

# INSPECTION REPORT

## Crescent English School

Report published in January 2013

Knowledge and Human Development Authority

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## GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT Crescent English School

Location	Al Qusais
Type of school	Private
Website	www.crescentenglishschool.com
Telephone	04-2988866
Address	PO Box 923, Al Qusais, Dubai
Principal	T. A. Khalifullah
Curriculum	Indian(CBSE)
Gender of students	Boys and Girls
Age / Grades or Year Groups	3-18 / Kindergarten to Grade 12
Attendance	Good
Number of students on roll	1,432
Students' nationalities	Predominantly Indian
Number of Emirati students	0 (0%)
Date of the inspection	1st October to 4th October 2012

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## The context of the school

The Crescent English School is situated in Al Qusais. At the time of the inspection the school had a roll of 1,432 boys and girls, aged three to 18 years. While the school offered classes from Kindergarten to Grade 12, many students left the school at age 16 to continue their education in India.

Almost all students were from Indian families, with only 25 students from other nationalities. No Emirati students were on the roll. The school followed an Indian curriculum with Central Board of Secondary Examination (CBSE) course. There was a choice of curriculum after Grade 8 with an option for students to follow the Tamil Nadu State Board courses.

There were 64 teachers. The majority were well qualified. However, the high turn-over of staff of 35 per cent had a detrimental effect on sustaining educational developments. An Assistant Headmistress had taken up post just prior to the inspection and a Headmaster was due to take up post several weeks after the inspection. The school had recently identified a significant number of students as having special educational needs.

## Overall school performance 2012-2013

### Unsatisfactory

#### Key strengths

- The good attitudes and behaviour of most students;
- Secondary students' attainment and progress in mathematics and middle and secondary students' understanding of Islamic values and local, cultural and global awareness.

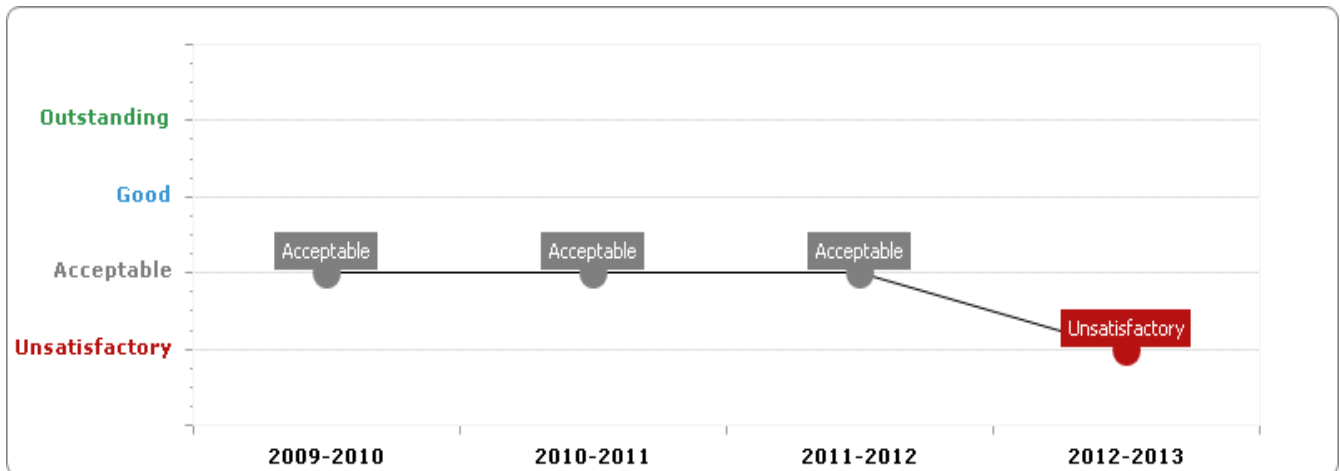
#### Recommendations

- Improve teaching and learning, particularly in the Kindergarten and the primary phase;
- Improve assessment by using the outcomes of assessment of students' work more effectively to improve their learning experiences in lessons across all subjects;
- Improve the curriculum and its delivery by raising staff expectations and engaging students more actively in their learning;
- Ensure that the school is compliant in the teaching of Arabic in Grade 9;
- Identify more accurately students who have a special educational need, ensure teachers modify lessons appropriately to meet these needs, and track and monitor effectively the progress of students;
- Create and implement a suitable child protection policy, including the relevant training of all staff;
- Improve leadership capacity and governance and ensure that self-evaluation is rigorous and accurate.

