



مجلس أبوظبي للتعليم
Abu Dhabi Education Council
Education First **التعليم أولاً**



Private School Inspection Report

ABC Private School

Academic Year 2016 – 2017

Iqraa

ABC Private School

Inspection Date	April 24, 2017	to	April 27, 2017
Date of previous inspection	May 16, 2016	to	May 19, 2016

General Information	
School ID	273
Opening year of school	2015
Principal	Baria Abou Zein
School telephone	+971 (0)2 444 5800
School Address	Shamkha 1 st Street, Al Shamkha City, Abu Dhabi
Official email (ADEC)	abc.pvt@adec.ac.ae
School website	abcprivateschool.com
Fee ranges (per annum)	Very low to average (AED7,128 to AED23,200)
Licensed Curriculum	
Main Curriculum	National Curriculum for England
Other Curriculum	----
External Exams/ Standardised tests	---
Accreditation	----

Students		
Total number of students	776	
%of students per curriculum	Main Curriculum	100%
	Other Curriculum	----
Number of students in other phases	KG	99
	Primary:	479
	Middle:	198
	High:	----
Age range	4 to 14 years	
Grades or Year Groups	KG2 to Grade 8	
Gender	Boys and girls	
% of Emirati Students	53%	
Largest nationality groups (%)	1. Egyptian: 17%	
	2. Jordanian: 7%	
	3. Syrian: 6%	
Staff		
Number of teachers	38	
Number of teaching assistants (TAs)	8	
Teacher-student ratio	KG/ FS	1:15
	Other phases	1:25
Teacher turnover	25%	

Introduction

Inspection activities	
Number of inspectors deployed	4
Number of inspection days	4
Number of lessons observed	96
Number of joint lesson observations	12
Number of parents' questionnaires	180; return rate: 12%
Details of other inspection activities	Inspectors held discussions with members of the governing body, principal, vice principal, other senior managers, teachers and other members of staff, students and parents. They reviewed a wide range of school documentation and students' coursework. They observed assemblies, school activities, arrivals, departures and intervals.

School	
School Aims	'Students will have: high quality learning experiences; be challenged to achieve at their best; be expected to develop self-awareness, responsibility and self-control, demonstrating the highest standards of behaviour. Parents will be a valued part of the school community.'
School vision and mission	'Staff will: develop their skills and capacity to raise standards; ensure the focus remains on student learning; work in a positive and supportive learning community; be provided with appropriate and effective professional development; provide regular recording of attainment and feedback to both students and parents on progress. The school will connect with the wider community.'

Admission Policy	The school has an inclusive and open admission policy.
Leadership structure (ownership, governance and management)	Governance comprises the owner and six trustees with expertise in education, finance, business and government. Leadership comprises the principal, vice principal and heads of key subject departments. Middle leadership comprises coordinators and supervisors for each grade. Parents are represented on a parents' council.

SEN Details (Refer to ADEC SEN Policy and Procedures)

SEN Category	Number of students identified through external assessments	Number of other students identified by the school internally
Intellectual disability	0	12
Specific Learning Disability	0	0
Emotional and Behaviour Disorders (ED/ BD)	0	2
Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)	0	0
Speech and Language Disorders	0	1
Physical and health related disabilities	0	0
Visually impaired	0	0
Hearing impaired	0	0
Multiple disabilities	0	0

G&T Details (Refer to ADEC SEN Policy and Procedures)

G&T Category	Number of students identified
Intellectual ability	0
Subject-specific aptitude (e.g. in science, mathematics, languages)	0
Social maturity and leadership	0
Mechanical/ technical/ technological ingenuity	0
Visual and performing arts (e.g. art, theatre, recitation)	0
Psychomotor ability (e.g. dance or sport)	2

The overall performance of the school

Inspectors considered the school in relation to 3 performance categories

Band A	High performing (Outstanding, Very Good or Good)
Band B	Satisfactory (Acceptable)
Band C	In need of significant improvement (Weak or Very Weak)

The school was judged to be:	Band B	Acceptable
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	Band A High Performing			Band B Satisfactory	Band C In need of significant improvement	
Performance Standards	Outstanding	Very Good	Good	Acceptable	Weak	Very Weak
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						

Summary Evaluation: The school's overall performance						
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The Performance of the School

