



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



Inspection Report

Glenelg School of Abu Dhabi - Secondary

Academic Year 2013 – 14

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Glenelg School of Abu Dhabi - Secondary

Inspection Date	5 – 8 May 2014
School ID#	202
Licensed Curriculum	American
Number of Students	893
Age Range	11 to 18 years
Gender	Male and female sections
Principal	Angela Fink
School Address	Sas Al Nakheel, Abu Dhabi
Telephone Number	+971 (02) 599 2002
Fax Number	+971 (02) 558 9045
Official Email (ADEC)	Glenelg.pvt@adec.ac.ae
School Website	www.gsad.sch.ae
Date of last inspection	8 – 11 October 2012

The overall effectiveness of the school

Inspectors considered the school in relation to 3 performance categories

Band A High performing (overall effectiveness grade 1, 2 or 3)

Band B Satisfactory (overall effectiveness grade 4 or 5)

Band C In need of significant improvement (overall effectiveness grade 6, 7 or 8)

The School was judged to be:	BAND B;	GRADE 4
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The main strengths of the school are:

- the positive and caring ethos and the schools' vigilance in all matters relating to the health and safety of students
- the excellent quality of buildings and premises
- the high quality resources.

The main areas for improvement are:

- the academic standards in all subjects, especially in Arabic and Islamic education
- the consistency in the quality of teaching and learning
- the need for greater stability in the senior leadership team.

Introduction

The school was inspected by 4 inspectors. They observed 62 lessons, conducted meetings with members of the Board of Trustees, senior leadership team, the heads of departments, teachers, support staff, students and parents. They evaluated test and assessment results, scrutinized students' work, analysed the 102 responses to the parents' questionnaire and considered many of the schools policies and other documents.

Description of the School

Glenelg School of Abu Dhabi (GSAD) was founded in 2008 by The Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC). During the first year of operation the female campus served 89 students and the male campus 117 students in Grades 7 through to 11. In the last 5 years, the school has increased enrolment and added Grades 6 and 12. There are 8 schools within the Glenelg group of schools. The head of school is responsible for all the schools and a Board of Trustees represents and governs the school and partner schools. GSAD aims to prepare students for both local and international universities. The school very recently achieved Middle States Accreditation.

There are 893 students with 424 boys and 469 girls in the separate sections of the school. There are 30 different nationalities represented at the school; the vast majority, 69%, are Emirati, 6% are American, 4% Pakistani, 3% Indian, 3% Jordanian, 2% Egyptian and the remaining 13% of from other nationalities. Almost all students are Muslim and most speak Arabic as their first language. Very few speak English as their first language and 20 students receive additional support for English. 8 students are identified as having special educational needs (SEN) including those with visual impairment, physical disability, dyslexia and Tourette's syndrome. The admissions policy requires that students are assessed and interviewed on entry to ensure that they have the academic potential required for the university preparatory programme that the school offers. The Admission Committee considers all applications.

The curriculum of GSAD was originally based upon that of Glenelg County School of Maryland, USA and adapted to meet the needs of students in the UAE. More recently there has been a shift towards the Common Core curriculum with English and mathematics now following this, and science moving towards Common Core standards. The Ministry of Education (MoE) curriculum is followed for Arabic and Islamic education. Students can opt to take external examinations such as American Advance Placement (AP) and Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT).

The Head of school joined in 2008 as director of admissions and has been in her current post since January 2012. The female campus principal joined the school in 2010. The director of curriculum joined the school in 2012 and since January of this year has been acting male campus principal. Since 2009 there have been 3 male campus principals.

School fees are in the high to premium category ranging from AED 28,500 to AED 36,000, excluding transport, uniforms and books.

The Effectiveness of the School

Students' attainment & progress

On entry to the middle school, students' attainment is broadly at age related expectations, except in English, which is slightly lower than expected. The majority of students learn English as an additional language. Reading skills are relatively weak and lag behind speaking and writing skills throughout much of the middle school. Progress is generally slower in all subjects in the middle school and gathers momentum in high school.

By the time students leave school, standards in most subjects are broadly in line with international expectations. Students are beginning to make more rapid progress in mathematics and chemistry and the standards they achieve in these subjects are good. Progress is slower in Arabic and Islamic education. Spoken and written Arabic skills are less strong than reading. The recitation skills of some students are of high quality. Students' understanding of Islamic principles and how to apply them to their everyday lives is an aspect in need of further improvement.

Generally girls make better progress than boys, especially in middle school due to their more mature behaviour and positive attitudes to learning. By the time they leave school, differences in attainment and progress between girls and boys close and are less significant.

Students' personal development

The personal development of students is good. The school has a caring ethos and relationships between students and their teachers are positive. Girls' behaviour is invariably very good and their attitudes to learning are positive. The behaviour of some boys, especially in middle school, lacks self-discipline and maturity and this can impact on the progress that they make in some lessons. The vast majority of students treat others with respect. Attendance is above average at 96%, reflecting the fact that students enjoy coming to school. The tardiness of boys is steadily improving as they adjust to moving between classrooms for their lessons.

