

INSPECTION REPORT

Queen International School

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Knowledge and Human Development Authority

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GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT Queen International School

Location	Hor Al Anz
Type of school	Private
Website	www.qisdubai.com
Telephone	04-2652600
Address	PO Box 85999, Deira, Dubai
Principal	Malaka Abdul Moneim Khalil
Curriculum	UK
Gender of students	Boys and Girls
Age / Grades or Year Groups	3-18 / Foundation Stage to post-16
Attendance	Good
Number of students on roll	1,205
Number of Emirati students	276 (23%)
Date of the inspection	Monday 9th to Thursday 12th January 2012

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The context of the school

Located in Deira, Queen International School is a private school providing education for boys and girls from Foundation Stage (FS) to high school, aged three to eighteen years. The school follows an English National curriculum and students complete International General Certificate of Education (IGCSE) and Advanced Standard (AS) examinations as part of their studies. At the time of the inspection, there were 1,205 students on roll. The student attendance reported by the school for the last academic session was good. There were 276 Emirati students in the school. Forty different nationalities were represented among the student population. No students had been identified by the school as having a special educational need. As a result, there were a few students in classes who lacked support and were unable to access the curriculum fully.

There were 66 full and part-time teachers, excluding the Principal and the senior leadership team. All teachers in the school had appropriate teaching qualifications. They were supported by a number of teaching and classroom assistants. At the time of the inspection, approximately 17 teachers or 25 per cent had been in the school for less than one year. Approximately 20 per cent of the students had also joined the school during that semester.

Overall school performance 2011-2012

Acceptable

How has the school progressed since the last inspection?

Queen International School provided an acceptable quality of education. It had some strengths, which included student's outstanding attitudes and behaviour and high attainment in IGCSE examinations. The quality of teaching for effective learning, students' learning and assessment were acceptable in all phases. The curriculum and the quality of support for students was also acceptable at all stages, but there was a lack of support within the curriculum and in lessons for students experiencing difficulties learning. Health and safety arrangements were good at the Foundation Stage, primary and post-16 phases, but acceptable in secondary phase, where safety arrangements in laboratories needed to be improved. Partnerships with

parents and the staffing, facilities and resources were good. Governors provided acceptable support and guidance to the school and had established adequate arrangements to hold the school to account.

The school had made a little progress towards addressing the recommendations from the previous inspection report. Leaders had begun to develop assessment practices that supported teachers and helped them make better use of data. Whilst arrangements to share the best teaching had started, there was still no common understanding of what constituted good and outstanding teaching and learning. Formal and systematic career and guidance counselling for students had yet to be implemented. Nevertheless, the school had an acceptable capacity to improve.

Key strengths

- The outstanding attitudes and behaviour of students;
- The good levels of understanding demonstrated by students of Islam, local traditions, the economy and the environment;
- Students' strong examination results across most IGCSE subjects;
- A very supportive parent body;
- The good facilities, levels of staffing and resources.

Recommendations

- Raise attainment and progress in all subjects, particularly in Islamic Education, Arabic as an additional language and science;
- Improve teaching, learning and assessment across the school;
- Ensure that the curriculum meets the needs of all learners, particularly those in the Foundation Stage;
- Improve the arrangements for the identification and provision for all students with SEN;
- Take a strategic approach to improvement planning to ensure greater impact of initiatives on all aspects of the school.

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

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Islamic Education				
Attainment	Not Applicable	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable
Progress	Not Applicable	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable
Arabic as a first language				
Attainment	Not Applicable	Good	Good	Good
Progress	Not Applicable	Good	Good	Good
Arabic as an additional language				
Attainment	Not Applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Not Applicable
Progress	Not Applicable	Good	Acceptable	Not Applicable
English				
Attainment	Good	Good	Good	Acceptable
Progress	Good	Good	Good	Acceptable
Mathematics				
Attainment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good	Good
Progress	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good	Good
Science				
Attainment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good	Acceptable
Progress	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good	Acceptable

Students' attainment was inconsistent across phases and key subjects. In Islamic Education, students displayed good knowledge of values and morals and Islamic etiquettes. However, recitation and Hadeeth skills were below expectations for non-Arab students. In Arabic as an additional language, students' writing skills required improvement. In English, students' listening, speaking, reading and writing skills were very well developed at the secondary stage. Across the school, students' computation skills in

mathematics were better than their understanding of how to apply the mathematical concepts. In science students had good knowledge but only acceptable levels of conceptual understanding; their ability to make links with their own experiences and their practical application skills were both under-developed. A majority of students needed regular and specific direction in the completion of experiments and were unaware of the importance of fair testing and measuring accurately.

Students' progress followed a similar pattern to attainment but progress in Arabic as an additional language was good against starting points and in lessons. Progress in most key subjects was better in the secondary than in other phases, apart from in English, where it was also good in the Foundation Stage and primary. Students with special educational needs made acceptable progress in lessons. The progress of Emirati students was in line with that of other students across the school.

