

# Jumeirah College Inspection Report

Secondary to Post-16

Report published May 2011

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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.

Jumeirah College was inspected in October 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, mathematics and science.

## Basic information about the school

Located in Jumeirah, Jumeirah College is a private school providing education for boys and girls from Year 7 to Year 13, aged 11 to 18 years. The school follows the English National Curriculum and students completed GCSE and A-level examinations as part of their studies. Over 60 different nationalities are represented with the majority of students being UK citizens. At the time of the inspection, there were 1028 students on roll. The 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. Overall, parents were highly satisfied with the quality of education offered. Satisfaction rates regarding children's progress in Islamic Education and Arabic were high but were much higher for English, mathematics and science. Almost all parents were happy with the standard of teaching and they also praised the diverse range of extra-curricular opportunities. They rated students' behaviour and attitudes to work highly as well as the support for their health and safety. Most parents thought communication between the school and home to be good or better and stated that they were well informed through meetings and reports. They considered homework to be appropriate. A small number of respondents had some individual concerns about the school but there was no common issue. Almost all parents had positive views about the inspection process. Almost half of the questionnaires cited teaching as the school's main strength.

## How well does the school perform overall?

The overall performance of Jumeirah College was outstanding. A welcoming, caring yet purposeful atmosphere pervaded all aspects of life in the school. The school had responded positively and effectively to the recommendations of the previous report. The school had succeeded in maintaining high standards in English, mathematics and science over recent years. Innovative attempts to raise attainment and progress in Islamic Education and Arabic had led to some success. Attainment and progress in these subjects were improving. The school's capacity to improve further was excellent.

At all key stages of the school, attainment and progress in Islamic Education and Arabic as both a first and an additional language were acceptable. Attainment and progress in English, mathematics and science were outstanding across the school. The students displayed outstanding personal and social development and had excellent appreciation of Islamic, civic and cultural issues. Their understanding of economic and environmental topics was also at an outstanding level. Teaching was good overall with many examples of outstanding practice. Students' learning and the assessment of their progress were outstanding. The curriculum in place for both secondary and post-16 was outstanding. Similarly, the arrangements for the protection of and support for students was outstanding. Governance was good and while it did not involve a suitably wide range of stakeholders there was a positive impact of its work to be seen in the school. The college had improved very well since the last inspection. Change had been spearheaded by the enlightened, decisive and energetic leadership of the Principal, supported extremely well by the professionalism and drive of the senior and middle managers. All staff were very keen to develop the college further and were wholly receptive to new ideas.

## Key features of the school

- The school had an excellent ethos because of outstanding relationships between all adults and students and a high quality of care;
- Outstanding attainment and progress in English, mathematics and science;
- The excellent attitudes and behaviour of the students;
- Students' learning was enhanced by an exciting, diverse and rich curriculum that included a strong cultural and community awareness;
- Outstanding leadership and management by all senior staff, and especially the Principal, ensured a strong impetus, shared vision and very clear direction for the continued development of the college;
- The partnerships with parents in the development of students' learning.

## Recommendations

- Raise attainment and progress in Islamic Education and Arabic by improving teachers' understanding of how students learn effectively;
- Improve the teaching of younger students, especially in English, by matching work more closely to their abilities.

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

Attainment and progress in Islamic Education were acceptable across the school. Most students in the lower years had an acceptable understanding of basic Islamic concepts and values. They were able to apply their knowledge to their lives. In the upper years, the majority of students understood the importance of Islamic values and could express their Islamic identity confidently. However, across all stages, student's recitation skills and application of the Tajweed rules varied. The younger students were starting to apply the rules learnt correctly, but the older students were not always clear about its application when reciting The Holy Qur'an.

Attainment and progress for Arabic as a first language were acceptable. For the majority of native speakers, listening and reading skills were broadly in line with age-related expectations. Year 7 students were able to apply grammatical rules appropriately when writing sentences. Year 10 students were able to read for a variety of purposes and could answer direct comprehension questions, both orally and in writing. Writing skills for students in Years 10 and 11 however were below the Ministry of Education expectations.

