

INSPECTION REPORT

The Philippine School

Report published in April 2013

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT The Philippine School

Location	Al Rashidiya
Type of school	Private
Website	www.thephilippineschooldubai.com
Telephone	04-284-4465
Address	Rashidiya, Dubai
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	1,894
Largest nationality group of Students	Filipino
Number of Emirati students	0 (0%)
Date of the inspection	18th to 21st February 2013

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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. At the time of the inspection there were 1,894 students on roll, an increase of around 200 since the previous inspection. The students' attendance for the last academic session was good.

The school followed the Philippine Revised Basic Education curriculum. All students studied Filipino, English and Arabic.

There were 69 teachers including the Principal and a senior leadership team. Class sizes, particularly in the primary stage, were large. The majority of teachers had relevant teaching qualifications and were deployed appropriately across the age and subject range. Five teaching assistants provided support in Kindergarten. Students were grouped into 56 classes. Almost all students were of Filipino nationality.

Overall school performance 2012-2013

Acceptable

Key strengths

- Good behaviour and relationships throughout the school;
- Good involvement with the local Filipino community, coupled with good understanding of Dubai's culture;
- Strong parental support to improve students' learning, for example, reading support in the Kindergarten.

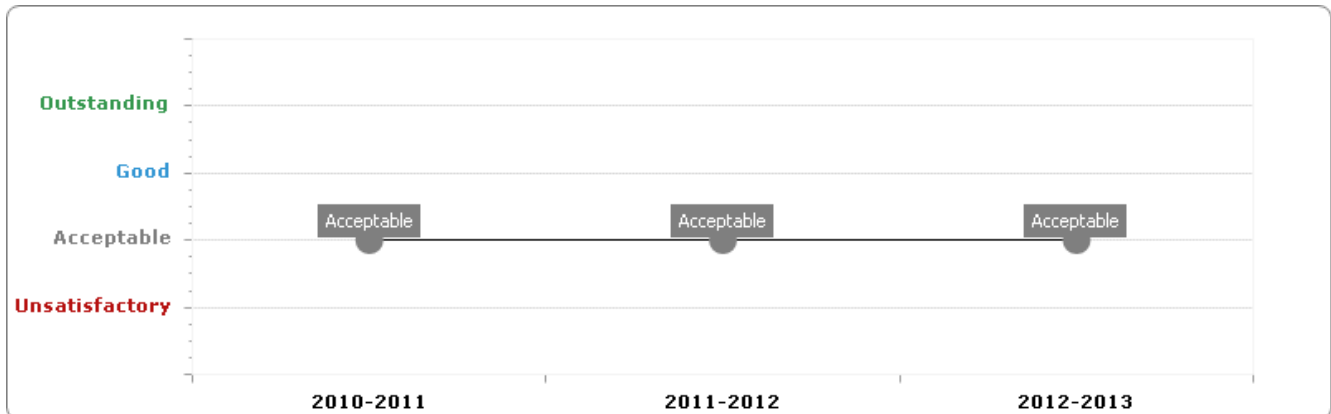
Recommendations

- Raise the quality of teaching and learning in Arabic so that students make at least acceptable attainment and progress;
- Improve the validity of assessments and ensure that the information is used by teachers in lesson planning to better meet the learning needs of all students;
- Ensure that the high school curriculum is compliant with Ministry of Education requirements for the teaching of Arabic as an additional language;
-
- Identify and provide for students with special educational needs, including those who are gifted and talented;
- Improve the quality of development planning to include specific objectives, measurable success criteria, realistic time scales and the required resources and training.

Progress since the last inspection

- Students' attainment in Arabic as a second language remained unsatisfactory;
- The school was not compliant with time requirements for teaching Arabic as an additional language in the secondary phase;
- Improvements in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment had not been maintained in the Kindergarten and primary phases;
- The school had monitored teaching in some subjects and grades but it was not rigorous;
- Some measurement of performance against international standards had been introduced but it was only with a small group of self-selected students. The data collected had not been used to benchmark performance against internal tests.

Trend of overall performance



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

	KG	Primary	High
Islamic Education			
Attainment	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Progress	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Arabic as a first language			
Attainment	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Progress	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Arabic as an additional language			
Attainment	Not Applicable	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Progress	Not Applicable	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Philippine			
Attainment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good
Progress	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good
English			
Attainment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good
Progress	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good
Mathematics			
Attainment	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable
Progress	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good
Science			
Attainment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good
Progress	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good

[Read paragraph](#)

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How good is the students' personal and social development?

	KG	Primary	High
Attitudes and behaviour	Good	Good	Outstanding
Understanding of Islamic values and local, cultural and global awareness	Good	Good	Good
Community and environmental responsibility	Good	Good	Good

[Read paragraph](#)

How good are the teaching, learning and assessment?

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

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

	KG	Primary	High
Curriculum quality	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

[Read paragraph](#)

How well does the school protect and support students?

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

[Read paragraph](#)

How good are the leadership and management of the school?

