



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



Inspection Report

Al Dhabiania Private School

Academic Year 2014 – 2015

إقرأ

Al Dhabiania Private School

Inspection Date	16 – 19 February 2015
School ID#	182
Licensed Curriculum	Ministry of Education (MoE)
Number of Students	1372
Age Range	3 to 18 years
Gender	KG – G3 (mixed classes) G4 – G12 (girls only)
Principal	Hamda Ahmed Al Muhairi
School Address	Khalifa Bin Shakhboot Street, Abu Dhabi
Telephone Number	+971 (0) 2 667 8282
Fax Number	+971 (0) 2 665 3374
Official Email (ADEC)	Aldhabiania.pvt@adec.ac.ae
School Website	_____
Date of last inspection	14 – 17 April 2013

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

The main strengths of the school are:

- the effective support senior leaders receive from the Family Development Foundation (FDF), particularly the professional development programme for teachers
- the satisfactory attainment and progress made by most students in all core subjects
- the satisfactory and improving development of students' thinking skills
- the personal development of students who behave well, enjoy school and are engaged in their learning
- high quality display which is used to celebrate students' work, inform learning and provide a positive learning environment.

The main areas for improvement are:

- the strategic use of attainment data, to track students' progress, and enable comparisons with schools following the same curriculum
- the development of assessment practices to inform and improve lesson planning and ensure that the needs of all students are met
- the level of challenge in lessons so that learning is accelerated
- the development of a pastoral system which supports students' academic progress
- the effectiveness of all subject co-ordinators in ensuring improvement to the quality of teaching and learning
- the quality, quantity and effective use of the school's resources for science.

Introduction

The school was evaluated by a team of 5. They observed 89 lessons, conducted several meetings with representatives from the FDF, the vice-principals, subject co-ordinators, social workers, students and parents. They scrutinised students' work across the school, analysed the 807 responses to the parents' questionnaire and considered many of the school's policies and other documents. The curriculum development specialists representing the FDF and the vice-principals were involved throughout the inspection process and 12 joint lesson observations were conducted.

Description of the School

Al Dhabiania Private School was established in Al Khalidiyah area of Abu Dhabi in 1987. The aim of the school states it is 'the intention to ensure students reach high educational standards and are able to use modern technology within their work'. The school follows the Ministry of Education (MoE) curriculum. The school is one of a group of 4 schools owned by the FDF. Managers from the FDF advise the principal and support many aspects of the school's development.

Boys and girls are admitted in Kindergarten (KG) to Grade 3; grades 4 to 12 admit girls only. There are 1372 students, of whom 86% are girls; 261 in KG, 443 in grades 1 to 5, 304 in grades 6 to 9 and 364 in grades 10 to 12. All students but one are Muslim, 16% are Emirati. Other students originate mainly from Egypt (20%), Syria (20%), Jordan (19%), Palestine (9%) and the Sudan (6%).

Students are admitted into the KG after an interview. In other grades, students' prior attainment, assessed through their report cards, is considered. The school has identified 89 students as having special educational needs (SEN) including those with physical disabilities and severe learning needs. Their needs are not formally assessed. Approximately 2 students in each class are considered by the school to be gifted and talented.

The current principal has been in post for 7 years. She is supported by 2 VPs, 2 curriculum development specialists and 11 subject coordinators. Teaching staff are all appropriately qualified and staff turnover is low. Annual school fees are low and range from AED 7,736 in KG1 to AED 13,570 in Grade 12, exclusive of books and transport.

The Effectiveness of the School

Evaluation of the school's overall effectiveness

Al Dhabiania Private School has improved since the previous inspection and now provides a satisfactory quality of education across all performance standards. Personal development is satisfactory and improving as students enjoy learning, behave well and are respectful to adults and their peers. The attainment and progress of students are satisfactory in core subjects and across all phases. The satisfactory quality of teaching is supported by regular professional development. The FDF procure and maintain the resources necessary to appropriately enrich the curriculum. Senior leaders provide clear strategic direction for school improvement.

Students' attainment & progress

Students' attainment and progress are satisfactory. Most students work at age-related expectations in the core subjects of English, mathematics, science, Arabic, Islamic education, social studies, and information and communications technology (ICT). Attainment and progress in non-core subjects are also satisfactory. The results for Grade 12 students in the MoE standardized examinations have risen slightly over the past three years. A few students attain overall results that put them within the top performing group in Abu Dhabi. Attainment in mathematics and physics is lower than that of the other core subjects, but remains satisfactory overall.

In Arabic, students' reading and comprehension skills are satisfactory and grammatical skills are well developed. Some students make elementary spelling mistakes and require more opportunities to develop their writing skills. Students understand Islamic values and can apply recitation rules accurately when reading the Holy Qur'an; their reading of the 'Hadith' occasionally lacks accuracy. Students' attainment in Islamic education in Grade 12 is above average. Students understand and can express an adequate knowledge of the UAE's culture, values and heritage.

