

INSPECTION REPORT

Queen International School

Report published in April 2013

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT Queen International School

Location	Hor Al Anz
Type of school	Private
Website	www.qisdubai.com
Telephone	04-265-2600
Address	PO Box 85999, Dubai
Principal	Malaka Abdul Moneim Khalil
Curriculum	UK
Gender of students	Boys and Girls
Age / Grades or Year Groups	3-18 / Kindergarten to Grade 12
Attendance	Acceptable
Number of students on roll	1,279
Largest nationality group of Students	Arab
Number of Emirati students	273 (21%)
Date of the inspection	14th to 17th January 2013

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The context of the school

Queen International School, located in Hor Al Anz, is a private school providing education in English for boys and girls aged three to 18 years. Students were grouped into 45 classes from the Foundation Stage to the Post-16 phase. At the time of the inspection the enrolment was 1,279 students. Approximately 21 per cent of students were Emirati.

The school followed a UK curriculum based on the National Curriculum for England. Students completed the International General Certificate of Education (IGCSE) and Advanced Standard (AS) examinations as part of their studies.

Fifty-four different nationalities were represented among the student population. Approximately 12 per cent of the students had been formally identified by the school as having some form of special educational need. There were 72 appropriately qualified teachers plus the Principal and members of the senior leadership team. Eight new teachers had joined the school in the current academic year. The school had been at the present site for fourteen years and the Principal had been in office throughout this period.

Overall school performance 2012-2013

Acceptable

Key strengths

- Students' attainment and progress in English were good and their progress was outstanding in the secondary phase;
- Students' significant successes in their external examinations;
- The good teaching and learning in English, mathematics and science in the secondary and Post-16 phases;
- Parents felt welcome at the school and found the senior leaders proactive in resolving matters of concern.

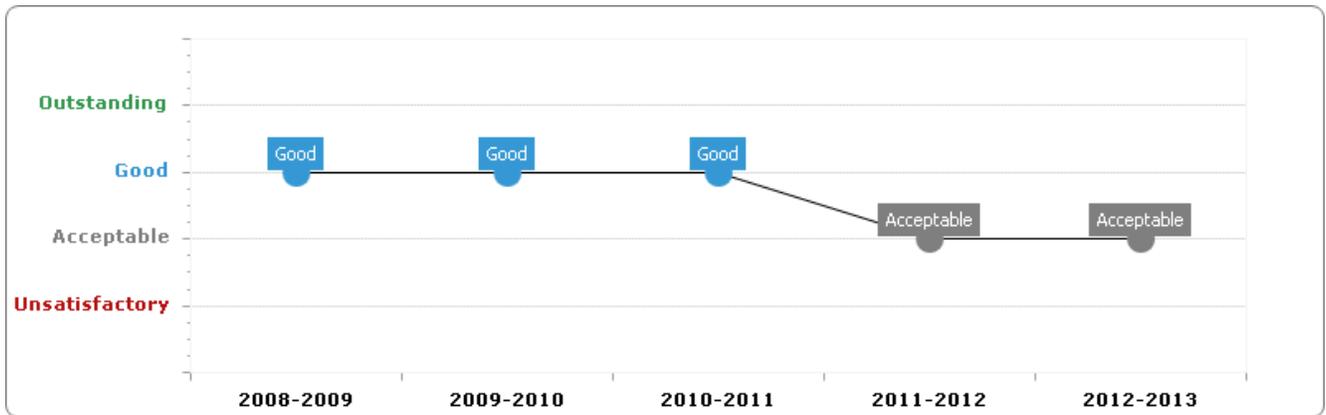
Recommendations

- Improve students' attainment and progress in most key subjects in the Foundation Stage and primary phase;
- Use assessment data to plan learning activities that address the needs of different groups of students;
- Continue to broaden and enrich the schools' curriculum beyond the classroom, providing increased opportunities for independent learning, research and critical thinking;
- Ensure that there is specific expertise to improve the methods of identifying and supporting students with special educational needs;
- Develop the school's self-evaluation processes by carefully monitoring the students' experiences and the educational outcomes of the school.

