

Lycée Georges Pompidou Primary School Inspection Report

Grades Maternelle to Cours Elementaire 2
Kindergarten to Grade 5

Report Published May 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.

Lycée Georges Pompidou Primary School was inspected in March 2011 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 Oud Metha, Lycée Georges Pompidou Primary School is a private school providing education for boys and girls from Maternelle (Kindergarten) to Cours Moyen 2 (CM2 or Grade 5), aged three to 11 years. The school follows a French curriculum. At the time of the inspection there were 550 students on the roll. The student attendance reported by the school for the last academic session was good.

As part of the inspection process, Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau (DSIB) analysed responses to on-line questionnaires issued to parents. Almost all the parents expressed high levels of satisfaction with the quality of education provided at the school. The quality of teaching was felt by a majority to be the main strength of the school. Almost all considered the school to be well led. A majority were happy with attainment in key subjects and almost all stated that their child enjoyed lessons. Almost all were satisfied with communication with the school and felt that the school informed them well of their child's progress and responded quickly to parental concerns. Almost all parents considered that their children were treated fairly. Parents were most pleased with the teaching and leadership of the school.

How well does the school perform overall?

The school provided a good quality of education overall. It performed effectively in almost all aspects of its work. The previous inspection report had identified several areas requiring improvement. There had been good progress in addressing these recommendations.

In Maternelle, attainment and progress in French, English, mathematics and science were good. There were strengths in students' skills across all aspects of French and English. In Primaire, students' attainment and progress in English, French and mathematics were good. Attainment and progress in Islamic Education, Arabic and science were acceptable. The quality of teaching for effective learning and the quality of student learning was good in both phases of the school. Assessment, while good in Maternelle, was acceptable in Primaire. Overall the school had good protection and support for its students. The quality of school leadership, self-evaluation and improvement planning and governance were good. The school demonstrated a strong capacity for continued improvement. There were good partnerships with parents and the community.

Key features of the school

- Lycee Georges Pompidou Primary School had improved since the last inspection and senior leaders demonstrated a strong capacity to support further improvement;
- A positive school ethos existed, with good relationships between teachers and students;
- The Directeur provided strong leadership, which has resulted in well-managed change;
- Well-motivated phase leaders were committed to ongoing improvement through careful monitoring;
- Primaire students' demonstrated outstanding economic and environmental understanding;
- There were good levels of attainment in all phases in French, English and mathematics;
- The use of information and communications technology (ICT) was underdeveloped across the school as a teaching and learning tool;
- The facilities were not adequate for the number of students.

Recommendations

- Improve provisions for teaching and learning of Islamic Education to further raise attainment;
- Continue to improve assessment procedures to provide additional feedback to students on their next learning steps;
- Ensure that there are sufficient opportunities for students to learn independently and at levels of challenge more suitable for their abilities;
- Use ICT more effectively to support teaching and learning.

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

Attainment and progress in Islamic Education in Primaire were acceptable. Most students recognised Islam's morals and principles and they could memorise and recite the short chapters of The Holy Qur'an fluently. However, they were not sufficiently knowledgeable about the Prophet's (PBUH) Sunnah. In lower grades, most students could recite short chapters to an acceptable level. A majority could explain the meaning of these chapters. They knew about the five Pillars of Islam and the importance of prayer and Zakah. Most could explain ways of showing mercy and empathy towards people. In higher grades, most students knew the six Pillars of Faith and they could interpret their meanings to an acceptable level. Overall, students' ability to link Islamic knowledge to real life was underdeveloped.

In Primaire, attainment and progress in Arabic as a first language were acceptable. In lower grades most students could engage in dialogue in standard Arabic, taking into consideration tone and gesture. Most students across the school understood stories and answered with short correct sentences. Independent writing for different purposes was well presented, using neat handwriting. Most students made acceptable progress in their reading skills. They could read sentences and short paragraphs and they could summarise them. However, in the upper grades most students' reading of poetry or unfamiliar text was still underdeveloped. They found it difficult to express their feelings using standard Arabic.

