

# INSPECTION REPORT

## Al Rashid Al Saleh Private School

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Knowledge and Human Development Authority

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## GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT Al Rashid Al Saleh Private School

Location	Oud Metha
Type of school	Private
Website	www.alrashed-alsaleh.com
Telephone	043368888/043376176
Address	PO Box 4458, Oud Metha, Dubai
Principal	Sister Samira Ayoub Botrus
Curriculum	MOE
Gender of students	Boys and Girls
Age / Grades or Year Groups	4-19 / Kindergarten 1 to Grade 12
Attendance	Acceptable
Number of students on roll	2,485
Number of Emirati students	320 (13 %)
Date of the inspection	Sunday 19th to Thursday 23rd February 2012

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## The context of the school

Located in Oud Metha, Al Rashid Al Saleh Private School opened in 1971. This private, non-profit school offers a Ministry of Education (MoE) curriculum, including MoE examinations and a small sample of external examinations from outside the UAE. The school was fully staffed with 138 teachers, 40 of whom had recently joined the school. The Principal had been at the school for over 30 years.

At the time of the inspection there were 2,485 students enrolled from Kindergarten to Grade 12. About 80 per cent of students were Arab expatriates, 13 per cent were Emiratis and five per cent Iranian.

## Overall school performance 2011-2012

Acceptable

## How has the school progressed since the last inspection?

Al Rashid Al Saleh Private School performed at an acceptable level overall with some good features. The school successfully achieved its mission, which emphasised character building and the preservation of local customs and values. A positive learning climate prevailed almost all of the time and students were well cared for by their teachers. Consequently, the personal and social development of students remained a strength of the school.

Students' attainment and progress were good in all five key subjects in Cycles 2 and 3. The quality of teaching and learning was generally better in the higher grades of the school and especially in Cycle 3. The school had improved since the previous inspection, notably in the attainment and progress of students in science. Other improvements included the curriculum in Cycle 2, provision for the health and safety of students, and the quality of support for younger students. The overall leadership in the school had become more effective due to increased delegation of responsibilities and a spirit of co-operation amongst middle and senior leaders

## Key strengths

- The students' attainment and progress in all key subjects in Cycles 2 and 3;
- The influence of the school's mission upon students' personal and social development;
- The quality of teaching and learning in Cycles 2 and 3;
- The outstanding provision for the health and safety of students;
- The good leadership, team spirit and commitment to school improvement shown by senior staff members.

## Recommendations

- Raise students' attainment to good in all key subjects in all phases;
- Improve economic understanding amongst the younger students;
- Improve consistency and quality of teaching and learning in Kindergarten and Cycle 1;
- Use assessment information to improve lesson planning and delivery;
- Develop teachers' understanding of how young students learn with a particular emphasis upon students' learning in independent, practical ways.

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

	KG	Cycle 1	Cycle 2	Cycle 3
<b>Islamic Education</b>				
<b>Attainment</b>	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good	Good
<b>Progress</b>	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good	Good
<b>Arabic as a first language</b>				
<b>Attainment</b>	Acceptable	Good	Good	Good
<b>Progress</b>	Acceptable	Good	Good	Good
<b>Arabic as an additional language</b>				
<b>Attainment</b>	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
<b>Progress</b>	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
<b>English</b>				
<b>Attainment</b>	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good	Good
<b>Progress</b>	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good	Outstanding
<b>Mathematics</b>				
<b>Attainment</b>	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good	Good
<b>Progress</b>	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good	Good
<b>Science</b>				
<b>Attainment</b>	Acceptable	Good	Good	Good
<b>Progress</b>	Acceptable	Good	Good	Good

Students' attainment mostly acceptable in the Kindergarten and Cycle 1, and good in Cycles 2 and 3. In Islamic Education most students in the lower grades had acceptable knowledge and understanding of the life of the Prophet (PBUH), Islamic etiquette, values and the importance of Islam upon their lives. Most students were able to recite a range of verses from The Holy Qur'an verses and Hadeeth. They were able to understand in depth their overall meanings. In Arabic, a majority of Kindergarten children could use an

appropriate range of vocabulary. In the upper grades the presentations, discussions, reading and debating showed that students could express themselves imaginatively. In English, attainment was good in the Kindergarten and Cycles 1 and 2, and outstanding in Cycle 3. Listening and speaking skills were a strength in all grades and persuasive writing was a strength in Cycle 3. In mathematics, students had strong basic skills across the school but they did not apply mathematics to solve problems. In science, attainment was good in all cycles. Students were confident and articulate, demonstrating good understanding of topics and, in Cycle 3, there was good application of mathematical knowledge to science learning. The overall attainment of girls was noticeably higher than that of boys in both Cycles 2 and 3.

Progress in the key subjects was mixed. It was stronger amongst the older students. In Arabic and science it was good from Cycle 1 to 3. Overall, progress in different aspects of Islamic Education was limited by teachers' inability to assess their learning objectives accurately. Most students made good progress in the use of standard Arabic, however insufficient planning for independent learning limited the progress of students in some lessons. Progress in English was strongest in Cycle 3. Students' demonstrated a high commitment to learning the language. Progress in mathematics was mixed. In both Cycle 2 and 3 in girls lessons, progress was noticeably stronger than in those of boys. Progress was limited across all five key subjects due to a low level of challenge especially for the more able students. The progress of the few students identified as having special educational needs was acceptable overall.

