

# INSPECTION REPORT

## Queen International School

Report published in April 2014

## 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, Dubai
Principal	Malaka Abdul Moneim Khalil,
Curriculum	UK
Gender of students	Boys and Girls
Age / Year Groups	3-18 / Foundation Stage to Year 12
Attendance	Good
Number of students on roll	1257
Largest nationality group of students	Arab
Number of Emirati students	240 (19%)
Date of the inspection	18th to 21st November 2013

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## The context of the school

Queen International School is located in Hor Al Anz. It is a private school providing education for boys and girls aged three to 18 years. At the time of the inspection, the roll was 1,257 students, three-quarters of whom were in the Foundation Stage or the primary phase. Around 20 per cent of students were Emirati, and almost two-thirds were Arabs from beyond the UAE. Around four per cent of students had been identified by the school as having some form of special educational need.

There were 66 appropriately qualified teachers in addition to the Principal and members of the senior leadership team. Around 23 percent of the teachers had joined the school in the current academic year. The Principal had been in post during the 15 years in which the school had been in existence.

The curriculum was broadly based on the English National Curriculum. At the end of the secondary and post-16 (Year 12) stages, students took the International General Certificate of Education (IGCSE) and Advanced Subsidiary (AS) level examinations respectively.

## Overall school performance 2013-2014

Acceptable

### Key strengths

- The school's broadly successful approach to promoting attainment and progress in Arabic, including the early start to the language in Foundation Stage;
- Outstanding progress and attainment in mathematics and science in the post-16 phase;
- Outstanding progress in English, mathematics and science in the secondary phase;
- The school's good attention to promoting healthy lifestyles and ensuring the safety of children throughout the school.

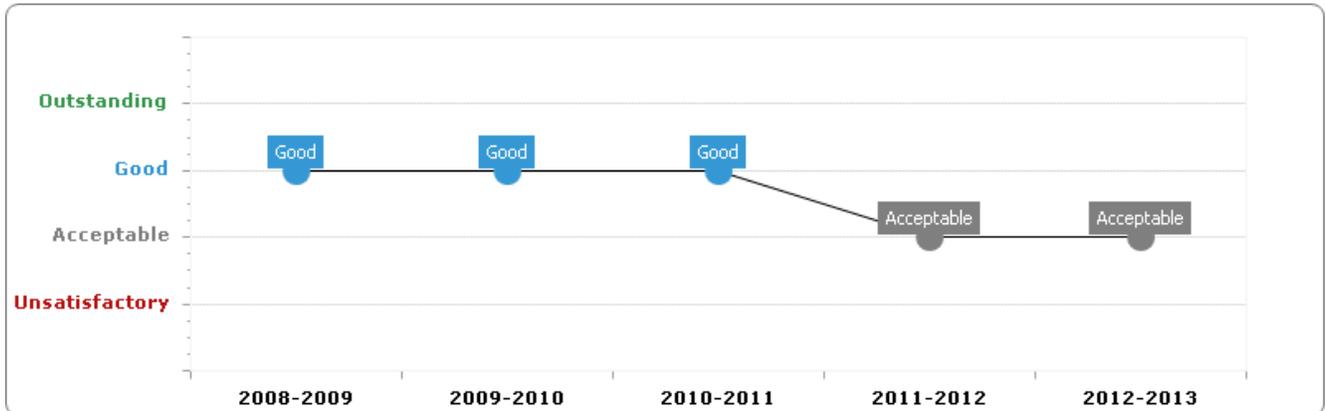
### Recommendations

- Ensure that middle leaders and other staff benefit from strong and clear leadership, which:
  - is focused on improving students' learning;
  - is based on detailed knowledge of the quality of the school's work, and;
  - supports and encourages all staff, in a practical way, to achieve their best.
- Re-design key aspects of the curriculum to ensure greater rigour and richness, and to ensure that the needs of all groups of students are met more effectively, including Emiratis and students with special educational needs.
- Deploy specialist expertise to ensure that the special needs of students are identified clearly, individualised programmes are implemented to meet their needs, and staff are supported to adapt their teaching appropriately.
- Improve the way in which staff assess students' progress, and use assessment results to modify teaching to meet the needs of groups of students more effectively.
- Improve attainment and progress in mathematics and science in the Foundation Stage and the primary phase.

## Progress since the last inspection

- Improvements had been made to support students' progress in the secondary and post-16 phases, and to raise attainment in Arabic as an additional language.
- Some small steps had been taken in using assessment data to plan learning activities that addressed the needs of different groups of students.
- Staff had been successful in some aspects of broadening and enriching the school's curriculum beyond the classroom.
- A number of improvements had been made to the school's self-evaluation processes, but there was no significant improvement in the quality of monitoring of the students' experiences and the educational outcomes of the school.

