



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



Inspection Report

Al Hamadanya Grand Private School

Academic Year 2013 – 2014

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Al Hamadanya Grand private School

Inspection Date	16 – 19 February 2014
School ID#	140
Curriculum	Ministry of Education (MOE)
Number of Students	629
Age Range	4 to 18 years
Gender	Mixed
Principal	Wadie Wasef Moustafa
School Address	Al Akabiya, Asharaj Roundabout, Al Ain, Abu Dhabi
Telephone Number	+971 (0)3 781 3114
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Email (ADEC)	Alhamadanya.pvt@adec.ac.ae
School Website	www.alhamadanyaschool.ae
Date last inspection	October 2012

The overall effectiveness of the school

Inspectors considered the school in relation to 3 performance categories

Band A	High performing
Band B	Satisfactory
Band C	In need of significant improvement

The School was judged to be:	BAND C;	Grade 6
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The main strengths of the school are:

- welcoming, well-behaved, courteous students who have positive attitudes to learning
- teachers are caring towards students, and most have secure subject knowledge
- regular communication with parents.

The main areas for improvement are:

- effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation procedures to identify how all students perform in order to raise standards more rapidly
- students' attainment in all subjects, and in developing 21st century skills, including taking on leadership roles
- the urgent need for the implementation of an appropriate curriculum in kindergarten (KG)
- teachers to take sufficient account of students' prior levels of achievement to differentiate learning and the curriculum to meet the needs of all students
- provision of sufficient resources to support the curriculum and learning.

Introduction

The school was inspected by 4 inspectors. They observed 72 lessons, interviewed staff, students, parents, the owner and the senior leadership team. They scrutinized the school's self-evaluation form (SEF), the school development plan (SDP) and other key policy documents, and analysed data. Inspectors observed assemblies, the start and end of each day and break times. Responses from a total of 34 parents to a questionnaire about the school were analysed.

Description of the School

Al Hamadanya Grand Private School is, located in Al Akabiya, Al Ain. It moved to its current location in 2008. The school aims to have 'Distinguished educational leadership, established national identity and have standards in keeping with international requirements.' The school follows the Ministry of Education (MOE) curriculum. The language of instruction is Arabic with the exception of Science subject from Grades 1 to 10, where both English and Arabic are used as languages of instruction.

Al Hamadanya has extended education to Grade 12 for the first time this academic year. Building space has not been expanded to accommodate the additional year group. To help address this, the school has not taken any more entrants this year and removed classes for KG1. Renewed plans have been submitted for approval to erect a similar sized building on the adjacent campus.

There are 629 students, 280 girls and 349 boys, from age 4 to 18. There are 36 in KG, 282 in Grade 1 to 5, 212 in Grades 6 to 9, and 99 in Grades 9 to 12. All students are Muslim and 99% are of Arabic heritage. There are 21 nationalities represented: 10% Emirati, 40% Syrian, 16% Sudanese, 10% Egyptian, 3% Palestinian and 3% Yemeni with a further 18% students coming from Europe and other Middle Eastern and North African countries. The school does not identify any student as having special educational needs (SEN). Students are admitted to KG following an interview with parents. Older students are admitted following consideration of their personal and academic records from previous schools. School fees are in the affordable to low category, from AED 6,625 in KG to AED 11,500 in Grade 12.

The leadership team comprises the Principal and subject coordinators. The Principal was appointed in September 2013, the third principal since the 2012 inspection. There are two owners of the school and a board of trustees. New teachers of mathematics, chemistry and science have been appointed this year.

The Effectiveness of the School

Students' attainment & progress

Students' attainment is below the levels expected for schools following the same curriculum and well below best international standards. Attainment and progress in Arabic, Islamic education, social studies, mathematics, science, and English are unsatisfactory. Progress in information and communication technologies (ICT) is satisfactory as a result of the increased focus on developing these skills for all students. Students develop adequate basic skills in communication, numeracy and ICT; their thinking skills are less well developed. The development of 21st century skills to become independent learners who also have the ability to work collaboratively is very unsatisfactory

In Arabic, skills in speaking, listening and reading are better developed than writing skills. In English, reading and writing skills are below age-related expectations for additional language learners. Students lack skills in applying their knowledge of mathematics and science. Higher achieving and SEN students make unsatisfactory progress through the lack of appropriate challenge or support. KG children are making very unsatisfactory progress across all subjects. Children have no opportunities to play, explore or be creative. Weaknesses in the implementation of the curriculum, teaching and assessment are key factors in the slow progress in raising standards. At grades 11 and 12 progress improves as teachers focus on national test requirements.

