



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



Inspection Report

Al Adhwa Private School

Academic Year 2013 – 14

Iqraa

Al Adhwa Private School

Inspection Date	9 – 12 March 2014
School ID#	130
Licensed Curriculum	American
Number of Students	887
Age Range	3 to 18 years
Gender	Mixed
Principal	Makarim Mobarak
School Address	Falaj Haza, PO Box 64997, Al Ain
Telephone Number	+971 (0)3 782 8870
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Official Email (ADEC)	aladhw.pvt@ac.ae
School Website	www.aladhwa-sch.net
Date of last inspection	20 – 23 May 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 5
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The main strengths of the school are:

- the warm, safe and friendly learning environment; there are positive and caring relationships between adults and students
- leaders and managers demonstrate a clear commitment to making further improvements
- the effective communications with parents
- the mature attitudes and self-discipline demonstrated by the majority of senior students

The main areas for improvement are:

- use of assessment outcomes to modify curriculum and lesson planning to provide differentiated support for students
- consistency in developing 21st Century skills
- development of consistent routines and behaviour expectations in Grades 1 to 5
- focus of lesson observations on the effectiveness of student learning
- accuracy of school's self-evaluation informing measurable target for improvement in the school development plan
- consistency in the operational effectiveness of middle managers.

Introduction

The school was inspected by 4 inspectors who observed 80 lessons. They met with school leaders, teachers, students and parents. They observed students' arrivals at and departures from the school, assemblies and break times. The inspectors reviewed and analysed data and documentation provided by the school. In addition, responses from 355 parents to a questionnaire about the school were analysed.

Description of the School

Al Adhwa School opened in 1994 and moved to the present site in Falaj Haza, Al Ain in 2004. The school's vision is 'to educate students to their highest potential' and the mission is 'to provide relevant, flexible and challenging college preparatory education'.

The student population is 887: 54% are boys and almost all are Muslim. The school has students from Kindergarten (KG) to Grade 12. There are 247 students in KG, 418 in Grades 1 to 5, 143 in Grades 6 to 9 and 79 in Grades 10 to 12. The school caters for students from many different nationalities: 43% Emirati, 12% Omani, 11% Egyptian, 9% Jordanian and smaller proportions from other nationalities comprise the remaining 25%. There are 88 students designated as having special educational needs (SEN), with most identified as having learning difficulties. The school has identified 6% students who require language support. The school follows the American Core Curriculum Standards. The Ministry of Education (MOE) curriculum is used for Arabic, Islamic education and social studies.

The principal has been in post for 2.5 years. The leadership team comprises of the principal and 2 vice-principals. The school has 66 teachers, with a 7% turnover last year. The school fees range from AED 6,601 to AED 18,428, which are in the affordable to medium categories. Students sit an entry test to gain admission to Grades 1 to 12. The school had a previous inspection in May 2012.

The Effectiveness of the School

Students' attainment & progress

Students' attainment and progress are satisfactory. In many lessons across the grades, students are working at age-appropriate levels. Attainment and progress are satisfactory in English, mathematics, science, Arabic, Islamic education and information, communication and technology (ICT). In social studies, they are satisfactory and improving.

Most children have little or no English on entry and they make satisfactory progress during KG. They make good progress in quickly learning to understand English, recognising initial letter sounds and giving single word or basic sentences when answering questions. Progress is best in KG when children use practical materials to build strong numeracy skills and outdoor play equipment to develop gross motor skills. In Grades 1 to 5, progress slows in some classes due to inconsistent procedures and lack of rigor and challenge in learning activities. In Grades 6 to 12, work is at international standards and progress increases significantly, particularly in the higher grades.

The acquisition of basic skills in speaking, listening, reading, writing, numeracy, thinking and use of ICT is satisfactory. Girls and boys make satisfactory progress in Grades 6 to 12. In contrast, progress in some lessons in Grades 1 to 5 is unsatisfactory because of inconsistent routines and expectations of behaviour.

Baseline assessments, twice-weekly diagnostic tests and teachers' ongoing assessments are used to monitor student progress. The data is used to identify students in need of additional support. It is not used effectively in many lessons to target the differentiated learning needs of different groups of students. As a result, SEN students and the more able sometimes make unsatisfactory progress during lessons.

