



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



Summary Inspection Report

Al Dar Private School

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Iqraa

Al Dar Private School

Inspection Date	24 th – 27 th September, 2012
School ID#	138
Type of School	Private
Curriculum	Ministry of Education
Number of Students	520
Age Range	KG - Grade 12
Gender	Mixed
Principal	Asmaa Abd Alazeem
School Address	Hili Khlih, Al Foua, Al Ain
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Introduction

The school was inspected by 3 inspectors. During their time in school, the inspection team met with school leaders, teachers and students and observed forty-eight (48) lessons. The results of parent questionnaires were examined along with school documentation on administration and finance.

Description of the School

Al Dar Private School is in the Al Foaa district of Al Ain. It was established in 2006 by the present owner. It aims 'to help children succeed and be happy'. The number on roll has risen considerably from 260 in 2010 to the current roll of 520 students. The school is situated in an isolated area on the edge of the city with no other buildings nearby. Seventy five percent of the students are non-local, some travelling over 50 km to reach the school. Approximately 60% of the students are boys, 65% are Arabs, and all are Muslim. Twenty different nationalities are represented, the largest groups being Emirati (28%), Egyptians (30%), Sudanese (12%) and Syrians (11%). The primary section of the school has 238 students including Kindergarten (KG) and there are 282 students in the secondary classes. This is the first year in which the school has offered education for Grades 11 and 12. The Ministry of Education (MOE) programme of study is taught throughout the school, with English studied from KG1. The school does not maintain any formal register of students with special educational needs or of those who are gifted and talented. All teachers have teaching qualifications. There is only one teacher in the KG classes who is specifically qualified to teach that age group.

Fees are low, ranging from AED 3,580 for KG1 to AED 12,040 for Grade 12, and students' backgrounds vary from comparatively comfortable to disadvantaged. A proportion of students do not wear the school uniform because of the expense. There are no entrance examinations or tests. Staff salaries are correspondingly low; the Principal and senior staff receive AED 7,000 and AED 5,000 respectively, and the majority of the teaching staff receive AED 2,500. The school is wholly owned by a single individual and has no board of governors.

The Effectiveness of the School

Band C

Grade 6

Inspectors judge Al Dar Private School to be in Band C, a school that is in need of significant improvement.

Many of the problems identified at the last inspection still remain, although the school has installed a science laboratory and a staffed, well-equipped medical room. The principal and the vice-principal are strongly committed to the school.

They ensure it runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis. Students and staff treat each other with courtesy and consideration, and behaviour is well managed.

Overall, students' standards and progress are well below international standards. They have little opportunity to develop higher-order thinking and research skills and become independent and questioning learners. Teaching in all Arabic subjects is dominated by rote learning and students are given little opportunity to ask questions. Work is not matched to students' levels of ability or achievement. Attainment in Arabic is unsatisfactory overall. Although reading is satisfactory throughout the school, the standard of writing is weak, particularly amongst boys. Achievement in Islamic studies is unsatisfactory and only a few students can recite the Qu'ran using Tajweed. Achievement in UAE social studies is satisfactory. Students show a real dedication to, and pride in, the UAE, including those students who are not UAE nationals. The flag is flown at the boys' daily assembly and the majority of students sing the anthem. The girls' assembly is currently held in a corridor and no flag is displayed. All girls sing enthusiastically.

Students acquire a satisfactory level of scientific knowledge. There are very limited opportunities for using and applying this knowledge in investigative activities. The new laboratory, which has only limited resources, is used infrequently. Attainment in science is therefore unsatisfactory.

Attainment in mathematics is close to international standards at the top of the school, and is satisfactory. This reflects stronger teaching overall in this subject. Attainment in English is unsatisfactory. This is because some teachers have poor subject knowledge and are not able to modify what is taught to meet students' needs. For example, younger classes often spend long periods of time repeating isolated English words over and over again. Writing is a particular weakness. Students commented on the inadequate opportunities for ICT in the school. There are no computers in classrooms except those belonging to teachers. Most of the computers in the computer suite are in urgent need of maintenance or replacement. Little use is made of ICT as an aid to learning. Although music lessons are timetabled, these periods are often used for 'catch-up sessions' on other subjects, and there are no musical instruments in the school. This detracts from opportunities to develop skills in music. There is no systematic development of skills in art, although it contributes to students' appreciation of UAE culture. Insufficient resources and facilities inhibit skill development in physical education (PE) for all students. KG have only one session a week per class in an indoor 'playroom' and older girl students have had no PE for some considerable time as their playground is being resurfaced. There are few visits to places of interest and the school has no links with external organisations. There is a limited range of

extracurricular clubs for older students which are available to boys or girls in alternate weeks.