## Trend of overall performance



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

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

[Read paragraph](#)

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Quality of students' learning skills	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good	Good

[Read paragraph](#)

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

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Personal responsibility	Good	Good	Good	Good
Students' understanding of Islamic values and their local, cultural and global awareness	Good	Good	Good	Good
Community and environmental responsibility	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

[Read paragraph](#)

## How good are teaching and assessment?

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Teaching for effective learning	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good	Good
Assessment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

[Read paragraph](#)

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

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
Curriculum quality	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Curriculum design to meet the individual needs of students	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory

[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
Parents and the community	Acceptable
Governance	Acceptable
Management, including staffing, facilities and resources	Acceptable

[Read paragraph](#)

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

Attainment was mostly acceptable in Islamic Education, although good in primary. It was good in English language and Arabic as a first language. Attainment was good in primary Arabic as an additional language, but acceptable in secondary. Attainment in mathematics and science was acceptable in the Foundation Stage, good in secondary and outstanding in post-16. In Islamic Education, most primary students could explain the five pillars of Islam. In the secondary phase, most students could explain what they had learnt from the Holy Qur'an to an acceptable level. In Arabic as a first language, listening and speaking skills were above expectations, while writing skills were in line with the Ministry of Education expectations. In Arabic as an additional language, most students could listen and respond well to familiar sentences. Reading and writing skills were weaker. In English, students listened intently, and were expressive readers and confident speakers. Children in the Foundation Stage had good oral skills. Independent writing was weaker than other writing, particularly in primary and the Foundation Stage. In mathematics, children's number skills were good in the Foundation Stage. In upper primary, students were able to identify and use co-ordinates. In the secondary stage, students had a secure understanding of algebra and geometry, but problem-solving skills were less well developed. In post-16, students achieved at a high standard. In science, most Foundation Stage children and primary students could enquire but they were less good at explaining reasons for predictions. In all phases, students' abilities to carry out directed practical work was better than for independent investigations. Students achieved outstanding results in examinations.

Progress followed a broadly similar pattern to that in attainment. The progress of a majority of students in their knowledge and understanding of Islamic values and morals was above expectations. Progress in recitation skills of the Holy Qur'an was less positive. In Arabic as a first and additional language, the majority of students made good progress in listening, speaking and reading skills. Progress in writing skills was limited. In English, progress in speaking, listening and reading was better than in writing. Children in the Foundation Stage demonstrated a growing awareness of numbers and associated vocabulary. Progress in mathematics in the primary phase was overly based on textbooks, and higher order thinking skills were not given full attention. In the secondary and post-16 phases, students made outstanding progress. In most science lessons in the Foundation Stage and primary phase, students were insufficiently challenged and this affected their progress but from Year 8 onwards, their progress in understanding of concepts improved.

[View judgements](#)

## Quality of students' learning skills

The quality of students' learning skills was acceptable in the Foundation Stage and primary phase, and good in secondary and post-16. In the senior stages, students were more able to focus on their learning and were more capable of working independently of the teacher. In too many lessons, teachers tended to dominate, so that students, while still positive about their learning, became disengaged. Students in all phases had positive attitudes towards their studies and worked well individually, in pairs and in groups. In the best lessons, they were engaged and motivated throughout the lessons. Students did not have enough opportunities to take part in interesting and stimulating work involving critical thinking, problem solving and extensive research. Children in the Foundation Stage did not have sufficient opportunities to explore the world around them independently. Students' use of technology in lessons was limited, although the introduction of project work for older students gave opportunities for development and use of information and communication technology (ICT) skills in research.

[View judgements](#)

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

Throughout the school, students' personal responsibility was good. Students were respectful towards teachers, other adults and fellow students. Most behaved well when supervised. When there was less supervision, a minority of students engaged in unruly behaviour. Students had a good understanding of the importance of healthy living. The school was working to improve punctuality at the start of the school day, and had achieved some success. Attendance was good. In all phases, students' understanding of Islamic values and their local, cultural and global awareness were good. Throughout the school, almost all students displayed a very good appreciation of Islam and valued the ways in which it shaped their daily lives. Students had a good understanding of the heritage of the UAE. While many students appreciated different ways of life in the local and wider area, their understanding of other cultures in the modern world was not fully developed. Community and environmental responsibility was acceptable at all stages. Most children in the Foundation Stage and students in other phases had age-appropriate understanding of responsibilities towards the school community. The recent re-establishment of the school council was beginning to impact positively on the school. Most students enjoyed their studies and had a positive work ethic, but a minority of younger students were too passive. Students had a good understanding of environmental and sustainability issues. Their activities to support these issues were at an early stage of development.