How good is the students' personal and social development?

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Attitudes and behaviour	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Understanding of Islam and appreciation of local traditions and culture	Acceptable	Good	Good	Good
Civic, economic and environmental understanding	Acceptable	Good	Good	Good

Relationships throughout the school were cordial and very respectful. Students demonstrated maturity and sensible attitudes. Behaviour in lessons and around the school was good and students showed high levels of personal responsibility and were sensitive to the needs of others, often leading by example. Their work ethic was good across all phases. They also demonstrated positive attitudes towards healthy living; making wise choices about their own health and well-being. They understood the importance of exercise in and outside school and took part in activities which promoted healthy living. Attendance in the last semester was good. Overall, most students had a good understanding of Islam and an appreciation of local

traditions and culture, although this was not as well-developed in the FS. They had good knowledge of the role of Islam in the lives of Muslims and non-Muslims in Dubai. Older students understood the impact of Islam in the wider world and stressed the positive roles their religion played in their lives. Most students valued the multi-cultural nature of their school and Dubai. They displayed high levels of respect for each other and their teachers. Students celebrated National Day enthusiastically and enjoyed the participation of their parents and teachers. A majority of students were unaware of many aspects of the different cultures of their peers. Students' civic, economic and environmental understanding was good apart from in Foundation Stage where this needed further development. Students had good understanding of the benefits of using renewable energy sources and of the issues surrounding sustainability of the resources in Dubai and the world. They understood, for example, the need to increase the country's reliance on solar power in the long term. Economic understanding was less consistently developed across the phases. Students knew there was a global recession but had only expected levels of understanding of the reasons for this and the impact on their lives in Dubai. Students participated in a limited range of projects which developed civic responsibilities. A few students lacked understanding of the importance of this in their development as global citizens.

How good are the teaching, learning and assessment?

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Teaching for effective learning	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good
Quality of students' learning	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Assessment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

Teaching for effective learning was acceptable in the Foundation Stage, primary and secondary phases and good in the post-16 phase. Across the school, the majority of teachers had good subject knowledge, and used a range of resources including new technology. The best teaching was seen in a few classes where students responded positively to open-ended questioning. This enabled them to reflect upon their learning and to communicate their ideas in a variety of ways. Nevertheless, questioning quality was inconsistent and generally did not probe student's understanding, promote independent thinking or provide well-informed feedback. In a few lessons where teaching for effective learning was unsatisfactory, teachers

spent too much time talking to the whole class and imparting knowledge, leaving insufficient time for the students to become engaged in the learning. Overall, students were over-dependent on their teachers, and too often were given activities which were not matched appropriately to the wide range of individual needs. The quality of teaching in other subjects including business studies, French, environmental management, physical education, music and art, varied from unsatisfactory to outstanding.

The quality of learning was acceptable overall. Most students had positive attitudes towards learning and were focused and conscientious within lessons. They responded with enthusiasm when given opportunities to be involved in collaborative learning or when activities promoted independence and critical thinking. Too often, lessons in the Foundation Stage classes were over-directed and the children were not encouraged to develop responsibility for their own learning or to build on their personal interests. In a few lessons in primary classes, students were over-reliant on their teachers' directions and were passive learners. Enquiry and research skills were not well developed in most lessons, particularly in science, where insufficient opportunities were given to students to make predictions and draw conclusions. Students were not always able to make connections in their learning to other subjects.

The quality of assessment was acceptable overall. Heads of departments used a range of measures to monitor students' progress and attainment. They had developed a formative assessment system that used project and field trip outcomes to check student progress. Leaders used IGCSE data at Grades 11 and 12 to understand students' learning needs better. Across the rest of the school, assessment was based on internal tests and other information. Most teachers knew their students well. Questioning by teachers did not regularly lead to well-informed feedback and so sometimes students did not know how to improve. Similarly, while books were mostly marked regularly, some teachers did not provide detailed written feedback to students to ensure they understood the next steps in their learning. Teachers did not routinely use assessment information to guide learning objectives or plan activities which met the needs of the range of learners in lessons.

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

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Curriculum quality	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

The quality of the curriculum was acceptable across the school. Arabic as a first and additional language and Islamic Education were included as additional opportunities in the Foundation Stage and the curriculum was enriched with French in Grades 5 to 7. Business Studies and Environmental Management were offered as optional IGCSE courses. There were few curricular choices for students at the post-16 level. The number

of classes for students in Grade 11 was too limited to ensure progress across a range of subjects. Since the last inspection, the curriculum had been reviewed and there was greater continuity and progression in English, mathematics and science. However, other subjects such as art, music and physical education had not received the same attention and progression was still lacking in these subjects. Schemes of work were inadequate to support progression in skills and content, which made it difficult for students to make connections with earlier learning. In the Foundation Stage, the curriculum had breadth, balance, continuity and development. However, the emphasis on direct teaching was not balanced by opportunities for children to independently apply their new learning inside and outside of the classroom. A few educational visits had been planned to support learning in the classrooms across the school. A few extra-curricular activities were available to primary students.