## Progress since the last inspection

- Little progress had been made in improving teaching for effective learning and the quality of students' learning, and in two phases this had regressed;
- The curriculum across all phases had deteriorated since the last inspection;
- Ministry of Education compliance requirements had been met in Islamic Education, however they were not met in Arabic in Grade 9;
- The weak identification of students with a special educational need and poor plans and programmes to meet their needs;
- The school continued to experience difficulties in filling leadership posts.

## Trend of overall performance



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

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
<b>Islamic Education</b>				
<b>Attainment</b>	Not Applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
<b>Progress</b>	Not Applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Unsatisfactory
<b>Arabic as a first language</b>				
<b>Attainment</b>	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
<b>Progress</b>	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
<b>Arabic as an additional language</b>				
<b>Attainment</b>	Not Applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
<b>Progress</b>	Not Applicable	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable
<b>English</b>				
<b>Attainment</b>	Unsatisfactory	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
<b>Progress</b>	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
<b>Mathematics</b>				
<b>Attainment</b>	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good
<b>Progress</b>	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good
<b>Science</b>				
<b>Attainment</b>	Unsatisfactory	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
<b>Progress</b>	Unsatisfactory	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

[Read paragraph](#)

## How good is the students' personal and social development?

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

[Read paragraph](#)

## How good are the teaching, learning and assessment?

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

[Read paragraph](#)



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

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Curriculum quality	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Acceptable	Acceptable

[Read paragraph](#)

## How well does the school protect and support students?

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Health and Safety	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Quality of Support	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory

[Read paragraph](#)

## How good are the leadership and management of the school?

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

[Read paragraph](#)

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

In Kindergarten attainment was acceptable in mathematics but unsatisfactory in English and science, where it had regressed since the last inspection. Students' attainment in Islamic Education, Arabic as an additional language, English, and science were acceptable in primary, middle and secondary. In mathematics attainment was acceptable in primary and middle and good in secondary. In Islamic Education, students' knowledge and understanding of Islamic concepts, Islamic Fiqh, and Seerah was appropriate and more developed than that of Hadeeth and Qur'an recitation. Most students were not able to make references to Hadeeth related to topics of study. In Arabic, listening skills were better developed than other skills. In speaking, most students had a restricted vocabulary. In writing, students could copy common words but independent writing was very limited. In English, listening and reading skills were better developed than those of speaking and extended writing. In mathematics, most students were increasingly confident as they progressed through the grades in their use of number. Senior students developed strong competencies in using algebraic techniques. In science, attainment was more knowledge based rather than understanding concepts. Throughout the school, students were rarely given opportunity to predict, investigate, test, experiment or conclude in science practical work.

Overall students' progress in each of the key subjects was weak. Progress had improved only in mathematics at the secondary phase. In Kindergarten, English, mathematics and science, and in primary, English and mathematics progress was not as strong as during the last inspection. A similar picture was seen in Arabic in middle and secondary and Islamic Education and English at secondary. In Islamic Education, students had not progressed in applying Tajweed rules appropriately. In Arabic, they made slow progress in using grammar correctly. In English, limited speaking and extended writing opportunities restricted progress. In mathematics, progress was particularly good for secondary students as they were set more challenging tasks. In science, children in Kindergarten made slow progress because of repetition in content and insufficient challenge. The text-book dominant approach to learning rather than students' active participation also impeded progress in science.