Progress since the last inspection

- The progress made by secondary and post-16 students in English had improved;
- Foundation Stage children had improved their understanding of Islamic values;
- Secondary teaching and learning had improved to good;
- The school had made slow progress in establishing procedures for the identification and provision for students with special educational needs.

Trend of overall performance



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	Good
Progress	Good	Good	Outstanding	Good
Mathematics				
Attainment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good	Good
Progress	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good	Good
Science				
Attainment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good	Good
Progress	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good	Good

[Read paragraph](#)

How good is the students' personal and social development?

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Attitudes and behaviour	Good	Good	Good	Good
Understanding of Islamic values and local, cultural and global awareness	Good	Good	Good	Good
Community and environmental responsibility	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

[Read paragraph](#)

How good are the teaching, learning and assessment?

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

[Read paragraph](#)

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

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

[Read paragraph](#)

How well does the school protect and support students?

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Health and Safety	Good	Good	Good	Good
Quality of Support	Acceptable	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
Partnerships with parents and the community	Good
Governance	Acceptable
Management, including staffing, facilities and resources	Good

[Read paragraph](#)

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

Students' attainment varied across the school. It was higher in the secondary and post-16 phases across the key subjects. In Islamic Education, most Arab students' recitation skills were developing well, as they were able to recite Surahs with reasonable levels of accuracy and fluency. However, non-Arabs often had difficulty with Tajweed rules and made frequent mistakes in their pronunciation of Arabic words. In Arabic, students' listening skills were well-developed in the primary school; they found little difficulty in understanding standard Arabic spoken by their teachers or their peers. In the secondary phase, the reading and writing skills of the majority of students were above curriculum expectations. In English, most students acquired the skills of writing, grammar and spelling through tasks which were sequential. Students' knowledge and skills in mathematics were well-developed in the higher years of the school. Science students in the secondary and post-16 phases were very successful in their external examinations in biology, physics and chemistry. They had a good understanding of how to conduct scientific investigations and they recorded their findings accurately.

In Islamic Education, most lessons and projects focused on Islamic concepts, laws and Seerahs. Students made better progress in these topics compared to other areas, such as interpreting Hadeeth and verses from The Holy Qur'an. Students of Arabic as a first language made good progress. In Arabic as an additional language, most students in the primary phase showed better progress in all four Arabic language aspects than their counterparts in the secondary phase. In English, in the Foundation Stage and primary phases, progress was inhibited by the limited opportunities for students to practise skills in imaginative or extended writing. Their ability to link knowledge, skills and understanding in mathematics to previous learning and real life situations was better-developed in the secondary and post-16 phases. Learning objectives in science lessons in the primary phase did not consistently challenge the more able learners and thus their progress was restricted.

[View judgements](#)

How well does the school provide for Emirati students?

The attainment and progress of Emirati students generally matched that of the school's student population at large. Emirati students' attainment and progress were at least acceptable across all key subjects and in all phases. Most students began school with low levels of English, but their attainment in other subjects was similar to their peers. It was stronger in Arabic and English where attainment was also good. Attendance was acceptable, but poor punctuality adversely influenced the attainment of a few Emiratis. Engagement in lessons and homework was acceptable in all phases for most Emirati students. Reports to parents were informative and accurate. Emirati parents used the schools 'open door' policy and formal

reports to become involved in their children's education. Two members of the Advisory Board were Emiratis.

How good is the students' personal and social development?

Students' attitudes and behaviour were good in all phases of the school. Most students displayed responsible attitudes; however, there was scope to strengthen self-reliance among some year groups. Students were generally well behaved in and outside of lessons. There was a high level of respect for teachers and peers. Attitudes towards, and practices of healthy eating and living were mixed. Across all phases, punctuality required improvement, especially at the start of the school day; this disrupted morning assemblies and some lessons. Overall, attendance was acceptable during the last full term. Students' understanding of Islamic values and culture was good. A majority of them could describe the key features of Islamic culture and their effects upon society. They were keenly familiar with aspects of UAE's heritage and traditions and how they influence life in Dubai. Great respect was shown to the national flag and anthem during assemblies. There was good recognition and awareness of cultural diversity amongst peers. Social interaction was cross-cultural, with well-developed inter-cultural respect. Students' demonstrations of community and environmental responsibility were acceptable. Most students were aware of their responsibilities. There was scope to enhance this through the recently established student council. Almost all students had a positive work ethic, were eager to succeed and were hard working. They were not sufficiently proactive in supporting the daily operation of the school. For example, while there was good awareness of environmental change and the importance of conservation, there was scope for students to be involved in recycling and the conservation of scarce resources within the school. Litter was casually dropped by a few students during breaks in the school day, despite the prominent provision of litter bins.

