



# **Inspection report**

## **Rashid School for Boys**

**Dubai**

**UAE**

Date

21<sup>st</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2017

Inspection number

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## 1. Purpose and scope of the inspection

The Department for Education has put in place a voluntary scheme for the inspection of British schools overseas, whereby schools are inspected against a common set of standards that British schools overseas can choose to adopt.

The inspection and this report follow the Department for Education (DFE) schedule for the inspection of British Schools overseas.

The purpose of the inspection is to provide information to parents, teachers, senior managers and the school's management on the overall effectiveness of the school, the standard of education it provides and its compatibility with independent schools in the United Kingdom.

The inspection and report will cover the key areas of quality of the curriculum; quality of teaching and learning; the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students; their welfare, health and safety; the suitability of the proprietor and staff; the school's premises and accommodation (including boarding); and the school's complaints procedures. An essential part of the inspection is considering the extent to which the British character of the school is evident in its ethos, curriculum, teaching, care for students and students' achievements.

This inspection was completed by Penta International. Penta International is approved by the British Government for inspecting schools overseas. As one of the leading inspection providers, Penta International reports to the English Department for Education (DFE) on the extent to which schools meet the standards for British Schools Overseas.

During the inspection visit, 62 full- or part- lessons were observed by inspectors. School documentation and policies were analysed and data reviewed. Students' workbooks were scrutinised, and discussions were held with the senior staff, the management teams, a range of teachers, parents and groups of students. Three school days were monitored. A separate, more detailed report was written on teaching of the Arabic language and Islamic studies.

The lead inspector was Colin Dyson. The team members were Abdulla Al Kamali, Stephen Deady, Sheila Smith and Nicola Walsh.

## 2. Compliance with regulatory requirements

The Rashid School for Boys (RSB) meets all the standards for British Schools Overseas.

### 3. Overall effectiveness of the school

Overall teaching is satisfactory, with a significant number of good lessons.

Students are well supported through effective pastoral care and the implementation of good welfare, health and safety policies and procedures.

The senior leadership team understands the strengths of the school and areas requiring improvement. Students, parents and staff value the British nature of the curriculum.

Nearly all students make progress: however the school recognises that levels of attainment can be raised further.

#### 3.1 What the school does well

There are many strengths, which include:

- The high quality of the welfare, health and safety implementation.
- The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students is a strength.
- The premises provide an outstanding learning environment.
- Parents are fully supportive of the values the school instils in their sons.
- Parents value the effective communications provided by the school.
- Student behaviour is excellent both in and outside the classrooms.
- The school is well managed and relationships are a strength.
- The care and concern of the teachers extends beyond the classroom in ensuring each child is truly valued.
- Resources for teaching are plentiful and enhance students' learning opportunities.

## 3.2 Points for improvement

While not required by regulations, the school might wish to consider the following points for development:

- Improve governance further to work more effectively in conjunction with the Head, agreeing the school development plan, monitoring progress and evaluating results, thus providing stronger support and holding the senior leaders more acutely to account.
- Further develop teaching and the accurate use of assessments to focus more sharply on raising attainment for all students.
- Implement professional management procedures that are more rigorous and ensure that clearer and more challenging targets are set for staff.
- Ensure the school aligns its developments to the educational needs of 21<sup>st</sup> Century learners and the host country's National Agenda.

#### 4. The context of the school

Full name of school/college	Rashid School for Boys				
Address	Street 20, Nad Al Sheba, Dubai, UAE and PO Box 2861, Dubai, UAE				
Telephone number	+971 (0) 4 336 1300				
Fax number	+971 (0) 4 336 1407				
Website	<a href="http://www.rsbdubai.sch.ae">www.rsbdubai.sch.ae</a>				
Email address	<a href="mailto:gk@rsb.sch.ae">gk@rsb.sch.ae</a>				
Head	Glyn Kilsby				
Executive Director	Abdulsalam Almarri				
Age range	3 ½ to 18 years				
Total number of students		<i>Boys</i>	694	<i>Girls</i>	0
Numbers by age	<i>0-2 years</i>	0	<i>11-16 years</i>	220	
	<i>3-5 years</i>	106	<i>16-18 years</i>	45	
	<i>5-11 years</i>	323	<i>18+ years</i>	0	
Total number of part-time students	0				

Rashid Boys School was established in 1986 by a decree from His Highness Sheikh Rashid Bin Saeed Al Maktoum, the ruler of Dubai. The school aims to provide a high-quality education for members of the ruling family and those closely associated with it. The admission policy clearly states that entrance is only available to UAE Nationals and those nominated by the Ruler's Office.