Attainment and progress in Arabic as an additional language in Primaire were acceptable. Students' listening skills were in-line with expectations. The majority were able to respond to spoken instructions clearly and could understand the main points from short passages. Students could verbally construct simple sentences, using their growing knowledge of grammar and vocabulary. They could participate in role-play conversations. Students made progress with their reading skills. In Grade 1, students were reading words and simple phrases. By Grade 5, the majority were reading and responding to short passages of high frequency words. Young students correctly copied words and simple phrases and connected Arabic letters. The majority of Grade 5 students wrote sentences using familiar language. However, this was mainly restricted to answering reading comprehension questions, rather than for communication purposes.

Attainment and progress in French were good across the school. Students in Grade 2 and Grade 5 attained above average levels in national French evaluation tests. Listening skills were well developed across the school. Most students' spoken French was good and progressing well over time. Almost all students' had an extensive vocabulary and their knowledge of grammar was good. In Grade 2, students used informal and formal French appropriate to the context. In the upper grades, students independently analysed literary texts well. By Grade 4, students' reading comprehension skills were good and students read aloud fluently and with expression. Students' written work across the school was of good quality and well presented. In Grade 1, most students connected prior learning effectively to write complete sentences. Most students in Grade 5 enjoyed creative writing and made good progress.

Attainment and progress in English across the school were good. Students in all grades showed well-developed skills in speaking, listening and communication. Most students read appropriate texts, listened to and understood stories and could answer questions using a good range of vocabulary. Most students used different tenses and a range of connectives in conversation to extend their spoken language. Almost all students in Grade 2 were able to take part in conversations about professions and talk with fluency about their daily routines. Students writing skills developed well across the phases. In Grade 3 and Grade 4, most students read for understanding. They used their knowledge of phonics to spell difficult words and present written functional accounts of their favourite films. However, more able students did not always make the progress of which they were capable.

Attainment and progress in mathematics were good across the school. Almost all students in Maternelle recognised and could count and write numbers correctly. The majority of students demonstrated good levels of mathematical knowledge. Attainment of almost all students was above international standards by Grade 5. French national examination results showed good progress in mathematics between Grade 2 and Grade 5. Children with special educational needs also made good progress. Students applied their mathematical skills and knowledge well in field trips, but were not always able to apply knowledge to real life learning in lessons.

Students' attainment and progress in science were good in Maternelle and acceptable in the Primaire grades. Most students in the Maternelle had good observation skills, knew the main parts of a plant and understood the conditions for effective germination and plant growth. In the Primaire grades, most students could use scientific vocabulary accurately and in context, but a minority found it difficult to find things out for themselves. In Grade 1, most students could describe the parts of a simple electrical circuit, but some found it difficult to draw a circuit diagram using electrical symbols. In Grade 3, a majority of students worked well in groups to solve scientific problems. They could make a letter box which lit up when a letter was posted. In Grade 4, students had a good understanding of how an earthquake occurred and what the possible impact could be on the surrounding area.

How good is the students' personal and social development?

Students' attitudes and behaviour were outstanding in Maternelle and good in Primaire. Very young children were well-behaved and independent in their learning, keen to do well and they sought feedback. Throughout the school, students were polite and co-operative and enjoyed their lessons. They played well together and treated each other with respect. Students developed leadership skills through a range of activities and projects. Students took responsibility to help each other during and after classes. Students demonstrated a strong understanding of healthy living and most made healthy food choices. Student attendance was good overall and almost all arrived in good time to school.

Students' Islamic and civic understanding was good across the school. A Conseil des Délégués enabled students to contribute to the decision-making in the school. They also initiated fund raising and other events. Most students undertook responsibilities within their school and the wider community, such as keeping it clean and tidy. They recognised and supported the needs of others. Students demonstrated high levels of respect for Islam and they could name the main Islamic events and principles. Students celebrated the diversity of culture and embraced the multi-cultural nature of Dubai. They had a strong understanding of the traditions and culture of their host country.

Students' economic and environmental understanding was good in Maternelle and outstanding in Primaire. Senior students had an outstanding knowledge of Dubai and its historical and economic development. Older students showed a mature understanding of current global economic issues. Almost all students could explain how Dubai had developed and they could name the landmarks of Dubai, such as Burj Khalifa, Burj al Arab, parks and mosques. They knew the importance of water in the region and understood the need to conserve energy. They suggested alternative energy resources. They had a distinctive vision of their contribution to Dubai and world development, such as wanting to become geologists to help with water conservation and fashion designers using sustainable textiles.