The new system to track students' progress is not making an impact, as it is not founded in a baseline assessment of students' skills and aptitudes. The data generated by this system shows inconsistent attainment and progress across year groups.

Students' personal development

Students' personal development is satisfactory. In classes and around the school, students are well-behaved. Teachers form positive relationships with their students. Staff ensure students' behaviour and social interactions are supervised effectively at break and play times. Students demonstrate their understanding of UAE values and respect for UAE traditions. At morning assembly, students confidently take part in short plays, presentations and recitations. All show respect by saluting the flag and singing the national anthem enthusiastically. A recently formed school council allows a few students to have decision-making responsibilities. Students have limited opportunities to collaborate or develop independence and they have few opportunities to take on leadership

responsibilities in school and within the community. Attendance is good at over 95%.

The quality of teaching and learning

Teaching and learning is unsatisfactory. Most lessons are teacher dominated with students listening passively. They have few opportunities to develop thinking skills, investigate, or apply knowledge to real-life contexts. Teaching strategies and resources do not motivate most students or improve their progress. Students have limited opportunities to work collaboratively. Teachers do not take sufficient account of prior levels of achievement to differentiate learning to meet the needs of all, including those with SEN and higher achieving students. Materials to support learning are very limited with textbooks being the main resource. Assessment is not used effectively to set targets and help students to know how to improve.

The positive classroom features are: most teachers have secure subject knowledge, learning objectives are displayed and most students are eager to learn. In some of the more effective lessons, students work together to share and express ideas and solve problems. In some lessons, students work at a smart pace because teachers plan carefully and have high expectations. These features are not sufficient to ensure that students make at least satisfactory progress.

The installation of data projectors in all classrooms is supporting teachers' strategies to integrate Information and communication technology (ICT) in all lessons. The Principal conducts professional development for all teachers and links them with other schools for visits. These continuous professional development (CPD) opportunities have an emerging impact on the quality of teaching and a few teachers are beginning to employ improved teaching strategies.

Meeting students' needs through the curriculum

The implementation of the curriculum is unsatisfactory, because it is mainly delivered through the use of textbooks. This results in limited academic progress and attainment for most students as work is not adapted to their needs and abilities. When some differentiation does occur, it is restricted to teachers mostly supplementing activities with worksheets. Learning objectives in lessons are shared but not followed up with setting targets for individual students to achieve.

The curriculum implementation for KG is inappropriate, as it does not meet children's needs, support their development, or promote academic progress. Those with SEN and more able students are not identified correctly. As a result,

the curriculum is not adapted to meet their needs and they make very unsatisfactory progress.

There is no music, and limited art and physical education (PE) activities. Additional activities, such as swimming, are included infrequently. A few activities, such as table tennis, have been introduced very recently for older students. The curriculum is not sufficiently enriched by extra-curricular activities or by visitors to the school. Assemblies and displays promote students understanding of the culture and heritage of the UAE effectively.

The protection, care, guidance and support of students

Most students feel safe and well-cared for in school. Students' attendance and punctuality have improved as a result of the implementation of more effective recording and monitoring measures. Staff are caring towards students. The clinic is clean, hygienic and well-organised. The nurse provides appropriate first-aid. A Child Protection policy has been implemented and necessary training given to staff.

The pastoral care system to support students' academic progress is limited. There is limited careers advice for students and the school maintains minimal records of students' destinations after leaving school. The social worker keeps records of behaviour and complaints and communicates with parents. Her role does not include pastoral advice. Behaviour management, rewards and sanctions are not always consistently used by teachers across the school. This results in inconsistent behaviour patterns and varied engagement levels from students in lessons. Students with SEN or additional learning needs do not receive the necessary support or guidance to help them make progress

There is a good level of security on entry to school, with the guard on duty ensuring visitors sign in and wear a visitors' badge. Emergency evacuation procedures are clearly signposted and regular practices are undertaken. There is no dedicated facility for students to have meals. A small prayer room is available to students but this is inadequate for the number of students and there is no provision to ensure girls have private access to the prayer room.

The quality of the school's buildings and premises

The quality of the buildings and premises is unsatisfactory overall as they do not support effective delivery of the curriculum. The accommodation is too small for the current population of students. Classrooms vary in size and many are overcrowded or cramped. There are very limited facilities for science, art, PE, and none for music. There is no dedicated outdoor play space and no play equipment

is available for KG. The library is also used for meetings. There is a large shaded outside area for assemblies and break times, and an additional unshaded area for games when the weather allows. Buildings are generally well maintained, clean and well ventilated. The school site appears secure. Plans for improvements to space and facilities are dependent upon building new premises on the adjacent site.