The school is fully funded by the ruling family and there are no school fees. Lunches and all resources are provided by the school, with parents only responsible for paying for school trips.

Rashid School for Boys aims to provide a British style curriculum modified to consider the local culture, social context and the additional language needs of the students. The non-academically selective character of the school results in a broad range of ability amongst the students attending. To address this wide diversity of educational levels, the school tries to individualise the curriculum and provides a wide and extensive range of support programs. Throughout the school, there is an emphasis on the teaching of Arabic and Islamic Studies, alongside UK National Curriculum expectations. The school has implemented a broad curriculum that aims to have a strong focus on personal and social skills.

The staffing arrangements at the school are generous. The headmaster and over 80% of teachers are British, with British degrees and teaching qualifications.

The school campus is extensive and provides a high-quality learning environment.

The school identifies some key areas that have a significant impact upon learning:

- The wide range and often limited levels of English language skills when students join the school.
- The continued need to focus on attendance and punctuality, throughout the academic year for all students.
- The continual need to focus upon developing strong home-school links, in an attempt to encourage students to be fully engaged in their education.

## 4.1 British nature of the school

The school aims to provide an education that has similar characteristics to an education in an independent school in the UK. Teaching and learning are driven by the English National Curriculum requirements. Developments in the UK are monitored and best practice adopted, wherever possible.

The school curriculum is based on the National Curriculum for England and Wales 2014.

The school utilises a range of assessment methods comparable to the UK. Except for Arabic Language Studies and Islamic Studies, all teaching is in English.

The school is organised according to the structures used in English schools. The house system, school uniform and school council contribute towards the 'Britishness' of the school.

British practice is evident in approaches to performance management, staff target setting, and annual review meetings.

Communications from the school to families and students are provided in English, though translated into Arabic for non-English speaking parents, as are all school publications, reports, letters and the website.

The importance of extra-curricular provision including clubs and school trips are in line with British practice.

Texts, materials, educational equipment, software and the school's management information system are UK-sourced.

Classroom management, displays of work, three-term year and age-related year groups further contribute to the British feel of the school.

Parents are supportive of the British nature of the curriculum. Parents clearly articulated their appreciation of the quality of care and guidance provided by the school.

The school is a member of BSME and takes part in a range of activities to enhance further opportunities for students.



## 5. Standard 1

### The quality of education provided by the school

The quality of education provided by Rashid Boys School meets the requirements of the BSO Framework fully.

#### 5.1 Curriculum

The curriculum is satisfactory.

The principal language of instruction is English throughout the school. Students often enter the school with no or very limited English, attaining levels that are well below UK expectations.

The subject matter taught is age and ability-appropriate. The school has written policies in place for Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, supported by schemes of work and appropriate planning documentation. Teachers plan together on a weekly basis, by subject.

The introduction of phonic and spelling lessons at the start of each day in Key Stages 1 and 2 provides a focus on helping students to acquire communication and language skills. In a Year 2 class, for example, the teacher displayed highly effective expert knowledge of phonics when teaching split digraphs, enabling all students to make good progress.

Through a rich, varied and imaginative experience the students make progress, however by the end of Key Stage 1 many are still below UK educational expectations due to limited initial experience in English, and restricted experience of English outside of school.

The Early Years and Key Stage 1 curriculum meets the needs of students. The school has been proactive in the deployment of specialist teachers to enhance the quality of learning particularly in English. Students are well motivated and eager to join in all activities.

In Key Stage 2, the National Curriculum is followed too, and has been adapted to support the needs of the students. 'Global English' and the new Primary National Curriculum for mathematics are used throughout the primary section.

In science, the school delivers a reduced National Curriculum. The school has timetabled 90 minutes of science each week. Whilst this is under the recommended National Curriculum allocation, all topics are taught.

Modifications and adaptations to provide opportunities for individualised learning include daily drills and individualised education programmes (IEPs) which further enhance the students' ability to access the curriculum.

The curriculum is well planned and implemented in Key Stage 2. It is relevant to the students' needs. There are several specialist teachers who enhance the curriculum.

Throughout their time in the school students are offered a variety of subjects which include linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic and creative learning opportunities. The primary school leaders recognise the need to develop the curriculum further. They aim to ensure students experience activities that encourage exploration of their world in a creative and personalised learning environment that supports independent student learning.

