



دائرة التعليم والمعرفة
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
AND KNOWLEDGE

Inspection Report of Raha International School

Overall Effectiveness: Outstanding

Academic Year 2017 – 2018



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School Information

General Information	Inspection date:	from	19 Jumada Al-Awwal, 1439	to	22 Jumada Al-Awwal, 1439
		from	05-Feb-18	to	08-Feb-18
	School name			Raha International School	
	School ID			113	
	School address			Al Raha Gardens, Khalifa City A, Abu Dhabi	
	School telephone			+971 (0) 2 556 1567	
	School official email			rahaint.pvt@adec.ae	
	School website			www.ris.ae	
	School curriculum			International Baccalaureate (IB)	
	School phases			KG - High	
	Fee range and category			AED36,100 – AED56,900 (High to very high)	
	Number of lessons observed			139	
	Number of joint lessons observed			9	
Staff Information	Total number of teachers			161	
	Turnover rate			18%	
	Number of teaching assistants			62	
	Teacher- student ratio			1 : 13	
Student Information	Total number of students			2035	
	% of Emirati Students			15 %	
	% of Largest nationality groups			1. American 13%	
				2. Canadian 8%	
				3. Indian 6%	
	% of SEN students			10%	
	% of students per phase			KG: 16%	Middle: 37%
Primary: 38%				High: 9%	
Gender			Boys and girls		



The Performance of the School

Performance Standard 1 Students' Achievement 	Performance Standard 2 Students' personal and social development, and their innovation skills 
Performance Standard 3 Teaching and Assessment 	Performance Standard 4 Curriculum 
Performance Standard 5 The protection, care, guidance and support of students 	Performance Standard 6 Leadership and management 



Evaluation of the school's overall performance

- The overall performance of the school is outstanding. Since the last inspection, the school has appointed a new principal.
- Students' achievement is outstanding overall, throughout the school. Students' achievement in Arabic medium subjects is good overall in the primary and middle phases and very good in the high phase. Students' learning skills are outstanding. Children's learning through outdoor play in Kindergarten (KG) is an example of best practice.
- Students' personal and social development is outstanding. They are highly independent, innovative and internationally minded. They show outstanding awareness of Islamic values and understanding of Emirati and world cultures. Their knowledge and skills of enterprise are less well developed.
- The effectiveness of teaching and the use of assessment are outstanding. Teaching is at least good in every subject and is frequently outstanding. Teachers have outstanding knowledge of their subjects and the highest expectations of their students. Assessment is regular and rigorous and contributes to the outstanding progress students make through the school.
- The quality of the school curriculum is outstanding. It is coherent and relevant and fully prepares students for each stage of their education. Every opportunity is taken to make links between areas of learning. The range of curriculum choices is outstanding. The provision for reading is an example of best practice.
- The quality of protection, care, guidance and support for students is outstanding. The school's safe and secure environment promotes healthy living and positive relationships for all students. Identification and support for students with special educational needs (SEN) and those who are gifted and talented (G&T) are outstanding.
- The overall quality of leadership and management is outstanding. Leaders at all levels, in partnership with parents and the community, have sustained and improved the school's performance. Strongly supportive governance ensures the school's facilities and resources are of the highest quality.



Progress made since last inspection and capacity to improve



- School leaders have addressed all the recommendations in the previous inspection report. They have sustained and improved the school's outstanding performance.
- The school's outstanding overall performance in the IB Diploma in 2017 represents an improvement since the previous inspection. The achievement of students in Islamic education and social studies has improved and is now good. Students' attainment in mathematics has improved and is now very good throughout the school. Their achievement in science is now outstanding in all phases. Achievement in Arabic has been sustained, but it has yet to match that found in the IB curriculum subjects.
- Students' personal and social development, along with the protection, care, guidance and support offered to them, remains outstanding.
- The school's outstanding curriculum means students have clear and effective academic guidance and support at all stages in their education
- Overall, school leaders at all levels demonstrate an outstanding capacity to continue to innovate and improve over time.



Key areas of strength and area for improvement

Key areas of strength

- The effectiveness of teaching and assessment in promoting students' achievement through the international baccalaureate curriculum.
- The learning and innovation skills of students throughout the school.
- The personal and social development of students as responsible, global citizens.
- The impact of leaders in sustaining and improving the school's performance.
- The protection, care, guidance and support of students.

Key areas for improvement

1. Further improve writing in first language Arabic, in primary and middle, to benefit all subjects taught in the language, by:
 - i. ensuring students have daily writing activities that further develop their skills
 - ii. raising expectations for increasingly longer form writing in paragraphs and essays.
2. Develop an all school programme to promote further students' entrepreneurship by:
 - i. conducting an audit of current provision, identifying any gaps and looking for examples of best practice in the school and beyond
 - ii. ensuring the participation of all stakeholders in enterprise programmes, including parents and the local community
 - iii. providing a linked programme of age-appropriate enterprise activities and experiences for all students.