How good are the teaching and learning?

Teaching for effective learning was good in both the Maternelle and the Primaire. Most teachers had good subject knowledge. They gave relevant examples and demonstrations to explain new concepts and ideas. Teachers planned their lessons with greater acknowledgement of the importance of activities and time to review and check on students' progress. However, a number of lessons in the Primaire were dominated by the teacher slowing lesson pace. Many teachers produced their own worksheets and enriched the textbooks with additional resources such as flash cards, pictures and other visual aids. There was limited use of ICT as a teaching tool. Students felt comfortable enough to ask for help, make mistakes and seek feedback. In effective lessons, students were asked challenging questions to promote their critical thinking. Teachers often used questioning to check for understanding. In most lessons, instructions and work were directed to the whole class. More able students were not challenged enough and the students requiring specific assistance were not always supported effectively.

The quality of students' learning was good in both Maternelle and the Primaire. Students in general enjoyed their learning and were keen to do well. When given responsibility, students worked well and without constant teacher supervision. Students were keen to succeed. They did not hesitate to ask teachers for feedback. They used this to improve their work. These learning skills were reinforced early on in the Maternelle. There were increasing opportunities for students to make connections with the real world through trips and field visits; however, there were limited opportunities for students to apply what they were learning to real life during the lessons. Students could use reference materials and resources to find things for themselves to aid in their learning and in their research, but access to ICT during lessons and the school day was limited. In the more effective lessons, both oral and written questions challenged students' thinking and promoted higher order thinking skills.

Assessment was good in Maternelle and acceptable in the Primaire. Students of Grade 2 and Grade 5 regularly took formal external examinations, which informed the school of attainment against external benchmarks and the expectations of the French curriculum. Students' performance in these external examinations was systematically analysed for trends in attainment. When a weakness was identified, adjustments were made from the earliest stage possible, even in Maternelle. Although this had resulted in improved outcomes on external tests, adjustments addressed what was taught rather than how it was taught. In the Maternelle, there were effective practices in place for on-going assessment and checking on individual students' progress. Information was often used to plan the next steps of the children's learning. In most lessons, good oral feedback was presented to students in a respectful manner which prompted nearly all students to work on improving outcomes. However, the quality and usefulness of written feedback were inconsistent.

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

The quality of the curriculum was good in both Maternelle and the Primaire grades. It met the requirements of the French Ministry of Education. It was compliant for Arabic. In Islamic Education the school was compliant in terms of coverage of time on a yearly basis, but weekly provision required attention. Since the previous inspection, the school had placed more emphasis on incorporating the history, culture and traditions of the United Arab Emirates into the teaching of Arabic. In the Maternelle, students had opportunities to study animals within the local environment. There were good links with local institutions. Students' learning was enriched by educational visits to the Museum of Science, local farms and to the zoo. There was a good range of extra-curricular activities, attended by the majority of students. Whilst the use of new technologies to extend learning had improved, students rarely used computers in lessons to promote their learning or carry out research. The curriculum provided opportunities for students to be active in their learning and to find things out for themselves. In a number of lessons there was too much reliance on the textbook. Students could not see the links between the different subjects they were studying. The regular review of the curriculum had led to significant improvement in attainment in key subjects and in personal and social

development. There were effective arrangements to ensure the positive induction of students into the Maternelle and to ease transition to the Collège.

How well does the school protect and support students?

Arrangements for health, safety and security across the school were good. There was good supervision of students in school at all times. There were effective procedures in place for students using buses, but arrangements for bus parking required attention. The premises were well maintained and there were comprehensive records of fire drills and clear evacuation plans. There was regular maintenance of the school's fire equipment. The medical staff ensured students health and well-being through regular health checks and well-kept records. The school promoted a healthy life style as part of the curriculum and a comprehensive physical education programme. Staff actively monitored children's lunch boxes to ensure food options were healthy. Child protection procedures were clear and well understood by staff.

Overall, the quality of support was good across the school. Staff-student relationships were very positive. The school's tracking of and support for students with special educational needs was effective and additional classes for students experiencing difficulties ensured they made good progress. However, support for students in lessons was less effective. Careful analysis of test data enabled the school to monitor individual student's progress. This data was used well to track students and provide relevant interventions. The students were well prepared for the next phase of their schooling. Management of attendance was effective, with second day follow-up on absentees, which this led to good attendance rates overall.

