



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



Private School Inspection Report

Abu Mousa Al Ashaari Private School

Academic Year 2016 – 2017

Iqraa

Abu Mousa Al Ashaari Private School

Inspection Date	February 6, 2017	to	February 9, 2017
Date of previous inspection	September 22, 2014	to	September 25, 2014

General Information	
School ID	o88
Opening year of school	1985
Principal	Ali Mahmoud Arafa
School telephone	+971 (0)2 583 3022
School Address	Bani Yas, Abu Dhabi.
Official email (ADEC)	Abumousa.pvt@adec.ac.ae
School website	----
Fee ranges (per annum)	Very low: AED 5,000 to AED 7,000

Students		
Total number of students	325	
%of students per curriculum	Main Curriculum	100%
	Other Curriculum	0
Number of students in other phases	KG	19
	Primary:	306
	Middle:	----
	High:	----
Age range	4 to 11 years	
Grades or Year Groups	KG2 to Grade 5	
Gender	Boys and girls	
% of Emirati Students	0.6%	
Largest nationality groups (%)	1. Yemeni: 38%	
	2. Syrian: 19%	
	3. Sudanese: 17%	

Licensed Curriculum	
Main Curriculum	Ministry of Education (MoE)
Other Curriculum (if applicable)	----
External Exams/ Standardised tests	----
Accreditation	----

Staff		
Number of teachers	23	
Number of teaching assistants (TAs)	1	
Teacher-student ratio	KG/ FS	1:9
	Other phases	1:13
Teacher turnover	65 %	

Introduction

Inspection activities	
Number of inspectors deployed	3
Number of inspection days	4
Number of lessons observed	64
Number of joint lesson observations	2
Number of parents' questionnaires	34; (response rate: 7%)
Details of other inspection activities	The inspection team held meetings with the principal, coordinators, teachers, parents and students. They attended assemblies and break times. Inspectors analysed school documents, data, records and students' work.

School	
School Aims	'An attractive learning environment attracts children facing the challenge of leading the future through an excellent educational system.'
School vision and mission	'To seek a promising generation proud of its past, on the value of a conservative loyal to his leadership, through the provision of qualified personnel and modern technology in a safe school building.'
Admission Policy	The school is non-selective. The Electronic Student Information System (eSIS) was closed so there was no new admissions in 2016.
Leadership structure (ownership, governance and management)	The acting principal has been in post since May 2016. Middle leadership comprises six subject coordinator. The owner founded the school in 1985 and now delegates oversight of the school to his representative and Board of Trustees.

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	7
Specific Learning Disability	0	0
Emotional and Behaviour Disorders (ED/ BD)	0	0
Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)	0	0
Speech and Language Disorders	0	15
Physical and health related disabilities	0	3
Visually impaired	0	5
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)	7
Social maturity and leadership	0
Mechanical/ technical/ technological ingenuity	0
Visual and performing arts (e.g. art, theatre, recitation)	5
Psychomotor ability (e.g. dance or sport)	3

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 C	Weak
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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 weak. In summer 2016, the school reorganised with the appointment of an acting principal and a 65% turnover of staff. The principal has begun to make an impact on aspects of the school but not enough has been done to prepare students well for their future education. Achievement is acceptable in Arabic and Islamic education but weak in all other subjects. Students have an acceptable understanding of UAE culture and Islamic values and a greater number are attending school regularly. Teaching is weak and is still centred too much on text books and worksheets. The school has few strategies and activities to encourage independence, innovation, investigation and critical-thinking skills. Assessment is not used well enough to ensure planned activities meet the needs of all children. The curriculum for the small number of children in the KG is very weak. Links with parents are acceptable. Students' learning is not monitored sufficiently well in order to improve the quality of teaching. Resources are very limited. The school's facilities are unsuitable.

Progress made since last inspection and capacity to improve

The school has made weak progress since its last inspection. The Trustees failed to act quickly after the last inspection to halt the decline of the school. Action was taken in May 2016 to appoint a new principal and reorganise staffing. Due to this delay, there has been a limited response to the recommendations from the previous inspection report. Students and parents say that corporal punishment was administered previously and this has been stopped. Important maintenance has made the premises safe. Security systems, students' behaviour and attendance have been improved. The Trustees and principal have recently begun to work with an external consultancy firm. This is needed because school leaders have insufficient capacity to improve the school without additional support.

Development and promotion of innovation skills

The school does not yet promote innovation effectively enough. Innovation opportunities are seldom integrated into teachers' planning. Students are unable to apply information and communication technology (ICT) skills across subjects during lessons because of the lack of resources in classrooms. Teaching in the ICT suite does not develop students' skills effectively. Lessons provide few opportunities for students to be creative or to build their confidence in trying things out for themselves. Overall, across the curriculum the school has yet to promote or teach effectively the skills that underpin innovation.

