

Lycée Georges Pompidou Secondaire Inspection Report

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Explanation of the inspection levels used in the report

Outstanding – exceptionally high quality of performance or practice.

Good – the expected level of quality for every school in Dubai.

Acceptable – the minimum level of acceptability required for Dubai. All key aspects of performance and practice in every school should meet or exceed this level.

Unsatisfactory – quality not yet at the level acceptable for schools in Dubai. Schools will be expected to take urgent measures to improve the quality of any aspect of their performance or practice that is judged at this level.

Lycée Georges Pompidou (Secondaire) was inspected in February 2010 as part of the regular inspection of all schools in Dubai. The inspection covered key aspects of the work of the school at all stages. It evaluated students' achievements, the effectiveness of the school, the environment for learning, the school's processes for self-evaluation and capacity for improvement. There was a particular focus on students' progress in Islamic Education (for Muslim students), Arabic, English, French, mathematics and science.

Basic information about the school

Located in Ruwayyah, Lycée Georges Pompidou (Secondaire) is a private school providing education for boys and girls from sixième to terminale, aged 11 to 18 years. The school follows a French curriculum. At the time of the inspection, there were 898 students on roll. The student attendance reported by the school for the last academic session was good.

Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau (DSIB) analysed responses to on-line questionnaires completed by parents. Parents were happy with the progress of their children in all key subjects, and most parents stated that their children enjoyed school, the teaching was good and that their children were treated fairly at school. However, a majority of parents disagreed or did not know if there was a good range of activities which their children found enjoyable and stimulating. Most indicated that they felt comfortable about approaching the school with a question or complaint. Just over a half disagreed or did not know whether the school would do something about a concern they raised. Only a minority agreed that the school had good links with the local community. A majority of parents agreed that the school was good at consulting them on decisions which affected their children. Written comments showed that a few parents were concerned with smoking at the school and some parents were concerned about teachers' absences, the quality of food in the school, and the 'rough manners' of a few teachers.

How well does the school perform overall?

The Lycée Georges Pompidou was a good school overall. Success in the French Baccalauréat exceeded 90 per cent, with particularly strong results in science and English. Attainment was at least good throughout the school in science, mathematics, English and French. First language speakers of Arabic achieved good results, but students learning Arabic as an additional language made only acceptable progress. Student progress and attainment in Islamic Education were unsatisfactory. Students' attitudes and behaviour were good, and students were polite to visitors and mostly pleasant with each other. They had an acceptable understanding of Islam, greatly appreciated the multi-cultural nature of Dubai and had a good sense of civic responsibility. Class representatives were involved in a school council. Students in Collège had good economic and environmental understanding, whilst older students had an outstanding awareness of the current economic situation and Dubai's development.

The quality of teaching across the school was good, with most teachers planning well-paced and challenging lessons. However, a minority of lessons were dominated by too much teacher talk. Learning was good, with students co-operating and contributing well to class discussions. In most lessons children were highly involved in engaging activities although, in some classes, their roles were limited to passive learning. Assessment had developed significantly since the previous report, although it was not consistent across the school. In many subjects students received accurate feedback on their learning that ensured they knew how to improve. There was a good curriculum that covered the requirements of the French Ministry of Education and so had good continuity and progression. Students were involved in a variety of sports, although with insufficient opportunity to compete against other schools. Many links between subjects had been established. There were few extra-curricular opportunities, but the local community was used effectively for field trips and to add relevance to the curriculum. The school's provisions for health and safety were acceptable. Students were safe and well supported. Most health matters were addressed well, but a few students smoked on and around the school campus.

Leadership and management were good. Senior managers worked well as a team, and were developing the roles of subject co-ordinators. There was good improvement planning, with well-organised strategic planning and significant progress on the recommendations of the previous inspection report. There were good partnerships with parents and the community, with open communication and use of the community as a resource for learning. The school's governing body had good stakeholder representation and provided school leaders with support and guidance.

Key features of the school

- Good teamwork among senior leaders and the development of middle managers, which were beginning to impact positively on assessment practices;
- The governing body had provided excellent strategic planning and long-term financial security;
- Improvements in assessment procedures were giving some students a clearer idea of their strengths and how to improve;
- Outstanding attainment and progress in science in the Lycée;
- The school delivered well on its promise to parents by ensuring that students could transfer successfully to other French schools or higher education institutions;
- A significant minority of lessons were dominated by teacher talk, and did not address the wide range of abilities in a few classes;
- A few students were observed smoking on school premises.