In the secondary section, there is a well-planned and flexible curriculum that is designed to meet the varying needs of the students. The Key Stage3 curriculum is closely aligned to the National Curriculum of England, but has been merged with the UAE Ministry Curriculum in Arabic and Islamic studies.

In Key Stage 4, GCSE courses are followed by everyone in years 10 -11. There are a set of core subjects plus optional courses from which the students may choose two or three.

In Key Stage 5, students can choose between AS levels and the High School Diploma which consists of a wide range of core and elective courses written and assessed within the school. Year 13 is always very small (currently two students) and is only for students who wish to complete full A-levels.

Throughout all key stages, Arabic and Islamic Studies are taught following the UAE Ministry Curriculum. Some students learn the French language, if they reach high enough levels of English at the end of Key Stage2.

Provision for personal, social and health education (PSHE) is built around six themes. It is well planned and delivered.

In addition to the taught curriculum, the school provides a varied programme of extra-curricular activities. This includes educational and social visits, both locally and internationally, guest speakers, plus after-school sports, clubs and social projects.

## 5.2 Teaching and assessment

Teaching and assessment are satisfactory.

Overall, the quality of teaching across Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 is satisfactory with a significant number of good lessons. Good classroom management encourages nearly all students to behave well and underpins their learning effectively. Relationships in classrooms are positive and all adults provide good role models of positive attitudes. The teachers plan to ensure students experience a happy and secure learning environment. Early learning goals are used to encourage them to engage in a range of learning activities.

Good guidance by the teachers and support staff establishes personal confidence in the students and helps to create a firm foundation for future learning. Classrooms are bright and colourful environments where students' work is displayed and valued.

Under the leadership of the recently appointed Heads of primary school, there has been a focus on developing the quality of teaching. As a result, students are making progress over time. The majority of students have English as a second language: teachers plan and teach lessons that have an appropriate strong focus on developing reading, writing and communication skills.

Shared planning brings a range of teacher expertise into weekly planning and this is further adapted in the better lessons. The use of the interactive whiteboard in many lessons effectively engaged all students in their learning.

Most lessons across Key Stage 2 were satisfactory or good.

In the best lessons, planning is strong and encourages collaborative student-led learning where all are challenged by expectations. In the less successful lessons, students were not extended by challenging expectations, differentiation was not effective: learning in these lessons was passive.

The school recognises and supports students with special educational needs. The school is aware that extra support should be used judiciously to ensure the independence of learners is not compromised.

Attainment in Key Stage 2 is below British National Standards. In English, most students are below expected levels. The school's assessments show that 77% of students are below or well below expected levels in Year 6 at the end of 2016. In mathematics, 47% of students are attaining levels below expected levels. The school has recognised the need to develop science further in Key Stage 2. It recently allocated more time to science teaching. In primary, the use of assessment data to support teaching and learning is being developed.

Teaching is mainly satisfactory with some good lessons in the secondary section.

In the best lessons, there is enthusiasm and energy in teaching and therefore in learning. Lessons are planned with well-timed, engaging activities. For example, in one lesson, a short section of a 'Top Gear' programme was used to stimulate discussion on speed/ time graphs. In a science lesson, students were fully engaged completing experiments researching how metals react with oxygen.

However in many lessons, teachers' expectations are too low and content lacks challenge. Differentiation is highlighted in planning but was not evident in all the teaching observed or in students' books. Learning objectives are often too vague and it is therefore difficult for the teacher to measure the impact of their teaching in a lesson.

There is little use made of formative assessment strategies. The school has identified the need to implement more robust and formative assessment data collection and analysis. A good start has been made by the English Department as illustrated in their handbook.

In some lessons students were asked to work in pairs but appeared reluctant to do so, resulting in little engagement. Few opportunities for students to work independently were seen.

Levels of attainment are lower than UK expectations at the end of each key stage. The school is working with parents to encourage higher levels of engagement and reinforce expectations of student attainment. The coloured traffic light reports are popular with parents: recent data for this system suggests that 80% of students are now displaying positive attitudes and effort towards learning.

## 6. *Standard 2*

### Spiritual, moral, social cultural development of students

Overall, the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the students is good and is a strength of the school.

Students develop their awareness and understanding of spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects through a combination of the formal and informal curriculum, assemblies, planned PSHE lessons, Islamic Studies, tutor time, extracurricular activities, as they progress through the school.

The pastoral curriculum reinforces students' understanding of right and wrong and respect for the law, through 'Golden Rules' and shared behavioural expectations. It is effective in ensuring that students behave responsibly, show initiative and understand how they can contribute to community life. Minor misdemeanours are dealt with appropriately. This results in a positive learning atmosphere. The principles of right and wrong are also supported through Islamic studies.