The inspection identified the following as key areas of strength:

- improved attainment and progress in Arabic since the last inspection
- students' understanding of UAE culture and Islamic values
- positive relationships and improved communications with parents
- improved attendance since the last inspection.

The inspection identified the following as key areas for improvement:

- students' achievement across all subjects
- the quality of teaching to address the needs of all students, including those who have special educational needs or who are more able
- the provision of resources across the curriculum
- the curriculum provided for KG children
- the range of strategies and activities to encourage independence, innovation, investigation and critical-thinking skills
- the impact of school leaders and Trustees on school improvement
- the quality of care, protection and guidance for students.



Performance Standard 1: Students' Achievement

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

The overall quality of students' achievement is weak. Most children in KG and the primary phase do not attain age-appropriate curriculum expectations, other than in Arabic and Islamic education. The school has recently introduced its own diagnostic test which shows that children enter with low skills. As progress in most subjects is weak, students' attainment remains below age-related expectations when they leave the school. The school's internal assessment data is unreliable. Recent MoE tests, which were administered and marked internally, show very high scores in almost all subjects. This correlates to outstanding attainment when matched with the MoE benchmarks. This does not match the quality of students' actual attainment or coursework. The majority of children who are more able and those with special educational needs (SEN) make the same weak progress as their peers.

Students' achievement in Islamic education is acceptable. Most students have skills and understanding in line with curriculum expectations. In KG 2 most children are able to recite simple verses from the Qur'an and can state the five pillars of Islam. By Grade 5, students are able to explain positive Islamic practices and their place in their own lives, such as how they should behave when travelling. Most students are respectful and respond with increasing confidence and accuracy to prayers in assemblies. The limited range of approaches and strategies in most lessons, however, prevents more rapid progress overall.

Achievement in Arabic is acceptable and much improved since the last inspection when it was poor. Acceptable progress is made in KG so children begin to gain an understanding of initial letters. Attainment improves in the primary phase in most lessons and is in line with curriculum expectations for most students. By Grade 4, for example, most students are able to use different word tenses in the right context. Teachers' model classical language appropriately in most lessons so students quickly gain confidence in expressing themselves. There are too few opportunities for students to develop independent writing skills.

The overall quality of students' achievement in social studies is weak. Their general knowledge and respect for the culture and aspirations of the UAE are acceptable, but they have insufficient depth, particularly in understanding geography and history. For example, KG 2 children are unable to name the president of the UAE and Grade 1 students do not know the names of the seven Emirates. Students' progress continues at a generally weak pace through to Grades 4 and 5, although in a few lessons better teaching improves learning. For example, most students in Grade 4 are able to work in groups to make comparisons between constitutional Law and Qur'an regulations.

Students' achievement in English is weak. The large majority are working below age-related expectations, particularly in writing. KG2 children do not know their initial



sounds and are unable to blend letters together to form simple words. In Grades 3 to 5, most students have difficulty recognising high frequency words confidently. Most students read slowly and with little fluency. They have little confidence when speaking English and their oral skills are underdeveloped. A few can read unseen text and can explain their understanding of the text. English is not promoted around the school so students do not see its relevance to their own lives. By Grade 5, students are not writing using a clear handwriting style, and are not developing the ability to write independently.

Achievement in mathematics is weak across the school and below curriculum expectations. In KG2, children are not developing an understanding of numbers to 20. In the primary phase, the lack of manipulatives and the limited range of strategies used restricts students' learning. In Grade 3, for example, students do not know their number bonds within 10. By Grade 5, the large minority of students are still counting using their fingers and have a weak understanding of multiplication facts. Grade 4 students had an understanding of patterns with missing numbers. The restricted opportunities to solve problems and carry out investigations limits progress.

Students' achievement in science is weak. In KG2 achievement is very weak and well below age-related expectations. Although children acquire some knowledge, such as the ability to sort healthy and unhealthy food, their skills and understanding are very limited. This is because they have few opportunities to observe, explore and investigate. In most primary phase lessons, students have no opportunity to investigate because teachers demonstrate the experiment to them. In Grade 2, however, students made anemometers linked with their weather topic, which aided their understanding of the effects of the wind.

Most students' attainment and progress in other subjects is weak and below age-related expectations. In physical education (PE), for example, students' skills development is limited by the few activities that they can carry out in the small playground. Teaching in art does not promote students' creativity or observational skills. ICT lessons do not build students' skills progressively. As a result, Grade 5 students had difficulty in opening a spreadsheet and entering data into a cell.