Attainment and progress for Arabic as an additional language were acceptable. Most students in Year 7 were able to ask and answer direct questions and understood the main points from short passages read to them. In Year 8, students were able to read short familiar texts and derive some details from contextual clues. In Year 9, language skills in general and writing in particular remained below expectations for additional language learners. Writing skills of a functional or extended nature were underdeveloped for students at this stage in their learning.

Attainment and progress in English at the end of secondary and post-16 were outstanding. Younger students were able to identify language features such as alliteration, onomatopoeia and similes and most could infer and deduce meaning from texts. Reading skills were well developed and supported imaginative development. Almost all secondary students wrote to a high standard. Older students were confident speakers with impressive use of language for effect. They appreciated how an author uses language to create atmosphere, for example at the beginning of "The Lord of the Flies". At the post-16 stage students showed an excellent grasp of the characteristics of the 'new woman' as portrayed in the Gothic novel. Their knowledge and understanding of symbolism and character changes were outstanding.

Across the school, attainment and progress in mathematics were outstanding. Younger students had developed a good capacity to link number concepts and could carry out

calculations accurately understanding the reasons for the results. Year 9 students could compute fractions and discuss the process using the correct mathematical terms. At General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE), attainment was well above international levels. Students knew and used theorems when finding answers to problems in two dimensions. They were able to analyse, select and apply an appropriate technique to obtain a solution. Examination results for post-16 students were above average with Advanced Subsidiary level (AS) results being well above. Year 13 students could apply their learning to a range of mathematical challenges.

Attainment and progress in science were outstanding. Almost all students by Year 9 had attained levels well above those expected for their age. They could use their investigative skills to gather data which they then evaluated and reported. Students used techniques, apparatus and materials appropriately. They could plan investigations and critically evaluate alternative methods. Post-16 students in biology were able to set up experiments to explore how various factors affect the balance in certain eco-systems. Year 13 physics students demonstrated an excellent awareness of the limitations of physical theories and models.

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

Students' attitudes and behaviour were outstanding throughout the school. In almost all lessons, students were extremely well behaved and eager to do well. They were respectful of their teachers and other adults and supportive of each other's learning. Co-operation in lessons was outstanding and highly beneficial to learning. Students were instinctively tolerant of others regardless of the diversity of their cultural and ethnic backgrounds. Commitment to a healthy lifestyle was evident in the students' diet and the enthusiastic participation in extra-curricular sports activities. In the hallways and in between lessons, students moved with purpose and were nearly always punctual. Attendance rates for the last academic term were good.

Students' civic understanding, their understanding of Islam and appreciation of local traditions and culture were outstanding. Students engaged positively with the opportunities to participate in the life of the school and assumed responsibilities readily. They were active citizens of school life, Dubai and the wider world through participating in the Student Council, college clubs and international charity organisations. Students were proud to discuss their growing knowledge of Islam and were relating actively to local culture through school-initiated programs, such as the weekly cultural studies course.

Students' economic and environmental understanding was outstanding. Knowledge of Dubai's economy was regularly reinforced through initiatives such as the Year 8 enterprise week, Year 10 work experience programme and Year 12 summer work programmes. Students showed care and respect for their school environment. Classrooms, hallways, outside areas and other parts of the school were kept very clean throughout the day. The Green Team initiated and participated in a number of activities to sustain the environment. Students in general were pro-active in suggesting and participating in activities to conserve energy such as volunteering to turn off the lights during the breaks and after school.