Recommendations

- Raise attainment and progress in Islamic Education and Arabic as an additional language;
- Continue to develop best practices in teaching, learning and assessment, taking into account the wide-ranging needs of different students;
- Further broaden the curriculum to enhance students' experiences, for example through competitive sport or music;
- Take sufficient preventative measures to ensure that students do not smoke on the school campus.

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

Attainment in Islamic Education was unsatisfactory and progress was acceptable in the Collège; both attainment and progress were unsatisfactory in the Lycée. Only a few Arab Muslim students could recite verses from The Holy Qur'an. Most students had little knowledge of Islam when they entered the school, but they began to understand the behaviour expected of a good Muslim, and Grade 6 students understood the importance of prayer. Few students in Grade 11 showed an acceptable understanding of Islamic rulings such as rules concerning marriage. Students had very limited knowledge about Prophet Mohammed's (PBUH) life and the main Islamic characters in early Islam. Non-Arab Muslim students had very limited

knowledge about Islam and only a few students knew a few facts about Prophet Mohammed's (PBUH) early life.

Attainment in Arabic was unsatisfactory in the Collège and acceptable in the Lycée, and progress was acceptable across the school. Arab and Non-Arab students made good progress in their reading. The majority of Non-Arab students in Grades 6 to 7 read short texts and understood most of what they read while Arab students read longer texts fluently and demonstrated good comprehension skills. In speaking, the majority of Grade 12 Arab students could express their ideas and points of view accurately while only a minority of Non-Arab students could communicate effectively or answer simple questions to an acceptable level. Most students across the school made limited progress with writing and most Non-Arab students could only copy letters, words and sentences; only a few of them could produce sentences or short paragraphs.

Attainment and progress in English were good throughout the school. Most students in the Collège had good listening skills and could identify details and opinions in what they heard. They took part in conversations and could seek and convey information in clear and often grammatically correct language. Most students' reading comprehension skills were good. Reading selections included magazine articles, excerpts from the classics and poetry. By Grade 9 students were able to write extended answers to questions requiring inference and deduction. In the Lycée most students were able to discuss challenging moral and social issues in eloquent and expressive language. By Grade 12 students were writing argumentative and persuasive essays.

Attainment and progress in French were good across the school. French was the language of instruction and was developed in the majority of subjects. From Grade 6 students made good gains in vocabulary, and reading proficiency became good. They acquired a range of strategies to improve their grammatical accuracy, especially in their agreements of verbs and adjectives. In the Lycée students developed their language and skills of literacy appreciation by discussing and analysing texts. They discussed characters such as *Antigone* with confidence. Throughout the school, students' oral French was good and often of high quality. Most achieved above average levels in written and spoken French and good levels in the various Baccalauréat options.

Attainment and progress in mathematics were good across the school. Students entered the Collège with skills which were broadly in line with international expectations and made good progress to reach standards which were above those expected for their ages by the end of Lycée. The youngest students used their growing knowledge and skills to good effect when plotting co-ordinates or identifying the properties of shapes. Students in Grade 10 had a good understanding of algebra, and, with support, could use simultaneous equations to solve word problems. By Grade 12, all students were using mathematical terminology and notation precisely.

In science, attainment and progress were good in the Collège and outstanding at the Lycée stage. Students entered the school with low levels of scientific knowledge and poor experimental skills, but made good progress. By Grade 9 students knew the most significant

properties of common elements and could deduce their properties from their positions in the periodic table. In higher grades, students used scientific terminology with precision, and were skilled in carrying out practical experimental procedures. By Grade 12 students knew the cell types and glands involved in reproduction, could identify them in microscope slides, compare slides with different characteristics and draw appropriate conclusions.

How good is the students' personal and social development?

Students' attitudes and behaviour were good. They were polite to strangers and mostly pleasant with each other. Most were attentive in lessons and sensible in the grounds during breaks. Attendance during the last session was good. Punctuality in the morning was dependent upon the arrival times of buses, as the large majority of students used them. Most students were punctual for lessons, given the size and layout of the campus.

Students had an acceptable understanding of Islam. They knew about the need to pray and about some Islamic festivals. They had a good understanding of the richness of cultures and traditions in Dubai, which all greatly appreciated. Students enjoyed being part of its multi-cultural society in school and at home. Students had good civic understanding. Students across the school voted for representatives on their school council. They were consulted on support provided for students, health and hygiene, sport and extra-curricular activities and appreciated that their voices were heard.