The majority of children speak little English on entry to the school. By the end of KG2, they make satisfactory progress in the acquisition of English, and particularly in their speaking skills. Most students make at least satisfactory progress as they move through the school and by the time they reach grades 11 and 12, they can discuss social and moral issues with confidence and write using accurate grammar and spelling.

In the KG, most children develop satisfactory number skills. In grades 11 and 12, many students are able to manipulate more complex algebra and use calculus to

find gradients. In a few lessons, progress is unsatisfactory due to a lack of challenge for the more able and an over emphasis on group work which slows the pace of learning. In science, children in the KG are given opportunities to explore, predict and experiment at first hand. By Grade 11, students can understand and illustrate scientific principles. Opportunities to undertake individual practical work are limited but students can make records of relevant observations, and compare and identify points of significance.

Students' basic skills in speaking, listening, reading, writing, numeracy and ICT are satisfactory; thinking is satisfactory and improving. The development of 21st Century skills, such as higher order thinking, is improving. The progress of students with moderate learning needs is variable. They are not provided with sufficient opportunities to access appropriate learning support.

The school records trends in attainment but this is not used strategically to compare results with similar schools in order to benchmark students' performance. The school does not track, monitor or evaluate the attainment and progress of individual students systematically enough as they proceed through the school.

Students' personal development

The personal development of students is satisfactory and improving. Relationships between adults and students are supportive, warm and respectful. Students say they enjoy school and are very positive about the help and guidance they receive from their teachers. They are engaged and enthusiastic about their learning. They speak confidently and are offered a number of opportunities to assume responsibility. Students regularly receive certificates and awards in assemblies to recognize their successes. They behave well, both in, and outside the classroom.

Students are knowledgeable about the UAE and its culture and show respect for its values. The school has a traditional outdoor heritage centre, which is used effectively. National values are promoted through assemblies, the curriculum, the 'National Identity Programme' and National Day celebrations.

Students acknowledge there are some opportunities to engage in sporting and cultural activities but say these are limited. The range of extra-curricular activities and competitions, particularly in science and English, is insufficient. This impacts on students' personal experiences and their understanding and awareness of issues within the wider community. There is no regular health education programme and many students have a superficial understanding of health and safety issues. Snacks brought to school by students in the KG do not demonstrate

an understanding of healthy eating. Vendors supply the rest of the students with a variety of nutritious food options.

The school reports an attendance rate that is well above average at 97%; this was not reflected by inspectors' observations which indicated that attendance was lower, but still above average.

The quality of teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are satisfactory across the school and in all core subjects. The quality of teaching ranged from a small percentage that was good to a very few very unsatisfactory lessons; the large majority were deemed satisfactory. More effective teaching was seen in science; the least effective teaching was in mathematics.

Teachers have adequate knowledge of their subjects and most are committed to improving the quality of their lessons. In the best lessons, teachers manage behaviour well. They engage students effectively in learning and provide regular opportunities for students to develop the quality of their standard Arabic and spoken English. The most effective teachers use well targeted questions to probe students' understanding and a variety of strategies to sustain interest and enjoyment.

Learning objectives are displayed in most lessons but occasionally they do not define measurable outcomes. Students work well collaboratively; in some lessons there is an over reliance on group work and this can slow the pace and lower the challenge of learning. In the KG, children are enthusiastic learners. Teachers plan active experiences; sometimes these activities do not deepen understanding because they are undertaken collectively as a whole class rather than in groups, pairs or individually.

Teachers understand the importance of developing skills for the 21st Century and endeavour to provide opportunities for students to investigate, solve problems, draw conclusions and report their findings. In a few lessons, teachers over-direct the learning and students are relegated to passive observation.

Many teachers provide learning activities for students of varying ability but this is at an early stage of development and is not consistently effective. Differentiated activities do not always match the children's needs or provide meaningful tasks to accelerate their progress. Baseline assessments are not used effectively to inform planning for individual children's learning needs. Teachers regularly assess students' work. These assessments are not used to set individual targets for improvement.

Meeting students' needs through the curriculum

The implementation of the curriculum is broad and balanced and offers a satisfactory programme for addressing the learning needs of most students. Curriculum delivery is improving and opportunities for students to develop 21st Century skills are developing. Students are being prepared adequately for their future lives. For example, they are developing the skills necessary to be inventive, use creative ideas, explore, investigate and follow lines of enquiry, and they are developing satisfactory speaking skills. The curriculum is not sufficiently adapted for those who are less able or have special gifts and talents. Extension and support work are evident in many lessons but this does not challenge or support these groups of students sufficiently.

Resources are improving though the resource centres have the potential to enrich the curriculum, they remain underused. There is only a single science laboratory and this is also underutilised. A range of textbooks is used to deliver the MoE curriculum and these ensure systematic progression. This curriculum is extended and enriched through the development of wider learning skills and lines of enquiry.

There are 4 ICT suites but there is little cross curricular work undertaken using these facilities. The MoE core curriculum is enhanced by physical education (PE), art and music. Students are developing a satisfactory understanding of UAE family and cultural values.