## How good are the teaching and learning?

Teaching was good with some outstanding features. The quality was higher with older students than with younger ones, especially in English where the match of work for those in Key Stage 3 was not sufficiently precise. Teaching in Islamic Education and Arabic was acceptable but teachers of Arabic had a limited understanding of how students learn an additional language. Subject knowledge was strong in nearly all lessons enabling teachers to accelerate the pace of learning. Teachers had high expectations and set challenging work. Excellent lesson planning featured precise objectives that were consistently shared with students. Three-part lessons proved an effective use of time and teachers used plenary sessions well at the end of lessons to review learning. Most teachers made very good use of resources, especially information technology. Teachers worked effectively with individuals to deepen understanding. The majority of teachers worked well with groups but this was less evident in mathematics. Skilful questioning elicited thoughtful responses appropriate to the ability levels of the students. In a few lessons, teachers over-directed activities and restricted students' opportunities to learn independently.

Learning was outstanding. In almost all lessons, students were completely engaged in their work. Keen to answer questions, suggest hypotheses or take learning further, students worked together productively in small groups to extend their learning. They provided constructive critiques of other students' performance in English presentations. Students made good connections between their class work and the world beyond gaining insights into Dubai's economic development. Research skills were fostered well in homework and in scientific enquiries. Critical thinking skills were developed particularly well with older students and mind-mapping was used regularly to enhance wider thinking.

Assessment was outstanding and was an integral part of almost all lessons. Introductions established students' starting points, expected conclusions and assessment for learning strategies facilitated reflection on what they learned. Self and peer assessment were embedded practice enabling students to make swift improvements. Departments tracked student progress effectively. They used this information at whole school and classroom level, for example in physical education and music, where assessments informed coaching and skills development. The marking of students' work was consistent and contributed to target-setting and students' understanding of how to improve, for example in English, design and technology and Spanish. Teachers had a very good knowledge of students' individual strengths and weaknesses.

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

The curriculum was outstanding. The school had maintained its strengths and added improvements. It met students' needs to a large extent although some boys achieved less well than girls in English. The school had introduced enrichment pathways for gifted and talented students to maximise their potential. A major theme had been to raise the profile of Islamic

Education and Arabic and reflect the local community much more. Both curricula had been improved. The school complied with Ministry of Education requirements and both subjects enjoyed key subject status. The school had a regular pattern of curriculum review which led to improvements such as GCSE courses in English and mathematics starting in Year 9 and the Project Based Learning Initiative. The school had a well-laid platform of schemes of work that translated into lesson plans for most subjects to secure the progressive development of learning. By contrast, schemes of work were still being embedded in Islamic Education and Arabic. Cross-curricular links had improved with the introduction of new courses such as the cultural studies programme and found expression throughout the host of extra activities. For example, oracy skills were improved in various debating contexts. Active participation in sports was promoted through the extensive range of competitive sports and clubs. There were excellent links with other schools. The school took part in a wide range of local and international competitions such as Young Musician of the Gulf. The curriculum supported a range of initiatives to promote healthy living including programmes in physical education and healthy options in the canteen.

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

The arrangements for health and safety were outstanding. The school was highly organised in its risk assessments of the premises and for trips, particularly on some of the more demanding overseas trips undertaken by students. The excellent premises and facilities were very well maintained. Detailed medical records were kept and teachers informed of any of the students' medical conditions. The school's promotion of a healthy lifestyle was very successful, with a significant input from students. The welfare of students was given high priority, including child protection; through close links with parents, the school was extremely proactive in addressing any concerns.

The quality of support for students was outstanding. Excellent relationships with staff meant that students contributed very productively to school life. Effective induction into Year 7 enabled students to readily understand the schools expectations and to achieve the '4Ps' - punctuality, presentation, preparation and performance. Throughout the school, good guidance was readily available to help students to make choices that would support informed decisions later in life. An excellent range of work experience for Year 8 and Year 10 enabled them to make decisions about what courses would suit their needs best. The management of students' behaviour was outstanding; any issues were swiftly and successfully dealt with. The school assessed the progress of all students rigorously and set pertinent academic targets for each student; underachieving students were quickly identified and supported. Support for students with special educational needs helped them to achieve extremely well over time. The arrangements for promoting attendance and punctuality were secure helped by good communication with parents.