Evaluation of the school's overall performance

The overall performance of the school is acceptable. Many aspects of the school's provision have been transformed since the start of the school year. The new leadership team has created and sustained a safe, caring and orderly environment. Attendance and punctuality are now very good, reflecting improved engagement of students and parental involvement in their learning. Most students show their awareness of Islamic values in respectful behaviour and relationships with staff and each other. Students show an acceptable appreciation of UAE heritage and culture. The quality of teaching and students' achievement is now acceptable, having improved significantly. Most students' progress and core learning skills are now acceptable across the school. While weakness remain in a number of areas, such as progress for older students, the school now has the means to recognise these and plan actions to bring about improvement. The curriculum does not yet provide the expected range of artistic and sporting activities and has yet to be adapted to meet fully the needs of students who have special needs or who are gifted and talented. Leaders' day-to-day management of the school is good but they have yet to engage effectively with the wider community or adequately promote students' social responsibility.

Progress made since last inspection and capacity to improve

The school has made very good progress since its last inspection. In a very short period, the new principal, new leadership team and new board of governors have rapidly improved what was a very weak school. The principal has ended the very weak behaviour among students and unprofessional attitudes among a few staff. All the recommendations from the previous inspection report have been implemented or are in the process of implementation. Leaders have very effectively tackled serious safety and safeguarding issues and won the trust of parents. Middle leaders, empowered by senior leaders, have improved the very weak quality of teaching. This has increased the engagement of students in their learning and raised achievement from a very low level in all subjects. Teachers now receive support and training, which has improved their use of assessment data, feedback to students, and resources. Leaders have introduced systems to identify and support SEN and G&T students but these are in their early stages. Staff turnover remains above average as the principal continues to seek a high quality of teaching. Overall, school leaders' capacity to improve the school is now good.

Development and promotion of innovation skills

The school does not yet promote innovation skills effectively enough. For example, activities that promote innovation are not a consistent feature of lessons and activities in all subjects. Not all teachers encourage higher level critical-thinking and problem-solving skills. The integration of information and communications technology (ICT) in lessons is still at an early stage of development. Overall, across the curriculum, the school has yet to develop or teach effectively the skills that underpin innovation.

The inspection identified the following as key areas of strength:

- the rapid and sustained school improvements the principal and school leaders have made in all key areas
- the care and safety of students and the promotion of students' attendance and punctuality
- the management of the day-to-day life of the school
- the reporting to parents of students' achievement and personal development.

The inspection identified the following as key areas for improvement:

- the further raising of students' achievement and the development of their higher level learning skills in all subjects
- teachers' expectations of students' performance
- the promotion of students' innovation skills and their social responsibility
- the identification and support of SEN and G&T students
- the adaptation of the curriculum and the use of external benchmarking.



Performance Standard 1: Students' Achievement

Students' achievement Indicators		KG	Primary	Middle	High
Islamic Education	Attainment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	
	Progress	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	
Arabic (as a First Language)	Attainment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	
	Progress	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	
Arabic (as a Second Language)	Attainment	N/A	Acceptable	Acceptable	
	Progress	N/A	Acceptable	Acceptable	
Social Studies	Attainment	N/A	Acceptable	Acceptable	
	Progress	N/A	Acceptable	Acceptable	
English	Attainment	Weak	Weak	Weak	
	Progress	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	
Mathematics	Attainment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	
	Progress	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	
Science	Attainment	Acceptable	Weak	Weak	
	Progress	Good	Weak	Good	
Language of instruction (if other than English and Arabic as First Language)	Attainment	N/A	N/A	N/A	
	Progress	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Other subjects (Art, Music, PE)	Attainment	Acceptable	Weak	Acceptable	
	Progress	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	
Learning Skills (including innovation, creativity, critical thinking, communication, problem-solving and collaboration)		Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	

The overall quality of students' achievement is acceptable. This is a major transformation in student outcomes from very weak performance at the time of the last inspection. Progress is now acceptable throughout the school for most students. Attainment as seen in the inspection is broadly acceptable in most subjects. It is less strong in those subjects where weak English skills restrict progress. There is no internal or external data from the previous school year. Results from recent internal tests show attainment overall to be in line with curriculum standards in primary and middle phases. The attainment of groups of boys in the middle phase and Arabic second language (ASL) students throughout the school is below age-related expectations. SEN and G&T students do not make the progress they should from their starting points. The only available results in KG are weak for phonics and outstanding for science. Students in Grade 5 and 7 took EMSA tests in Arabic and await results.