The school's first term records indicated that the attainment of Emirati students was generally lower than the school average across the school. In Cycle 1, in Arabic and English, the achievement of the Emiratis was below the school average and was also slightly lower in mathematics. In Cycle 2, Emirati students average scores were lower than their peers in Arabic and English and notably lower in mathematics. In Cycle 3 Emirati students averaged lower attainment in Arabic and mathematics. In Cycle 3, English the attainment of Emirati students matched that of the school as a whole.

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

	KG	Cycle 1	Cycle 2	Cycle 3
Attitudes and behaviour	Good	Good	Good	Outstanding
Understanding of Islam and appreciation of local traditions and culture	Acceptable	Good	Good	Outstanding
Civic, economic and environmental understanding	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good

Across the school students were respectful to each other and their teachers. Students demonstrated positive attitudes, self-discipline and appropriate independence, particularly in Cycle 3. They were able to distinguish between healthy and non-healthy lifestyles and most had positive attitudes toward healthy living and fitness. Although the students' attendance was good, too many students arrived late to morning assemblies. Students had a firm understanding of Islam due to the school's emphasis on Islamic values. Students were positive about the local cultural traditions and the importance of keeping their local identity. They were equally positive about the multi-cultural nature of Dubai society that provided them with the opportunity to learn from friendships across cultures. Students' civic, economic and environmental understanding was acceptable in the Kindergarten and Cycles 1 and 2 but good in Cycle 3. They demonstrated age-appropriate understanding of their civic duties and of Dubai's economic development. The students were aware of environmental issues but a few students littered the grounds during break times. Older students demonstrated good understanding of economic and environmental issues and could discuss them critically. Projects on recycling and energy generation allowed students to apply their learning.

## How good are the teaching, learning and assessment?

	KG	Cycle 1	Cycle 2	Cycle 3
Teaching for effective learning	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good	Good
Quality of students' learning	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good	Good
Assessment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

The quality of teaching was acceptable in the Kindergarten and Cycle 1 and good in Cycles 2 and 3. Teachers had acceptable knowledge of their subjects in the lower grades but more than a few lacked good understanding of how young children learn. As a consequence, many lessons in the Kindergarten and lower grades were not effective. Teachers generally planned lessons well and shared learning objectives clearly at the beginning of their lessons. In the best lessons teachers checked their students' learning against the original objectives at the end. Teachers explained tasks clearly. A majority of teachers used information and communication technology (ICT), but only a minority to good effect, clarifying concepts and enlivening lessons. Overall, most teachers used a limited range of resources and relied too much upon textbooks and their own worksheets. They did not use a sufficient range or number of practical activities, especially in the lower grades. In a few lessons, teachers met a wide range of learning needs very well. However, most teachers did not ask sufficiently demanding questions to challenge students' thinking and some did not allow enough time for students to answer.

The quality of learning was acceptable in the Kindergarten and Cycle 1, and good in Cycles 2 and 3. Throughout the school, almost all children and students showed positive attitudes towards learning. Older students were conscientious. In the Kindergarten and Cycle 1 there was very little independent learning and students relied too much on their teachers. Students worked well together in a majority of lessons, especially in English. In a few classes teaching strategies did not allow students to collaborate and learn from each other. In some subjects students did not see connections between what was being learned and their daily lives. Furthermore, students did not often make connections between different areas of learning as these had not been planned for. In the younger grades thinking skills were not being developed well and there was still a tendency for rote learning in different parts of the school.

The quality of assessment was acceptable. The school had developed systems for collecting assessment data and tracking results year-on-year. The analysis of the data was usually limited to identifying general trends and did not extend to drawing conclusions that would influence the curriculum and teaching strategies. Teachers used assessment information to identify discrete skills and targets for students. Teachers generally knew their students' strengths and weaknesses well, especially in the higher grades of the school, but the use of international benchmarks was very limited and not systematic. Assessment that helped learning was undertaken particularly well in English, mathematics and science. Teachers' marking varied in quality and the marking and report cards did not include next steps in students learning.

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

	KG	Cycle 1	Cycle 2	Cycle 3
Curriculum quality	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good	Good

The curriculum was acceptable in Kindergarten and Cycle 1, but it was good in Cycles 2 and 3. Continuity was ensured by following the Ministry of Education curriculum, which was extended in higher grades through planned enrichment and better implementation. Curriculum review had resulted in greater emphasis on the development of character and cultural understanding in line with the school's mission. The Kindergarten curriculum had become livelier and more organised. However, tasks that developed children's skills as independent, active and thoughtful learners were limited. Throughout the school too often the curriculum relied on textbook-derived experiences and did little to meet specific students' needs. There was limited awareness of the needs of the school's diverse population, including the highly able and students with special educational needs. Cross-curricular links were a feature of a number of lessons in all phases of the school. Good use was made of ICT to enrich the curriculum and explain complex ideas in the higher grades. Although some high quality activities were offered during breaks, the range of extra-curricular options for all students remained limited.