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

The leadership and management of the school were outstanding. Under the resolute and clear-sighted leadership of the Principal, the school continued to raise already high academic performance by its students across the curriculum. The skilled, dedicated and corporate approach of all senior leaders ensured that staff members were highly valued and sustained thoroughly professional attitudes to their work. Parents praised all staff as role models. The leadership was instrumental in maintaining the excellent atmosphere that pervaded the school – an ethos of calm, focus, cohesion and singularity of purpose.

Self-evaluation and improvement planning were outstanding. There was an excellent understanding of the schools' own strengths and weaknesses, and comprehensive and focused action plans had been drawn up. For example, senior and subject leaders had succeeded in improving the curriculum, students' cultural awareness and their attainment. The school had addressed two issues from the previous inspection effectively. Assessment arrangements had greater impact because there was better use of analysis to inform staff of students' needs. The school had made good effort to boost the provision for Islamic Education and Arabic through staff appointments and training. Professional development was focused and led by the identified needs of teachers and students.

Partnerships with parents and the local community were outstanding. Communication with families was frequent, informative and much appreciated by parents. Parents felt that their voices were listened to and that their opinions did matter. They responded very positively to the creation of the recently revived Parent Partnership. Parents supported their children very well at home with their learning, if necessary, and provided valuable links and expertise. For example, many were instrumental in finding work placements for older students.

Governance was good. The management board provided a comprehensive system of support linked to the school's needs. The Principal was responsible for the school's development, but worked closely with the parent company to ensure quality was maintained and raised. The board held the school to account for major decisions and it acted effectively as a critical friend. The parent company had no plans to extend governance to include representatives from all the school's stakeholders. It felt that it made every effort to consult with them and respond to their views.

All staff were well qualified. There was considerable range of subject expertise across all departments. The premises were impressive and were well-designed, light and airy with a wide range of specialist rooms including a large library, information and communication technology suites, drama and art rooms, purpose-built sports facilities and a recording studio. However, the lack of a sports field limited students' opportunities to embrace all sports fully. A designated support for learning centre played a pivotal role in helping students with special educational needs through focused guidance and pastoral care.

## 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:	Secondary	Post-16
Attainment	Acceptable	Not Applicable
Progress over time	Acceptable	Not Applicable

How good are the students' attainment and progress in Arabic?		
3% of students in the school studied Arabic as a first language.		
Age group:	Secondary	Post-16
Attainment in Arabic as a first language	Acceptable	Not Applicable
Progress in Arabic as a first language	Acceptable	Not Applicable
Attainment in Arabic as an additional language	Acceptable	Not Applicable
Progress in Arabic as an additional language	Acceptable	Not Applicable

How good are the students' attainment and progress in English?		
Age group:	Secondary	Post-16
Attainment	Outstanding	Outstanding
Progress over time	Outstanding	Outstanding

How good are the students' attainment and progress in mathematics?		
Age group:	Secondary	Post-16
Attainment	Outstanding	Outstanding
Progress over time	Outstanding	Outstanding

How good are the students' attainment and progress in science?		
Age group:	Secondary	Post-16
Attainment	Outstanding	Outstanding
Progress over time	Outstanding	Outstanding

How good is the students' personal and social development?		
Age group:	Secondary	Post-16
Attitudes and behaviour	Outstanding	Outstanding
Islamic, cultural and civic understanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Economic and environmental understanding	Outstanding	Outstanding

How good are teaching and learning?		
Age group:	Secondary	Post-16
Teaching for effective learning	Good	Good
Quality of students' learning	Outstanding	Outstanding
Assessment	Outstanding	Outstanding

How well does the curriculum meet the educational needs of all students?		
Age group:	Secondary	Post-16
Curriculum quality	Outstanding	Outstanding

How well does the school protect and support students?		
Age group:	Secondary	Post-16
Health and safety	Outstanding	Outstanding
Quality of support	Outstanding	Outstanding

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

How well does the school perform overall?
Outstanding

## 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.

More information about Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau can be found at [www.khda.gov.ae](http://www.khda.gov.ae).

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