[View judgements](#)

## How good is the students' personal and social development?

The attitudes and behaviour of most students across the school was good. In senior grades, students were self-motivated learners and mutual respect among staff and students was high. The school canteen needed some improvements to ensure consistently healthy eating habits. Students' attendance and

punctuality were good. Students' understanding of Islamic values and their influence on the society of Dubai was acceptable in Kindergarten and primary phases but good in middle and secondary. Kindergarten children were courteous and respected each other and their school environment and applied the values of friendship and co-operation. Middle and secondary students showed a strong sense of tolerance, friendship and respect to other people and their relative religions, traditions and cultures. Students' local cultural and global awareness was acceptable in the Kindergarten and primary phases. It was stronger in middle and secondary than in Kindergarten and primary phases. Students knew the main features of the UAE's traditions and culture. They were proud of being Indian yet they felt concerned about some aspects of life in their own country. When asked about places where they would like to live in the world, all students justified thoughtfully their preferences, reflecting good global awareness. Most students in all phases had community and environmental knowledge but their deep understanding was limited. Students participated in several community responsibilities, including an environmental group, but community activity outside the school was restricted.

[View judgements](#)

## How good are the teaching, learning and assessment?

Teaching for effective learning was unsatisfactory in Kindergarten and primary and acceptable at middle and secondary. The most prevalent teaching style adopted by most teachers, particularly in lower phases was direct class instruction. This resulted in a lack of active student participation and insufficient pace and challenge to accommodate the needs of most students. Too many lessons were protracted and dull. Most teachers, particularly in the secondary school, had secure and appropriate subject knowledge. Across the school, teachers' planning did not give enough consideration to the range of abilities in most classes. The emphasis was on the delivery of content rather than the improvement of understanding and higher-order thinking skills of students. Teaching strategies lacked variety and failed to interest and motivate students. There were low expectations of learners and insufficient challenge to promote better outcomes.

The quality of students' learning was unsatisfactory in Kindergarten and primary, but acceptable in middle and secondary. Most students were keen and enthusiastic learners but they had limited opportunities to express their own ideas or to become independent learners. Learning often included a significant amount of passive listening. Consequently, students rarely reflected on their learning to consider their strengths and weaknesses. Personal learning targets were not routinely established. Students did not readily make connections between other areas of the curriculum because they had become too reliant upon the teacher to be the instigator of their learning. In homework assignments, particularly in project work, students showed that they could research for themselves. However, enquiry, research and critical thinking skills development were not features of lessons observed.

Assessment was unsatisfactory across all phases. Although a comprehensive system of recording student outcomes was in place it was largely restricted to tests. Ongoing assessments did not give a relevant profile of skills or competencies in sufficient detail. In classes, teachers had a broad, anecdotal knowledge of the standards and progress of individual students. However, students were rarely involved in assessing their own learning. They were neither given sufficient support and feedback on their performance nor where they could improve. The arrangements for tracking and recording progress were inconsistent. The lack of clearly established benchmarks meant there was little analysis of assessment data. Consequently, assessment information was not used well by staff in their planning to meet the learning needs of all groups of students. Correction of students' work was often cursory, with few comments to clarify points or to indicate next steps in learning.

[View judgements](#)

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

The curriculum offered by the school was unsatisfactory in Kindergarten and primary. It was acceptable in middle and secondary but had significant weaknesses. In all phases, timing issues restricted teacher's ability to deliver a broad and balanced curriculum. In Kindergarten and primary, the curriculum was largely textbook driven and rarely met the age requirements of young learners. In middle and secondary, students' choice of subjects was narrow. The development of life skills was ignored in most grades. A modest range of sports activities were offered. Field trips, as well as inter-house and inter-school competitions provided a few students with opportunities for self-expression, but these were sporadic. The curriculum review committee met informally to review each syllabus and the plans to cater for transitions between classes. However, each subject syllabus was dictated by text books and lessons were rarely thematically connected to make learning meaningful. The review process did not consider planning for enrichment and challenge or support the needs of all students.

[View judgements](#)

## How well does the school protect and support students?

Health and safety were acceptable across the school. Documentation was robust, apart from the child protection policy which required immediate review. Premises were largely safe and well maintained, with a few procedural changes required to be implemented. Although students had commented adversely about the toilets, cleanliness and sanitation were good during inspection. Facilities were often insufficient to meet demand during the short recess. The buses were well maintained and supervising staff had received first-aid training, but safety procedures needed to be reinforced. The canteen supplied some

healthy options but was too small to stock a range of appropriate food. The nurse and doctor provided health cover throughout school hours and led the Health Education programme.