Provision for Reading

- The school has three libraries, well stocked with a wide range of English and Arabic texts. Students receive weekly English and Arabic library lessons in inviting, stimulating learning environments. They are well used by students. Library book circulation has more than doubled over the last year.
- The school promotes the national reading initiatives. In addition, the libraries organise the 'Global reading challenge' and the 'World book day' events.
- In Arabic and English lessons in all phases students read for comprehension. There is a focus, particularly in secondary, on the PISA requirements of reading for purpose, extracting information, comprehension and a focus on skills.
- There is an effective and comprehensive three-year primary reading plan supporting first and additional language reading in both Arabic and English. Assessment systems track students' reading ability. Other initiatives to support reading include visiting authors, annual book fairs, and out-of-hours library use for parents and students. All library books are indexed appropriate to the students' reading ability.
- Provision for reading for research is well developed. A wide range of extra-curricular activities provide students with opportunities to develop their public speaking and debating skills, digital storytelling, English book clubs and creating their own Arabic dictionary.
- Teachers are well-trained to teach phonics and reading in Arabic and English and an effective reading programme is in place across all phases. Effective reading support is available for SEN students.
- The school cultivates a culture of literacy and inquiry and nurtures a love of reading that is an example of best practice.



Performance Standard 1: Students' Achievement

Students' achievement Indicators		KG	Primary	Middle	High
Islamic Education	Attainment	N/A	Acceptable	Good	Very Good
	Progress	N/A	Good	Good	Very Good
Arabic (as a First Language)	Attainment	N/A	Good	Good	Very Good
	Progress	N/A	Good	Good	Very Good
Arabic (as additional Language)	Attainment	N/A	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
	Progress	N/A	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
Social Studies	Attainment	N/A	Good	Good	N/A
	Progress	N/A	Good	Good	N/A
English	Attainment	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
	Progress	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Mathematics	Attainment	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
	Progress	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
Science	Attainment	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
	Progress	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Other subjects (Art, Music, PE)	Attainment	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
	Progress	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Learning Skills		Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding



Overall achievement

- The overall quality of students' achievement is outstanding. It is outstanding in English and science and in the 'other subjects' that constitute over half of the school curriculum. It is very good in mathematics and Arabic as a second language. It is also very good in Arabic and Islamic education in the high phase. Achievement is acceptable in Islamic education the primary phase, and is good, along with social studies, in the middle phase.
- Students' attainment in the 2015 Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) and Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) examinations was above the Abu Dhabi, national and international average. This put the school's students alongside the top 15 countries in the world, in line with the UAE's 2020 target for international performance.
- In 2017, attainment in the IB Diploma overall was outstanding. Students' attainment in recent Grade 12 MoE examinations, in Arabic and in Islamic education, was outstanding.
- The school's own internal assessment information shows that students across all subjects consistently attain above curriculum standards. This was confirmed by attainment seen in lessons and in scrutiny of students' work.
- Overall, most students make outstanding progress and make better than expected progress in every subject. The progress of different groups of students, including SEN, G&T and who speak English as an additional language (EAL), is broadly similar to that of other students. Their learning skills are outstanding.

Subjects

- Students' achievement in **Islamic Education** is good overall. The majority of students in the primary and middle school develop a strong understanding of Islamic concepts and values, above curriculum expectations. Their reading of the Holy Qur'an is not always as secure. In the high school, a large majority of students utilize their higher order thinking skills in text analysis and digital research.
- Students' achievement in **Arabic as a first language** is good overall. It is very good in high school and good in primary and middle. Reading, listening, and speaking skills are above curriculum standards. Students demonstrate good grammatical skills but their writing skills in primary and middle are not always



as strong. They make above expected progress because of motivating teaching and strong learning skills.