[View judgements](#)

How good are the teaching, learning and assessment?

Teaching was acceptable in the Foundation Stage and primary phases. It was good in the secondary and post-16 phases. In the senior sections of the school the good subject knowledge of most teachers enabled them to pose effective questions that challenged students. These strategies helped promote high levels of achievement amongst senior students in external examinations. Most teachers' planning was detailed and was reflected in the comprehensive lesson notes of most teachers. The learning intentions shown in lesson plans were not always evident. For example, in the unsatisfactory lessons, teachers did not

adequately provide for the learning needs of different groups of students. There was an over-reliance on the use of worksheets and workbooks as the main student activities in lessons for younger students.

Similarly, the quality of learning was acceptable in the Foundation Stage and primary phase but good in the secondary and post-16 phases. Most students were keen and enthusiastic learners. When given opportunities to be involved in group work, they showed good collaborative skills and respect for each other's points of view. However, on too many occasions, students were passive listeners because teachers dominated the proceedings of the lesson. The use of student presentations was an effective way to develop students' confidence and this helped stimulate the interest of others. This approach was a particularly strong feature of the more effective senior classes in mathematics and English. Children in the Foundation Stage had limited opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning. The emphasis on project work in some subjects gave opportunities for research and development of information and communication technology skills.

The quality of assessment was acceptable overall. A comprehensive data management system enabled teachers to record test and examination results to gain profiles of their students' achievements. The school had introduced the identification of achievement levels to gain a more focused profile of student progress. The outcomes of the improved assessment process were not consistently used to modify the teaching of students with special needs. In the senior sections, effective use was made of examination data to plan for the learning needs of students. In the Foundation Stage, profiles of the children's gains in learning were at an early stage of development. Comparative data for judging students' performances against international benchmarks were not available at the time of the inspection.

[View judgements](#)

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

The school curriculum was of acceptable quality in all four phases. It had been reviewed and improved and was providing many more opportunities for cross-curricular links. These links had positive effects upon students' progress. For example, in mathematics some children were learning about angles by looking at local roads; this engaged them because their learning became more relevant. Visits and 'special days' also ensured that children were engaged in their learning in a variety of ways. In the Foundation Stage, subjects were taught independently and this slowed the children's overall progress. There were too few opportunities for the younger children to engage in independent learning tasks. As a result, they did not practise the skills they had been taught. Transition arrangements, for example at the start of the Foundation Stage and between the phases, were not robust and, as a result, not all children's needs were

met. Students, particularly in the high school, indicated that they would welcome more extra-curricular activities to enrich the curriculum.

[View judgements](#)

How well does the school protect and support students?

The arrangements for ensuring students' health and safety were good across all phases of the school. The school offered a clean, hygienic and safe environment to its students. Procedures for emergency evacuation were conducted regularly and the lessons learned from fire practices were implemented promptly. Effective procedures were employed to ensure the secure storage of science equipment, hazardous cleaning substances and medicines. Students were well supervised by teachers and support staff during the school day. There were very good arrangements to ensure the safe and orderly transportation of students to and from school. The school promoted healthy living through the work of the medical team and through some planned cross-curriculum themes. However, the school canteen did not stock many healthy foods. The school's procedures for child protection were understood clearly by staff members at all levels.

The quality of support for students was acceptable. Relationships between teachers and students were generally courteous and mutually respectful. There were clear expectations of what constituted good behaviour and, as a result, behavioural issues were infrequent and easily managed. There were clear expectations shared with parents about the need for punctuality and good attendance. However, the school did not follow through on those expectations with the rigour needed to secure improvements. This was a caring school which valued the welfare of its students very highly. However, there was no counsellor able to offer support to students who on occasion might be distressed. There was limited advice and guidance available to senior students to make informed choices about career options or progression to further or higher education. Post-16 students reported that they were not fully advised on their futures.

