

# INSPECTION REPORT

## The Philippine School

Report published in April 2014

Knowledge and Human Development Authority

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## GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT The Philippine School

Location	Al Rashidiya
Type of school	Private
Website	www.thephilippineschooldubai.com
Telephone	042844465
Address	Al Rashidiya, Dubai, United Arab Emirates
Principal	JOCELYN M. SOLLANO
Curriculum	PHILIPPINE
Gender of students	Boys and Girls
Age / Grades or Year Groups	3-15, K to Grade 10
Attendance	Good
Number of students on roll	1867
Largest nationality group of Students	Philippines
Number of Emirati students	0
Date of the inspection	17th March to 20th March 2014

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## The context of the school

The Philippine School is a private school providing education from Kindergarten to high school for boys and girls aged three to fifteen years. The school is situated in Al Rashidiya, and at the time of the inspection had 1867 students. Students' attendance for the last academic session was good.

Students followed the Philippine Revised Basic Education system. Students from Kindergarten to Grade 2 and at Grades 7 and 8 followed the K-12 curriculum in accordance with the Philippine Government's phased introduction of curricular reform. All students studied Filipino, English, and Arabic.

There were 84 teachers including the Principal and the leadership team. Almost all teachers were appropriately qualified for the posts they held and were suitably deployed. Five teaching assistants supported children in the Kindergarten. Across the school, students were grouped in 61 classes. Almost all were of Filipino nationality.

## Overall school performance 2013-2014

Acceptable

### Key strengths

- Students' good attainment and progress in Filipino in the elementary and secondary phases and in English at secondary phase;
- Students' good personal responsibility across all phases, except in secondary which was outstanding;
- Students' well developed cultural awareness, and creativity in expressing this respectfully through both Filipino and Emirati performing arts;
- The good provision for health and safety across all phases;
- The good support from parents for the school's preparation of students for the next stage of their education.

### Recommendations

- Prepare and present students for external examinations in order to broaden their opportunities for further study;
- Improve the consistency of teaching by:
  - further developing teachers' understanding of how children and students learn best;
  - raising expectations of what all children and students can learn and achieve;
  - ensuring that planning at every level explicitly relates to making a positive difference to students' learning outcomes;
  - sharing and applying effective practice, so that good teaching becomes the standard practice across all phases and subjects.
- Use assessment to; measure student progress more reliably, and to inform teachers' planning to meet the learning needs of all groups of students;

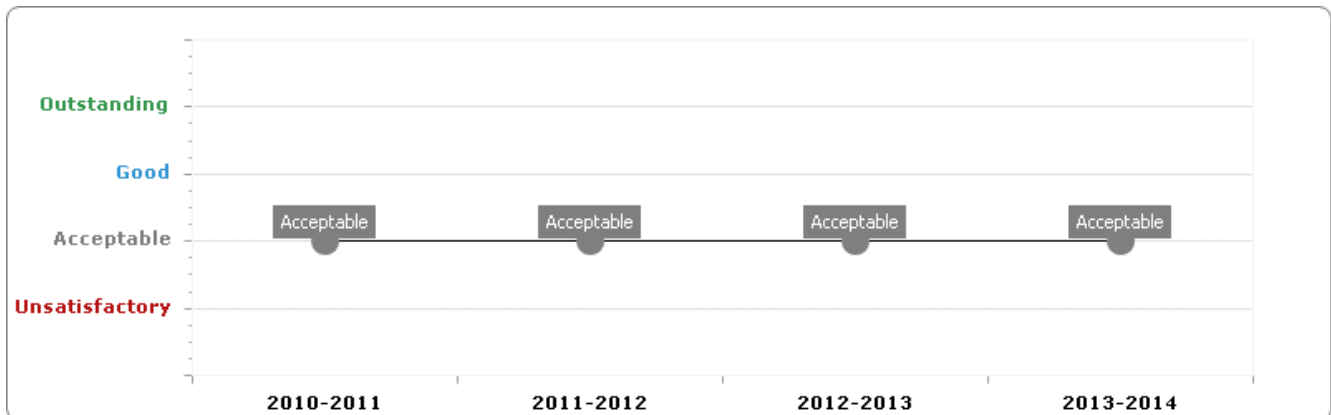
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- Improve the support and challenge for all students with special educational needs including gifted and talented in lessons by:
  - training teachers to use recognised strategies in class that meet those needs;
  - ensuring tasks and activities meet individual needs.
- Ensure that the school has sufficient and suitable resources to support active and imaginative learning, particularly in the Kindergarten;
- Reduce class sizes in all phases.