Students' achievement in Islamic education is acceptable. Most students are achieving age-appropriate curriculum expectations. For example, in KG2 most children can adequately read the "Hadeeth Shareef" and understand its meaning of being merciful to others. By Grade 4 most students can read the "Hadeeth Shareef" well and explain the simplicity of Islam using relevant vocabulary. By Grade 8 most can discuss the welfare and care of orphans, including Allah's rewards for those who care for them. They can recite verses from the Holy Qur'an following 'Tajweed' rules appropriate to their age group.

Students' achievement in Arabic as a first language (AFL) is acceptable. Most students are achieving age-appropriate curriculum expectations in reading, speaking, listening and understanding. For example, by the end of KG2, most can recognise and sound different letters, and write them correctly. In Grade 1, most can read short sentences accurately and communicate their learning appropriately. By Grade 8, most can read poems fluently with expression. They communicate the main ideas in standard Arabic language and make connections to their daily lives. Their extended writing skills are underdeveloped.

Students' achievement in ASL is acceptable. Most students are achieving age-appropriate curriculum expectations in reading, speaking, writing, listening and understanding. For example, in Grades 4 and 5, most students can read short paragraphs correctly with 'Tashkeel'. They use appropriate vocabulary to answer questions and describe pictures, demonstrating acceptable speaking, listening and understanding skills. Most students' creative writing skills are underdeveloped.

Students' achievement in social studies is acceptable. Most students are achieving age-appropriate curriculum expectations. For example, in Grade 2 most can talk about how the growth in UAE population affects the daily life of Emiratis. By Grade

6 most can discuss the services the UAE government provides for its citizens, for example in the health and education sectors. Most can link their knowledge to UAE and Islamic values.

Students' attainment in English is weak and their progress is acceptable. Only the minority of students are achieving age-appropriate curriculum expectations. Students are now making acceptable progress in lessons but previous low levels of attainment have yet to improve sufficiently. For example, in KG2, only the minority of children can say the 'qu' sound with confidence and only a few can write simple words using these letters. In Grade 3, only the minority can retell the main parts of a simple story and answer questions about it. By Grade 7, only the minority can identify and use antonyms and synonyms in their writing.

Students' achievement in mathematics is acceptable. Most students are achieving age-appropriate curriculum expectations. For example, most children in KG2 can estimate capacity by manipulating materials to make a container full, half full or empty. Most students in Grade 2 can identify and estimate the size of angles, classifying them as acute, right or obtuse. Most in Grade 7 can add and subtract simple fractions. Progress is strongest in lessons that link mathematics to everyday life.

Students' achievement in science is weak overall. In KG, attainment is acceptable and progress is good. For example, in KG2, most children can conduct simple experiments with magnets and make good progress in response to good teaching. Progress slows in the primary phase and is weak, leading to weak attainment. For example, in a G5 lesson about transparent, translucent and opaque properties of materials, only the minority could confidently predict results. In the middle phase, older students' progress starts to accelerate from weak starting points due to effective specialist teaching.

Students' achievement in other subjects is acceptable overall. Their attainment in the primary phase is weak. Most students are achieving age-appropriate curriculum expectations in physical education (PE), music, art, ICT and robotics. For example, in KG2 most can sing a song in unison for a concert performance and cut out shapes for a collage, using equipment safely. By Grade 8, most can work collaboratively to build and program simple robots.

The overall quality of students' learning skills is acceptable. It is good in KG science. Most students are engaged learners but do not always take enough responsibility for their own learning. Collaboration skills are generally effective and interactions are positive and productive, for example when working together on a presentation. Students understand the links between subject areas, particularly between social studies and other subjects. Students' innovation skills are weak because they do not have sufficient opportunities to apply their problem-solving and critical-thinking skills. For example, in most primary science lessons they do not use their investigative skills independently to solve problems or find solutions.

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
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Personal development	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Weak	Weak	Weak	

The overall quality of students' personal and social development is acceptable. Most students have positive attitudes to their learning, and behaviour is acceptable throughout the school. This represents a very significant improvement since the beginning of this academic year. Relationships amongst students and with staff are respectful and bullying is rare. Most students make healthy eating choices and take exercise. Students show their enjoyment of school through very good attendance of 96% and the punctuality of almost all students to assemblies. Punctuality to lessons is always prompt as all grades are escorted by teachers. This restricts opportunities for older students to learn to manage their own punctuality.