How well does the school protect and support students?

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Health and Safety	Good	Good	Acceptable	Good
Quality of Support	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

The arrangements for ensuring students' health and safety were good in most phases but just acceptable in the secondary phase. The school site was safe and secure. Classrooms were clean and well maintained, although some classrooms were too small and overcrowded with student's heavy school bags. Staff responsibilities for health and safety were clearly defined and generally carried out well, although there was an inconsistent approach to ensuring safety whilst leading experiments in a secondary science lesson. Records of health and safety issues were meticulous and kept up-to-date. Emergency evacuation practices were carried out twice a year. Measures to ensure students' well-being on school transport were exemplary. The school medical staff contributed well to the health education programme, which enabled students to understand about healthy living. Any health related issues were dealt with promptly and sensitively. Medicines and students' personal records were kept secure. Child protection measures were thorough and clearly understood by all staff members.

The quality of support provided for students was acceptable. Staff-student relationships were good and students behaved well in lessons and around the school. The personal well-being of students was a priority for the school. However the guidance and support for older students about to make future choices were less well developed. Teachers knew their students well and created a positive atmosphere for learning. Nevertheless, a lack of differentiation in lessons prevented students at the lower levels of

attainment from accessing learning, and students at higher levels from reaching their potential. Systems for the identification and support of students with special educational needs were not developed enough, nor were they strategically or consistently applied across the school. The arrangements for managing attendance were good and almost all students attended school regularly. However, strategies to support punctuality at the start of the day were not having positive effects.

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	Good

The leadership of the school was acceptable. The head of the school and the management team were committed, well-meaning and demonstrated care and respect for the student body. Heads of departments showed understanding of the general needs of the school. However, they had not been empowered to make the changes that were needed to bring about improvement. Consequently, they did not have significant effects upon the quality of teaching and thus students' attainment and progress were not being maximised. The school demonstrated an acceptable capacity to improve. There was an underdeveloped awareness of how leadership influences students' learning outcomes.

Self-evaluation and improvement planning were acceptable. The school had a generally realistic view of the majority of its key priorities and had begun to address the recommendations of the previous inspection report. The action plan did not contain sufficient details about how improvement was to be implemented or how it would be measured. The school did not have a realistic view of the performance of its teachers or the quality of learning in lessons. Whilst senior managers carried out classroom observations, they were not sufficiently rigorous. The information gained was not used effectively to inform self-evaluation or to improve teaching.

Partnership with parents and the community was good. Parents were highly supportive of the school and the leadership team. Parents felt welcomed in the school and knew they could discuss any aspect of their children's education. They felt that teachers were approachable and had quickly resolved any issues. Parents meetings were held regularly and these, along with written reports, informed parents about their children's progress in class tests and examinations. There was no parents' association and parents were not always involved in decision-making or in other aspects of the life of the school. The school's links with the local community were limited but productive and impacted positively on students' learning.

The quality of governance was acceptable. The governing committee met the statutory and instructional needs of the school in an effective manner. The body benefited from representation from the parent body and local businesses. The governing body welcomed suggestions from parents and the school community. Nevertheless, little impact of the governance system was evident in the work of the school and accountability measures needed further development in order to support improvements.

The management of staffing, facilities and resources was good. Teachers were sufficiently qualified and deployed effectively. The school was attractive, clean and well cared for but a few classrooms were too small for the numbers of students. As noted in the previous report, the school's library was not sufficient for the teaching programme and lacked appropriate resource materials and technologies that students could use. Teachers did not benefit from individual professional development opportunities to further develop their teaching skills. A There was no proper area for students to sit and eat their food during the break time; consequently, many sat on the ground to eat. The outside play areas were mostly concrete and brick, but a new games hall was being prepared at the time of the inspection. There was no prayer room for Muslim students.

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 that responded to the survey follows:

Responses to the surveys			
Responses received	Number		Percentage
Parents	This year	156	26%
	Last year	134	23%
Teachers	14		21%
Students	3		1%

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

About one quarter of the parents responded to the survey. About a fifth of teachers and very few students responded to their surveys. Most parents who responded to the questionnaire reported a high degree of satisfaction with the leadership of the school and the quality of education their children were receiving. They felt the school kept their children safe and most felt their children were happy in their learning and were making good progress. Just over half did not know the school's arrangements for supporting children with additional learning needs. A third felt they would like to be more involved in the life of the school. A third believed that resources and equipment could be improved and they did not know whether or not the previous inspection had led to any improvements in the school. A few staff members responded to the questionnaire and thought they would benefit from more training and better and more frequent communication between managers and teachers. Students who responded wanted more after school activities and school trips, as did parents.

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.

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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