



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



Private School Inspection Report

Al Ittihad National Private School

Academic Year 2015 – 2016

lqraa

Al Ittihad National Private School

Inspection Date	February 15, 2016	to	February 18, 2016
Date of previous inspection	May 5, 2014	to	May 8, 2014
General Information		Students	
School ID	91	Total number of students	1325
Opening year of school	2006	Number of children in KG	198
Principal	Fatima Ahmed Murshid	Number of students in other phases	Primary: 497 Middle: 410 High: 221
School telephone	+971 (0)2 556 2666	Age range	3 years 8 months – 18 years
School Address	Khalifa City A North, P.O. Box 107071.	Grades or Year Groups	KG – Grade 12
Official email (ADEC)	alittehadad.pvt@adec.ac.ae	Gender	Mixed
School website	www.inpsabudhabi.com	% of Emirati Students	95%
Fee ranges (per annum)	Low to high: AED 17,250 - AED 35,362	Largest nationality groups (%)	1. Jordanian 5% 2. 3.
Licensed Curriculum		Staff	
Main Curriculum	American	Number of teachers	91
Other Curriculum	-----	Number of teaching assistants (TAs)	5
External Exams/ Standardised tests	Ministry of Education, EMSA (Arabic), MAP, SAT, IELTS	Teacher-student ratio	KG/ FS 1:15 Other phases 1:25
Accreditation	AdvancED	Teacher turnover	13%



Introduction

Inspection activities	
Number of inspectors deployed	5
Number of inspection days	4
Number of lessons observed	116
Number of joint lesson observations	6
Number of parents' questionnaires	136; (return rate: 10.9%)
Details of other inspection activities	Lesson observations; meetings with the principal, governors, senior leadership team; scrutiny of students' work; review of documents; observations of assemblies.

School	
School Aims	'A generation of Heritage Guardians and Global Thinkers'
School vision and mission	'A generation that adapts to the demands of the modern age and preserves its cultural heritage. Al Ittihad National Private Schools pride themselves in raising future leaders who are proud of their heritage and legacy, and are able to face the challenges of a most competitive global world with great confidence and resilience. Al Ittihad National Private Schools provide a perfect atmosphere for teaching and learning and to prepare students for higher education and life.'
Admission Policy	Interview for KG students. Grades 1-11 entrance examination in English, mathematics and Arabic and an interview and reference letter from previous school.
Leadership structure (ownership, governance and management)	Owner; General Director and Deputy Director; section principals for KG, primary and middle to high school phases for each of boys and girls; subject co-ordinators for English, mathematics, Arabic, science, Islamic education, social studies.

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	13	0
Emotional and Behaviour Disorders (ED/ BD)	0	0
Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)	0	0
Speech and Language Disorders	1	0
Physical and health related disabilities	0	0
Visually impaired	1	0
Hearing impaired	0	0
Multiple disabilities	0	0

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

G&T Category	Number of students identified
Intellectual ability	6
Subject-specific aptitude (e.g. in science, mathematics, languages)	19
Social maturity and leadership	6
Mechanical/ technical/ technological ingenuity	0
Visual and performing arts (e.g. art, theatre, recitation)	0
Psychomotor ability (e.g. dance or sport)	0



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 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						

The Performance of the School

Evaluation of the school's overall performance

The school offers a good quality of education. The principal, her senior management team and subject coordinators have a shared commitment to raise standards through continuous improvement. The behaviour of girls is good around the school and in lessons. Boys' behaviour has improved since the last inspection and is now good in almost all lessons and around the school. Relationships and attitudes to study are very good and learning skills, including creative thinking, innovation and entrepreneurship, are strengths of the school. Attainment overall is good and close to age-related expectations, but the analysis of data by the school in relation to external benchmarks needs to be strengthened. The school provides a dedicated special educational needs (SEN) co-ordinator who provides additional support to students. The school identifies gifted and talented students but does not reflect their specific needs in lesson planning. Teaching is good overall with few examples of very good and outstanding teaching. Students have a very good understanding of Islamic values and a very good appreciation of UAE culture and history. This is evident in assemblies and in the school's participation in the 'My Identity' programme. The school is well maintained and resourced and provides a very good learning environment for students.

Progress made since last inspection and capacity to improve

The school has made good progress in responding to the majority of the recommendations from the previous inspection report. The school's development plan addresses the requirement to plan activities that challenge the most able and provide resources that help students with learning difficulties. It also focuses on the need to improve the behaviour and progress of boys. These areas are also reflected in lesson plans and teaching. Teachers produce work sheets at three levels for students of different abilities. Boys' behaviour and progress have improved and teachers are aware of the need to provide work which challenges and interests boys in grades 5 to 8. Punctuality to school in the mornings remains an issue. Overall, the school has the capacity to improve itself further.