The provision in all the KG classes is poor. This is because teacher-talk dominates classes and children's involvement is limited to supplying one-word answers to closed questions. These young children are not able to sit and listen for long periods and quickly lose concentration and interest. Children are not given opportunities to learn through play or experimentation. In each KG classroom, individual children were seen crying, falling asleep, or wanting to leave the room to go to the toilet. The teaching of English is particularly weak. Teachers have little knowledge of the subject and use vocabulary which the children do not understand. The sessions of 'extra tuition' for these classes held at the end of the school day provide very little educational content.

Teaching does not engage and motivate students. In many lessons student participation is limited to the rote answering of questions and copying from the board or their textbooks. The heavy dependence on textbooks does at least ensure some progression from year to year. Lessons are not planned to meet the varying abilities of students. Resources are extremely limited, particularly for the teaching of information and communication technology (ICT). In many classrooms no resources were seen other than textbooks and workbooks, in some classes students did not even have text books. There is very little display in classrooms, and none which celebrates students' work.

The curriculum is neither broad nor balanced. It is unsatisfactory for the school as a whole, and poor in the KG classes. It falls well short of the best international expectations.

Students are courteous and friendly, and respond well to the best teaching. They work hard and are keen to do well. There is no student council or other facility for them to make a contribution for the improvement or smooth running of the school. Students are not taught about the importance of a healthy lifestyle, and the food they bring for themselves often consists of crisps and sweets. The food sold by the school canteen is healthy and hygienically prepared.

Personal relationships between staff and students are good and first aid provision is satisfactory. Personal care and guidance overall is unsatisfactory. There are no policies on child protection and bullying. Students say they are confident that staff deal with bullying effectively and help with personal problems. Staff are not briefed on how to look for signs of abuse. The school does not hold fire drills, and the fire extinguishers and electrical equipment are not checked regularly. There is a social worker for girls, but not for the boys. The school has no system in place to offer academic guidance for students leaving the school, and does not keep

records of where they go. At the pre-inspection visit, there were no prayer rooms for students. At the inspection, one had been created for boys. The timetable does not allow time for students to go and pray. Corporal punishment is forbidden. The school follows up absence and lateness on the day it occurs. It does not analyse patterns of attendance for groups or individuals in order to identify and address any trends. Attendance is good except amongst older boys, who often arrive late or not at all. Buses are sometimes overcrowded, and few seatbelts are used. Not all drivers carry first aid boxes. The results of parental questionnaires received indicated strong support for the school.

The building is adequate for the current number of students, and most classrooms are an appropriate size for the number of students. Some are too small. The building is kept very clean throughout. The library and the laboratory are on the girls' side and seldom used by boys. The main gate is kept locked during school hours and the site is secure. The boys' playground is sand which limits the use of the football goals and volleyball net. The shaded area on the boys' side is attached to the school building and is extensive enough for the number of students. The shaded area on the girls' side is at the far end of the playground and is much smaller. This playground is currently being resurfaced in hard tiles which will not provide an appropriate surface for PE. There are insufficient toilets for the number of students and staff, and those for KG are the wrong size.

The school's development plan is not robust. It has vague statements of good intent with no grading or critical analysis of the school's performance or targets for improvement. Senior staff do not offer academic leadership, nor do they monitor the quality of teaching and learning. Some subject coordinators and individual teachers have a good awareness of how to engage students and support their learning. They work in isolation with no support from senior management. As a result of these weaknesses, capacity to improve is unsatisfactory and the unsatisfactory quality of education means the school is not providing value for money.

What the school should do to improve further:

1. Produce and implement a school development plan which identifies and grades its strengths and weaknesses, and sets targets for improvement.
2. Ensure that all teaching reaches the standards of the best by:
 - i. monitoring lessons using ADEC's criteria to guide evaluation;
 - ii. giving teachers focussed feedback on what they need to do to improve;
 - iii. providing structured opportunities for teachers to share good practice; and

- iv. using data to show what is working well and to celebrate good practice.
- 3. Provide appropriate resources to support learning throughout the school, particularly for ICT and the KG classes.
- 4. Ensure that a curriculum is introduced in the KG classes which will allow children to become confident, independent learners with knowledge and understanding of the world, while ensuring the development of key skills.
- 5. As a matter of urgency, address the health and safety issues by:
 - i. regularly check electrical equipment and ensure all cleaning material is stored safely out of the reach of students; and
 - ii. organise regular fire drills to ensure the students and staff are aware of safety procedures if an emergency occurs.