



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



Private School Inspection Report

Al Ekhlass Private School

Academic Year 2015– 2016

lqraa



Al Ekhlass Private School

Inspection Date	February 29, 2016	to	March 3, 2016
Date of previous inspection	February 9, 2015	to	February 12, 2015

General Information		Students		
School ID	53	Total number of students	1113	
Opening year of school	1987	Number of children in KG	140	
Principal	Abla Saleh Abdullah (acting)	Number of students in other phases	Primary:	517
			Middle:	249
			High:	207
School telephone	+971 (0)2 585 3591 +971 (0)2 585 3592	Age range	4 years –19 years	
School Address	Baniyas- East 8	Grades or Year Groups	KG – Grade 12	
Official email (ADEC)	alekhlass.pvt@adec.ac.ae	Gender	Mixed	
School website	www.alekhlass.ae	% of Emirati Students	5%	
Fee ranges (per annum)	Low: AED 9,000 to AED 19,000	Largest nationality groups (%)	1. Syrian	24%
			2. Jordanian	21%
			3. Egyptian	15%
Licensed Curriculum		Staff		
Main Curriculum	Ministry of Education (MoE)	Number of teachers	79	
Other Curriculum	-----	Number of teaching assistants (TAs)	6	
External Exams/ Standardised tests	MoE	Teacher-student ratio	KG/ FS	1:25
			Other phases	1:30
Accreditation	-----	Teacher turnover	10%	

Introduction

Inspection activities	
Number of inspectors deployed	4
Number of inspection days	4
Number of lessons observed	142
Number of joint lesson observations	10
Number of parents' questionnaires	1002; (response rate: 96%)
Details of other inspection activities	The inspection team held meetings with the senior management team, middle leaders, other teachers and representative from the governing body. They observed lessons, analysed school documents, performance data, records and students' work. Inspectors attended assemblies and spoke to parents and students, including children in the Kindergarten (KG).

School	
School Aims	'To provide good opportunities for students to learn independently, improve the quality of teaching in the KG, provide teaching and learning resources to enhance students' learning and to set clear learning objectives for students.'
School vision and mission	'To achieve a distinctive educational performance, developing a creative generation of students committed to its values.'
Admission Policy	In the KG, the school accepts 4-year-old children after an interview with them and their parents. The school accepts students from other schools after completing the process of admission.
Leadership structure (ownership, governance and management)	The school is managed by the acting principal, a vice principal, an academic advisor, three student counselors and governance.

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
Intellectual disability	0	0
Specific Learning Disability	2	2
Emotional and Behaviour Disorders (ED/ BD)	0	1
Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)	0	0
Speech and Language Disorders	2	0
Physical and health related disabilities	0	1
Visually impaired	0	0
Hearing impaired	3	0
Multiple disabilities	0	0

G&T Details (Refer to ADEC SEN Policy and Procedures)

G&T Category	Number of students identified
Intellectual ability	10
Subject-specific aptitude (e.g. in science, mathematics, languages)	16
Social maturity and leadership	10
Mechanical/ technical/ technological ingenuity	2
Visual and performing arts (e.g. art, theatre, recitation)	14
Psychomotor ability (e.g. dance or sport)	12

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)

School was judged to be:	BAND (B)	Acceptable
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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 school provides an acceptable standard of education. Children start in KG with academic, personal and social skills that are below those expected for their age. Their attainment and progress are now acceptable overall because of improved provision since last inspection. Across the other school phases, attainment and progress are acceptable and improving, particularly in mathematics in some of the upper grades in school. Students' personal development is consistently good throughout the phases. The quality of teaching, assessment and the curriculum are satisfactory overall. Support for the small number of students with special educational needs (SEN) is adequate. The school leaders and staff have worked together relentlessly to bring about improvements in the school's practice in a short period of time. Management of the day-to-day of the school is effective and efficient.

Progress made since last inspection and capacity to improve

The previous inspection of February 2015 judged the school's overall effectiveness to be unsatisfactory. The acting principal, senior leaders and governors have met most of the inspection's recommendations. This is because they have developed better understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. School leaders now demonstrate the capacity to improve the school further. The KG has now improved from unsatisfactory to acceptable provision. Teachers have raised their expectations of what children can achieve. This improvement is also evident in some other parts of the school where teachers use the information they obtain on students more effectively to meet the needs and abilities of students. Students' personal and social development and their innovation skills have also improved.