[View judgements](#)

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

There were insufficient strategies and resources for assessing the needs of individual students and little provision for meeting their needs in lessons. There were no basic diagnostic or screening tools. The students with special educational needs were not named on lesson plans and provision relied on varying

the seating arrangements in classrooms. Some students had received additional help from their teachers during breaks. The few individual education plans that had been completed were of poor quality and offered the teachers little guidance. Target-setting was weak and reviews of students' progress were too far apart. The school used the KHDA categories for special needs, but the teachers' understanding of the categories was weak. There was insufficient expertise on the staff to identify potential needs in some categories, particularly learning and communication. No member of staff had specialist knowledge of special needs so advice and support for teachers was limited.

How good are the leadership and management of the school?

The leadership of the school was of acceptable quality overall. The Principal and the Vice-Principal were committed and well-supported by senior managers and most subject leaders. Overall, the leadership team showed an understanding of the general needs of the school and the team was slowly becoming empowered to make the changes that were needed. By combining the strengths of the whole leadership team, the school was well-placed to improve overall student progress. The school demonstrated an acceptable capacity to improve. The leaders had taken steps to address a majority of the recommendations in the previous report and this had improved teaching and learning in the secondary and post-16 years.

The school's systems for self-evaluation and improvement planning were acceptable. The school improvement plan provided a sound basis for further developments, but performance management procedures and policies were not embedded, and lacked a clear focus regarding the outcomes for students. Monitoring of teaching and learning had contributed to improvements in only a minority of classrooms. The school's leaders recognised the need to use the self-evaluation information at its disposal more productively, for example, to reduce the number of unsatisfactory lessons and enable good practice to be more widely shared.

Links with parents and the community were good. Parents were supportive of the school, especially as most considered that their children were happy and fulfilled. They found the leaders and general staff approachable and quick to resolve any issues. Along with informal discussions with staff about their children, parents received reports about academic progress that were regular and informative. Parents were largely recipients of the school's decision-making processes rather than active participants. Links with the broader community were underdeveloped in most phases of the school.

Governance of the school was of acceptable quality. There was no direct parent or community elected representation on the Advisory Board. Two members were parents at the school and members of the local business community and most other members were from the school's leadership team. They all had a strong commitment to the school. However, their monitoring of the school's development did not focus enough on students' outcomes. The strategic and advisory roles of governors, including holding the professional leaders of the school to account for its performance, were underdeveloped.

Staffing, facilities and resources were generally good. Teachers were suitably qualified, experienced and mostly well-deployed. A programme of continuing professional development included teachers attending local workshops on differentiation. Teacher turnover was lower than in previous years. The premises were generally well maintained and fit for purpose. Facilities included a multi-purpose hall and well-shaded play areas for outdoor sports activities. Older Muslim students commented on the lack of a prayer room. The library contained mainly non-fiction resources, so that opportunities for pleasure reading were restricted.

[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	129	16%
	Last year	151	21%
Teachers	62		94%
Students	57		90%

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

A minority of parents responded to the survey, less than last year. Almost all teachers and senior students responded to their surveys. Most students believed that they were making good progress in English, mathematics and science and their parents agreed. In general, most parents reported that their children enjoyed life at school although a minority of senior students disagreed. Most parents and almost all teachers indicated that behaviour was good. A majority of parents and students agreed that Muslim and non-Muslim students had a good understanding of Islamic values. Almost half of the students did not agree that they were involved in community projects. Most parents and students agreed that teaching and learning in the school were good, with a majority reporting that teachers made sure that their children knew how to improve. However, over a third of students stated that they did not use a wide range of technology to support their learning. Only a minority of parents and students indicated that students could choose from a range of interesting extra-curricular clubs and activities. Generally, students and parents agreed that students were treated fairly at school and that the school dealt with incidents of bullying effectively. Most stakeholders surveyed believed that the school was led well; but less than a third of parents were involved in decision-making. Almost all parents stated that the school's reports were regular and helpful.

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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