	Whole school
Quality of leadership	Acceptable
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?

Attainment in Arabic as an additional language was unsatisfactory in the primary and secondary phases in reading, writing, listening, and speaking. They could not understand or respond to simple sentences and could not write independently. In English, Filipino and science, students' attainment was acceptable in the Kindergarten and primary grades and good in the secondary grades. In Filipino, attainment of the language expectations was only acceptable in the Kindergarten and primary phases. In the secondary phase the majority of students showed the ability to discuss and apply to real life situations a deep understanding of Filipino literature. In English, students' speaking and listening skills were strong and the reading skills of most students developed more rapidly by Grade 6. By Grade 10, students' reading was fluent and expressive amongst the majority. A minority of students in the secondary school experienced difficulty analysing texts and lacked confidence when using evidence to justify their ideas. Children entered the school with good mathematical knowledge and their attainment was good. They developed strong computational skills and good subject vocabularies. Their application of numbers was weaker by comparison and so attainment overall was only acceptable in the primary and secondary phases. In science, the skills of enquiry and understanding were underdeveloped at all levels. In the secondary school most students had good understanding of theoretical concepts such as molecular structure and good problem solving skills. Inspectors did not make an evaluation of students' attainment in Islamic Education because there were very few Muslim students in the school.

In Arabic progress was better in the primary than the high school but was still unsatisfactory. In Filipino, students in the Kindergarten and primary grades did not show significant gains on previously learned knowledge. In the secondary phase, progress by the majority of students was better, as they became familiar with various forms of literature. In English, Filipino, mathematics and science, progress was acceptable in the Kindergarten and primary grades but improved to good in the secondary grades. In English, by Grade 6 most students had made acceptable progress in all four skills, but especially with speaking and listening. By Grade 10 their progress was good. Student-initiated writing and independent reading showed the least progress by a minority of students. Better mathematical skills supported students' work in science. In science, progress in the primary was noted in terms of increasing breadth of knowledge, but not depth of understanding. Inspectors did not make an evaluation of students' progress in Islamic Education because there were very few Muslim students in the school.

[View judgements](#)

How good is the students' personal and social development?

Attitudes and behaviour were good in the Kindergarten and the primary phase, and outstanding in the secondary phase. Almost all students were well behaved, respectful and friendly to visitors. They had purposeful and positive relationships with their teachers and their peers. Older students were good role models for their younger peers. All students in the oldest classes participated in community service as part of the Philippine curriculum. Most students made healthy food choices and many were enthusiastic participants in sporting and dance activities. Attendance over the last term was good. Understanding of Islamic values and local, cultural and global awareness were good. Student had clear understanding of how Islamic values influenced contemporary society, and good knowledge, respect and appreciation of the Islamic heritage and culture of the UAE. They were proud of their Filipino heritage and had deep understanding of their culture, as well as appreciation of other cultures in Dubai and around the world. Across the school, students showed respect and commitment to learning. The student council had a role in improving the school. Older students developed skills in designing, organising and managing events both in the school and the Filipino community. They actively raised funds for charities and disaster relief. Students took good care of their school environment and also participated in various environmental activities in the local community.

[View judgements](#)

How good are the teaching, learning and assessment?

Teaching for effective learning was acceptable in the Kindergarten and primary phases and good in the secondary phase. Teachers' subject knowledge was secure and was strongest in the secondary phase. Teachers' understanding of how young children learn was under-developed in the Kindergarten. Planning was consistent in each phase of the school and a range of approaches were used. However, there were insufficient planned activities in Kindergarten to develop children's creative and physical skills. Some weaker classroom management strategies reduced the pace and effectiveness of a few lessons in the younger students' classes. As the students progressed through the school, they had greater roles in their learning and thus progress was accelerated. Teaching strategies satisfactorily addressed the needs of most groups of students, although there was insufficient challenge for the more able ones. Many teachers used closed questions effectively to assess student knowledge. Open questions to develop higher order thinking were less frequently used.

The quality of learning was acceptable in the Kindergarten and primary phases and good in the secondary. Almost all students were eager to learn. When given opportunities, most students took responsibility for their learning and worked for appropriate periods of time without direct supervision. The provision for

group work was limited in the Kindergarten, which reduced the children's abilities to develop their social skills. They also had limited opportunities to make choices, follow their interests and develop their perseverance. By the time the students reached the secondary phase, they were able to engage in discussions and clarify their thinking while learning. Students in the secondary grades could apply themselves to tasks for lengthy periods of time and used previous learning to solve new problems. Students were able to make good use of information technology in their studies, for example, when animations were produced by Grade 8 students in science.

Assessment was acceptable across the school. A range of student performance data was collected from all subjects. It was analysed to show students' attainment and progress at class and grade levels but no targets were set for students. Annual reports on students' attainment and personal growth were shared with parents. The school made some use of the attainment data to group students for reading support and to create classes of high attaining students in each grade. Students' progress data was not used sufficiently in the planning of lessons to provide additional support or extra challenge. Books were marked regularly; however, there were too few comments relating to the quality of the work and how work could be improved. There were some good practices for assessing understanding during lessons, particularly in the secondary phase. Older students were also supported, in certain subjects, to assess their own performance and that of their peers.