Development and promotion of innovation skills

A minority of teachers provide opportunities for students to demonstrate innovation skills. In the best lessons, students have a strong work ethic and enjoy learning. In a Grade 10 geography lesson, students learn about different rivers in Europe and water cycle process. They link such learning to the UAE environment and explore ways to recycle water to promote sustainability. Through some extra-curricular activities, students use their creativity and imagination in their work. Students do not have regular access to technologies. As a result, they are not able to develop higher level of enquiry and research as they move through the school.

The inspection identified the following as key areas of strength:

- the capacity of the new school leaders to improve the standard of education in the school
- the improvement to the education that children receive in the school's Kindergarten (KG)
- the strong relationships within the school as shown in students' much improved attendance, positive behaviour and attitudes to learning
- students' appreciation of the heritage, culture and future vision of the UAE and their understanding of Islamic values
- the efficient and effective management of the school on a day-to-day basis

The inspection identified the following as key areas for improvement:

- inconsistency in the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school
- use of assessment and curriculum adaptation to meet the needs of all groups of students, including the gifted and talented and those who require additional support
- opportunities for students to develop their English speaking skills
- opportunities to develop more innovation and problem solving skills
- teachers' feedback to students on how to improve their work



Performance Standard 1: Students' Achievement

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



Students' achievement is acceptable in all the key subjects across the school. Most students attain levels that are in line with curriculum standards and a few are above, particularly in mathematics. Grade 12 external examination results in all subjects in recent years are similar to or better than those of other schools that teach the MoE curriculum. With the support of the new leadership team, the school has now started to analyse its own data and other marked examinations to identify possible trends and/or patterns to improve its performance. As students do not sit any international standardised tests, the school is unable to benchmark their performance against best international standards.

Most children enter the school with knowledge and skills which are below expectations. By the end of KG2, most children attain levels that are broadly in line with curriculum standards. Children now make acceptable progress in all aspects of their development because the curriculum and teaching have improved and these are adequately meeting the needs of young children.

Attainment in Arabic is broadly in line with the expectations of students following the same curriculum. Most students make acceptable progress and a few make more than expected progress. In primary, students are able to read and write sentences, applying their language skills to read and write. For example, in a Grade 1 Arabic lesson, students read letters and words, at age appropriate levels. They order words to form correct sentences, showing good understanding of the Arabic articles. In a Grade 7 lesson, students can read a poem with fluency, understand the new vocabulary and explore the meaning of verses. This is representative of acceptable levels of students' achievement.

Attainment of most students in Islamic education and social studies is in line with curriculum standards. Progress over time is acceptable. The majority of students across the school can recite and memorise the age appropriate verses 'Suras' from the Holy Qur'an following basic recitation rules. They understand Islamic values and etiquettes. Students understand and appreciate the value of (Zakaat) charity and donation in Islam. In social studies, the school promotes the UAE culture, heritage and values effectively. Students develop secure understanding of history and geography and make useful links with life in UAE. For example, in a Grade 11 social studies lesson, students learn about the UAE culture and values, comparing past and present civilisations.

Students' attainment in English is in line with the curriculum standards. Children enter the KG with very little knowledge of English and make acceptable progress in relation to their starting points. Children learn to relate letters to sounds. They benefit from videos and games to help them hear appropriate sounds and pronunciations of



words. Students throughout the school are developing adequate reading and writing skills. Their speaking skills are less well developed. This is because teachers do not always encourage students to speak English, particularly in English lessons to develop their language skills.

Attainment in mathematics and science match national expectations. In mathematics, students are adequately developing their mathematical skills to solve problems. In KG, children learn to count objects and recognise numerals and simple shapes. Students in Grade 4 are able to calculate operations using different strategies. In the upper grades, students can solve algebraic equations, set to their age-appropriate levels, with confidence. In science, students make acceptable progress and develop secure understanding of scientific concepts. For example, in a Grade 5, students show good understanding of the different types of clouds, including cirrus and cumulus, and the ability to develop their critical thinking skills. There is evidence of some good progress in science, as a result, of much improved teaching and learning strategies, but this is not consistent throughout the school.

