

# INSPECTION REPORT

## The Philippine School

Report published in May 2012

Knowledge and Human Development Authority

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## GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT The Philippine School

Location	Al Rasidiya
Type of school	Private
Website	www.thephilippineschooldubai.com
Telephone	04-2844465
Address	Rashidiya
Principal	Jocelyn M. Sollano
Curriculum	Philippine
Gender of students	Boys and Girls
Age / Grades or Year Groups	3-15 / Kindergarten to Grade 10
Attendance	Good
Number of students on roll	1,684
Number of Emirati students	0 (%)
Date of the inspection	Monday 27th February to Thursday 1st March 2012

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## The context of the school

Located in Al Rashidiya, The Philippine School is a private school providing education for boys and girls from Kindergarten to high school aged three to 15 years. The school followed the Philippine Revised Basic Education curriculum. Students were entered for a diploma at the end of high school. At the time of the inspection there were 1,684 students on roll, an increase of around 400 since the previous inspection. The student attendance for the last academic session was good.

There were 64 teachers including the Principal and senior leadership team. The majority of the staff members had relevant teaching qualifications and were deployed appropriately across the range of subjects. Five teaching assistants provided support in Kindergarten. Students were grouped in 52 classes. There were a small number of different nationalities represented among the student population.

## Overall school performance 2011-2012

Acceptable

## How has the school progressed since the last inspection?

The Philippines School provided an acceptable quality of education. The willingness and hard work of staff to improve the school as well as the outstanding attitudes and behaviour of the students, ensured some success since the last inspection. This included the good quality of teaching and learning in Kindergarten and high school and the good understanding of Islam and appreciation of local traditions and culture. Since the last inspection the school had increased the roles and responsibilities of senior staff to help raise standards and improve progress. As a result progress was improved in mathematics in the high school but little progress was observed in Arabic as an additional language, where standards remained unsatisfactory. In both Islamic Education and Arabic as an additional language the school failed to meet MOE requirements; in both subjects students had an insufficient allocation of lesson time each week.

The school had made acceptable progress towards addressing the recommendations from the previous inspection and an appropriate set of actions to sustain improvement had been introduced. However, there was insufficient monitoring of lessons in primary in mathematics and science to ensure all students made good progress. The school was successful in identifying students with special educational needs but did not provide the support for them to make better progress. The school demonstrated that it had sufficient capacity to improve.

## Key strengths

- The outstanding attitudes and behaviour of the students;
- An improvements in students' understanding of Islamic and their civic understanding across the school;
- Students understanding and use of Filipino and English across the school;
- The improved teaching and learning in high school;
- Willingness and hard work of teachers to improve the school.

## Recommendations

- Raise standards in Islamic Education in high school and in Arabic as an additional language across the school;
- Continue to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in the kindergarten, primary and high schools;
- Set benchmarks against which students' attainment can be measured and compared with international expectations;
- Ensure that the school is fully compliant with curriculum requirements of the Ministry of Education for Islamic Education and Arabic as an additional language;
- Plan the curriculum to provide greater opportunities for independent learning, especially in Kindergarten;
- Provide additional specific guidance and support to teachers in order to improve the progress of students with special educational needs;
- Improve the capacity of all leaders to monitor and evaluate the work of the school.

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

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

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Attainment in English and Filipino was good across the school. Most students had age-appropriate skills especially for students who had English as an additional language. Speaking and listening skills were particularly strong and writing skills were acceptable overall. Attainment in Arabic as an additional language was unsatisfactory in primary and high. Most students had limited vocabulary and had difficulty using full, accurate sentences when speaking. The limited vocabulary restricted writing and reading skills. In Islamic Education, attainment in primary was acceptable and unsatisfactory in high. Most students were able to recognise the difference between the compulsory and the optional prayers but memorisation and recitation skills of The Holy Qur'an were underdeveloped across the school. Attainment in mathematics was good in Kindergarten and acceptable in primary and high school. Kindergarten children could successfully subtract two digit numbers from two digit numbers and were able to give an explanation of how they made their calculations. Attainment in science was in line with expected standards in kindergarten and primary but good in high school. Students in high school performed better in physics and chemistry than in biology. Across the school, students had insufficient expertise in hypothesising, investigating and constructing fair tests.

Progress in high school was good in most subjects. In primary, progress was acceptable in Islamic Education, mathematics and science and good in English and Filipino. Progress in Arabic as an additional language was unsatisfactory in both primary and high. In Kindergarten, progress was good in most subjects except science where it was acceptable because students had no opportunities to practice scientific skills and apply them in different contexts. Progress in speaking and listening was particularly strong across the school. A significant minority of students made little progress in independent writing. Students with special educational needs made acceptable progress in the key subjects.