Students' economic and environmental understandings were good in the Lycée and better in the Collège. The older students in particular showed an outstanding awareness of the current economic situation in Dubai, the impact of the recession around the world and the importance of tourism. They were aware of the recent slow-down of Dubai's rapid expansion. The school organised visits to the desert for students to appreciate the excellent opportunities for studying the stars and underground water. They recognised the need to preserve desalinated water.

How good are the teaching and learning?

The quality of teaching across the school was good. Teachers in all departments had good knowledge of their subjects, although not all had an equally good understanding of how best to teach them. Science teachers consistently planned lessons which were engaging and inspiring and this impacted positively on student's results in examinations. In a few other lessons students were mostly passive, following their teachers' instructions. In the best lessons, good use was made of resources other than textbooks. For example, students in one French class participated in an interesting discussion about *Antigone* after the teacher skilfully included a French film in her lesson. In the majority of English lessons, teachers' good questioning and clear explanations facilitated the understanding of challenging texts. Whilst individual support for students was provided by many teachers out of lesson time, there was little in-class challenge or support for higher and lower attaining students.

Students' learning across the school was of good quality. Students valued one another and demonstrated respect for their peers when listening and contributing to class discussions. They were often fully involved in their learning, participating in lively discussions with peers and their teachers. Students worked particularly well in pairs and in groups, when responding to questions or carrying out scientific investigations. Older students in one French class used group work to very good effect. Of particular note was the high quality learning in one science class where students learned about the causes and consequences of diabetes. They used their keen observation skills very well when comparing cells and confidently searched the Internet for relevant information which would enhance their understanding. In the few classes where teachers talked for too long, students were not given enough responsibility for their own learning.

Assessment of learning was of acceptable quality. The recently implemented practices were consistent across departments and all staff members were aware of their role in the collection and analysis of data. Senior staff members were rigorous in their approach, ensuring that the data collected from assessments was carefully analysed. Consequently, the school was carefully monitoring student progress. Students were given clear feedback in the majority of lessons against a standardised marking scheme. In many cases they were given clear guidance as to how they could improve their work. However, students were not involved in assessing their own work; therefore they could not say what they needed to do to improve their work.

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

The curriculum was of good quality in both phases of the school. It covered the current requirements of the French Ministry of Education, which accredited it. Senior managers were reviewing planned curricular changes for 2010-11. The school offered a rich variety of languages. Arabic was taught both as a first and additional language. English, German, Spanish and Latin were also taught. Additionally, the school organised the learning of Chinese and Italian by correspondence. Following a recommendation of the previous inspection, the school complied with the Ministry of Education's requirements for teaching Islamic Education to Muslim students in all year groups. Several students regretted the lack of music in the curriculum. The school prepared its students for the three most usual academic baccalauréats: science and mathematics; languages; and economics and social sciences. All students were taught history, geography and sports throughout the school. The school's large gymnasium, playing fields and swimming pool allowed students to enjoy a good range of physical activities. They could practise individual sports such as swimming and running in order to increase their point score in the Baccalauréat. Although all students received lessons in information and communication technology (ICT), its use was not as widely integrated into subject learning as is found in many international schools. Many staff members offered a range of learning activities and work on the school website, which allowed students to extend their knowledge at home and helped them prepare for examinations. Students in their

Terminale year received guidance on further education and career choices. Parents and health professionals guided and contributed to students' health education.

How well does the school protect and support students?

Arrangements to ensure students' health, safety and security were acceptable across the school. The premises and facilities were well maintained and measures were taken to ensure students' safety as construction work was going on. Arrangements concerning school transportation were adequate considering the major road works taking place around the school campus. Students received good medical care, often combined with quality advice on various health issues pertaining to their lifestyles. The school regularly invited guest speakers to help raise awareness about various issues, ranging from the effects of tobacco and drugs to oral hygiene. However, these attempts were undermined when students continued to smoke on school premises.

The quality of support the school provided its students was good in both phases. Relationships between most staff members and students were positive and based upon mutual respect. Most teachers knew their students' strengths and weaknesses well. A sizable minority of teachers did not cater to students' individual educational needs in their lessons. Students had ready access to known and trusted members of staff who provided advice and guidance on academic, personal and social issues. Students' concerns were handled in confidence and parents were contacted as necessary. Members of staff, including a psychologist, were contacted by parents if they needed to discuss issues pertaining to their children's well being. Students' academic and personal development was monitored and tracked by teachers and the administration. Action was taken as necessary to ensure improvement. The school kept accurate records of attendance which were logged for every lesson of the school day.

How good are the leadership and management of the school?