How good are the leadership and management of the school?

Leadership in the school was good and senior staff demonstrated a strong capacity to secure further improvements. The Directeur had made a significant impact on the school through his clear vision and direction. His decisive action had led to improvements in teaching. Roles and responsibilities were defined clearly and effective teams contributed to on-going school review and improvement. The school was very well managed and effective systems meant that communication was good across the school. Although phase leaders led initiatives and managed effectively, their roles and responsibilities were not aligned to key subjects and therefore they did not always have a clear view on the quality of teaching.

Self-evaluation and improvement planning were good. The school had encouraged feedback on its work from a range of sources, including teachers, parents and students. Phase leaders analysed attainment data carefully and initiated changes to the curriculum on the basis of this data. Appropriate development priorities had been identified and effective strategies had been introduced to help the school to improve. The school had made good overall progress in addressing the recommendations from the previous inspection report. Nevertheless, the school's action plan did not include time targets or measurable success criteria.

Partnerships with parents were good. There were effective communication systems with parents, including the very positive relationships with the Association des Parents, which worked closely with the Directeur. Regular communications kept parents informed of class work and the carnets de correspondance were valued by parents as a means of frequent and regular communication about student learning. The revised reports to parents on student attainment were very well received, but these would benefit from comments as well as skills-related evaluations. Links with the community were well established and effectively supported the curriculum. However, there were few established links with other schools to share good practice.

Governance was good. The governors met monthly and were very involved in the life of the school. They worked closely with the Directeur on all aspects of strategic management, providing support and guidance and holding the school to account. This group had well-defined roles and responsibilities and was working well with the leadership to plan the proposed new school building. They ensured that statutory requirements were met. Whilst this group did not include teacher representation, the Directeur shared all governance decisions with teachers on a formal, regular basis through the Conseil d'Ecole and ensured teacher concerns were shared with the governors.

Staffing, facilities and resources were of acceptable quality. Staff were appropriately qualified and effectively deployed and Maternelle benefited from teaching assistants who supported learning well. The school facilities were, however, limited and space was restricted. The current building did not support the recent developments in the curriculum well. Resources, especially those for ICT were also limited and this meant that the use of ICT by students in lessons was underdeveloped. The outdoor space in Maternelle was well utilised to support learning.

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:	Maternelle	Primaire
Attainment	Not Applicable	Acceptable
Progress over time	Not Applicable	Acceptable

How good are the students' attainment and progress in Arabic?		
49% of students in the school studied Arabic as a first language.		
Age group:	Maternelle	Primaire
Attainment in Arabic as a first language	Not Applicable	Acceptable
Progress in Arabic as a first language	Not Applicable	Acceptable
Attainment in Arabic as an additional language	Not Applicable	Acceptable
Progress in Arabic as an additional language	Not Applicable	Acceptable

How good are the students' attainment and progress in English?		
Age group:	Maternelle	Primaire
Attainment	Good	Good
Progress over time	Good	Good

How good are the students' attainment and progress in French?		
Age group:	Maternelle	Primaire
Attainment	Good	Good
Progress over time	Good	Good

How good are the students' attainment and progress in mathematics?		
Age group:	Maternelle	Primaire
Attainment	Good	Good
Progress over time	Good	Good

How good are the students' attainment and progress in science?		
Age group:	Maternelle	Primaire
Attainment	Good	Acceptable
Progress over time	Good	Acceptable

How good is the students' personal and social development?		
Age group:	Maternelle	Primaire
Attitudes and behaviour	Outstanding	Good
Islamic, cultural and civic understanding	Good	Good
Economic and environmental understanding	Good	Outstanding

How good are teaching and learning?		
Age group:	Maternelle	Primaire
Teaching for effective learning	Good	Good
Quality of students' learning	Good	Good
Assessment	Good	Acceptable

How well does the curriculum meet the educational needs of all students?		
Age group:	Maternelle	Primaire
Curriculum quality	Good	Good

How well does the school protect and support students?		
Age group:	Maternelle	Primaire
Health and safety	Good	Good
Quality of support	Good	Good

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

How well does the school perform overall?
Good

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:
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More information about Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau can be found at www.khda.gov.ae.

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