- Students' achievement in **Arabic as a second language** is very good in all phases. The large majority of students attain above curriculum standards in reading, writing, listening and speaking skills. Students have a wide Arabic vocabulary and can read short sentences and text with very clear pronunciation.
- Students' achievement in **social studies** is good overall. As students move into the middle phase, they develop good knowledge, understanding and application of geography, history and UAE culture and heritage. Students' collaborative learning skills and their engagement is well developed across the phases.
- Students' achievement in **English** is outstanding. Most students are achieving above age-related curriculum expectations. By KG2, most children understand instructions and speak and write simple sentences. Students are confident and articulate speakers and their written skills are equally strong. By grade 12 students' attainment in IB Diploma is outstanding. All students meet expected curriculum standards and most exceed them.
- Students' achievement in **mathematics** is very good overall. A large majority of students achieve standards above curriculum expectations. In KG, they can measure the height of plants and begin to tell the time. In primary and middle they develop their use of geometry, algebra and trigonometry to solve mathematical problems. Students effectively apply their knowledge of mental mathematics to solve increasingly complex problems.
- Students' achievement in **science** is outstanding. Most students demonstrate knowledge, skills and understanding above curriculum standards in science. Investigative work is a focus in science lessons and contributes to science achievement.
- Students' achievement in **other subjects** is outstanding. Most students achieve standards above curriculum expectations in the visual arts, theatre arts, French, Spanish, history, geography, economics, psychology, environmental systems and societies, physical education (PE), music and digital and product design. They thrive on practical activities and project work that allows them to make the best use of their highly developed learning skills.

Learning skills

- Students' learning skills are outstanding. They demonstrate the key attributes of the IB learner profile as thinkers, risk takers and communicators. From a young age, students are given opportunities to be responsible for



their own learning, to problem solve and to collaborate effectively. Students make meaningful connections between subjects. They are adept in using digital technologies and are highly innovative and creative learners.

Areas of Relative Strength:

- Students' outstanding achievement in English, science and 'other subjects'.
- Students' innovative and creative use of their outstanding learning skills.
- Students performance in Grade 12 in national and international examinations.

Areas for Improvement:

- Students' writing skills in Arabic as a first language in the primary and middle phase and their impact on other subjects.
- Improve attainment in Islamic Education in the primary phase.



Performance Standard 2: Students' personal and social development, and their innovation skills

Students' personal and social development, and their innovation skills Indicators	KG	Primary	Middle	High
Personal development	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding

- Students' personal and social development is outstanding.
- Students' attitudes to learning and to school along with their exceptional work ethic, result in excellent behaviour for all age groups. They are polite and respectful, self-disciplined, confident and proactive. There are positive relationships between staff and students, and students with their peers.
- Students feel safe at school and are committed to following safe and healthy lifestyles. Attendance is very good at 97%.
- The school is both a highly diverse and strongly harmonious learning community. Students understand the links between the IB Learner Profile and Islamic values and this allows them to see how these values can frame an ethical approach to life. Students display a high regard for and understanding of UAE and other world cultures. In lessons, their unique personal experiences and backgrounds are frequently used to enhance and enrich their learning.
- Students' IB projects and exhibitions contribute to their communities at a school, local and international level. They engage in their own environmental projects. Their entrepreneurial skills are less fully developed.
- Students thrive on experimentation and innovation across creative, technical and design activities, both curricular and extra-curricular. They are engaged in the 'Tournament of Minds', an international competition in critical thinking and problem solving.

Areas of Relative Strength:

- Students in all phases have excellent attitudes and show exemplary behaviour.
- Students are making consistently healthy and safe choices.
- Students are young global citizens in a multi-cultural learning community.

Areas for Improvement:

- Attendance is not yet outstanding.
- Students' entrepreneurship is not consistently strong.



Performance Standard 3: Teaching and Assessment

Teaching and Assessment Indicators	KG	Primary	Middle	High
Teaching for effective learning	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Assessment	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding

- The overall quality of teaching and assessment is outstanding, and has led to outstanding achievement in many subjects Teachers use their excellent knowledge to apply teaching strategies that engage students quickly in their learning.
- Teachers plan imaginative and motivating lessons. They use time and resources effectively, promoting group and independent activities, and reading in Arabic and English. Teachers use probing, open-ended questions to extend students' critical thinking and problem- solving skills. Outdoor play is an outstanding feature of the way children learn in KG.
- Teachers support and challenge SEN and G&T students. They engage all students in innovative activities that promote the confident application of knowledge to further enhance their skills This is less evident in Arabic writing in primary and middle phases.
- Very strong teacher-student relationships encourage collaborative and independent work, achieving the mutual learning goals of the lesson.
- The school's internal assessment procedures are rigorously and consistently applied. The school makes good use of international and national benchmarks and standards. Teachers assess students' and students assess themselves and each other regularly using highly effective digital tools. Teachers carefully review students' performance. They use this information in their planning to meet the needs of all groups. Teachers provide students with constructive feedback that strongly supports their further learning.

Areas of Relative Strength:

- The outstanding quality of the large majority of lessons
- The depth and range of teachers' subject knowledge.
- Reliable and accurate assessment of students' progress.



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Areas for Improvement:

- The teaching of writing skills in Arabic as a first language in primary and middle phases.
- Teaching in Islamic Education, social studies and mathematics, to raise achievement in those subjects to outstanding levels.



