



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



Summary Inspection Report

Al Ettehad Private School

Published in 2013

Iqraa

Al Ettehad Private School

Inspection Date	12 th – 15 th February, 2012
School ID#	142
Type of School	Private
Curriculum	Pakistani
Number of Students	554
Age Range	Kindergarten - Grade 8
Gender	Mixed
Principal	Syed Mohammad Atif Alam
School Address	Area 16, Plot 14, Falaj Hazaa, Al Ain
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Introduction

The school was inspected by four inspectors. During their time in school inspectors considered the school ethos, the quality of students' learning experiences, personal development and progress, and the teaching they receive.

Description of the School

Al Ettehad Private School was founded in 1995 as a villa school. It relocated to the present building in September 2010. The Emirati license holder rents the school buildings and license for an agreed fee to the director-principal, who operates and manages the school. The majority of students are Pakistani, with others from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India and Iran. Most of the teachers are from Pakistan, but the Arabic and Islamic teachers are of Arab origin.

Almost all students are Muslims; about two thirds are Pakistani, and the remainder are of Afghani origin. There are significantly more boys than girls. Only two students have been identified by the school as having special educational needs. School fees range from AED 1920 in the kindergarten (KG) to AED 2700 in grade 8. Students come from relatively disadvantaged backgrounds. Teachers' monthly salaries range from AED 1200 to 2600. The school's managing director and a vice principal were appointed in September 2011.

The Effectiveness of the School

Band C

Grade 8

Inspectors judged the Al Ettehad Private School to be in Band C; that is a school in need of significant improvements.

The last inspection also placed the school to be in need of significant improvement. Since then a few positive steps have been taken to make improvements, especially in the areas of students' personal development and their care, protection and guidance. This work is not sufficiently systematic or embedded to bring standards and performance up to international standards. The kindergarten has been relocated to the ground floor and this arrangement meets requirements. Students' current standards remain low and their progress is poor in response to uninspiring teaching of a very narrow curriculum. The inadequate premises and poor resources contribute to their limited personal development.

The leadership team, and in particular the new vice principal, care about the future of the school but have not yet rigorously evaluated its performance and are unaware of its strengths and weaknesses, especially in teaching and learning. As a result, they cannot provide clear strategic direction because they are not aware of

the key priorities for improvement. For example, the self-evaluation form submitted for the inspection was mainly descriptive with no clear judgments on the quality of most areas of the school's work. The judgements on the quality of teaching were too generous and did not consider how teaching should change to enable students to make more progress. The school improvement plan is not a well-considered document with clear priorities and actions. It is also unclear who would carry out the responsibility for each action and when actions should be completed.

The new vice principal has started to observe lessons. Teachers have received feedback and guidance on how to improve their teaching skills. As yet, it is too soon to measure the impact of this on learning. A significant turnover of teaching staff has adversely affected students learning. Subject leaders have only just been identified, and they have not been given appropriate training to monitor their areas or support teaching and learning, or extra time outside teaching duties. Staff salaries are low, which leads to low morale. Relationships with parents are satisfactory. The new school leadership team do not have a clear enough focus on school improvement, and have demonstrated only a limited capacity to improve the quality of education without external support.

The quality of teaching is poor. Very limited resources, particularly in information and communications technology, physical education, mathematics, science and kindergarten, have a negative impact on teaching. Most teaching is directed to the whole class with no challenge for more able students or support for the less able. Teachers' weak questioning skills fail to stimulate students' thinking or deepen their understanding. There are too few opportunities for students to work in groups or learn independently. Relationships in lessons are suitably maintained and behaviour is adequately managed.

Children begin kindergarten with low attainment and make very slow progress in speaking, reading, writing and mathematics, because they are not provided with interesting experiences that motivate them to become curious and confident learners. By the end of kindergarten, students have not effectively acquired the skills necessary for the next stage of learning.

In grades 1–3 standards in most subjects remain low. Students are not given opportunities to become independent learners or develop their creative thinking skills. Students' technical skills in English, mathematics, scientific investigation and Information and communication technology (ICT) are well below what is expected for their age. Their ability to work in a group and develop good interactive skills is very limited. They remain in their seats and are largely passive.

They spend too much time repetitively rote chanting and this makes a limited contribution to deepening their knowledge, skills and understanding.

In grades 4–5 most students underperform in most subjects. Students who do not speak English as their first language or have difficulty in learning lag behind even more, because there is no appropriate provision for them to overcome their difficulties and access the curriculum. In all subjects, teachers' expectations are low and the work is not matched to students' abilities. As a result, standards are low and the progress is very slow. Inspectors identified a similar pattern of progress in grades 6–8. The standards achieved by students are well below those achieved in international schools worldwide.

There is a notable difference between the standards and progress of boys and girls, with girls performing better in most subjects. Students' test scores overall showed low standards and limited progress over time. The progress noted in lessons and through analysis of students' recorded work confirmed a similar picture.

