

INSPECTION REPORT

Gulf Model School

Report published in January 2013

Knowledge and Human Development Authority

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GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT Gulf Model School

Location	Al Muhaisnah
Type of school	Private
Website	Not applicable
Telephone	04-2544222
Address	P O Box 13683, Dubai.
Principal	Molly Rajan
Curriculum	Indian (CBSE)
Gender of students	Boys and Girls
Age / Grades or Year Groups	3-18 / Kindergarten 1 to Grade 12
Attendance	Outstanding
Number of students on roll	2,689
Students' nationalities	Indian
Number of Emirati students	0
Date of the inspection	24th to 26th September 2012

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The context of the school

Gulf Model School is situated in Al Muhaisnah 4. It opened over 30 years ago and, at the time of the inspection, there were 2,689, students on roll, aged three to 18 years. This was a 38 per cent increase in enrolment over the previous year.

The school followed the Indian Kerala Board and Central Board of School Education (CBSE) curricula. There were 79 full- and part-time teachers, including the Principal and senior leadership team. The school had assimilated high numbers of new students without any proportionate increase in staffing. All teachers had appropriate teaching qualifications. The school was organised into four phases. Kindergarten had 12 classes, in the primary phase there were 33 classes, a middle phase had 14 classes and, in the secondary phase, there were 24 classes. Only one extra group had been created for all the additional students so that the school was not compliant with minimum class size regulations.

There were no Emirati students in the school. Five different nationalities were represented among the student population. A total of 68 students had been identified by the school as having some form of special educational needs. At the time of the inspection, there was a Principal designate.

Overall school performance 2012-2013

Unsatisfactory

Key strengths

- The students' good understanding of Islamic values and their local, cultural and global awareness in all phases of the school;
- The good links with parents which keep them fully informed about their children's progress.

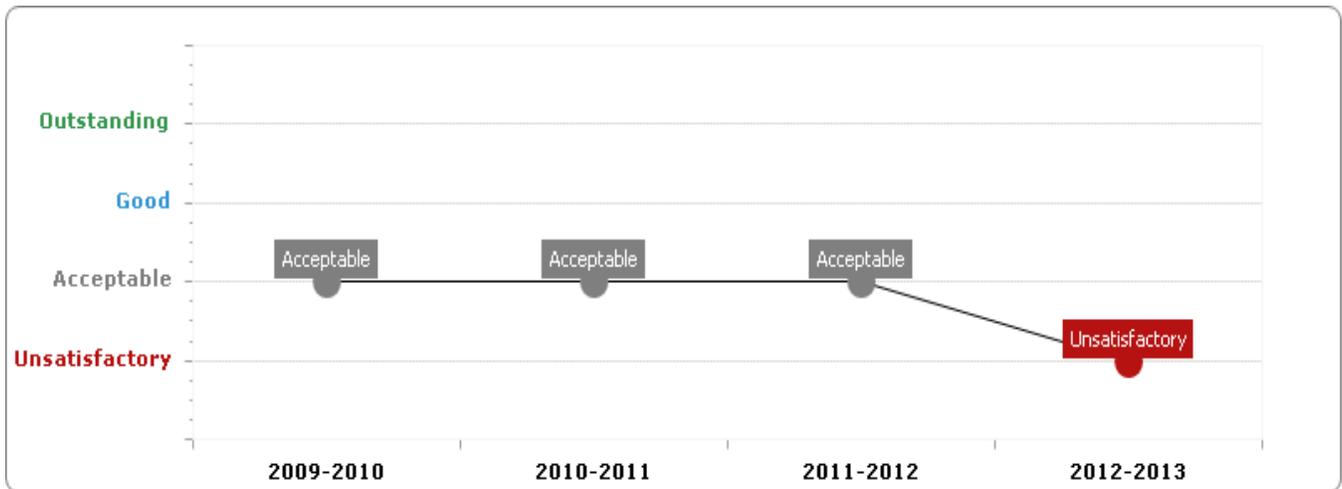
Recommendations

- Improve teaching and learning so that unsatisfactory lessons are eliminated and there is a significant increase in the proportion of good lessons taught, especially in the primary phase;
- Raise the awareness of all staff members on health and safety issues so that a more proactive approach can be used to eliminate potential hazards;
- Improve the progress of students with special educational needs by better identification of their needs and improved support;
- Improve the quality of senior and middle leadership, with a focus on accurate evaluation of the school's current learning outcomes;
- Improve governance so that the school meets all statutory requirements, eliminates over-crowding in the classrooms and has adequate resources to meet the needs of a larger student body.

Progress since the last inspection

- The school failed to ensure compliance with the Ministry of Education requirements for Arabic in Grades 1 to 3;
- The school had not improved the quality of teaching, learning and assessment across all phases of the school. In the primary phase, the quality of teaching and learning had declined and was unsatisfactory;
- Plans to broaden the curriculum were in place but they had not been implemented and the school had failed to identify students with special educational needs appropriately;
- The school continued to have an inaccurate understanding of its strengths and weaknesses.