Students are knowledgeable about their cultural heritage and are respectful of the values of the UAE as well as the different cultures represented in the Emirates. There are good opportunities for students to participate in a range of sports, extra-curricular activities and a variety of competitions. Fewer boys take advantage of after school clubs. Practical understanding of how to live safe and healthy lives is good and demonstrated by students' actions and the choices they make in school. Students take on leadership roles and initiate fund raising and other events. On each campus, there are active School Councils with representatives from each grade level. Almost all students are involved in community service. These positive experiences contribute to the good levels of self-confidence demonstrated by the majority of students.

The quality of teaching and learning

The quality of lessons observed by inspectors ranged from unsatisfactory to outstanding. Despite some strong practice, teaching is too variable and learning outcomes too inconsistent for it to be judged as securely good across the school. Relationships between students and teachers are positive and almost all teachers have good behaviour management strategies. The exception to this is in some lessons in the middle school on the male campus.

Teachers' subject knowledge is secure and this allows them to deliver lessons with confidence and ask probing and challenging questions. Teachers speak good quality Arabic and English, thus modeling language to a high standard. Lesson objectives are shared with students; not all are focused sufficiently on the development of skills. In the majority of lessons good links are made to previous learning. Additionally, good links are being made across subjects; for example, joint projects combining social studies content and the development of English skills. Lessons are increasingly active and engaging, with students given opportunities to work collaboratively. Most teachers make good use of the available resources to support their teaching and motivate students. In lessons taught in Arabic this was generally less effective.

Professional development has focused on more closely matching learning activities to the needs of all students including those who need additional support and those requiring greater challenge. There is good evidence of this in some lessons but there remains inconsistency in the quality and effectiveness of this. There are too few opportunities for students to develop their critical and problem solving skills, especially in mathematics and science. Good progress has been made since the last inspection in assessment. Assessment rubrics detail success criteria enabling more effective teacher marking, increasing opportunities for student self-assessment and encouraging individual target setting.

Meeting students' needs through the curriculum

The implementation of the curriculum is satisfactory and improving. It is broad and balanced. English and mathematics have been aligned with the Common Core Curriculum and additional courses have been added to give students more options that more closely meet their academic needs. The curriculum is now more effectively planned to meet the academic needs of all students. The delivery of these aspects of the curriculum are not yet consistent in all lessons. As a result, not all students receive the support they need and the higher achievers are not always challenged sufficiently. This reduces the rate of students' academic progress. Where necessary the curriculum is appropriately and effectively adjusted to support the needs of students with identified special educational needs.

The curriculum strongly promotes a good understanding of the UAE. School trips, celebrations, competitions, sporting events and extra-curricular activities enrich the curriculum. The uptake of clubs and activities by boys is highly variable. The range of experiences on offer, the positive links with external partners and a programme of community service enables students to make good personal development. The curriculum effectively enables students to develop the skills they will need in the next stages of their life and to face the challenges of the 21st century.

The protection, care, guidance and support of students

The protection, care, guidance and support of students are good. The school provides a safe learning environment with a positive and caring ethos. All teachers are familiar with the child protection policy and the required procedures. Instances of bullying are rare on the female campus. There are some reported instances on the male campus, mostly in the middle school. Boys feel that some minor bullying is not dealt with as supportively as they would like but know that any serious instances are dealt with swiftly and effectively.

Provision for students with SEN has improved and those identified are supported effectively and as a result make good progress. Students requiring remedial Arabic and English, and those needing support leading up to exams, are well catered for by additional classes. Attendance is tightly monitored, absences followed up on the first morning and punctuality and behaviour recorded daily on students' individual digital files. Tracking and monitoring of students' academic and personal development are instantly accessible on 'PowerSchool' via the internet by teachers, students and parents. The provision for first aid is of high quality. Guidance to students about the courses they select and their choices of post-school destinations has improved. Parents and students would now like the

information sooner and the implications of some choices explained more explicitly.

The quality of the school's buildings and premises

The buildings and premises are of very high quality. The school is spacious and meets all the curriculum requirements. Sports facilities in particular are impressive. Two swimming pools, gymnasiums, auditoriums, numerous science and computer labs, specialist teaching areas, student lounges, cafeterias and libraries ensure that students' academic, health and social needs are met effectively. The school premises are maintained well ensuring high levels of hygiene, cleanliness and safety. Site security is tight with clear procedures and sufficient security staff. CCTV throughout the school is constantly monitored. Security personnel in corridors provide an extra layer of safety. The school has appropriate evacuation procedures and undertakes regular practices. Great care and attention is given to all aspects of health and safety ensuring that the school is very safe and fit for purpose. Classrooms, corridors and communal areas are made attractive and stimulating by high quality displays and samples of students' work.