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

	KG	Cycle 1	Cycle 2	Cycle 3
Health and Safety	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Quality of Support	Good	Good	Good	Good

The arrangements for the health and safety of all students were outstanding. There was excellent supervision of students boarding and leaving buses and around the school. The school site was secure and the buildings very well maintained, with a high standard of cleanliness. The doctor and two nurses provided excellent first aid cover, carried out regular health checks, maintained excellent records and knew the needs of every student. They were actively promoting healthy life styles through the education of students and routine monitoring of the premises. Child protection procedures and staff training were in place. Routine emergency evacuation practices were carried out and students were trained to cope with a range of emergencies. The school had excellent record-keeping procedures.

The school's mission statement gave high priority to the well-being of students and this was monitored effectively by the guidance team, who co-operated with parents. Excellent relationships existed between all members of the school community. Thorough academic assessment data was available in key subjects and students' progress was well tracked. Tracking data was not used to produce targets and to challenge students and teachers to improve academic performance, although processes for helping weaker students improve were effective. The school had effective policies to monitor daily attendance and punctuality to lessons and made contact with parents on the first day of absence. The school had identified a very small number of students with special educational needs and the additional support they required, but little differentiation was seen in their classes.

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

	Whole school
Quality of leadership	Good
Self-evaluation and improvement planning	Good
Partnerships with parents and the community	Acceptable
Governance	Acceptable
Management, including staffing, facilities and resources	Acceptable

The quality of leadership was good overall. Leaders had a shared vision of the school's purpose and their work fulfilled the mission. Commitment to students' overall development was a priority and there were competent personnel in key positions to facilitate their development. Since the previous inspection roles had been expanded and responsibilities delegated to give subject leaders more prominence. The school's leaders had made clear progress since the previous inspection and demonstrated the capacity to make further improvements. New subject leaders had joined the school, bringing high aspirations for improvement and coached teachers to broaden their skills.

Self-evaluation and improvement planning were good. The school had made progress on the recommendations of the previous inspection report and there were clear improvements across a range of quality indicators. There was a system of teacher performance appraisal that included collegial and self-evaluation which had helped improve teaching quality over the past year. The school's self-evaluation documents were thorough, as were written plans to address inspectors' recommendations but not all leaders were conversant with the school's priorities for the future.

The school's partnership with parents and the community was acceptable. Parents were present in the school and participated in their own committee and as governors. The school's reports were sent home six times per year but did not include useful comments on progress or advice on how students could improve. There were more links between the school and the local community than previously, but students did not have regular opportunities to learn outside of the school.

The governance of the school was of acceptable quality. The board had increased to 14 members, including parents and two senior students, to become more inclusive. The priorities of the board included improved fiscal management and access to outside facilities to broaden the range of activities available to students. Board members demonstrated commitment to the school and to further improvements, but had

limited understanding of the school's priorities as stated in the action plan and strategic development documents. Consequently, the board's effect upon students overall progress was limited.

Management, including staffing, facilities and resources was acceptable. Management procedures and routines were effective. The school had sufficient numbers of qualified teachers who were deployed skillfully. However, there was a lack of support specialists. The school premises were well-maintained, and all areas for learning were accessible to students, including those with additional needs. Some classrooms did not have enough space for the numbers of students in them. There was no appropriate area for the majority of students to sit and eat their food during the break times and consequently, many stood or sat on the ground to eat. The outside play areas were mostly concrete and thus potentially unsafe. There were computer laboratories for all students and almost all Cycle 3 classrooms were equipped with projection equipment. However, the school's library lacked appropriate resources and technology for teachers and students to use.

## 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	176	12%
	Last year	404	23%
Teachers	52		32%
Students	105		21%

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

A few parents responded to the survey, much less than last year. Minorities of teachers and senior students responded to their surveys. Parents generally expressed satisfaction with the quality of education available at the school. Students expressed a slightly lower level of satisfaction. Most parents reported that their children were safe and well cared for at the school and on the buses. Most parents believed that their children were making good progress in the key subjects but a few disagreed that progress was good in English. Majorities of parents and students believed that behaviour was good at the school, but a few

indicated that it was not. About half of the senior students reported that they enjoyed life in school though a third reported that they did not enjoy the school or most of their lessons. About half of the senior students believed that there was a good range of subjects, clubs and activities to choose from, but again, a third believed that this was not the case. Parents held similar views on this topic. Most parents believed that the homework given to their children was suitable, but more than a few disagreed that this was the case. Almost all parents believed that the school was well led, but only a majority reported that their opinions about the school were listened to. Senior students were evenly split in their opinions about the willingness of school leaders to listen to their opinions. About half the parents reported that they were involved in the life of the school but about a third reported that they were not. Teachers' views were very positive on all aspects of the school, its students and the quality of leadership.

## 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)

## 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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