## Progress since the last inspection

- The school was now compliant with time requirements for teaching Arabic as an additional language;
- The overall quality of teaching and learning had not improved significantly since the last inspection
- The school had improved the validity of its assessment through the use of the International Benchmarking Tests; teachers had yet to make consistent use of assessment to plan suitable next steps in learning for their students;
- The school had improved its identification of students with special educational needs, including gifted and talented, through its appointment of a Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator;
- Staff had improved the quality of their improvement planning to include specific objectives, realistic timescales and necessary resources and training. Plans were now more realistic and manageable, and more closely focused on suitable priorities for improvement.
- Students' attainment in Islamic education and Arabic as an additional language remained unsatisfactory.

## Trend of overall performance



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## How good are the students' attainment progress and learning skills?

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

[Read paragraph](#)

	KG	Elementary	Secondary
Quality of students' learning skills	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good

[Read paragraph](#)



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

	KG	Elementary	Secondary
Personal responsibility	Good	Good	Outstanding
Students' understanding of Islamic values and their local, cultural and global awareness	Good	Good	Outstanding
Community and environmental responsibility	Good	Good	Good

[Read paragraph](#)

## How good are teaching and assessment?

	KG	Elementary	Secondary
Teaching for effective learning	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good
Assessment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

[Read paragraph](#)

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

	KG	Elementary	Secondary
Curriculum quality	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Curriculum design to meet the individual needs of students	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

[Read paragraph](#)

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

	KG	Elementary	Secondary
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	Acceptable
Parents and the community	Good
Governance	Acceptable
Management, including staffing, facilities and resources	Unsatisfactory

[Read paragraph](#)

## How good are the students' attainment and progress?

Students' attainment in Islamic Education and Arabic as an additional language were unsatisfactory. In English, Filipino, mathematics, and science, attainment was acceptable across the school, except for English and Filipino. In these subjects, Filipino was good in elementary, and both English and Filipino were good in secondary. In Islamic Education, the majority of elementary students knew few short Surahs of the Quran and could recite them to an adequate level. Their knowledge and understanding of the Pillars of Islam and of Islamic Faith were at a basic level while their knowledge of the Prophet was very limited. Older students did not demonstrate sufficient knowledge and understanding of Islamic practice and main events in the Seerah. In Arabic as an additional language, listening skills were adequate. However, in reading, students could not read Arabic script or respond to simple questions and relied excessively on transliteration. In English, listening and speaking were strong. Kindergarten children read simple words using phonics. By Grade 10, students analysed text accurately. Writing, while imaginative and well-structured, often lacked accurate presentation. In Filipino most of the students met expected standards at Kindergarten. In the elementary and secondary phases the majority of the students attained beyond Philippine curricular expectations. Students understood mathematical terms but were less skilled in applying knowledge and understanding to statistics in economics, or simple mathematics in calculating value for money. In science, Kindergarten children's observation skills were well developed. Overall, students' practical scientific skills were poorly developed in all phases.

Students' progress in the key subjects was broadly acceptable, apart from Arabic as an additional language, which was unsatisfactory in all applicable phases. Students' progress was good in Filipino at elementary, and in English, Filipino, and mathematics in secondary school. In Islamic Education, students' progress in Quran recitation and understanding of basic Islamic beliefs and forms of worship was developing steadily. In Arabic as an additional language, most students made some progress in understanding a few grammatical rules. However, their progress in developing their script recognition and comprehension, and in speaking were all limited. In English in Kindergarten and elementary listening and speaking progress was stronger than in writing. In secondary English, progress was consistently stronger in listening talking reading and writing. In Filipino, progress in elementary and secondary school, was stronger than in Kindergarten. In mathematics secondary students progressed well because of their use of learning targets. In science students progress was constrained by the lack of clear links between scientific theory, and the application of scientific method to what they observe in experiments.