The quality of students' understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures is acceptable. Students show an appreciation of the influence of Islamic values on society. Most students have an adequate knowledge of the heritage and culture of the UAE. This is supported across the curriculum and in regular celebrations such as Flag Day and Martyr's Day. They know about their own cultures and show a basic understanding of other world cultures, creating displays about Paris and China, for example.

The quality of students' social responsibility and innovation skills is weak. They rely too much on adults to help and direct them. They have few leadership or entrepreneurial roles in the school community. The student council has yet to meet. Students do not drop litter, but their awareness of environmental issues beyond the school is weak. Innovation skills are underdeveloped both in lessons and other activities.

Performance Standard 3: Teaching and Assessment

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

The overall quality of teaching and assessment is acceptable. Teaching for effective learning is acceptable overall. Most teachers have appropriate subject knowledge, and use a common lesson plan format to deliver their subject securely. Teachers offer helpful support for students through regular additional follow-up lessons. Relationships with students are now positive but expectations of what they can achieve can still be raised in a few grades. Teachers promote effective links to Islamic values and the culture and heritage of the UAE in most subjects. Teachers' questioning is acceptable overall and used mostly to find out how well students are grasping key lesson objectives. A few teachers use questioning to challenge students to think more deeply, but this is not a consistent approach. To improve teaching further, the school recognises that it must achieve greater consistency in the way teachers provide opportunities for students to take greater responsibility for learning, for example through leading an activity. This is now feasible because of the major improvements that have taken place in students' behaviour. The use of ICT to raise achievement further through research and investigation is not embedded across subjects.

The quality of assessment is broadly acceptable. Students' attainment is now assessed regularly and compared with curriculum standards. Lack of reference to external benchmarks contributes to teachers' expectations being insufficiently high. Leaders are beginning to use internal assessment information to monitor students' progress, inform planning and meet the needs of groups. Teachers have a general understanding of students' individual strengths and weaknesses through regular weekly tests. Primary phase assessment in English and science is underdeveloped as few teachers use probing, targeted questioning to assess students' understanding. Teachers provide regular feedback in most subjects but do not always give constructive responses to accelerate students' progress. They do not use assessment effectively enough to promote the progress of SEN and G&T students.

Performance Standard 4: Curriculum

Curriculum Indicators	KG	Primary	Middle	High
Curriculum design and implementation	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	
Curriculum adaptation	Weak	Weak	Weak	

The overall quality of the curriculum is weak. The quality of curriculum design and implementation is acceptable. The school has implemented the ENC, since September, to meet the needs of most students. It has delivered all the core ENC subjects effectively alongside the subjects taught in Arabic, although focus is more on knowledge than skills, particularly those of innovation. Provision meets minimum requirements in art and music. Consistent lesson planning provides appropriate progression in the key subjects. Opportunities for independent learning, research and critical thinking are rare. In KG, there are few opportunities to exercise choice in child-initiated activities. The school plans appropriate cross-curricular links that help students transfer their learning between subjects. The scope and sequence of planned programmes is appropriate but previous learning is not always taken fully into account for students who have a legacy of gaps in their learning. The curriculum is currently being comprehensively reviewed for recognition in the Cambridge International Examinations programme.

The quality of curriculum adaptation is weak. It is not sufficiently adapted to meet the needs of groups of students, particularly SEN, G&T and ASL students, or for some groups of older boys. For example, the selection of novels in English has not been carefully considered. The curriculum is partially enhanced with visits, including to Ferrari World and Yas Waterworld. There are a few sporting and cultural activities for a minority of students. Community links and opportunities for enterprise and innovation are underdeveloped. Appropriately chosen opportunities to learn about UAE traditions and culture are integrated in the curriculum, and students' appreciation of the UAE is enhanced by assemblies and other school activities.