Students' learning skills are weak overall. Recent training has encouraged teachers to begin to provide opportunities for collaboration. For example, in a Grade 3 Arabic lesson, most students developed their communication skills in group discussions. In the majority of lessons, students have too few opportunities to work collaboratively in lessons or to practise their problem-solving and leadership skills. Students' abilities to link knowledge across subjects, carry out research or work independently are limited. This is largely because teaching gives them too few opportunities to find

things out and think for themselves.

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

Students' personal and social development and their innovation skills are weak. Their understanding of Islamic values and Emirati culture is acceptable. Their knowledge of other world cultures is less well developed. Most children in the KG have passive attitudes to learning because the activities offered do not engage them. Across the primary phase, behaviour is acceptable for the majority and improved since the last inspection. However, the minority of boys become disengaged when lessons are less motivating and they do not show appropriate respect to their peers or teachers. Attendance is improved and acceptable at 93%. Students do not take sufficient personal responsibility for their own learning because of a lack of opportunity. They show a limited understanding of how to live a safe and healthy lifestyle.

Students demonstrate an acceptable level of understanding of Islamic values. Their understanding of UAE culture and heritage is developed in regular celebrations of cultural events such as National Day. During assemblies, students sing the national anthem and respectfully observe prayers, readings and the flag. Students lack opportunities to develop their understanding of the cultural backgrounds of others at the school.

Social responsibility and innovation skills are generally weak because the school has not yet focused sufficiently on promoting them. The new student council has limited responsibilities but is a step in the right direction as the school seeks to give

students more opportunities to develop leadership skills. A few students, such as those in Grade 5 who are prefects, show responsibility by greeting visitors and helping at break time. There are too few opportunities for other students to take on leadership roles. Students have a few opportunities to contribute to the local community, such as organising donations for the Red Crescent.

Performance Standard 3: Teaching and Assessment

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

Teaching and assessment are weak overall. In the KG this is because teachers do not understand that young children need to learn by being active and to learn experientially. Teachers require KG children to sit for long periods of time. No activities are set up around the room for exploration or consolidation of prior learning. Although most teachers have acceptable subject knowledge there is a limited understanding of what constitutes good teaching and how students learn best. English teachers do not always model oral or written English accurately. This limits students' progress.

In Arabic and social studies in the higher grades, a wide range of strategies are used and activities are adapted carefully for different groups. During a Grade 5 lesson, for example, role play and a range of resources were used to help students deepen their understanding of Britain's historical role in the Arabian Gulf. Recent training has introduced teachers to new strategies such as 'brainstorming'. These are being used appropriately in a few lessons which encourage collaborative working. In other lessons, however, only a few students took an active part. In the majority of lessons a limited range of strategies is used and resources are confined to the text book or worksheets. There are few open-ended tasks and teachers over-control lessons. In the majority of lessons, they talk for too long and this leaves too short a time for students' independent work. Questioning often only requires a one or two-word answer and is not used purposefully to check students' understanding. Lower achieving students often find the work too difficult while the more-able find activities fairly easy and do not make the progress they are capable of.

Assessment practices are weak across the school. Teachers do not have the kind of accurate information about attainment and progress which would enable them to plan to meet students' strengths and weaknesses. The school has yet to approach the use of assessment in a systematic way. The quality of teachers' marking is variable and it rarely provides students with information about how to improve their work. Students are rarely involved in assessing their own and each other's learning. The school's internal assessments do not reflect actual attainment accurately.

Performance Standard 4: Curriculum

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

The overall quality of the curriculum is weak. It is very weak in KG. The school follow the MoE curriculum. Provision for Arabic is a strength but the school does not offer music or the new design and technology curriculum.

The implementation of the KG curriculum is very weak because it does not take into consideration how children at this developmental stage learn and develop. Young children do not have planned opportunities to make choices or follow their interests. Art, PE and ICT are timetabled for all students but the lack of progression in skills limits progress. A new library room has opened but this contains insufficient resources or space to have an impact on reading across the curriculum.

Much of the curriculum is text-book driven, even in KG. A few teachers ensure that lessons are enlivened through using textbooks only as a starting point. The school does not provide sufficient cross-curricular or real-life links. This undermines students' ability to consolidate skills across subjects. The curriculum is not adapted well enough to provide engaging activities that promote skills in enterprise or innovation. There are no clubs, for example to develop creativity, environmental concern or sporting skills.

The curriculum is not adapted sufficiently to meet the needs of all groups. The school does not have a diagnostic system for the identification of students with special needs or those that are gifted and talented. The curriculum promotes UAE

culture and Islamic values acceptably well and provides some enrichment through visits, such as the recent visit to the Sheikh Zayed Mosque. The curriculum has not yet been reviewed since the new principal's arrival.