Students' personal development

The personal development of students is satisfactory. There are positive relationships between adults and students, creating a caring and respectful school ethos. Behaviour is good when tasks are well matched to students' abilities and needs. In teacher- or textbook-dominated lessons, students often lose interest resulting in disengagement and behaviour issues. In Grades 1 to 5, inconsistent routines lead to unsatisfactory behaviour in some lessons. Students in secondary school are generally confident, mature and have positive attitudes to learning.

The school positively promotes the heritage, culture and values of the UAE. Students face the flag and sing the national anthem in assembly. The school has areas throughout the building with displays and artefacts celebrating the heritage

and culture of the UAE. Social studies and other curriculum areas give students further understanding and knowledge of their national heritage.

Students have some opportunities to take on leadership roles through the school council and by becoming group leaders in some classes. Senior students demonstrate good leadership skills in preparing and presenting their research findings and own ideas on subjects such as the benefits of Expo 2020 being held in Dubai. Displays around the school are colourful and often celebrate students' work. Students learn about healthy lifestyles in lessons. Attendance is high at 96%.

The quality of teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are satisfactory in the majority of lessons. Teachers have good knowledge of their subjects. Teachers use lesson objectives in all subjects, with most students showing knowledge of the intended learning. Many teachers are using a variety of strategies to provide more student-centred learning. Students often have group tasks, but in some cases the activities lead to a few students doing the work, leaving many as passive observers. The quality of teachers' spoken English is variable and this has an impact on students' outcomes, particularly in the lower grades.

In some lessons, teachers successfully provide appropriate challenge for all groups of students. In many lessons, attempts at differentiated activities are not well planned and take little account of students' prior knowledge. Activities often provide access for students who find learning difficult. This is not a consistent feature for higher achieving students and learning activities often lack challenge for them. The development of problem solving, inquiry and research skills are in the early stages across the school and are inconsistent.

Assessment, through observation and work scrutiny, is not used effectively by some teachers to inform plans for the next steps of learning and in setting students individual targets for improvement. Teachers have access to effective professional development through a contracted training organisation.

Meeting students' needs through the curriculum

The school's implementation of the Common Core Curriculum provides a satisfactory programme for meeting most students' needs. The MOE curriculum is used in Arabic, Islamic education and social studies. The curriculum is broad and balanced. The core subjects are enhanced by music and art in KG to Grade 4, French from Grade 3 to 6 and by physical education (PE) and ICT for all grades. In Grades 11 and 12, students can choose from economics, business studies and the three main science subjects.

The curriculum is insufficiently modified in some lessons to ensure that activities are matched to the needs of SEN and high achieving students. The curriculum provides some opportunities for students to develop 21st Century skills; this is not consistent across all subjects.

The extra-curricular programme creates opportunities to develop wider interests and experiences. It includes photography, environment, film making, computers, robotics, drama and debating. The school has developed links with Abu Dhabi, American and Sharjah Universities. It also has links with UNESCO, the Red Cross, Tawam Hospital, community police and other schools.

The protection, care, guidance and support of students

The protection, care, guidance and support of students are satisfactory. The school provides a caring, safe, clean and healthy environment. Effective pastoral care is provided by a social worker and supervisors in each area of the school. The senior students have sufficient support and guidance when making choices about university courses and employment opportunities. Academic progress is monitored regularly by senior managers and subject and grade coordinators. This is based on the school's internally designed tests and is supported by the recently adopted standardised tests.

The school has a behaviour policy, but its application by teachers is variable. The lack of consistency, particularly in Grades 1 to 5, limits progress in some lessons. The school has an effective anti-bullying policy and very few incidents occur. The school has a child protection policy, with all staff receiving training and they are fully aware of the procedures. The clinic is well equipped and has a full-time nurse. There are separate prayer areas for girls, boys and staff.

The quality of the school's buildings and premises

The school buildings provide a satisfactory environment for students' learning. The school is housed in a single building, with KG and most lower grade classes on the ground floor. The higher grades are on the first floor, with separate areas for older boys and girls. Most classrooms are of a reasonable size, though a few in the lower grades are a little cramped because of the larger number of students. Displays are colourful and plentiful around the school and in classrooms, with some celebrating the UAE culture and heritage. Security is satisfactory, with visitors required to sign in and provided with passes. The school is well maintained and has assigned staff with responsibility for health and safety matters. Regular safety checks are carried out on all equipment.