[View judgements](#)

## Quality of students' learning skills

Students learning skills were acceptable at Kindergarten and elementary, and good in secondary school. Most students were very keen to learn. They engaged well in lessons, including Arabic as an additional language, where this engagement often improved their learning experience despite weaker teaching. Student interactions and co-operation were good in all phases. Teachers' questioning was often closed which inhibited students' understanding and critical thinking and discouraged discussion and enquiry. Research and enquiry through collaborative group work was best when students undertook practical activities. Effective examples included Business case studies, English dramatisations, and investigations in Science, Social Studies discussions, musical creativity and well-developed practical applications in mathematics. These opportunities enabled students to use what they had learned in other subjects. Information and Communication Technology (ICT) was not widely used by students in key subjects lessons. The high quality of dance, facilitated by teachers, was an enriching feature across all phases.

[View judgements](#)

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

Personal responsibility was good in Kindergarten and elementary, and outstanding in secondary school. This reflected the school's happy, respectful and cohesive ethos. Students were self-disciplined. Seniors supported younger students conscientiously. They were responsible class officers and marshals, and participated well in weekly clubs. The School Council initiated and led fundraising for victims of conflict and natural disasters. Students ate healthy food and exercised during morning assemblies. Attendance was good overall.

Students recognized universal values of Islam and showed a good understanding of how these values influenced their lives in Dubai. They manifested strong respect for prayers and used Arabic greetings often. They compared the features of UAE and Philippines and appreciated living in Dubai. They showed strong pride and understanding of their own culture through organized learning activities. The social studies curriculum enhanced their awareness of other cultures.

Students' community and environmental responsibility was good. They actively supported others less fortunate. They worked hard together to perfect frequent sporting and artistic performances. They were aware of the value of education. Students of all ages conscientiously cared for their school, and supported environmental initiatives, through recycling and beach clean-ups.

[View judgements](#)

## How good are teaching and assessment?

Teaching was good in secondary school and acceptable in Kindergarten and elementary. Among the key subjects, teaching was variable and included the occasional unsatisfactory lesson. Lesson planning across the school was acceptable, but its implementation in lessons was variable. Teachers used ICT appropriately in most lessons, and positive teacher-student interactions featured in almost all lessons. However, differentiation for groups and individuals in classes, including students with special educational needs, was underdeveloped. As a result learning needs were not consistently met. At Kindergarten, and in elementary, teachers' insecure understanding of how younger students learn resulted in excessive teacher talk, and insufficient active learning. In Kindergarten, weak time management resulted in lessons with shortened group activity and insufficient time to review learning. Practical activities were a feature of the more successful teaching and learning.

Assessment was acceptable in all phases of the school. In the Kindergarten, testing lacked consistency. Teachers had expanded their range of assessment tools. Entry and exit tests and external bench marking for all students in elementary and secondary school were mandatory. Teachers effectively moderated internal tests and aligned their students' performance against curriculum standards. However, they could not clearly measure student progress. Senior staff did not yet have a clear whole school view of students' performance as they lacked a centralised system for collating results. Teachers helped students assess their own learning and set new targets using a range of methods, such as 'learning stations'. They usually marked notebooks regularly but rarely included helpful comments on how to improve. Increasingly, teachers used external tests to identify areas of weakness and adapt the curriculum accordingly.

[View judgements](#)

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

The curriculum was acceptable at all phases. Students had access to a broad and balanced range of subjects beyond English, mathematics and science. A range of extra-curricular activities provided varied opportunities to enhance learning. In Kindergarten, the curriculum offered children choices, but these were not always purposeful. There were inconsistencies in the implementation of the new curriculum which affected students' progression in learning. However, teachers' review of the curriculum had minimized repetitions and had improved cross curricular links. There were limited opportunities for research and independent learning although assignment of investigatory projects and performances provided opportunity for independent learning. Some subjects relied heavily on textbooks, while others provided insufficient opportunities to apply concepts to real life situations or use apparatus. Transition arrangements for the next stage of education were adequate with majority of students gaining admission to universities in the Philippines.

The curriculum design to meet the individual needs of students, including those with special education needs and lower attaining students, was acceptable. Lessons were planned to meet the learning needs of most students and there had been initiatives to identify students with additional learning needs and provide individualized education plans for them. However, teachers did not consistently or effectively implement lesson plans. The level of challenge for those who were identified as gifted and those who were lower attaining remained inconsistent. There were too few activities designed to meet individual needs, including choice or appropriate pace and styles for the different learners.

[View judgements](#)

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

Health and safety provision was good in all phases. Staff supervision around the school was conscientious and senior students monitored their younger peers. Clinic staff monitored students' weight and school initiatives promoted healthy eating. The school's emphasis on physical education and dance contributed to students' health and wellbeing. Staff at all levels were caring and were aware of child protection arrangements. School travel was well monitored, although there was no designated pedestrian pathway from buses. Some student toilets had broken fixtures, and the Kindergarten toilets were some distance away from classrooms.