Attainment and progress in other subjects are variable. Students benefit in many ways from their physical education (PE). Students' achievement in this subject is good. This is because the school takes effective steps to ensure that students develop their co-ordination and fitness, promoting well their physical health. In daily assemblies, students including the young ones take an active part in physical exercise to prepare them for learning. Standards in art and music are acceptable. Information and communications technology (ICT) is not used widely enough by older students to develop research skills. Older students are mature and responsible learners.

Students with SEN continue to make acceptable progress. G&T students now make acceptable progress and their learning and skills have improved since the last inspection, when it was judged unsatisfactory.

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

Students' personal and social development, and their innovation skills are good overall. Students behave well in classrooms and around the school. They display positive attitudes to learning and show consideration to one another. In the KG, children share resources fairly and take turns. Relationships between the school's community are respectful. As a result, most students have a strong work ethic and learning flows without interruption. Attendance has improved significantly. The attendance rate at 96.5% is very good. Students arrive at school and to lessons on time. Throughout the school, students show a good understanding of healthy eating habits. For example, in the KG, children learn to wash their hands before and after meals to reduce the risks of infections. Students take an active part in physical activities to promote physical health and well-being.

Students demonstrate a good understanding of Islamic values and appreciate the UAE heritage, culture and traditions. Through planned activities for subjects such as history and geography and celebrations of different festivals, students value diversity and show tolerance of others. Students from different nationalities get on well with one another and are sensitive to the needs and circumstances of their peers in school.

Older students enjoy responsibility and lead on projects to develop their leadership skills. Students contribute well to the life of the school and the wider community. For example, the eco-group, promotes recycling opportunities and monitors the school to ensure it is free of litter. Other students ensure that lights are switched off in classes, when they are not in use. Students raise funds for charities such as Red Crescent to help poor families in the Arab Emirates and beyond.

Performance Standard 3: Teaching and Assessment

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

Teaching and assessment are acceptable overall. Most teachers demonstrate secure subject knowledge. They plan and prepare suitable activities and resources to support students' learning. There is evidence of some good practice in school, though this is not a consistent feature of teaching at present.

In the best lessons, teachers use effective systems to measure and compare students' progress with curriculum and national standards. They share the learning objectives with students so that they are clear about what is to be achieved. They ask effective questions to test students' understanding and to reshape tasks to fully engage students in learning. In these lessons, teachers set higher expectations which enable students to work at a brisk pace and to respond with enjoyment to learning. This results in attainment above the curriculum standards for the majority of students in these lessons. For example, in a Grade 10 mathematics lesson, students are provided with very good learning experiences to help them apply and develop their mathematical skills to solve problems such as calculating percentages, fractions and equations in everyday situations. In these lessons, students work collaboratively as a team, share ideas and develop their independent learning skills.

In the less effective lessons, teachers do not always use the information about students' assessment to ensure that tasks are well matched to their abilities and learning needs. Few teachers provide too much input into learning and this does not help students to apply and develop their critical thinking skills. In a few English lessons, teachers do not always encourage students to interact with one another in English so that they can develop their language skills. Teachers mark students' work regularly and praise them for their efforts, but they do not always tell students what they can do next to improve the quality of their work even further.

Teachers generally use a range of strategies and learning styles to enhance and facilitate learning. In KG, children enjoy videos and games and co-operate well. Throughout the school, students listen attentively to instructions and respect the

views of others. Most teachers have established good routines and students respond well to their expectations for appropriate behaviour.

Performance Standard 4: Curriculum

Curriculum Indicators	KG	Primary	Middle	High
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Curriculum design and implementation	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Curriculum adaptation	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

The curriculum is broad and relevant. It meets MoE curriculum requirements. The new management team and school staff have recently reviewed the curriculum content to ensure it provides appropriate academic guidance and support for students' personal development and well-being. It adequately meets the needs of the large majority of students and generally prepares them for their future education. The curriculum provides older students with some choices to follow their interests and motivations.

The curriculum offers good learning experiences to help students develop a clear understanding of the UAE's values and cultures. Students benefit from good opportunities to help them transfer knowledge and skills from one subject to another. For example, in a physical education lesson, older students were able to link the importance of physical exercise on health calculating the percentage of obesity in society and developing the knowledge to solve problems. There are more opportunities for students to take part in competitions and social contributions. For example, the eco-group is proud of the support and training they offered to students from another school to start a recycling project in their school to save the environment.