Development and promotion of innovation skills

The school's development and promotion of students' innovation skills is very effective in all parts of the school. Students designed a rocket during innovation week. Students in the upper school lead a co-operation initiative linked to their chosen subject which has had a positive impact on the school's community and demonstrates entrepreneurship and innovation. They set up a company with a board which runs a business to buy stocks in the co-op and then to buy healthy food



and snacks with the funds. The profit made is used to buy different resources for the school and some money is set aside to help people in need. The school's media committee is also involved in promoting the business. The community and service committee helps to choose a charity for the donations set aside from the profit. Students at the school are considerate and responsible citizens who contribute actively to the life of the school and the wider community.

The inspection identified the following as key areas of strength:

- the quality of educational provision in kindergarten
- development and understanding of Islamic values and UAE culture and traditions
- the development of learning skills, in particular entrepreneurship, innovation and critical thinking.

The inspection identified the following as key areas for improvement:

- attainment of students, particularly as measured by external tests
- the use of data to influence teaching, the curriculum and students' progress
- students' punctuality to morning school.



Performance Standard 1: Students' Achievement

Students' achievement Indicators		KG	Primary	Middle	High
Islamic Education	Attainment	Good	Good	Good	Good
	Progress	Good	Good	Good	Good
Arabic (as a First Language)	Attainment	Good	Good	Good	Good
	Progress	Good	Good	Good	Good
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	N/A	Good	Good	Good
	Progress	N/A	Good	Good	Good
English	Attainment	Very Good	Good	Good	Good
	Progress	Very Good	Good	Good	Good
Mathematics	Attainment	Very Good	Good	Good	Good
	Progress	Very Good	Good	Good	Good
Science	Attainment	Good	Good	Good	Good
	Progress	Good	Good	Good	Good
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	Good	Good	Good	Good
	Progress	Good	Good	Good	Good
Learning Skills (including innovation, creativity, critical thinking, communication, problem-solving and collaboration)		Very Good	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good



Students' achievement is good overall. In the high phase it is good overall and students' performance in EMSA for Arabic was acceptable. Outcomes in the IELTS tests ranged from 60% for boys, which is less than acceptable, to above 75% for girls which is outstanding. Internal continuous assessment shows overall attainment to be acceptable to outstanding against curriculum standards. This data is not measured against curriculum standards using a range of external sources. In the primary phase attainment, knowledge and skills are good but data across almost all subjects is insufficient to judge attainment in comparison with international benchmarks. SAT data for Grade 12 boys and girls is minimal.

In Islamic education, students' attainment and progress are good in all phases. In the primary phase, students are given real-life examples of loyalty and honesty which enable them to make progress in their understanding of these concepts. Students in Grade 1 respect the recitation of the Qur'an and use resources to enhance learning. Collaborative work is used to engage most students. Students with special educational needs are supported by teaching assistants and make comparable progress to other students. Students in middle and high school phases are given opportunities for self- and peer-assessment and benefit from teachers' secure subject knowledge.

Attainment and progress are good in all phases in Arabic. Students in KG and primary are making good progress through levelled Arabic reading resources that are used in literacy circles and guided reading lessons every week. In the primary phase, work is adapted to meet the needs of low achievers. Students are withdrawn from their Arabic language lesson and are given a plan which targets important skills and concepts. Students become confident speakers of Arabic and achieve outstanding results in the MoE examinations by Grade 12.

Attainment in English is very good in KG and good in other phases. Students can use phonics effectively in primary to build language skills. In Grade 7, students' progress is enhanced through the use of electronic tablets. Attainment in English, as measured against authorised curriculum standards, is above average for reading and writing in the primary and middle phases. It is also above international averages as judged by MAP assessments for reading and writing in all grades except Grade 10. Trends in attainment over time are also positive.

Students' attainment and progress in science are good in all phases. The science coordinators across the phases work together closely to improve students' progress in science in all grades. Students apply and develop their scientific skills to solve problems and to learn new scientific terms and concepts. Students use these skills



very effectively. For example, in the high phase in a simulated crime scene investigation, students' investigative skills are challenged to a very high level.

Attainment and progress in mathematics are very good in the KG and good in other phases. Students in the middle and high phases work well together and in groups. They support each other's learning. Teachers provide opportunities for students to develop their problem-solving and collaborative learning skills.

Attainment and progress in social studies are good in all phases. In the primary phase in most lessons, students are developing strong collaborative learning skills because they have regular opportunities to work in pairs and in groups. In all phases, students' ability to link their learning is promoted through cross-curricular links including areas such as Arabic and UAE culture and tradition.