Trend of overall performance



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

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Islamic Education				
Attainment	Not Applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Progress	Not Applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Arabic as a first language				
Attainment	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Progress	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Arabic as an additional language				
Attainment	Not Applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Progress	Not Applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
English				
Attainment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Progress	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Mathematics				
Attainment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Progress	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Science				
Attainment	Unsatisfactory	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Progress	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	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	Good	Good	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	Acceptable	Unsatisfactory	Acceptable	Acceptable
Quality of students' learning	Acceptable	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	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

[Read paragraph](#)

How well does the school protect and support students?

	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
Health and Safety	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory
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	Good
Governance	Unsatisfactory
Management, including staffing, facilities and resources	Unsatisfactory

[Read paragraph](#)

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

Students' attainment was acceptable in all key subjects apart from science in Kindergarten, where it was unsatisfactory. Most Muslim students across the school had age-appropriate recitation skills, however only a few could link their knowledge to their lives or to infer lessons from The Holy Qur'an and the Hadith. In Arabic, students could copy common words but their independent writing was very limited. In English lessons, most Kindergarten children developed phonic awareness and could listen and respond to simple queries but their speaking skills were not as well developed. In mathematics, most students were able to accurately calculate at the appropriate level but problem-solving, investigative and higher order skills were underdeveloped. Kindergarten children were not learning to think about the world carefully in science but were simply learning names of objects by memory. In the other phases, students were attaining impressive amounts of factual knowledge but not developing investigative or experimental skills.

Students' progress was acceptable in all key subjects except for science where it was unsatisfactory in the Kindergarten and primary phases. Progress was limited by a lack of challenge across all key subjects and the repeated over-learning of factual information. There was a heavy reliance on students learning at home. Older students were more able to make progress outside of lessons than their younger peers. Students with special educational needs made acceptable progress in Arabic, but made unsatisfactory progress in Islamic Education, English, mathematics and science.

[View judgements](#)

How good is the students' personal and social development?

Students' attitudes and behaviour were good across the school. Most students were respectful towards visiting adults, staff members and each other. The senior students had opportunities to take on responsibility, for example at bus duties and play times. Although the school reported very high attendance figures for the last term, inspectors found this aspect only to be acceptable during the inspection. Most students appeared to make healthy food choices but a minority chose less healthy food which was available from the school canteen. Most students demonstrated good understanding of the influence of Islam on Dubai society. They also demonstrated good respect for the culture and traditions of the UAE and their own cultures. Students knew the words of the UAE anthem and were proud to live in Dubai. Almost all students felt they were involved in the life of the school and could make a contribution. There was an active student council. Students understood the link between effort, achievement and success. They had acceptable community and environmental responsibilities across the phases; they took part in activities and projects in the school to support conservation. However, their engagement with the community was underdeveloped.

[View judgements](#)

How good are the teaching, learning and assessment?

The quality of teaching was variable across the school. It was acceptable in all phases, except for the primary, where it was judged as unsatisfactory. Good teaching was observed in all phases of the school but this was too infrequent. The majority of teachers had good subject knowledge and were able to share it with their students. However, more than a few teachers did not understand how young people learned, frequently talking for too long, leaving their students bored. Some teachers did not know their students' names. In a few lessons, teachers structured discussions which encouraged students to think critically. However, in too many lessons, teachers failed to summarise what had been learned. Only a few teachers recognised that different groups or individuals had different learning needs. Although lesson plans included such students, most teachers did not adapt their approaches to address their needs. Individual students with specific learning needs were not properly identified and supported. In most lessons, teachers did not encourage students to take active roles in learning. Teaching in other subjects, including physical education, information and communication technology (ICT) and humanities, was of variable quality. In a Yoga lesson, an expert student acted as demonstrator and coach for her peers. Less successful lessons, such as some of those in humanities, were didactic and relied heavily on teachers' talk and text books. Active participation in physical education was constrained by poor resources.

The quality of learning was acceptable throughout the school, with the exception of the primary phase, where it was unsatisfactory. Students in all phases lacked opportunities to work independently or solve problems and were too often passive learners. Links of learning to the real world were seldom seen, but were evident in Islamic Education, science and English lessons. Learning was better amongst students in the upper grades, who studied well independently. Most students were eager to learn and they enjoyed the few opportunities to discuss various topics. Students' critical and creative thinking skills were rarely developed in lessons. There were insufficient opportunities to learn through practical, investigative work in science or to develop skills using ICT for independent research.

The assessment of learning remained unsatisfactory across the school. Despite members of the management team working hard to improve assessment and tracking procedures, assessment information had limited affect upon the curriculum. Assessment findings were not used to guide school improvement. Teachers used questions to check factual knowledge and sometimes understanding, but did not lead their students towards improvement through constructive feedback. They relied too much on group answers to oral questions as a means of assessing learning. Students' work was regularly checked but did not provide guidance on how to improve. Records of tests were kept, but insufficient steps were taken to use that information to plan teaching and thus better support students' learning.