Performance Standard 4: Curriculum

Curriculum Indicators	KG	Primary	Middle	High
Curriculum design and implementation	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Curriculum adaptation	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
- The quality of the curriculum is outstanding. It is clearly aligned to the school's IB mission and the UAE national vision. It is highly effective in developing a balance of knowledge, skills and understanding to prepare students for life-long learning - The well-planned curriculum meets the needs of all students, fully preparing them for the next stage of education. The wide range of curricular options provides students with varied and stimulating choices. - The school effectively implements meaningful and innovative cross-curricular links in the IB programme. The IB themes throughout the school enhance transfer of learning between different subjects. The IB Learner Profile provides meaningful links across all subjects, prompting students to be risk takers, innovators and critical thinkers. - The school reviews its curriculum rigorously to ensure it meets, in full, the academic and personal needs of all students, including SEN and G&T. - Opportunities for innovation, creativity and social contribution are embedded in all curricular areas. Entrepreneurial opportunities are less frequent. A wide range of extracurricular activities enhance students' experience of school. - Almost all aspects of the curriculum enable students to develop a broad understanding of UAE culture and society. To strengthen this aspect further, the school is developing further links with the local community. - Moral values are embedded in the curriculum and addressed in specific moral education lessons. The school follows the appropriate textbooks and employs digital literacy to stimulate research and enquiry in moral issues. The school has recorded an impact on values of responsibility, honesty, respect and resilience from the moral education programme. Areas of Relative Strength: - A coherent, meaningful and relevant IB curriculum. - The range of curricular choices provided for students. - Carefully planned and skilfully implemented cross curricular links. Areas for Improvement: - Further opportunities to promote entrepreneurship. - Further embedding students' understanding of UAE culture and society.				



Performance Standard 5: The protection, care, guidance and support of students

The protection, care, guidance and support of students Indicators	KG	Primary	Middle	High
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection/safeguarding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Care and support	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
- The overall quality of protection, care, guidance and support for students is outstanding. The school has rigorous procedures for the care and safeguarding of students, including a clear child protection policy which is understood by students, parents and staff. Effective policies and procedures ensure a safe and secure school, including skilled medical care. - The school has staff dedicated to the personal development and well-being of students. The school buildings provide a vibrant and inclusive learning environment, well suited to meet the needs of all students. The school provides well-informed guidance on healthy living and on social, emotional and academic progress. Career and further education guidance for middle and high school students is effective and highly valued. Most students go on to study at prestigious national and international universities. - Relationships between students and staff are strong. This is reflected in highly effective systems that lead to outstanding behaviour. - The school closely monitors students' very good attendance and their punctuality to school. It involves parents in finding solutions to overcome absences and lateness. Processes for overcoming lateness between lessons is less effective. - The school uses the expertise of specialist staff well to identify SEN and G&T students. These students receive highly effective support and individualized planning, as well as effective reviews to meet their needs and accelerate their progress. Areas of Relative Strength: - Procedures to ensure the care and safeguarding of students. - The provision and promotion of healthy living. - The identification and support of SEN and G&T students. Areas for Improvement: - Procedures to follow-up lateness between lessons.				



Performance Standard 6: Leadership and management

Leadership and management Indicators	
The effectiveness of leadership	Outstanding
Self-evaluation and improvement planning	Outstanding
Partnerships with parents and the community	Outstanding
Governance	Outstanding
Management, staffing, facilities and resources	Outstanding
• The overall quality of leadership and management is outstanding. School leaders share an ambitious vision with all stakeholders. Inspirational and skilled educational leadership has demonstrated a sustained capacity to innovate and improve over time. • The school's self-evaluation form (SEF) and school development plan (SDP) are powerful working documents that drive improvement. The innovative use of hyperlinks further expands their effectiveness. School leaders at all levels ensure improvement in teaching. This is not yet as strong in Arabic medium subjects. • Outstanding parental participation in all phases informs the school's processes and planning. The school provides regular communication and detailed reporting on progress. National and international partnerships are equally strong, although links with the community for entrepreneurship is less well developed. • The consistent support of knowledgeable school governors provides both stability and accountability for school leaders. • School leaders' management of the facilities and day to day life of the school is outstanding. The deployment of teachers and resources is highly effective. • School leaders have ensured the school has made a positive contribution to the promotion of the UAE in international assessment. They ensure Grade 3 and Grade 7 students follow the 'Question a Day' initiative and provide support when needed. They use mock PISA analysis to ensure students are covering all identified areas of learning	



Areas of Relative Strength:

- The impact of school leaders on the sustained performance of the school.
- The school's partnership with parents.
- The school's effective, electronic systems of assessment and self-evaluation.

Areas for Improvement:

- The further improvement of teaching, particularly in Arabic medium subjects.