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

The protection, care, guidance and support of students Indicators	KG	Primary	Middle	High
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Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection/safeguarding	Good	Good	Good	
Care and support	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	

The overall quality of protection, care, guidance and support of students is acceptable. The school is now a safe environment for students and staff. The child protection policy has been widely shared with all stakeholders. Any incidents of bullying are now rare. Highly effective safeguarding is based on well-implemented policies and procedures for behaviour, fire safety and security. A large support staff effectively maintain the cleanliness and good order of the school site. The health and safety committee undertake frequent checks and keep detailed records. Arrangements for the arrival and dismissal of students are now safe, including the addition of safety barriers in the bus area. The school clinic is hygienic and the school nurse provides good quality care. The school promotes healthy life styles but these are not fully supported through, for example, PE lessons. Students do not always bring healthy snacks to school. Prayer and washing facilities meet the needs of both boys and girls.

The quality of care and support is acceptable. Relationships between staff and most students are now courteous and secure. They contribute to an effective whole-school approach to behaviour management. This is appropriately supported by the team of behaviour supervisors. The school's rewards and sanctions policy is effective. The school has very successful systems to manage very good attendance and punctuality to school, including a robust reporting system. Procedures for identifying and supporting SEN and G&T students, although improved, remain weak. The school lacks effective specialised SEN expertise to develop and share individual education plans. There is adequate guidance to older students to help them make decisions about further education.

Performance Standard 6: Leadership and management

Leadership and management Indicators	
The effectiveness of leadership	Good
Self-evaluation and improvement planning	Acceptable
Partnerships with parents and the community	Acceptable
Governance	Acceptable
Management, staffing, facilities and resources	Good

The overall quality of leadership and management is acceptable. New leadership has improved all areas of the school's work in a very short time, showing good capacity to innovate and improve. Provision and outcomes are now acceptable in most areas. None remain very weak. All leaders show a commitment to UAE and Emirate priorities. Relationships are now positive between staff and students. Middle leaders are effective in holding teachers accountable for students' achievement.

The quality of self-evaluation and improvement planning is acceptable. The self-evaluation form (SEF) is accurately based on UAE framework standards but does not use external data to validate performance. The school development plan (SDP) shows strategic planning, with clear priorities. Leaders' effective monitoring of teaching has improved learning. They have not yet developed effective support for SEN and G&T students. The curriculum is not yet adapted to meet the needs of all groups of students.

The quality of partnerships with parents and the community is acceptable. Leaders have worked with parents to improve the school and to inform priorities in the SDP. Reporting is good, with daily information about homework and performance. The school's community, national and international partnerships remain underdeveloped.

The quality of governance is acceptable. The school had no governors in its first year. The new governors have been effective in appointing strong leadership to manage the school's improvement. Governors have yet to establish regular evaluation of all stakeholders' views and regular accountability of school leaders.

The quality of management, staffing, facilities and resources is good. The day-to-day life of the school is well organised. Staff are suitably qualified and trained. The premises provide a well-designed learning environment. Adequate resources are available to support learning.

What the school should do to improve further:

1. Raise achievement further in all subjects, particularly in English and science, and promote higher level learning and innovation skills by:
 - i. ensuring students take increasing responsibility for their own learning
 - ii. developing students as critical thinkers and problem solvers
 - iii. promoting students' roles as leaders in classroom and school activities
 - iv. engaging students in imaginative and creative tasks
 - v. providing students with frequent opportunities to use ICT for research in all subjects.
2. Improve the quality of teaching and assessment by:
 - i. raising teachers' expectations of the progress all groups of students can make from their different starting points
 - ii. providing challenging activities through lively and active teaching and questioning strategies
 - iii. using resources imaginatively to stimulate and support learning, particularly for G&T and SEN students
 - iv. giving students regular opportunities to respond to teachers' comments on their work
 - v. ensuring all teachers have access to, understand and use externally validated benchmarks to inform their planning.
3. Improve leadership and management by:
 - i. developing processes which use external benchmarks effectively to measure students' attainment
 - ii. ensuring continued rapid improvement through focus on raising students' attainment
 - iii. providing more opportunities for students to show social and environmental responsibility
 - iv. identifying and supporting SEN and G&T students, including specialised assistance in a dedicated SEN area
 - v. adapting the curriculum to meet the needs of all groups of students, including groups of older boys and ASL students.
 - vi. measuring the impact of internal and external professional development that is closely linked to school priorities
 - vii. providing further opportunities for middle leaders to evaluate teaching and learning effectively and to share best practice.