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	Weak	Weak		
Care and support	Weak	Weak		

The overall quality of protection, care, guidance and support for students is weak, although aspects of care and protection have improved since the last inspection. The school's child protection policy is fully understood by staff, parents and students. The school is now secure and the required maintenance to improve safety has been carried out. Safety checks are regular, although the school has yet to develop a wide range of risk assessments. Supervision levels are appropriate and procedures for the buses are acceptable. Attendance procedures have been strengthened which has resulted in increased attendance. The lack of Arabic language in the clinic limits discussions between the school with parents and students about health issues. It also limits the activities that can be run to promote a healthy lifestyle.

Many classrooms are small and dark, with little natural light. This environment limits the scope for practical and experiential learning in many lessons. The small playground space limits students' ability to play games at break times. There are too few toilets for the number of students.

The majority of staff have acceptable relationships with students. However, a minority of teachers shout excessively in classrooms and this results in disengagement by students. Although behaviour has improved since the last inspection, there is a lack of a consistent approach to behaviour management. The school does not have a system for the identification of students with special needs or those who are gifted and talented. Consequently, there is no specific or targeted provision for these students. The minority of teachers give acceptable verbal feedback to students but the limited use of other strategies, such as success criteria

or targets, means that students do not always know how to improve.

Performance Standard 6: Leadership and management

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

The overall quality of leadership and management is weak. The new principal has focused, quite rightly, on addressing urgent issues such as safety, behaviour and security. This has limited the scope for setting a direction for educational improvement, however. The school is not yet inclusive in meeting the needs of students who have special needs and the school community is not fully harmonious. Staff say that morale has improved and there is a positive team spirit. They value the new routines and systems introduced by the principal which are helping the school to operate more smoothly. Communication amongst the staff is effective.

Until recently, teachers did not receive professional development opportunities. Teachers have yet to receive sufficient training that focuses on the quality of learning, especially for those students who tend to be passive or who become disengaged. Monitoring systems check only a narrow range of aspects of teaching and learning and are not sufficiently robust or accurate in evaluating the quality of lessons. As a result, they are having insufficient impact on raising achievement. Leaders at all levels need continuing support to ensure that they can fully contribute to school improvement.

The school's self-evaluation form (SEF) involves all staff. The SEF is not accurate in its judgments against national standards. Student attainment data has begun to be collated and analysed. It mostly overestimates the performance of students, except in Arabic, where judgements are accurate. The school development plan (SDP) has some focus on improving teaching and learning but the actions are not detailed enough to have a clear impact on improving students' achievement.

The school has acceptable links with parents and they appreciate the



communications through newsletters, meetings and social media. Regular reports outline students' successes but do not yet give next steps in learning. The Parent Council is active in the school and helps with events such as Flag Day.

The Trustees meet infrequently and this does not provide sufficient direction or hold leaders robustly to account. The owner's representative has begun to visit more regularly for meetings with the new principal. As at the last inspection, the school does not have sufficient resources in all curriculum areas. Facilities are still weak.

What the school should do to improve further:

1. Improve the quality of teaching and students' achievement across all subjects by:
 - i. developing teachers' knowledge and understanding of how students learn effectively
 - ii. ensuring that students do not become disengaged because they have to sit passively listening to teachers for too long
 - iii. planning activities which better engage and meet the needs of all students, including those who need special support and the more-able
 - iv. introducing more open-ended activities which enable children to investigate, explore, solve problems and think critically
 - v. introducing age-appropriate learning targets and success criteria so that students know what they need to do to improve
 - vi. developing teachers' use of assessment, including constructive feedback, and children's portfolios to better track progress.
2. Improve the adaptation and implementation of the curriculum to ensure skills progress by:
 - i. providing an appropriate range of resources for all curriculum areas
 - ii. planning cross-curricular and real-life links to make learning more relevant
 - iii. providing a range of extra-curricular activities
 - iv. delivering the KG curriculum in an age-appropriate way
 - v. developing a system for the diagnosis and provision of students requiring special support.
3. Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
 - i. providing training for all leaders so they can better contribute to school improvement
 - ii. widening the range of monitoring activities so that all aspects of students' learning are checked
 - iii. improving learning environments to provide prompts for learning and celebration of students' work
 - iv. introducing a consistent approach to assessment which helps teachers meet students' needs
 - v. agreeing a consistent approach to rewards and sanctions to improve the behaviour of all students



- vi. providing training in how to evaluate students' attainment and progress accurately against curriculum expectations