The facilities include 3 science laboratories, 2 ICT rooms for students and 1 for teachers. A play area for KG is covered and air conditioned. There are music and

art rooms and a very large library, which includes a media/meeting area. There is no gym, but there are outside sports areas and large covered outdoor play spaces. Evacuation procedures are well understood and regular practices carried out.

The school's resources to support its aims

Resources are satisfactory in supporting the school's aims. The quality, quantity and range of resources adequately support the delivery of the curriculum and stimulate students' learning in core subjects. There are a sufficient number of teachers. Classroom assistants provide effective support for teachers in KG and Grades 1 and 2. There are sufficient textbooks and teachers use other materials and manipulatives to provide extra support for students. Group activities in some lessons lack the range of resources to fully engage all students.

In many lessons, high achieving students are not provided with appropriate resources to create a level of challenge matched to their needs. In KG to Grade 5, teachers make good use of technology to provide a range of visual images and videos that create exciting and enjoyable ways for students to learn. The ICT facilities for students are well equipped and support their development of 21st Century skills. The library is run by a full-time librarian. There is a restricted range of library books and fiction texts and the quantity and quality of PE resources are limited.

Teachers have many professional development opportunities, both internally and through a commercial organization. Professional development is not sufficiently differentiated to the needs of individual teachers based on the outcomes of lesson observations. School transport is well maintained and operates efficiently. Arrangements for preparation and consumption of food in the canteen and the storage of hazardous chemicals in science areas are satisfactory.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The school functions well on a day-to-day basis. Leadership has been strengthened by the training of middle leaders. The recently constituted Board of Trustees have a very clear view of their responsibilities in holding the senior leadership to account for the quality of educational provision. There have been too few meetings to determine their effectiveness in fulfilling their responsibilities.

The operational effectiveness of middle managers in holding teachers to account for the improvement of student learning is not consistent in some subjects and grades. Lesson observations are undertaken by senior and middle managers. The observation format concentrates more on compliance with regard to teaching tasks and is insufficiently focused on students' learning outcomes. The identified

improvements from observations are not consistently linked to differentiated professional development action plans for teachers.

The self-evaluation form is overly positive and lacks measurable evidence to justify the ambitious scores. The school development plan follows the ADEC model, with all the expected components. Success criteria often concentrate on task completion rather than measurable outcomes to demonstrate the impact of activities on improving student learning. The school has appropriate financial systems in place.

Parents generally have positive views of the school and the parents' council is very supportive. The school communicates with parents in multiple ways. They operate an open door policy and send out questionnaires and surveys to get parents' views on the school. Parents receive academic updates three times a year. There are appropriate procedures in place for dealing with complaints.

Progress since the last inspection

The school has achieved some improvements since the last inspection and senior leaders demonstrate the capacity and commitment to continue to improve the quality of the educational provision in the school. Middle managers are now provided with time to fulfil their responsibilities in leading teaching and learning. Training has been provided for senior and middle leaders and there is evidence of improvements in monitoring teacher and student outcomes. This is not consistent in a few subjects and grades.

The school has started using standardised tests, but there is insufficient data to check progress against local and international indicators. Teachers in all subjects have made some progress in providing opportunities for student-centred learning. Higher order questioning, collaborative learning, problem solving, research and higher order thinking are features in some lessons. In other lessons, attempts are made to incorporate these strategies, but poor planning of activities leads to insufficient engagement and challenge for students.

What the school should do to improve further:

1. Continue to improve learning and teaching and raise attainment levels in all subjects by:
 - i. using the outcomes of assessments of students' prior knowledge and skills when planning learning activities
 - ii. modifying curriculum and lesson planning to provide differentiated support for SEN students and higher levels of challenge for more able students
 - iii. creating greater consistency among teachers in providing students with opportunities to develop their independent, collaborative, problem-solving, research and presentational skills
 - iv. developing consistent routines and behaviour expectations in Grades 1 to 5.
2. Continue to improve leadership and management by:
 - i. focusing lesson observations on the effectiveness of students' learning
 - ii. linking the outcomes of observations to differentiated professional development action plans for teachers
 - iii. planning classroom revisits to check that all identified improvements are embedded in practice
 - iv. creating more consistency in the operational effectiveness of middle managers in holding teachers to account for the improvement of student learning.
 - v. ensuring accuracy and rigour in self-evaluation, to identify areas for improvement and link them with clear measurable targets in the school development plan.

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								