The quality of support for students was unsatisfactory across all phases. Staff-student relationships were cordial and behaviour in some classrooms was managed adequately. However in too many classes, teachers did not know how to manage the poor behaviour of a few students. Classroom teachers were required to contact parents' regarding their child's absence on their first day away from school, but parents could not always be contacted promptly. A school counsellor provided support, care and guidance to students. She communicated effectively with students, parents and teachers and dealt sensitively with students' needs. A part-time counsellor provided advice and support for future education and careers for senior students. However, limited visits to tertiary institutes had been provided. Career counselling did not always effectively align students' capacities with the choices they made.

[View judgements](#)

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

There were important weaknesses in the provision for students with a special educational need. The school had not accurately identified students. Classroom teachers were sometimes unaware that they had such students in their classes. The curriculum was not modified to meet their needs and little or no classroom support was provided. Individual education plans with improvement objectives had not been developed. Students starting points had not been established and progress was not tracked or monitored over time.

## How good are the leadership and management of the school?

The quality of leadership was unsatisfactory. The Principal lacked an understanding of what characterised good teaching and learning across the school. Promoted staff did not ensure that the school delivered consistently good quality learning experiences for students. There was a lack of shared vision and direction. An Assistant Headmistress had just been appointed and a Headmaster had yet to take up post. Overall, in the past year, school leaders had demonstrated a lack of capacity to bring about improvement. The school's performance had deteriorated in several significant aspects.

Self-evaluation and improvement planning were unsatisfactory. Minimal progress had been made in response to the recommendations in the last inspection report. Self-evaluation was poorly developed

across the school and too many internal judgements were inaccurate and over-optimistic. School leaders did not have a realistic view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Promoted staff carried out classroom observations of teachers and there were some teacher-peer observations. However, the outcomes of such activity failed to identify and share good practice or remedy identified shortcomings. The implementation of planned improvements had been limited by a turn-over of more than a third of teachers in the last year.

Partnerships with parents and the community were acceptable. The school website, student diaries and occasional newsletters provided parents with good communication systems which they appreciated. Parents, with their children, could attend six open meetings over the school year to discuss their child's progress. However, parents remained uncertain as to how they could support their children with their next steps in learning. The Parent-Teachers Association was restricted to a few parents and seldom met.

Governance was unsatisfactory. The school did not benefit from effective governance. The Board of Governors had four members of which only one was a parent. Its membership was not representative of all stakeholders. It did not have the capacity to hold the school's leadership and management to rigorous account. Board members had failed to identify and remedy difficulties in implementing improvement plans and did not analyse the school's performance rigorously enough. These serious shortcomings had resulted in the school drifting into significant decline in many key aspects of its work.

Management, including staffing, facilities and resources were acceptable. The school operated smoothly most of the time. There were sufficient qualified teachers; however staff retention was a major issue. The continuous professional development of teachers and Kindergarten classroom assistants was very restricted. Premises were adequate but aspects of resources, facilities and furnishings were poor. In particular, ready access to computers to support independent learning and research was restricted.

[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	250	23%
	Last year	305	20%
Teachers	21		30%
Students	31		5%

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

About 20 per cent of parents, a similar percentage to last year completed the survey. A minority of teachers and a few students also completed their surveys. Almost all parents and students and all teachers were satisfied with the quality of education provided by the school. Over a quarter of students and parents did not think they were involved in decisions and a quarter of students felt that the school did not take account of their views. Almost all students and parents thought that children enjoyed school and that children were safe and well looked after in school. Students' behaviour was thought to be good by all teachers, most students and parents. All teachers thought students had a wide range of subjects and activities to choose from. Almost all students and teachers felt that inspection had led to school improvement and most teachers said that the previous inspection report had reflected their school accurately.

## 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](mailto:inspection@khda.gov.ae)



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