No significant differences exist between subject areas.

All classes contain students of at least four different age groups. This is due to students who fail the end-of-year tests remaining in the same class, or not placing them in the correct grade on admission. All students receive the same textbook-based work, regardless of their age or ability. Students are not set any targets for improvement or supported in their knowledge of how they can improve. This results in low standards and poor progress for most students. Students with special educational needs are not identified accurately or targeted for extra support to meet their needs.

Students' show some improvement in their attitudes to work as they progress through the school. They are given a voice through the newly-formed school council, and are slowly gaining self-confidence and leadership skills. Most show respect for the teachers and each other. However, their self-esteem, personal qualities and social interaction are very weak, as is their ability to articulate their ideas and opinions, take initiative or work independently. A few students display aggressive behaviour towards others and need direction. Rewards and sanctions are unclear. Many students do not attend school regularly. The school now has a discipline policy, but it has not yet been shared with all staff or implemented and is therefore ineffective.

The curriculum is very narrow, poorly matched to students' needs and falls well short of the best international standards. It does not place appropriate emphasis on skills in literacy and mathematics. It does not broaden students learning by providing sufficient opportunities in subjects such as art, music and drama. Art is

taught up to grade 4, but it is limited to drawing only. Extra-curricular opportunities, for example visits to museums or places linked with social studies, are not provided. The practice of teachers leading lessons based on the textbook, with no opportunities to develop skills, is common in all subjects. Assessment is very limited. Teachers do not know how well individual students are making progress over time or from lesson to lesson. The information collected through tests by teachers is not used to inform their planning.

The kindergarten curriculum does not involve learning through play and focuses almost exclusively on building children's listening skills, learning the alphabet and recognition of number. Activity based learning and challenge are missing in all grades and subjects. Older primary students receive a very narrow curriculum that focuses on the acquisition of knowledge and as a result students do not develop essential skills in English, mathematics, science, Arabic, Islamic studies or ICT. There is no planning for providing clear progression in skills, knowledge and understanding. The planning that does exist is based on textbooks only and geared towards whole-class activities, and there is no flexibility for matching the curriculum and assessment to students' differing needs.

There is no systematic pastoral system within the school to support students' personal development and support for their academic progress. There are inconsistencies in approaches to behaviour management and teachers do not know what to do if they suspect a child is at risk of harm, abuse or neglect. The school now has vetting arrangements for appointing adults, but most staff have not yet gone through the required clearance procedure. The school is aware of the need to raise attendance to a satisfactory level and has developed an appropriate system to do so but this has not yet led to improvements. Provision for students' medical care is adequate; the clinic is licensed and there is a nurse in attendance. Arrangements to transport students to and from school appear to meet requirements.

The school's buildings and premises have improved since the last inspection. The building has been renovated and painted. It is in an adequate state of repair. All areas are kept clean and tidy most of the time. Classrooms are adequate in size but they are not an attractive environment for learning. The kindergarten, for example, lacks play areas to enable children to learn by discovery and exploration. The specialist subject rooms include a science laboratory, which is not used, and a room with 15 computers. The school makes little use of the spacious area around the perimeter to provide students with courts for sports and recreation. Fire safety arrangements are in order, and fire drills are conducted at regular intervals. Safety and evacuation plans are clearly displayed and communicated to staff and students. There is no private space for Muslim girls to pray in.

The school's resources are poor. Few teachers are qualified and there is insufficient subject expertise in many areas. Subjects such as science and physical education are also hampered by the lack of specialist equipment. In some classrooms the furniture is dirty and broken. There is a serious lack of the books in the library and around school, practical equipment and modern technology necessary to develop students' skills. ICT resources, although recently improved, are not sufficient for the number of students. Only one computer is connected to the internet, and this denies most students the opportunity to gain the skills needed for employment in the 21st century.

What the school should do to improve further:

1. Improve the quality of teaching so as to improve students' learning and their achievements, particularly by:
 - i. developing an effective system to monitor teaching that leads to planned professional development;
 - ii. ensuring lessons meet the needs of all students and build on what they already know;
 - iii. planning activities that build on students' prior learning; and
 - iv. developing assessments of students' learning that enable teachers to plan what they need to learn next.
2. Improve the curriculum implementation by:
 - i. producing schemes of work for each subject that ensure that students learning is built one step at a time;
 - ii. including in the schemes of work the gradual development of skills as well as knowledge; and
 - iii. provide a wider range of learning opportunities so that students develop knowledge, skills and understanding in music, art and physical education.
3. Improve the development of leadership at all levels within the school by:
 - i. providing all leaders with clear roles and responsibilities that promote improvements in teaching and students' learning and to higher standards;
 - ii. developing and implementing appropriate policies and procedures that ensure that students are well cared for, supported and safeguarded; and
 - iii. directing funds appropriately to improve resources.
4. Ensure that a prayer room is created for Muslim girls.