The quality of support for students was acceptable across all phases. All members of the school community showed care and concern for the needs of students. Almost all teachers managed behaviour supportively. There were a few instances in lower elementary where there was a lack of promptness in teachers responses to misbehavior which had a negative effect on learning. The school welcomed students with

special educational needs and there was a commitment to ensure that they took a full part in school life. The school maintained adequate processes for checking academic and personal development of all students. Though there were systems in place to track students' progress, they were not used consistently to guide students on their future learning. The school was diligent in its recording of attendance and punctuality and responded promptly, where necessary, to ensure high levels of attendance. The school provided useful guidance for students on subject options and career choices.

[View judgements](#)

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

The quality of leadership was acceptable. The senior leaders' clear vision focused on 'values' education, and preparing students well for the next steps in their education. They had begun to compare their students' attainment to international standards. Middle leaders had clear roles, with increased non-teaching time allocated to fulfil these. Most recognised where change was needed. Their capacity to lead such change was at times constrained because they were unsure how best to improve key aspects such as teaching and learning.

Self-evaluation and improvement planning were acceptable. The school evaluated its strengths and weaknesses in staff friendly ways. Most understood what needed to improve. Resultant improvement plans clearly identified actions, person's responsible, timescales and measures of success. However there was insufficient identification of improved learning outcomes as a target for actions. . As a result, the pace of improvement was variable, with important aspects such as unsatisfactory teaching and learning not sufficiently addressed.

The Partnership with parents and the community was good. Parents identified strongly with the school and valued its promotion of Filipino cultural identity within the context of Dubai. They appreciated 'Orientation Evenings' which had informed them of curriculum change originating in the Philippines. Most also found school reports regular and helpful. There were clearly understood lines of communication between home and school using student diaries as well as letters and phone calls. Parents recognised the school's involvement of their children in celebrating important national events in the UAE, and supporting communities in need.

Governance was acceptable. The recently formed Governing Council included a broad range of stakeholders as well as the Principal and the Managing Directress. Council members clearly understood their role of challenge and support for school improvement. They knew about aspects of school performance, for example, students' attainment. However, the Governing Council's constitution lacked

clarity about its power to hold school personnel accountable for performance, and about its role in securing improvement in resources and facilities.

Staffing, facilities and resources were unsatisfactory. The timetable complied with requirements for Arabic as an additional language. Specialist staff oversaw provision for students with special educational needs. Although increased staffing and additional classrooms had reduced average class size across the school, large class sizes in elementary and secondary hindered students' learning. Numbers of children in most classes in Kindergarten exceeded regulations. Across the school, there were inadequate resources to support active learning.

[View judgements](#)

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

The school leaders showed a strong commitment to the inclusion of students with special educational needs and gave their full support to the newly appointed coordinator and counselor. The school had improved its identification and assessment process, which were, on the whole, accurate and reliable. The counselor provided effective support for students with behavioural, social and emotional needs which enabled them to make acceptable progress. Most teachers were aware of students' specific needs and modified their teaching methods in lessons. They often provided additional support at break times and extra worksheets to complete at home. However, overall their progress was too variable as some teachers lacked the skills and expertise to adapt tasks and worksheets to help students' understanding. In addition there was a shortage of suitably graded resources to help students develop their skills and understanding in practical ways. The school had begun to identify gifted and talented students. Specific programmes for these students had not yet been implemented.



## 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	963	67%
	Last year	773	68%
Teachers	49		98%
Students	425		79%

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

Most parents responded to their survey a similar percentage to last year. Almost all teachers and most students responded to their surveys. Almost all parents thought their child enjoyed school and almost all students and parents agreed about their feeling safe in school. Only a majority of students and parents agreed that bus travel was safe. Parental comments concerned lack of seat-belts and overcrowding. Almost all teachers and most students and parents felt careers guidance was helpful, and most parents thought the school prepared their child well for the next stage of their education. Almost all students thought they were learning to become productive citizens and most felt they had good opportunities for leadership. Most parents and staff thought the school was well led. Only a majority of parents and students thought their views were listened to. Students and parents commented on poor maintenance of toilets and lack of necessities such as soap and towels.

## 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)

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