[View judgements](#)

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

The curriculum was acceptable in all phases. The time allocated to Arabic as an additional language did not comply with the UAE Ministry of Education requirements. Continuity was provided through the use of the Philippine National Curriculum, which provided a good range of subjects, including opportunities to study Philippine history, society and culture. However, the progression of skills and concepts in a number of subjects provided inconsistent challenge to some students, especially the most and least able students. There were few opportunities for students to develop investigative skills, work independently and solve problems. A range of academic, sporting and creative extra-curricular activities allowed students to follow their interests and enhanced their learning opportunities. In the Kindergarten, children had limited opportunities to learn through active exploration. The balance between curricular areas was uneven; a narrow range of academic skills dominated the children's day, so that they had few opportunities to develop communication, social, physical and creative skills.

[View judgements](#)

How well does the school protect and support students?

The provision for health and safety was good. There were effective systems that ensured compliance with Dubai's regulations for school clinics and the operation of school buses. The effective and well-staffed school clinic played a proactive role in promoting healthy living. Students, however, had limited time to access playgrounds and be active during breaks. Parts of the school were not accessible to students with physical disabilities. Buildings were well maintained and facilities were kept clean. There was a well supervised system for ensuring that children were safe upon entering and leaving the school premises. All staff members and students were aware of the child protection policy; the guidance office provided training for staff and the teachers discussed the policy with students.

The quality of support for students was acceptable across the school. Staff members knew most of their students well and provided effective counselling and guidance for their future careers, in addition to their social and emotional needs. These relationships under-pinned the on-going management of behaviour and care. The staff nurtured the confidence of students to ask for help if and when they needed it. Effective systems supported the monitoring of attendance and punctuality. Absences were followed up, reasons were recorded and parents were contacted if a child's attendance became a concern.

[View judgements](#)

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

Procedures to identify students with special educational needs, including those who were more gifted, had recently been put into place. The school was in the process of developing procedures to share information with staff and beginning to address the specific needs of students. However, across the school, these structures were only used effectively in a few classes. The needs of students requiring additional support were rarely met in lessons. The guidance counsellor had begun a process of staff training and had put into effect a few systems to improve provision and to raise standards. These had not had sufficient time for their benefits to be seen.

How good are the leadership and management of the school?

The quality of leadership was acceptable. There was a shared vision for the school and many of those with leadership roles had some understanding of areas which required improvement. There was appropriate delegation of roles and responsibilities but there were no clear lines of accountability. In some cases the capacity to adequately fulfill roles was limited by the heavy work load and lack of planned time to discharge the responsibilities. Elements of good practice were not always shared effectively across the school.

Self-evaluation and improvement planning was unsatisfactory. The school development plan lacked focus and did not include targets, evaluation criteria, time scales or specific requirements in terms of resources and staff training. The variable practice in the Kindergarten, in particular, demonstrated the failure to establish effective success criteria and evaluation processes. There was a system of regular, formal and informal observation of teachers but the significant number of unsatisfactory lessons seen during the inspection indicated it was insufficiently rigorous.

Partnership with parents and the community was good. Most parents felt involved in the school and strongly valued regular reports and the open lines of communication that existed with teachers. A few parents were critical of their limited representation on the governing body and reported they had little influence on decisions that affected the education of their children.

Governance was unsatisfactory. The school had not met key recommendations in the previous inspection report and remained non-compliant with the time requirements for teaching Arabic as an additional language in the high school. Many classes in the primary and secondary phases exceeded the regulation size and the majority of Kindergarten classes were above the regulation limit. The increased student numbers over the last two years had not been matched by an appropriate increase in either teachers or physical resources.

Staffing, facilities and resources were unsatisfactory. The daily life of the school was well managed. Most teachers had appropriate qualifications but had not received training for changes in the curriculum. They often lacked resources for the numbers of students they taught. Classrooms had become more overcrowded due to the further increase in student numbers. The well-equipped play area for Kindergarten children was not fully used to promote the physical development and health of the students.

[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	771	65%
	Last year	622	60%
Teachers	60		87%
Students	78		80%

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

Almost all students, parents and teachers believed that students were well behaved, respected and well looked after by the school. Similar numbers thought there was a wide range of interesting extra-curricular activities and clubs. Almost all parents and students agreed that school was enjoyable place. Almost all teachers, but only a majority of parents and students, felt there was active involvement in community projects in Dubai; similar proportions believed that the school provided non-Muslims with a good understanding of Islam. Most parents thought that the school prepared their children well to move to another school offering a similar curriculum. A majority of parents and most teachers and students thought the school was well led. A minority of parents had concerns about the identification and support for students with special educational needs. Parents and teachers commented on the overcrowding of classrooms and inadequate resources.

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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