan indicating how it will address the main findings of the report, and to share that plan with parents. 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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