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

Overall, students' personal and social development and their innovation skills are very good. Students' appreciation of, respect for and understanding of Islamic values and the UAE's heritage and culture are evident across the school. This is seen in morning assemblies and lessons. The school celebrates National Day and special Islamic occasions such as Eid Al Adha. Prayer time is respected and students and staff in the boys' section of the school, in particular pray together. Relationships are good between students themselves and between students and staff. Students respect their teachers and in the majority of lessons there is good cooperation between students and staff. Students in all phases show a very good attitude to learning. They are engaged in lessons and the majority are keen to contribute to discussions in whole class settings and during group work. Boys' behaviour in Grades 5 to 7 has improved



since the previous inspection so that it is now good in all except a few lessons. These are usually lessons where the learning is insufficiently challenging and interesting for students.

Students understand how to live a safe and a healthy life. Older students' innovative ideas in promoting recycling and sustainable energy, help to spread awareness to others across the school. These initiatives also encourage younger students to get involved in maintaining a cleaner and greener environment. The parent-teacher association is involved in monitoring and promoting understanding among students on how to maintain a healthy weight through the health club. This is done by involving parents and by collaborating with a nearby hospital. The association has also been involved in raising awareness of the dangers of smoking.

The average attendance at the school is good at 94%. Absence is recorded and, where necessary, authorised appropriately. The punctuality of students on arrival for assembly in the morning needs to be improved. The school provides opportunities through cross-curricular links in subjects to build a better understanding of the wider world. For example, in a Grade 1 English lesson about cooperation among ants, students made connections with both science and with moral choices when exploring the benefits of working as part of a community.

Performance Standard 3: Teaching and Assessment

Teaching and Assessment Indicators	KG	Primary	Middle	High
Teaching for effective learning	Very Good	Good	Good	Good
Assessment	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
The overall quality of teaching and assessment is good. Teaching is very good in KG and good in other phases. Almost all teachers have good subject knowledge and have a good understanding of how students learn. This enables them to support students well. This is particularly a strong feature of teaching in mathematics. A strong feature of the teaching across all phases is the quality of lesson planning, with explicit setting and sharing of learning objectives and effective use of time and resources. An example of this was seen in a Grade 12 lesson about words where the teacher enabled students to use difficult words such as 'omnipotent' and 'malefactors' to build effective sentences.				



Students enjoy working together in groups and they support each other in very positive ways. In the best lessons, students give constructive feedback to their peers following presentations of their work. This happened, for example, in Grade 11 biology during the study of specific and non-specific responses to pathogens. In the majority of lessons observed, teachers' planning enabled students to make effective links to real-life contexts. This helped students to understand the relevance of what they were learning.

Teachers use a wide range of classroom strategies including individual, group and paired work. This helps to meet the needs of students of differing abilities. The school has a strong focus on developing critical thinking, problem solving, innovation and learning skills in lessons. Teachers use questioning techniques which enable students to make progress. A good example of this occurred in Grade 4 English where the teacher asked questions about suffixes in different ways for students of differing abilities.

Assessment is good in KG and acceptable in other phases. When assessing students' work, teachers use a range of strategies including, for example, peer assessment and commenting on drafting and re-drafting so that students understand how to make progress. Marking is used generally well to help students improve their learning, particularly where teachers adopt a constructive tone. In these cases teachers give helpful advice on next steps. In mathematics, students' work is often over-praised at all phases, with the exception of KG. This means the students do not always have an accurate understanding of what they need to do improve further. Internal assessment is linked to the school's curriculum standards. The school analyses data and tracks it over time. The tracking is not sufficiently robust and does not provide the school with the information it requires to enable students to make age-appropriate progress in all cases.



Performance Standard 4: Curriculum

Curriculum Indicators	KG	Primary	Middle	High
Curriculum design and implementation	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
Curriculum adaptation	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good

The curriculum is very good in all phases. It is a strength in the kindergarten phase where it provides for all areas of early learning. It is based on best practice in early childhood education where it gives children good opportunities to make choices and explore. The curriculum enables teachers to plan stimulating learning experiences for all and to make good connections across subjects.

The school offers the American curriculum for the state of California, with standards for English and mathematics aligned to the Common Core Curriculum and the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) for the teaching of science. The curriculum is regularly reviewed and modified. Teachers make effective links to the real world in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) subjects well, including the teaching of robotics. The school is involved with a wide range of innovative programmes which enhance and support the learning of the students. New curriculum developments include a phonics scheme in KG to Grade 4, the robotics curriculum in ICT, and guided reading from kindergarten to Grade 6 for Arabic and English. All students use tablets in Grade 7 mathematics, science and English classes. The school applies the principles of Student Competency Framework in the teaching of Arabic and science, in particular.