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

	KG	Primary	High
Attitudes and behaviour	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Understanding of Islam and appreciation of local traditions and culture	Good	Good	Good
Civic, economic and environmental understanding	Acceptable	Good	Acceptable

Almost all students displayed outstanding behaviour both in class, assembly, the canteen and around school. They had positive attitudes to learning and had a clear understanding of the need to keep healthy. They showed a commitment to healthy eating by making appropriate choices in the school canteen. Older students had a well-developed sense of responsibility and provided good role models for younger students. Islamic and cultural understanding was good across the school. Most students understood Islamic values and their impact on contemporary society in Dubai and the wider world. They could explain how Dubai helped poorer countries and had a good understanding of the traditions and culture of Dubai by describing some of its main sporting activities, local food, and traditional clothes. Most students valued and respected the multi-cultural nature of Dubai. Students in primary were aware of their responsibilities toward the community and in school. Most students participated in local community activities and contributed actively to social and cultural events. They had a clear knowledge of Dubai and the changes over the past few years. Primary students understood the impact of global environmental issues and could speak with confidence about possible solutions to reduce pollution.



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

	KG	Primary	High
Teaching for effective learning	Good	Acceptable	Good
Quality of students' learning	Good	Acceptable	Good
Assessment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

Teaching for effective learning was acceptable in primary and good in the Kindergarten and high school. In all phases, teachers' subject knowledge and how students learn was secure, especially in English, Filipino, mathematics and science in the high school. Across the school most teachers provided tasks and resources that suited relevant grade levels. However, in the Kindergarten, a lack of choice of activities during lessons did not support the development of creative thinking and independence. The majority of teachers planned their lessons carefully. The level of challenge for more able learners and support for slower learners was not consistently appropriate in a minority of lessons across all phases. A range of practical activities supplemented textbooks but too often tasks were not related well to real life contexts. As students were not always asked to reflect on and explain their learning. Students' critical thinking and enquiry was not consistently developed in classes.

Learning was acceptable in primary and good elsewhere. There was a high level of collaboration and shared understanding amongst students. In the most effective lessons, students were active and engaged. Successful learning was a result of opportunities for enquiry and critical thinking. Such opportunities were less apparent in the younger sections of the primary school. Application of learning to the real world and making connections between areas of learning were features of learning in some but not all subjects. A significant majority of students were able to present the outcomes of their learning orally with confidence and increasing fluency in subjects where they were proficient. However, most students undertook very little independent research or enquiry and had limited access to information and communications technology in lessons other than the discrete technology lessons.

The quality of assessment was acceptable in all phases of the school. Regular diagnostic and summative assessment methods were used to identify students who were not succeeding in internal tests. External

assessments measured attainment against national standards but there were no tests to provide the school with international comparisons. The use of assessment information to inform teaching and learning was varied. In the better lessons teachers modified their teaching to meet individual needs but others did not. Teachers generally knew students' strengths and weaknesses but did not provide individual learning targets. Work was marked regularly but did not include comments for the next steps in learning. Although a majority of teachers shared the objectives of lessons with students, the rubrics for assessment were not used regularly by teachers to involve students more fully in reviewing their own learning. Teachers did not use assessment information to identify and provide sufficient levels of challenge for the most able students or to plan lessons that supported the less able.

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

	KG	Primary	High
Curriculum quality	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

The curriculum was acceptable across all phases in the school. It was broad and balanced and covered all the subjects required in the Philippine curriculum. Planning across the phases built on previous curriculum content and helped students transfer to the next stage in their education. Even though the curriculum had been regularly reviewed, it did not meet the statutory time requirements for Islamic Education and Arabic. The curriculum was planned to meet the needs of most groups but opportunities for independent learning were not planned for, especially in Kindergarten. Elective subjects such as information and communications technology (ICT), journalism, research and statistics in the high school added breadth and depth. Extra-curricular activities allowed students to extend their learning and interests. The school offered a range of community extension activities where students, parents and teachers participated in Filipino and locally organised community events, tree planting, 'Clean Up the World' and 'Public Transport Day'.