Behaviour is good in classrooms and around the school. Students report very positive feelings about the school. They feel secure and cared for, and report satisfaction with the commitment, support and availability of their teachers.

Students mainly co-operate well with each other, their teachers and other adults in the school, though not always in lessons. Attempts to give students greater responsibility and involvement are made through their roles in the Student Council.

The school provides students with a broad general knowledge of the responsibilities of citizenship in the UAE, UK and internationally. Parents interviewed were highly supportive of the school's approach and see it as a priority.

## 7. Standard 3

### The welfare, health and safety of the students

The quality of care and support provided is good: it is a strength of the school.

Students are polite, well-mannered, confident and happy to be at school. There are good relationships between staff and students. Students are polite and supportive of each other. They show pride in their school. Ex-students are frequent visitors and are keen to express their gratitude for the work of the school.

The health and safety of the students is paramount. Students are well supervised by staff at all times. Students move around the site in an orderly and responsible manner. The school site is kept clean and well-groomed throughout the day and this makes for a pleasant learning environment. In practical lessons, such as physical education (PE) and design technology, students wear appropriate clothing and footwear.

A whole school anti-bullying policy has been implemented and the boys confirmed that they felt safe and were aware of what to do should an incident occur.

The school works hard to meet all local health and safety requirements. The school has a comprehensive fire warning system and fire drills are carried out and logged. There are regular visits from the Dubai Municipality safety inspection team. This covers water safety, cleanliness of the buildings, hygiene, building safety and fire safety.

School food is of a very high standard, with little unhealthy food provided and a wide range of freshly prepared meals. The catering department has been a fully HACCP-certified institution since 2005.

There are two full time nurses on site and a school doctor is on call. Nearly all members of the teaching staff are first aid trained.

## 8. Standard 4

### The suitability of the proprietor and staff

RBS forms part of Rashid and Latifa Schools Establishment, within the Knowledge and Human Development Authority. Strategic leadership of the school is through an Executive Team comprising the Headteachers of Rashid School for Boys and Latifa School for Girls, Director of Shared Services and CEO of Rashid and Latifa Schools Establishment.

The Executive Team and senior staff have implemented effective working practices that enable the day-to-day management of the school to be efficient and effective. Self-evaluation is enabling an agreed awareness of the school's strengths and areas for further development in implementing a high standard of safety and financial operations. The school has appropriate policies which make clear the steps taken before a member of the teaching staff joins the school.

An appropriate range of strategies and procedures to ensure levels of accountability are implemented has not yet been fully established. The proprietor and board do not maximise effective monitoring of progress for the school against specific educational short and medium term targets and embedding quality assurance procedures. There is limited alignment of school developments to the educational needs of 21st Century learners or to the host country's National Agenda.

There is a list of all staff who currently work in the school. This is regularly updated and shows when they started and stopped working in the school. Staffing levels are generous to support the learning of all students and ensure satisfactory delivery of the curriculum. Non-teaching staff are effective and make a valuable contribution to the success of the school.

## 9. Standard 5 *The premises and accommodation*

The school buildings and facilities are of a high quality. They are strengths of the school.

The school has extensive gardens and grassed areas across a large campus. The premises are well-maintained. There is an effective full-time maintenance team who ensure high standards in health, safety and aesthetics around the school. All rooms are light and well ventilated with air conditioning, the standards exceed building regulations. All buildings are built with due regard to all national regulatory requirements.

The grounds are secure. The school has made excellent security arrangements with a team from Dubai Police. The water supply, drainage, health and safety procedures and kitchens are all subject to annual local authority checks: the school consistently meets and surpasses regulatory requirements in these areas. Emergency procedures are efficient and the single-level buildings allow easy accessibility for students throughout the school. A few areas of block paving around the exterior of the buildings cause trip hazards.

Classrooms provide comfortable and stimulating learning environments across the school. The classrooms, libraries, science laboratories and other learning environments are well-resourced and maintained.

The grounds of the school are impressive in both size and standards of maintenance. In Foundation Stage, high-quality free-flow areas allow students' learning to take place inside and outside, throughout the year. Play areas in the primary and secondary schools are spacious and well monitored at break and lunch times. In secondary, a Student Council-funded assault course is an impressive additional feature. Sports facilities including the swimming pool and sports hall are also very well maintained and resourced.