The protection, care, guidance and support of students

The protection, care, guidance and support of students are satisfactory. The school has established a behaviour policy with a particular focus on the positive reinforcement of good behaviour, punctuality and school rules, promoting a culture of care. Students' behaviour is well managed and students report that the few incidents of bullying are dealt with appropriately. Assemblies are well organized and managed and support the development of a caring community and a sense of school identity.

The child protection policy is clear and staff have been trained; a few are limited in their understanding of how to recognize students at risk. There are 2 social workers and they have many responsibilities. This often impacts on their availability and the consistency of their support for vulnerable students. The systems to record pastoral concerns and academic progress are underdeveloped and not aligned satisfactorily. This reduces the effectiveness of tracking and communication processes.

The school site is secure; there are 2 security guards and a considerable number of closed-circuit TV (CCTV) cameras. Reasonable checks are made on the moral character of all staff and the required documents are maintained in a central file. There is a prayer room in one area of the school and this is used regularly. The school has recently appointed a registered nurse and the care provided at the school clinic is improving.

The quality of the school's buildings and premises

The buildings and premises are well maintained and provide a satisfactory environment for learning. Most classrooms are reasonably spacious although classrooms in grades 9 to 12 are smaller and more crowded. One of the 4 ICT suites has been updated with new equipment. There are art and music rooms and 4 large halls used for physical education (PE). There is only 1 science laboratory and this does not support the science curriculum effectively. The library is used as a learning resource for junior and middle grades. Outdoor areas are shaded and this includes an area for KG play. The use of display to enhance the learning environment and support learning is strong; it is used effectively to celebrate students' achievements.

The FDF monitors, manages and funds the development and security of the buildings. A vice-principal has responsibility for health and safety and all equipment is regularly checked. Regular evacuation practices take place and procedures are well understood.

The school's resources to support its aims

Resources are satisfactory in supporting the school's aims. Teachers are adequate in number, secure in subject knowledge, qualified and demonstrate a commitment to their students. The FDF have appointed 2 curriculum development specialists to provide support for subject leaders and teachers. They team-teach and model good practice. There are no classroom assistants to provide additional support for students.

All classrooms have 'data show' facilities that are used regularly and the ICT suites are well equipped. The science laboratory is not well resourced. There appears to be a lack of equipment to support a range of PE activities. The quantity and quality of resources in KG are satisfactory and there is a resource room for KG games. Resource centres for Arabic, English, science and mathematics are available for other junior grades and these are adequately equipped with a variety of learning support materials.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The FDF actively supports the school to ensure that development and improvement are secure and aligned to the recommendations made in the previous inspection report. The FDF has a sufficiently objective and independent view of the quality of the school's work. Senior leaders, most subject co-ordinators and teachers demonstrate strong commitment to improving their practice and enhancing learning opportunities. Subject co-ordinators lack the confidence to take full responsibility for their areas without the support of the FDF specialists. As a result, their impact in improving the quality of teaching in their subject areas is variable.

Teaching staff and middle managers are involved in the evaluation process and the self-evaluation form (SEF) highlights the improvements made since the last inspection. It is over positive and does not provide sufficient measurable evidence to demonstrate the impact of the initiatives on student outcomes. The school development plan (SDP) is reasonably well structured and focused on the key improvements. Curriculum development specialists and subject co-ordinators regularly undertake lesson observations. These are more likely to focus on teaching rather than the effectiveness of student learning.

There is a Parents' Council and parents are positive about the quality of care and education provided for their children. They do not participate formally in the cycle of school improvement and development. There are appropriate procedures in place for dealing with parental complaints.

Progress since the last inspection

There have been improvements to all performance standards since the last inspection and many of the issues raised by the inspection report have been successfully tackled. Attainment and progress have improved and are now satisfactory in all core subjects. Students are satisfactorily developing skills related to collaborative work, problem solving, investigation and creativity.

Professional development activities are held weekly and the school has made some progress in improving teaching and learning strategies. The school is fully staffed and teaching in the KG and grades 1 to 3 is now age-appropriate.

ICT resources have been improved and there are now 4 ICT suites. Resource bases are available for specialist teaching in all core subject areas. Children in the KG have access to a safe, shaded outdoor space for play. Security has been improved with additional staff and CCTV cameras.

The school has demonstrated that it has the satisfactory capacity to make further improvements.

What the school should do to improve further:

1. To improve the quality of teaching and learning by:
 - i. ensuring that teachers provide written feedback when marking and this is used by students to improve their work
 - ii. planning learning activities that are consistently differentiated so that the needs of all students are met
 - iii. providing students with more opportunities for independent learning
 - iv. increasing the level of academic challenge offered in lessons.
 2. To improve leadership and management by:
 - i. monitoring and tracking students' attainment and progress more regularly and strategically so that clear targets can be set to accelerate learning
 - ii. strengthening the role of co-ordinators so that they take full responsibility for the leadership and management of their subject areas
 - iii. ensuring that during lesson observations, subject co-ordinators focus on the quality of learning rather than teaching.
 3. Align pastoral and academic systems more effectively to support the needs of all students and effectively track their progress and achievement.
 4. Improve the delivery of science by increasing the quality and quantity of resources and by making better use of those that already exist.
-

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								