



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



Inspection Report

Al Iman School

Academic Year 2013 – 14

Iqraa

Al Iman School

Inspection Date	16 – 19 February 2014
School ID#	92
Licensed Curriculum	Ministry of Education (MoE)
Number of Students	862
Age Range	3 to 16 years
Gender	Mixed
Principal	Shawqi Ahmed Madi
School Address	Al Karama, Sheik Rashed Road, Abu Dhabi
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Official Email (ADEC)	aliman.pvt@adec.ac.ae
School Website	-----
Date of last inspection	12 – 15 February 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 C;	GRADE 6
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The main strengths of the school are:

- the new principal making a positive impact on achieving the school aims and vision
- improvements made against the recommendations made in the previous inspection report with regard to many aspects of student personal development and health and safety
- displays in classrooms and around the school that acknowledge students' achievements and develop an awareness and understanding of UAE culture.

The main areas for improvement are:

- levels of attainment and progress in core subjects
- development of 21st Century skills through lessons and the broader life of the school
- level of resources to support learning across all subjects and in particular Kindergarten (KG), science, library and art
- rigorous audit of building facilities to maximise the delivery of a broad and balanced curriculum.

Introduction

The school was inspected by a team of 4 inspectors who observed 80 lessons as well as assembly, break periods and students' arrival and departure. They met with school leaders, teachers, students and parents. Inspectors scrutinised students' work and analysed performance data and documents provided by the school. In addition, 189 responses from parents to a questionnaire about the school were analysed.

Description of the School

Al Iman School opened in 1974 in Al Karama, in Abu Dhabi City. It forms part of the Iman Trust. It aims 'to build an educational system creating a motivating educational environment and professional development where students interact with their teachers and societies. This is for graduating an energetic generation who are ready to overcome the challenges that they may face'.

There are 862 students: 504 boys and 358 girls. There are 70 children in KG, 569 in Grades 1 to 5 and 223 in Grades 6 to 9. All students are Muslim and all are of Arab heritage. Of these 2% students are Emirati, 39% are Egyptian, 14% Jordanian, 13% Syrian, 11% Sudanese, 6% Yemeni and a smaller percentage from Palestine, Morocco, Iraq and Tunisia. Two students are identified with special educational needs (SEN), dyslexia, and an additional 60 students with English language learning difficulties. Admission procedures are selective and include tests in Arabic, English and mathematics.

The school follows the Ministry of Education (MoE) curriculum. The governing board has been established recently and consists of the principal, vice-principal, two parents, all coordinators and the social worker. There are 47 full-time teachers and 17 support staff.

Fees range from AED 5,128 in KG to AED 7,750 in Grade 9 and does not include books and transport fees. This places the school in the affordable category.

The Effectiveness of the School

Students' attainment & progress

Attainment and progress across the school are unsatisfactory. Standards are broadly in line with similar schools using the Ministry of Education (MoE) curriculum but well below international standards. The exceptions are Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and physical education (PE), where standards are similar to international expectations.

Until very recently the school did not have an accurate understanding of students' academic progress. It used its own tests and prepared the students well for them. Consequently most students appeared to achieve very well. The new principal applied EMSA tests for Grades 6-9 in December 2013 and these results showed 75% of students were achieving average or below average scores. These results form a useful baseline to measure future attainment and progress the students make.

In KG progress is hampered, as teachers do not have a clear understanding of how children of this age learn most effectively. Across most subjects progress is inhibited by a lack of suitable resources to support learning.

Attainment and progress in Arabic, Islamic education and social studies, science and mathematics is limited because it is dependent upon memorization and textbook exercises. Students do not apply the concepts they learn to new or different situations, or link them to real life experiences. The exception to this is in mathematics, where high ability students are working at age related expectations; for example Grade 9 students are working on exponential powers and roots and in Grade 5 are ordering fractions using equivalence. In science, attainment and progress is unsatisfactory because most lessons are very teacher directed and do not develop an investigative approach or develop skills of fair testing, predicting and hypothesising.

Arabic and English listening skills are age appropriate. Outcomes are lower than expected in reading and writing because students are not confident in working outside of textbook activities. Attainment in English is unsatisfactory because expectations are low, lessons lack challenge and teachers do not have a confident command of spoken English. In most lessons, speaking and reading skills are more developed than writing. Students have a good knowledge of basic concepts of Islamic education and social studies; for example students can recall stories of the prophets, know the pillars of Islam and Faith, and recite Qu'ranic verses.