[View judgements](#)

## How good are teaching and assessment?

Teaching was acceptable in the Foundation Stage and primary phase, and good in secondary and post-16. Good relationships between students and teachers were a strong feature of all lessons. In the senior phases, teachers demonstrated stronger subject knowledge and awareness of examination requirements. They used a greater repertoire of teaching strategies to engage students. Across the school, teachers had a strong commitment and enthusiasm for their subjects. They questioned students well overall, but too often, lessons were teacher-dominated, especially in the Foundation Stage and primary phase. Teachers relied on textbooks and worksheets, and did not customise tasks or resources enough to cater for groups of differing abilities. As a result, lower attaining students were not supported fully and higher attaining students not always challenged. Teachers shared the objectives of lessons with students but opportunities to revisit these at the end of the lesson to check learning were missed.

Assessment was acceptable in all phases. Teachers had a good general awareness of their students' strengths and development needs. Marking in books was too brief. It did not give students sufficient advice about what they needed to do to make their work better, or set them targets for improvement. Teachers questioned students and scrutinised their work to check their understanding. Strategies such as student self-assessment and peer assessment were being implemented in some lessons. Teachers asked probing questions, especially in Arabic and science, which engaged students and made them think more deeply. The school had a good range of assessment data but did not analyse the data sufficiently. Assessment results were rarely used to support teachers' planning or improve their teaching. The school had evaluated its performance against international standards of attainment but teachers did not take sufficient account of progress measures to modify their teaching.

[View judgements](#)

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

The quality of the curriculum was acceptable in all phases. It was broadly based on the English National Curriculum but did not demonstrate the breadth or rigour expected of the Foundation Stage and primary phase, even though staff reviewed the curriculum annually. Here, and particularly in the Foundation Stage, there was an over-reliance on the teaching of the key subjects at the expense of social, emotional and physical development, and opportunities to engage in independent or creative learning were limited. The shortening of the secondary curriculum to four years led to a significant narrowing of choice, which meant that the needs of many students were not fully addressed. Following the year in which they sat IGCSE examinations, students again had limited choice and were only offered one year AS programmes rather than two-year courses such as A-level. This situation was not helped by the fact that the student

population reduced by 50 percent over the course of the secondary phase. Transition arrangements within school had improved but advice on progress beyond school remained under developed. Cross-curricular links and critical thinking were evident but these aspects were inconsistent across subjects and stages. Students welcomed the recent introduction of opportunities afforded by student-led clubs for independent learning. The curriculum across all stages had not been modified to meet adequately the educational and personal development needs of different groups of students, particularly Emiratis, lower-attaining students or those with special needs.

[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. Students were appropriately supervised in all areas of the school, and good arrangements enabled the students to enter and exit the school safely from buses. However, the supervision of traffic when parents dropped off and picked up their children in cars was not fully effective. The school buildings were clean, secure and maintained to a high standard. Fire drill was undertaken regularly. A number of exit doors opened inwards, causing a potential hazard in the event of a fire. A number of classes in the Foundation Stage had a larger than recommended number of children which led to some overcrowding. The medical needs of the students were looked after well. All health records were updated regularly and medicines were stored appropriately. A healthy lifestyle was promoted well through the healthy eating policy, health checks on the students, physical education and through a range of very suitable curriculum-related projects. The canteen supplied healthy food and the students in general had healthy food for their snacks. The school's procedures for child protection were understood clearly by staff.

The quality of support was acceptable in all phases. There were good relationships between teachers and students. Staff knew students well and were mindful of their well-being and personal development. Staff encouraged student leadership, personal responsibility and a strong sense of citizenship. Students responded well to expectations and their behaviour was managed well. The school accepted students with special educational needs. Systems for promoting attendance and punctuality had not been wholly successful despite attempts at improvement. There was no school counsellor. The school did not provide adequate advice and guidance for students, particularly about further education and advice on careers for older students.

[View judgements](#)

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

All elements of leadership and management were acceptable. The Principal and the Vice-Principal had a clear vision of what the school should be but staff needed further support if they were to implement it. Heads of department and the head of curriculum provided broadly effective leadership in their areas of responsibility. They were working hard to try to improve outcomes for children and students. The school's capacity to improve lacked a strong commitment from senior leaders to addressing shortcomings in the school's work, and a clearer and more detailed focus on improving learning.

Staff employed a range of approaches to monitoring and evaluating the quality of the school's work. Heads carried out lesson observations, and there was peer teacher observation. Data on assessment were gathered from internal tests and from international benchmarking assessments. Use of data had improved but, overall, the information from lesson observations and from assessment data was not used effectively to identify weaknesses and implement improvements. The views of students and parents were not taken into account sufficiently.