The school has adapted and modified the curriculum to support students with special educational needs (SEN) and those who are gifted and talented (G&T). Examples of how they have done this include the introduction of advanced mathematics in Grade 11 for more-able students and individual modifications for students with special needs based on their individual education programmes.

The school plans a wide range of extra-curricular activities, clubs, visits and special events that enhance the curriculum and students' learning. Good examples of enterprise and innovation programmes in the curriculum include, for example, the Young Enterprise schemes and a Formula 1 project where students enjoy being engineers and designing their own cars and racing them on the Yas Marina track. Grade 11 students modelled a robotic hand and a synovial joint.

Links with Emirati culture, traditions and values are strengths of the school and are celebrated in classrooms and corridors. Programmes like the 'My Identity' help promote active links with the UAE culture and society. Special events such as National Day, assemblies and displays build on this theme. These experiences are planned into the curriculum and into lesson schemes.

The curriculum provides older students with a few choices. Students have a choice of three sciences, history, business, economics, accounts, physical education (PE), art and advanced mathematics in Grade 11. The number of options remains relatively limited for an American curriculum.

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	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
Care and support	Very Good	Very Good	Good	Very Good

The protection, care, guidance and support for students are very good in all phases except for care and support in the middle phase where it is good. The school has a consistent and effective behaviour management policy which has the support of the whole school community. On occasion, boys' behaviour is unacceptable, particularly when the learning lacks challenge and engagement. Overall though, relationships among students and staff are respectful.

The school has an active students' council which is a partner in school decision making. Students with SEN and who are gifted and talented are accurately identified but lesson plans do not always show clearly how their learning is adjusted to meet their individual needs. The school building has ramps and elevators for wheelchair users.

The school is a safe and secure learning environment for the care and welfare of students. An experienced staff member is responsible for the safety and health of all students. The school benefits from a nurse who provides screening and medical support for all students to promote safe and healthy lifestyles. Effective safety arrangements are in place for students' arrival, departure and transportation. A few



students are late in the morning, especially in the upper grades. The school approach is not presently sufficiently robust to improve this. Dedicated academic guidance and support is provided for students. Students receive good support for their future careers or university placements. The school does not measure itself against national figures for university placement or career data for other schools to motivate more students to proceed to further education.

Performance Standard 6: Leadership and management

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

Leadership and management is good overall. Leaders at all levels set a clear direction which promotes the development of learning skills for all, including critical thinking, independent and collaborative learning. The school works well with a very large number of stakeholders. The school has made a number of improvements since the last inspection, for example in the improvement in boys' behaviour in Grades 5-8, in improving attendance and in improving teaching and learning so that, for the most part, they meet the needs of students of all abilities. The school has demonstrated the capacity to innovate and improve, for example by allowing students to take responsibility for their own learning by designing their own lessons.

Senior leaders monitor and evaluate teaching and learning by means of regular appraisals of teachers, including through professional development, learning walks, formal appraisals, peer evaluations and monitoring formative assessment.

The school's Parent-Teacher Association supports the school in a number of ways including helping on National Day and finding speakers for talks. Parents receive regular termly reports and are able to see their children's class and homework via the school's 'app' for parents and teachers. The school's Board of Trustees takes a close interest in the work of the school and influences its work. It has been strongly involved in the promotion of healthy eating and members have given talks on issues such as



the dangers of drugs. The Board of Trustees is well qualified in a range of key areas including health and finance and it holds the principal to account by looking closely at the data and the development of the school.

Most aspects of the day-to-day life of the school are well organised. The school is appropriately staffed. The premises promote the learning environment. The school has a very wide range of appropriate resources, including the provision of laptops for all students in Grade 7. Leaders need to improve the analysis of external data to ensure that the school reaches external benchmarks. Some students do not arrive on time for assembly in the morning.

What the school should do to improve further:

1. Strengthen the attainment of students at all levels by:
 - i. ensuring tracking and monitoring processes provide the school with accurate assessments of student outcomes and progress, including in relation to external benchmarks
 - ii. analysing and using this data to set clear targets for improvement across the school and in individual subjects
 - iii. using assessment information more effectively to plan specific learning in classes to strengthen progress for SEN students and for those who are gifted and talented.
2. Improve punctuality by:
 - i. implementing regular and rigorous monitoring of punctuality
 - ii. enlisting parents' support to encourage punctuality and in agreeing appropriate approaches where lateness remains a problem.