The quality of leadership was good. The Principal and Vice Principal worked well as a team, with clear areas of responsibility. They had good relationships with staff, which had led to significant school improvements. The school had started to develop middle management well. This was beginning to improve learning in many subjects. There was a strong vision for the future of the school, including developing into a *Lycée International* with special language status, and the overall growth of the Lycée.

Self-evaluation and improvement planning were good. Senior leaders showed good understandings of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Good development planning identified who would do what, why and how, with good evaluation procedures to ensure that developments were effective. There was a three-year plan to develop ICT throughout the school, including interactive whiteboards and extended use of computers. Parents reported that many previous problems, such as bussing and communication, no longer caused difficulties. The finances of the school had been stabilised. Two main issues from the previous

inspection report had been addressed; provision of Islamic Education was compliant with the UAE Ministry of Education regulations and assessment of learning had improved significantly.

Partnership with parents and community was good. The school involved parents through class delegates, regular parent-teacher meetings and an 'open door' policy. Parents were also involved through the Conseille d'Etablissement, Conseille Générale and an active parents association. Parents spoke of transparency and good communication, and that relationships with the school had improved significantly in the last few years. They said that they were kept well informed about the school through regular written communication and that telephone contact was always available when parents were interested, although some parents did not follow their children's progress carefully. The community was used for a wide variety of field trips to broaden students' experiences.

Governance of the school was good. Governors had a good understanding of major school strategic issues, but did not get involved in micromanagement. They had brought considerable financial expertise to the school, which had stabilised finances and provided an opportunity for future building development. There were good relationships between school leaders and the board, which supported developments such as the plan for ICT resourcing and the development of the building. The Conseille d'Etablissement had good stakeholder representation. It comprised of one third school administration, one third elected parent and student representatives and one third staff representatives.

Staffing, facilities and resources were good. The school was fully staffed, and all staff had appropriate qualifications. Although student enrolment was slightly down from the previous year, the numbers of teachers and classes were maintained. The school building was modern and conducive to learning, with attractive gardens and grounds, although some classrooms were bare and so did not provide stimulating environments. Classrooms were spacious and there were good specialist rooms and facilities, including a swimming pool and sports facilities, and well-equipped science laboratories. The spacious library was well-used, with suitable ICT resources, books, newspapers and journals in many languages. Facilities for ICT were put to good use in science, but this use was more limited in most other subjects.

Summary of inspection judgements

In their evaluation of the overall effectiveness of the school, the inspection team made judgements about the following aspects of the school's performance.

Four descriptors are: Outstanding; Good; Acceptable; Unsatisfactory.

How good are the students' attainment and progress in Islamic Education?		
Age group:	Collège	Lycée
Attainment	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Progress over time	Acceptable	Unsatisfactory

How good are the students' attainment and progress in Arabic?		
Age group:	Collège	Lycée
Attainment	Unsatisfactory	Acceptable
Progress over time	Acceptable	Acceptable

How good are the students' attainment and progress in English?		
Age group:	Collège	Lycée
Attainment	Good	Good
Progress over time	Good	Good

How good are the students' attainment and progress in French?		
Age group:	Collège	Lycée
Attainment	Good	Good
Progress over time	Good	Good

How good are the students' attainment and progress in mathematics?		
Age group:	Collège	Lycée
Attainment	Good	Good
Progress over time	Good	Good

How good are the students' attainment and progress in science?		
Age group:	Collège	Lycée
Attainment	Good	Outstanding
Progress over time	Good	Outstanding

How good is the students' personal and social development?		
Age group:	Collège	Lycée
Attitudes and behaviour	Good	Good
Islamic, cultural and civic understanding	Acceptable	Good
Economic and environmental understanding	Good	Outstanding

How good are teaching and learning?		
Age group:	Collège	Lycée
Teaching for effective learning	Good	Good
Quality of students' learning	Good	Good
Assessment	Acceptable	Acceptable

How well does the curriculum meet the educational needs of all students?		
Age group:	Collège	Lycée
Curriculum quality	Good	Good

How well does the school protect and support students?		
Age group:	Collège	Lycée
Health and safety	Acceptable	Acceptable
Quality of support	Good	Good

How good are the leadership and management of the school?	
Quality of leadership	Good
Self-evaluation and improvement planning	Good
Partnerships with parents and the community	Good
Governance	Good
Staffing, facilities and resources	Good

How well does the school perform overall?
Good

Next Steps

The school has been asked to prepare an action plan indicating how it will address the main findings of the report, and to share that plan with parents. 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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