Parents were generally supportive of the school. Parents received written reports on their child's progress, and had opportunities to attend meetings to discuss this progress with their child's teacher but had a limited number of opportunities to be involved in their child's learning. Written reports for primary, secondary and post-16 students did not set out the students' next steps in learning, although reports on the Foundation Stage children were more comprehensive. There was no forum in which parents could express their views and participate in decision-making. Links with the community had improved, but had not yet led to better development of students' learning or social skills.

The governing body consisted of the owner of the school, who was the Principal, other members of the school senior leadership team, and two community and parent representatives. The community representatives provided good general advice to the school but it was more difficult for staff to influence the decisions of the governing body. Monitoring and evaluation of the school's provision and development was underdeveloped.

The building and premises, including specialist areas for physical education, science and information technology, were well maintained. The library stock had not been augmented to address weaknesses in the resources for reading for pleasure, which had been highlighted in the previous year's inspection report. There was a suitable number of qualified staff. The lack of anyone with expertise in special educational needs was a weakness. Class sizes in the Foundation Stage were above the recommended limit.

[View judgements](#)

## How well does the school provide for Emirati students?

The progress of Emirati students from the Foundation Stage to the end of early secondary in Year 8 tended to be slower than for other students and too few reached the same levels of attainment. Data for 2012-13 showed that some Emirati students in all subjects and in all year groups gained internal examination marks in the top or second top bands. However, the proportion of Emirati students having such marks was less than the proportion of non-Emirati students gaining them. This pattern applied in most years in each key subject. Attendance was acceptable, but poor punctuality adversely influenced the attainment of a few Emiratis. The curriculum made good provision for the Emirati heritage to be discussed, but no modifications had been made to meet the learning needs of Emirati students more effectively. Engagement in lessons and homework was acceptable in all phases for most Emirati students. Reports to parents were informative about test marks, but did not set out next steps in learning. Reports on children in the Foundation Stage were more informative. Emirati parents used the school's open-door policy and formal reports to become involved in their children's education but, overall, their opportunities to be involved or have their views heard were limited. Two members of the Advisory Board were Emiratis.

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

Provision for special educational needs was unsatisfactory. There was no qualified and experienced leader for specialist staff for special educational needs to identify students accurately and ensure an appropriate diagnosis of them. Teachers were not supported to identify and help these students. A few students were provided with extra help by teachers. Senior staff did not ensure that the curriculum was modified or specific teaching strategies used to support students. Support in lessons and outside lessons was not adequate for students to make expected progress. There were insufficient resources. There were no individual education plans recording starting points, milestones, progress made and the next steps for development.

## How well does the school teach Arabic as a first language?

Most teachers demonstrated good subject knowledge and used their knowledge well to enhance students' language skills. They knew their students well, and were confident in teaching Arabic as a first language. They modelled good speaking skills. Although a majority of lessons were overly teacher-driven, the good interaction and often the good quality of questions helped students to make steady progress, particularly in listening, speaking and understanding and application of grammar. A majority of lessons were effectively planned, but often teachers provided few opportunities for student-led activities or independent learning. Teaching strategies were usually suitable for most students, although strategies to address the needs of lower attaining students were limited, and higher attaining students were rarely challenged.

The curriculum was closely based on the Ministry of Education textbook. The school offered Arabic lessons beyond the minimum requirement, including in the Foundation Stage, and this had a positive impact on students' attainment and progress in most aspect of the language. The limited focus on creative writing and deeper reading skills was the main weakness in the school's provision for this subject.

## 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	158	21%
	Last year	129	16%
Teachers	66		96%
Students	54		93%

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

Around one-fifth of parents responded to the survey, an increase from the previous year's return rate. All teachers and almost all senior students responded. Most parents who responded were broadly satisfied with the school. They felt that their children enjoyed school and were well looked after and safe. Only a majority thought that the school dealt well with bullying. Most thought that their children were making good progress in most key subjects, although they were slightly less positive about Arabic. Their views on the curriculum were not positive. Only just over half of them thought that their children used a range of technology tools, or benefited from interesting and challenging activities. Less than half thought that their children could choose from a wide range of courses and activities. All of these parents' views were largely reflected in the students' questionnaire returns. For example, less than half of the students were happy with the range of extra-curricular activities. Most parents and teachers felt that the school was well led, but less than half of the parents and students thought that leaders listened to their opinions. Teachers had positive views of almost all aspects of the school but about half of them thought that they did not have enough time to prepare lessons and mark students' work.

## 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](mailto:inspection@khda.gov.ae)

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