Students' personal development

Students exhibit positive attitudes towards learning and enjoy school life. They share positive relationships with their teachers and peers. Students display

respect for adults and their peers of different nationalities and exist together as one community. There are some leadership roles performed by students which are proving popular and effective. Some female students are provided with the opportunity, through the student council, to undertake roles which make a positive contribution to the classroom and school community. Apart from these, there are limited opportunities for students to perform roles or engage in activities that further develop students' personal qualities and prepare them for next stages in life.

The principal has effectively shared the school vision and aims through the encouragement of displays of students work, student-led assemblies and an appreciation and exemplification of UAE values. This has had a positive impact upon student and staff morale, and improved the school ethos. The school has a prayer room which is timetabled for males and females to use.

The quality of teaching and learning

Teachers, particularly those in the higher grades, have satisfactory subject knowledge. School leaders are working hard to improve the quality of teaching and learning through regular classroom monitoring and provision of professional development. There are signs of improvement with teachers working on the implementation of new strategies to help students learn. This is not yet having a significant impact in raising standards or changing practice to ensure all groups of students are making the expected levels of progress.

Good behaviour and relationships are established, particularly in higher grades. The management of behaviour in the lower grades is less effective, due to low expectations and lessons that fail to engage students in active learning. Common features of unsatisfactory teaching are the lack of purposeful differentiation or the effective use of questioning to deepen and challenge learning. Lessons are too often textbook-led with no attempt to relate the value of what is being learnt to everyday experiences. Assessment is confined to tests and not used as an ongoing strategy to check what students are learning in order to adjust future learning sequences. The different learning needs of students are not being adequately catered for, particularly those who find learning difficult or easy.

The marking of students' work is minimal, particularly homework which is often unmarked. Consequently students do not know if they have a correct understanding of the concepts taught. Lesson objectives often do not reflect learning outcomes and students do not know what their learning targets are or how and what they can improve upon. A consistent feature across most subjects is insufficient time given to practise new skills, or link facts and knowledge to embed concepts. Collaborative learning strategies are not fully understood by

teachers and therefore have limited impact. Teachers do not use practical resources to help students understand the basic skills required for English, mathematics, and science. Independence and self- directed learning skills are underdeveloped, as is the use of cross curricular planning to apply skills and knowledge to different subject areas. All of these contribute to the unsatisfactory quality of teaching and learning overall.

Meeting students' needs through the curriculum

The curriculum implementation does not motivate or challenge students sufficiently. It is not adequately adapted to cater for those students with special educational needs or learning difficulty. In KG it does not meet the cognitive, physical, emotional and social development needs of the children. The delivery of the curriculum is not broad and balanced enough and students do not have a choice of subjects. Students have very little time allocated to non-core subjects, do not have broader range of humanities subjects. There are no extra-curricular activities that take place after the school day except an alliance with a local sports club for activities on a Saturday morning as an additional activity for some boys.

There are limited links with external partners in order to support and enrich the curriculum or inform future career or educational choices. There is a satisfactory coverage of UAE values and culture. There is not a diverse enough range of activities or resources that allow students to know more about the world around them.

The protection, care, guidance and support of students

School leaders have made significant improvements to ensure the safety and well being of the students and staff; this aspect of the school's work is now satisfactory. Toilets have been refurbished and all have a daily cleaning rota which requires signatures from the company responsible for the work. The school clinic has re-opened with a qualified nurse and there are ample first aid boxes around the school. An extensive closed-circuit television (CCTV) system has been installed to offer additional security. Students arriving and leaving by bus are very well supervised. Fire evacuation rehearsals take place regularly and all safety procedures undertaken are recorded. Attendance is well above average at 95% approximately. Absence and lateness are only notified at the end of the day and risk assessments are not used for activities inside or out of school.

The quality of the school's buildings and premises

School leaders and the owner have endeavoured to improve the quality of provision within a restricted site. Generally the school is clean and tidy with some classrooms requiring some additional maintenance and upgrading of electrical equipment. There is a proactive approach to school maintenance with weekly

checks taking place and involvement of teachers in notifying repairs and hazards. Some classrooms are overcrowded and the library is too small. The science laboratories are too small for effective learning or to ensure adequate health and safety. There is no art room or provision for music or inside PE. Space is at a premium, particularly in KG where there is not enough room for the children to access a full range of activities and facilities. Classroom furniture is dated and requires a major investment to modernize all classrooms.