## 8. Standard 6 The provision of information for parents, carers and others

The provision of information for parents, carers and others is good and another strength of the school.

Contact details of the school and the proprietor are readily available to parents. The school website is a good source of information. Here, the parents and prospective parents can find all key policies and curriculum information. A parent handbook provides information about the school, its staff and information about the school's processes and policies.

The school makes excellent efforts to ensure that communications with parents are bilingual, as much as possible. For example, a parents' mathematics information morning was led by English-speaking staff, but all slides were in Arabic and were made available for parents to take home.

Administration and liaison teachers ensure that there is a high level of bilingual communication flowing from the school to parents. Parents commented that they felt well-informed by the school. In primary, there is a notable effort to engage parents and keep them well-informed through information mornings. Evidence from parents suggests these mornings have been a success.

In primary, there are two full written reports each year. In secondary, there is one full report supported by 3 shorter reports. These reports highlight the students' achievement using National Curriculum levels in mathematics, English and science and the *Rashid School for Boys* scale in other subjects. They also contain reports on the students' efforts. Parents did indicate that they struggled to understand the National Curriculum levels and suggested that they would like to understand more about their boys' attainment. The school also holds parent teacher evenings which are becoming better attended each year.

The school provided a full self-evaluation form and a development plan to the inspection team, and shares results of external examinations with parents. It is anticipated that the school will make the report available to parents: it will also be available on the [Penta International website](#).

Parents expressed high levels of satisfaction with the support provided for their sons.

## 9. *Standard 7* The school's procedure for handling complaints

There is a formal complaints procedure that is transparent, open and effective.

Procedures show due regard to local regulatory requirements and to elements of best UK practices. The policies are available as hard copies and can also be viewed on the school website.

The complaints procedures are rigorously adhered to and are highly effective in ensuring that any complaint is dealt with at an appropriate level. Clear timescales are set out and parents are updated on any long running issues.

The handling of complaints mirrors the management structure of the school. The class or subject teacher is consulted first, but if an issue is not resolved, it can be raised with senior leaders. If a complaint remains unresolved, parents are encouraged to address their concerns to the Executive Director.

In discussion with inspectors, parents stated that they felt confident about raising concerns, should they have any. Ultimately parents have recourse to the Ministry of Education.

Confidentiality is assured throughout the whole process.

## 10. *Standard 8* The quality of provision for boarding

Not applicable.

## 11. Standard 9 Leadership and management of the school

The head of school ensures the effective and purposeful management of the school. Senior leaders have worked together to oversee the establishment of a school that values the personal development of each student: with the head, they ensure that students feel safe and well-cared for. Parents feel the values instilled in their sons through the work of the school are excellent.

The head is supported by the executive group which considers strategic issues such as staffing, salaries, budgets and student admissions. This group has not yet implemented strategies to hold senior leaders fully accountable for educational outcomes: this is a missing strand in the school's search for excellence. The lack of accountability results in ambiguity regarding the success of some aspects of the school's impact, such as the monitoring and evaluation of outcomes.

The senior leadership team, through the self-evaluation process has a sound understanding of some of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. The school development plan provides helpful direction. The school leaders are successful in identifying priorities for improvement. There is a lack of rigour however, in ensuring the implementation of policies for effective improvement. A clearer focus on the monitoring of the impact of developments would enable the school to secure full awareness of value-added, in terms of raising student attainment further.

The establishment of an effective middle management team who can be held to account and hold others to account is a work in progress and staff need to be supported in their roles of encouraging more rigorous improvements. The school has been proactive in forming educational links with its sister organisation, Latifa School for Girls. These links will provide further opportunities to support the professional development of both senior and middle leaders.

Teaching is improving because of monitoring, but this is not yet fully rigorous and sustained. The school's curriculum provides sound opportunities for students to learn and make progress. The school has identified the need for a more rigorous approach to monitoring, tracking and assessment and is planning to ensure these all contribute to raising students' attainment.

The heads of the primary school have recognised that the requirements of cohorts have changed over time and are making changes to both curriculum content and pedagogy, including introducing new schemes of work and student support arrangements. These key developments demonstrate an awareness of how the school can develop further to meet student's needs.

The school's arrangements for safeguarding students are robust and meet statutory requirements.

The school provides a range of professional development opportunities and staff are encouraged to take responsibility for their professional learning. The school has implemented peer lesson observations: the impact of this initiative is still working through, in some aspects of teaching. Professional development target setting has been introduced and this is gradually becoming more clearly aligned to the school's key aims.