The school's resources to support its aims

The school's resources, quality and quantity, are very good and support the curriculum well. Staffing levels are high and teachers are qualified to teach their subjects. The range and quality of Information and communication technology (ICT) is impressive. All classrooms have interactive whiteboards and teachers make good use of these to enliven lessons and motivate students. Students have access to plentiful, good quality ICT to support their learning. The maintenance of ICT is not always rapid enough. Science laboratories have a wide range of resources and equipment. The facilities to support the teaching of PE are of a high standard. Resources in most lessons are plentiful and are used well by teachers to enhance learning. In lessons taught in Arabic, resources are not used as frequently to enrich students' learning experiences. School libraries are well stocked but there are not enough Arabic books to promote a love of reading and support better outcomes. Teachers have access to regular, pertinent and well focused professional development.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

The leadership and management are satisfactory and improving. Managers at all levels ensure that the school runs smoothly and the school has a harmonious tone. Senior leaders share a vision for the school and through their procedures of self-evaluation have a clear and well-articulated understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses that informs their improvement planning. There was

wide involvement of teachers and heads of department in the self-evaluation process. As a result, the school knows itself well.

Members of the Board of Trustees have clearly defined roles and fulfil them effectively. They oversee the strategic plan for the groups of Glenelg schools and hold school leaders to account appropriately. Recently the focus for school improvement has been on the curriculum, professional development and on establishing systems and processes. The impact of the initiatives is starting to be seen in student outcomes. Monitoring of teaching has not been rigorous enough to ensure that the professional development is embedded consistently in all lessons. Progress in school development has been slightly hampered by changes in leadership of the male campus and a long period of sick leave during this academic year of the principal of the female campus. Greater stability in the leadership team, especially of the male campus, is now needed if the school is to make more rapid progress against the goals identified in the school development plan.

Communication with parents is strong and parents are well informed about their children's academic and personal progress. Currently there is no forum for parents to be involved in the decision-making processes of the school. Responses from the parents' questionnaire were largely positive and supportive.

Progress since the last inspection

The school has continued to steadily improve since the last inspection. The curriculum has moved towards Common Core standards in English and mathematics. Science is beginning to be aligned. Additional courses have been introduced to offer students greater choices and to more closely meet their academic needs. Assessments have been redesigned to increase opportunities for students to carry out research, collaborative and independent work and 21st century skills. As a result, student engagement and motivation have increased. Assessment rubrics and success criteria increasingly allow students to identify next steps, set individual targets and carry out self-assessments. Iowa Tests have been replaced by Measure of Academic Progress (MAP) tests to enable more effective tracking and analysis of assessment data. The impact of these improvements on student outcomes is beginning to emerge; it is too soon for them to have significantly raised standards.

Professional development has been well targeted and has started to strengthen the quality of teaching and learning. In the better lessons learning is more active, questioning skills encourage students to think more deeply and imaginatively and teaching is meeting the needs of all students. Monitoring the impact of

professional development initiatives on classroom practice has not been rigorous enough. Teacher appraisals have been effectively refined.

The school has made steady progress in many aspects of school development and student attainment is gradually improving. This along with the commitment of the Board of Trustees, would suggest that the capacity for further improvement is at least satisfactory and could be better with greater stability in the senior leadership team.

What the school should do to improve further:

1. Raise standards in all subjects, especially Arabic and Islamic education, by improving the quality of teaching and learning so that a greater proportion of lessons are good and none are less than satisfactory by:
 - i. more closely matching activities to the learning needs of all students, providing sufficient support where necessary and greater challenge for higher achieving students
 - ii. providing greater opportunities for the development of critical thinking and problem solving skills especially in science and mathematics.
2. Leaders and managers should:
 - i. more rigorously evaluate the quality of teaching to ensure that professional development has an impact on student's academic progress
 - ii. ensure that the curriculum consistently delivers what is planned for, so that all students make as much academic progress as possible.
3. The Board of Trustees should ensure that capacity is strengthened by:
 - i. establishing the reasons for the high turnover of members of the senior leadership team and exploring ways to ensure greater stability
 - ii. ensuring that there are appropriate methods for involving parents in the Board's decision making processes.

Inspection Grades

	Band A High performing			Band B Satisfactory		Band C In need of significant improvement		
Performance Standard	Outstanding	Very Good	Good	Satisfactory & Improving	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Very unsatisfactory	Poor
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Standard 1: Students' attainment and progress								
Standard 2: Students' personal development								
Standard 3: The quality of teaching and learning								
Standard 4: The meeting of students' needs through the curriculum								
Standard 5: The protection, care, guidance and support of students								
Standard 6: The quality of the school's buildings and premises								
Standard 7: The school's resources to support its aims								
Standard 8: The effectiveness of leadership and management								
Summary Evaluation: The school's overall effectiveness								