The school's resources to support its aims

There are a sufficient number of adequately qualified teachers. Most classrooms have digital projectors and there is a well stocked ICT room with 25 computers. There is not enough technology to enable students to use for research, project work, word processing, presentations and curriculum related activities. There are not enough reading resources, fiction or non-fiction, in classrooms and the library to meet the interests and learning needs of students. There is a good range of colourful displays in classrooms, corridors and open areas that express different aspects of school life and that value the culture and heritage of the UAE. Not enough is done to broaden students' horizons, acknowledge different traditions and cultures or to make links with other schools and groups within and without the UAE. General resources to support learning around the school remain unsatisfactory.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

There has been a significant change to the effectiveness of the school since the arrival of the new principal in October 2013. There is now a clear vision for whole school improvement shared by the principal, teachers, students and parents. A focus upon ensuring student and staff well being has successfully tackled some recommendations from the previous report. Middle leaders and some senior leaders have varying degrees of competency related to their roles and responsibilities. They do not all possess the required understanding to support the Principal in moving the whole school to the position it is aiming for.

The new Principal completed the self-evaluation form (SEF) on his arrival; the judgements are too generous, but indicative of his ambitious approach. The School Development Plan (SDP) is based around inspection performance standards. It is not sufficiently focused upon meeting all the needs identified by the last inspection. The plan covers most aspects of development planning and objectives have key actions, identified personnel to lead, are costed, time constrained and linked to improvement priorities. The plan lacks clear goals and specific evaluation and impact measures.

The quality of teaching is not improving fast enough to raise standards rapidly. There are some good examples of teaching practice across the school but important features of high quality teaching to meet the needs of all students is not firmly embedded. The monitoring of lessons is not sufficiently rigorous to identify this. Students' progress is not tracked and monitored and teachers do not make use of assessment of learning to inform future planning. Despite some investment in resources for KG, the teaching and expected learning outcomes fall far short of international standards and expectations.

A local board of governors has recently been formed consisting of the principal, two parents and five other school staff. Governors will require training and clear guidance in order for them to carry out their respective roles and responsibilities. The majority of the parental responses to the inspection questionnaire demonstrated their support for the school. The main area of concern expressed related to communication and lack of progress reports about their children.

Despite the significant improvement observed in some areas, the overall effectiveness of the leadership and management remains unsatisfactory.

Progress since the last inspection

Since the new Principal's arrival, important improvements have taken place. His first priority was to ensure the school conformed to health and safety recommendations from the previous report. He has achieved this aim in a relatively short period of time.

The principal undertook an audit of teaching and learning and attainment which agreed with the previous inspection judgments. Subsequently he provided a structured professional development plan for the year, based upon his audit and the self-assessment of teachers' training needs, with some external support. There is evidence that some improvement is taking place; not enough yet to raise levels of attainment and quality of teaching to at least consistently satisfactory levels.

The involvement of student leaders and an improved learning environment, through displays around the school and in classrooms, is improving student's personal development. Relationships are much improved between students and teachers. Morning assemblies are a good example of this: they are mainly student led and involve both a variety of different ways of building student confidence and nurturing UAE culture and diversity.

The school has demonstrated satisfactory capacity to improve since the appointment of the new Principal. It will benefit from external support in raising

standards, developing rigorous assessment procedures, improving the quality of teaching and the effectiveness of middle leaders.

What the school should do to improve further:

1. Improve attainment and progress through:
 - i. ongoing assessment procedures which inform teachers understanding of how well every student is learning within lessons and across sequences of lessons
 - ii. making learning outcomes clear to students so that they know if they have been achieved and how well they have achieved them
 - iii. marking all work on a consistent basis, with constructive comments about improvements, and next steps for learning.
2. Improve the quality of teaching and learning by focusing on:
 - i. involving students more in their learning
 - ii. meeting the needs of all students, particularly those with special educational needs, by a greater and more effective use of differentiation
 - iii. making learning more engaging, meaningful and appropriate by:
 - linking sequences of learning together
 - making links across the curriculum
 - relating learning to everyday life and activity
 - using a greater range of resources to engage students
 - iv. asking more open-ended questions which help students to deepen their understanding of new concepts, to challenge thinking and to promote further discussions and exploration of ideas
 - v. providing more working time for students to individually practice new skills
 - vi. knowing how to integrate and communicate 21st century skills in lessons.

3. Improve leadership and management by:
 - i. focusing all activity on learning outcomes for students
 - ii. auditing all existing resources within each subject department and cycle and prioritizing what is required to best support learning and the delivery of the curriculum
 - iii. creating a three year strategic financial plan to improve resources and provision, including buildings
 - iv. providing all middle leaders with:
 - ongoing targeted professional development
 - a clear job description outlining clear expectations and accountabilities
 - sufficient time within the school day to monitor, plan, train and deliver support across and between departments
 - v. using external support from outstanding classroom practitioners to show what good and better teaching actually looks like in practice
 - vi. providing governors with clear guidance and training on their roles and responsibilities.

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								