[View judgements](#)

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

The curriculum was acceptable across all phases of the school. In response to the previous inspection report, the Kindergarten curriculum was more clearly defined but there were still no planned opportunities for educational play and no access to computers for children. The school was still not compliant with Ministry of Education requirements relating to the time given to Arabic in the early grades. In the rest of the school, the curriculum was planned for more practical learning opportunities and the sharing of experiences, but these were not consistently put into action in lessons. Students went on field trips, took part in competitions and celebrations of important days, but links with local businesses were weak. Opportunities for students to learn in a cross-curricular way were very limited. The language curriculum was broad. The process of transition from one phase to another within the school was planned appropriately. Students sat for either the CBSE or Kerala Board examinations in Grades 10 and 12.

[View judgements](#)

How well does the school protect and support students?

The arrangements for ensuring students' health, safety and protection were unsatisfactory in all phases of the school. Because of over-crowding, emergency evacuations were unsafe. There were serious safety risks arising from how the buses parked and unloaded passengers at school; conductors did not ensure that seat belts were used and that identity cards were worn. Kindergarten children were observed unattended on many occasions. Chemicals were stored unsafely and there was broken glass in a science laboratory. There was insufficient awareness of safety risks and the arrangements for child protection were not known by most teachers who were asked.

The quality of support for students was unsatisfactory in all phases of the school. Good relationships between staff members and students were evident in most classes. Behaviour was good because most students took responsibility for their own behaviour but, where they had not developed these skills, behaviour was not always well managed by teachers. Punctuality was promoted by the school council students and good attendance was encouraged by certificates and trophies for individuals and classes. Students received general advice on career and university choices, but there was no planned programme of individual guidance.

[View judgements](#)

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

Students with special educational needs were screened at interview prior to being admitted to the Kindergarten, and any students with severe educational needs were not admitted. The school lacked expertise in dealing with the students who were admitted and their needs were not met. Consequently, the progress made by students with special educational needs was unsatisfactory. Improvements had been made since the last inspection in providing special 'catch up' lessons, but these did not provide high attaining students with opportunities to develop critical thinking skills or enable low ability students to develop their literacy skills.

How good are the leadership and management of the school?

The leadership of the school remained unsatisfactory. The lack of clear vision and urgency to improve, combined with the admission of very large numbers of extra students, contributed to the overall quality of education falling. The protection and support of students and the teaching, learning and assessment in the primary phase of the school were in decline. The line management structure with supervisors, subject co-ordinators and subject experts was imprecise, with roles, responsibilities and accountabilities insufficiently identified. The capacity to improve was limited, as shown by the failure to sufficiently and effectively address the concerns raised in the previous inspection reports.

Self-evaluation and improvement planning were unsatisfactory. The school did not know its strengths and weaknesses, and relied on inspections to evaluate its effectiveness. Improvement plans were not evaluative and lacked clarity about what needed to be done and who was responsible for the actions to be taken. Summative judgements had begun to be used in the evaluation of lessons but were not consistently implemented by senior leaders. Overall, judgements about learning and assessment were still not being made. The progress made in response to the recommendations in the previous report was unsatisfactory.

Partnerships with parents and the community were good. Communications between home and school were effective. Parents appreciated the regular meetings with teachers. The school had acceptable links with the local community and with Kerala, India, for an anti-smoking campaign involving parents and students. Partnerships with local business remained underdeveloped.

Governance was unsatisfactory. There had been a significant improvement with the establishment of a board with parent, teacher and community representation. However, there was continued failure to meet statutory requirements for provision of Arabic in the early years. The decision to admit large numbers of

students that breached class size regulations had a negative effect upon teaching, learning and safety. The lack of strategic planning for these new admissions had contributed to declining attainment.

Management, including staffing, facilities and resources, was unsatisfactory. Over-crowded classes were unsafe and adversely affected students' learning experiences, as did the noisy air-conditioning in most classrooms. Resource levels were very low in many areas across the school, particularly in the Kindergarten, where there were no teaching assistants, inappropriate furniture and very little access to suitable play areas. The limited range of resources reported by previous inspections continued, especially in Islamic Education, science and the library. There was limited internet access. The prayer room was not accessible to Muslim students at the beginning of the autumn term.

[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	329	45%
	Last year	321	42%
Teachers	30		38%
Students	213		45%

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

A minority of parents responded to the survey, about the same percentage as last year. Minorities of teachers and senior students responded to their surveys. Most parents expressed positive views about the school. Most parents and students and almost all teachers thought that the behaviour of most students in the school was good. Almost all parents thought their children enjoyed life at school and most senior students agreed. A large minority of parents and senior students did not think there was a wide enough range of technology to support learning and that there were insufficient extra-curricular clubs and activities. A majority of parents thought that the school guided their children well in making future educational choices. Almost one third of parents did not know or did not think there was an adult in school their children could trust and talk to.

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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