Some teachers adapt their planning and activities to meet the needs and interests of student, but this is not consistent throughout the school at present. The school offers extra-curricular activities to enrich its curriculum. These include art, music, physical education and UAE heritage workshops. The opportunities for students to develop innovation in their own work are less well developed. This has been identified as an area for improvement by the senior management team.

Performance Standard 5: The protection, care, guidance and support of students

The protection, care, guidance and support of students Indicators	KG	Primary	Middle	High
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection/safeguarding	Good	Good	Good	Good
Care and support	Good	Good	Good	Good

The protection, care, guidance and support for students are good. The school has good procedures for protecting and safeguarding its students. A new, detailed child protection policy, linked with training, helps staff to be vigilant. Such procedures are also shared with parents and students. Parents agree that their children are kept safe and secure and say they are well looked after. Students feel safe and are confident to ask for support should a welfare concern arise. Staff care for, and nurture, students including the young ones effectively. Safety checks are frequent and thorough. Levels of supervision, including on school transport are very effective.

The premises, facilities and resources are adequately maintained and suited to the needs of students. Incidents are correctly recorded and acted on to improve practice. The school actively promotes healthy living effectively. For example, young children learn about dental health and hygiene. Through well planned healthy eating projects, the school community develops good understanding of the importance of healthy food on well-being. Behaviour management policies and procedures are used by all staff to ensure consistency of approach. The school's system to promote very good attendance and punctuality is very successful.

The new leadership team have introduced thorough systems to identify students with SEN. The school now identifies students with gifts and talents. There are more opportunities for them to follow their talents and aspirations in clubs and activities outside the classroom. Management have prepared individual educational plans to help those who require additional support. The school shares such information with parents so that they can support their children at home. Currently, students receive good support for their personal development and adequate academic progress. Senior students receive appropriate careers' guidance.

Performance Standard 6: Leadership and management

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

The new leadership team and all staff set a clear vision and direction for the school. They demonstrate commitment to inclusion. Relationships and communications between the school community are strong. The middle leaders are clear about their roles and responsibilities. They have created a warm and welcoming learning environment, where staff and students can work together in mutual respect. Morale throughout the school is high.

Leaders have improved some aspects of the school's work in a short period of time, demonstrating capacity to sustain the current trajectory for development. However, they have yet to raise students' achievement throughout the school and that better teaching practices are a consistent feature of the provision. The acting principal and most leaders show good understanding of teaching, learning and assessment practices to bring about improvements in students' learning. Leaders observe teaching and learning regularly. They provide constructive feedback to staff and offer them training courses to improve the quality of their practice. The school has recently reviewed its self-evaluation and it is representative of a broadly realistic view of the school's strengths and what needs improving. The school development plan includes adequate goals, actions, costing, timelines and a monitoring system.

Partnerships between parents and school are strong; the very return of parents' questionnaires is a representation of this. Parents are actively involved in the life and work of the school. For example, during the inspection week, parents prepared food to be sold in school to raise funds to support good causes. The school takes account of their views when shaping the school's priorities. Effective communication strategies keep parents fully informed about their children's progress and well-being. The school contributes well to the life of the community, for example, working with local schools, higher educational institutions and emergency services to enrich its curriculum and to benefit students' learning.

Governors are visible in school. They seek the views of staff, students and parents to gain knowledge about the school. They support school and are beginning to hold leaders accountable for its performance.

Suitability of staff, resources and premises are adequate. The buildings were repaired and new teaching resources were added to the classrooms following the last inspection of the school. New facilities are now in place, including a computer room, a washroom facility for disabled people and a playground area for KG. There are firm plans to build a new school in the near future.

What the school should do to improve further:

1. Improve the quality of teaching by:
 - i. encouraging sharing of best practice among teachers for grater consistency
 - ii. ensuring effective use of assessment information to plan for the differing needs of students, and match tasks to all abilities, including SEN and the G&T students
 - iii. providing more opportunities for students to take initiative and control of their learning
 - iv. providing more opportunities for students to develop their innovation and critical thinking skills, including regular use of technologies
 - v. providing written feedback in students' books to explain what they need to do next to improve the quality of their work.
2. Ensure teaching in the English lessons encourages students to interact in English so that they can develop their language skills further, especially confidence and fluency in their speaking skills.