The school's resources to support its aims

The school has very few resources to support learning. Resources are not well matched to the needs of the curriculum or to support students in their class work. Textbooks and worksheets form the main resource for learning. Data projectors have been installed and are in use in each class. All students have timetabled access to the computer lab. Teachers are sufficient in number and have adequate qualifications. The library has few books and there are no fiction or factual books available in classes. Science equipment is limited and does not support students in carrying out experiments on their own. Equipment for mathematics is very limited, resulting in students unable to develop their understanding of practical applications of learning. In KG, resources are very unsatisfactory. The quality of facilities for sports and physical education restricts students' experiences in these important dimensions of their education.

School buses are maintained appropriately and each has a first aid kit and fire extinguisher. Supervisors accompany students to ensure their safety; some overcrowding was noted by inspectors and seatbelts are not fitted in all buses. Students consume packed lunches outside with few seating areas available.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership is unsatisfactory. The Principal was formerly Vice Principal for a short period; this gives some continuity in the school leadership. The Principal along with subject coordinators form the management team. They ensure the school runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis. All staff understand and carry out their roles and functions appropriately. The owners and Board of Trustees have overall responsibility for monitoring the provision.

The school's self-evaluation does not make accurate judgements about the quality of provision offered. The school's self-evaluation procedures do not effectively identify how all groups of students perform in order to improve the quality of provision or make rapid progress in raising standards. There is a school development plan (SDP) that follows the ADEC model. It is detailed and links with recommendations from the previous inspection. Financial resources are not

adequately well-managed to support the curriculum and improve the quality of students' learning and attainment

The school operates a whole-school performance management system. Staff are held to account for their areas of responsibility. Senior and middle management undertake lesson observations and provide feedback to teachers. This has not impacted sufficiently on improving learning and teaching or raising the levels of attainment. Since his appointment this session, the Principal has introduced regular training and supports staff with continuing professional development (CPD). He has focused on effective classroom practice in teaching and learning. As a result of the lesson observation programme and CPD, only a few teachers' deploy more effective teaching strategies. Overall, the training is not yet having the desired result in most classes in raising the quality of learning or standards.

Positive relationships and communication with parents are fostered. Responses received in the parental questionnaires were positive and reflected appreciation of the hard work of staff in support of their children's education. Members of the parents' association and other parents interviewed were also supportive of the school and the new Principal. The school has limited links with outside organisations, to enhance their understanding of the community and wider world.

Progress since the last inspection

The previous inspection of October 2012 judged the school to be in Band C and that the overall effectiveness of the school was very unsatisfactory. It recommended: the school needed to ensure leadership and management provided vision, direction and security; improve the quality of teaching across subjects; provide a far wider range of resources for teachers and students; improve the curriculum to meet the needs of all students much more effectively, and take steps to provide the promised new buildings.

The school has made some progress against these recommendations and has demonstrated the capacity to improve; it now needs to accelerate the pace of progress. The new Principal is providing better vision and direction to the school. He has recruited new, qualified teachers to improve the curriculum in science and mathematics. A significant investment has been made in equipping each class with digital projectors and ensuring all students have regular access to the computer lab. These improvements have resulted in better progress by students in ICT. There is a child protection policy and clear guidance on corporal punishment. Overall, the very recent changes are not yet impacting on raising attainment or the quality of learning, teaching and assessment for a significant number of students. Resources remain very unsatisfactory. Provision in KG is in urgent need of improvement.

What the school should do to improve further:

1. Urgently improve provision in KG, particularly through:
 - i. developing and implementing an appropriate curriculum for young children
 - ii. ensuring teaching allows children to explore, make choices and play together
 - iii. providing a wide range of age-related resources for children to learn through practical experiences
 - iv. providing a dedicated, stimulating outside play area
2. Improve students' attainment and progress through:
 - i. continuing to develop the range of teaching and learning strategies to motivate students and meet their learning needs
 - ii. using effective assessments which take appropriate account of students' prior levels of achievement in order to differentiate learning to meet the needs of all students.
3. Improve the quality of educational leadership by:
 - i. using self-evaluation procedures to identify and track effectively how all students perform across the school
 - ii. ensuring leadership provides increased rigour in linking lesson observations more closely to improving standards of attainment and progress.
4. Improve the curriculum by:
 - i. adapting the curriculum across the school to meet students' needs and to provide continuity and progression of learning as students move through the grades
 - ii. including wider choices in extra-curricular activities and for students to take on leadership responsibilities
 - iii. providing a wider range of material resources to enhance curriculum delivery across all subjects.
5. Ensure girls either have private access to the existing prayer room or have a separate dedicated prayer room.



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								