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

	KG	Primary	High
Health and Safety	Good	Good	Good
Quality of Support	Good	Good	Good

The provision for health and safety was good. Students' safety on the buses was carefully managed. The buildings were very well maintained and secure and site maintenance issues were quickly and effectively resolved. The clinic nurse and doctor recorded all visits and treatments and took a positive role in the healthy living aspects of the curriculum. Medicines were kept secure but some flammable materials were not appropriately stored in the science laboratory. Fire equipment was regularly maintained and there were water hose outlets along corridors. Evacuation procedures were clear and the school had smoke alarms at regular intervals. The canteen made fruit available to students. Physical activity was limited to sports lessons as students did not have opportunities for play during recess.

The quality of support and guidance for students was judged as good across the school. Staff had very good relationships with all students. The systems for monitoring behaviour were thorough and effective and prompt action was taken when necessary. The Guidance Counsellor provided career advice and worked with students to identify and recommend future action to support the students. The school identified students with special educational needs on entry and teachers referred students during the year. The Guidance Counsellor provided some advice for subject teachers but there were no teachers working specifically with students with special educational needs. The performance of students with special educational needs was monitored and parents were fully involved in the process. Students in the higher ability range were streamed in all grades. There were detailed systems to monitor attendance and punctuality.

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

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

The quality of leadership was acceptable. The principal was highly committed to improving the school and had some understanding of what areas needed change or development. The senior leadership team and all staff were enthusiastic and committed to the values and ethos of the school. Although roles and responsibilities were appropriately delegated, not all staff members were clear about what they were. The school had been successful in improving progress in mathematics in the high school and for improving aspects of students' personal development. It had less success in sharing good practice across all phases and subjects especially in Islamic Education and Arabic as an additional language. Senior leaders were aware that further improvements were needed and demonstrated sufficient capacity lead further development.

Self-evaluation and improvement planning were acceptable. Detailed self-evaluation and action plan documentation had been compiled. Senior leaders ensured that teaching staff and subject leaders had been involved. However, the interpretation of data and other evidence in order to reach individual judgements was inconsistent. Some data did not support the school's view in a number of key areas. Performance management was in place and used to provide professional development for staff. Improvement plans included appropriate detailed actions but the criteria used to show success were not sufficiently focused to ensure accurate monitoring. The school had made acceptable progress in addressing the recommendations from the previous report.

Partnership with parents and the community was good. Parents appreciated the regular communication and the quick response of the school when necessary. The school had a Parent Teacher Council with an elected body of parents representing all classes. Parents enjoyed occasional school celebrations including the Family Day. Reports to parents were quarterly and included percentages and grades along with a

summary comment. There were good community activities and occasional links with the business community.

Governance was acceptable. The governors were compliant with regulations and were in a position to hold the school accountable for its actions. They met regularly to review the work of the school. Board members represented different stake-holders providing opportunities for parents and members of the local community to influence decision making.

Staffing, facilities and resources were acceptable. The day-to-day life of the school was managed very efficiently. Most staff members were suitably qualified and a good programme of professional development was in place. The facilities and resources were sufficient to support the curriculum and the library was adequately stocked. However, students were not observed using the books to help them in their studies. Laboratory equipment was appropriately maintained. Many of the classrooms were too small to allow teachers to plan activities that involved students moving around. The one laboratory and small canteen were insufficient for the numbers of students in school. The covered area for Kindergarten and sports provided suitable shade from the sun.

## 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	617	56%
	Last year	529	38%
Teachers	38		67%
Students	73		78%

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

Almost all students and parents felt that life in the school was enjoyable, that students were well behaved and there were clear opportunities for students to take responsibility. All teachers were of the view that most students appreciated the different nationalities and cultures in Dubai. Almost all students felt their lessons were good and they understood how to take steps to improve the environment. A similar proportion of parents and students felt that any incidents of bullying would be dealt with well and that students were safe on the buses and in school. A minority of students felt that there was occasionally too much homework. A large majority of teachers felt the school was well led and all teachers were of the view that students were treated fairly at the school.

## 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.

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## 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)

## Our work with schools

Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau (DSIB) inspects schools to inform parents, students and the wider community of the quality of education provided. Inspectors also give guidance to staff about how to improve the standard of education.

At the beginning of the inspection, we ask the principal and staff about the strengths of the school, what needs to improve and how they know. We use the information they give us to help us plan our time in school. During the inspection, we go into classes and join other activities in which students are involved. We also gather the views of students, parents and staff. We find their views very helpful and use them, together with the other information we have collected, to arrive at our view regarding the quality of education.

This report tells you what we found during the inspection and the quality of education in the school. We describe how well students are doing, how good the school is at helping them to learn and how well it cares for them. We comment on how well staff, parents and children work together and how they go about improving the school. Finally, we focus on how well the school is led and how staff help the school achieve its aims.

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