



دائرة التعليم والمعرفة
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
AND KNOWLEDGE

Inspection Report of Al Ittehad National Private School, Abu Dhabi

Overall Effectiveness: Good

Academic Year 2017 – 2018



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School Information

General Information	Inspection date:	from	12 Jumada Al-Awwal, 1439	to	15 Jumada Al-Awwal, 1439
		from	29-Jan-18	to	01-Feb-18
	School name			Al Ittehad National Private School	
	School ID			9091	
	School address			SE – 16, Sector 13 – Khalifa A City, Abu Dhabi	
	School telephone			+0971 (0) 2 556 2666	
	School official email			Alittehadad.pvt@adec.ac.ae	
	School website			www.inspsabudhabi.com	
	School curriculum			American	
	School phases			KG - Grade 12	
	Fee range and category			Low to high: AED 19200 - AED 39300	
	Number of lessons observed			119	
	Number of joint lessons observed			15	
Staff Information	Total number of teachers			107	
	Turnover rate			8%	
	Number of teaching assistants			5	
	Teacher- student ratio			1: 13	
Student Information	Total number of students			1372	
	% of Emirati Students			94 %	
	% of Largest nationality groups			1. Jordan 3%	
				2. Yemen 1%	
				3. Egypt 0.4%	
	% of SEN students			10%	
	% of students per phase			KG: 14%	Middle: 30%
Primary: 36%				High: 20%	
Gender			Boys and girls		



The Performance of the School

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 

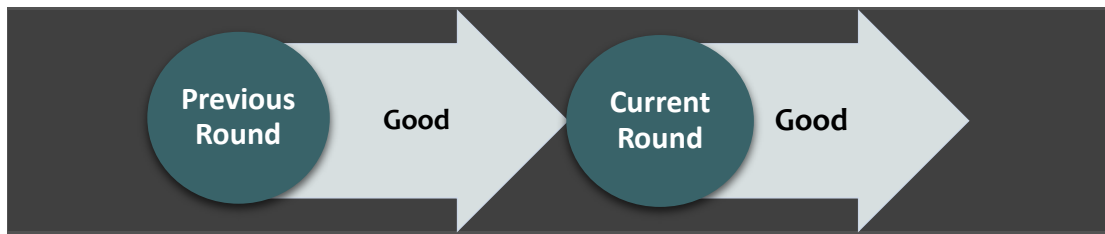


Evaluation of the school's overall performance

- The overall performance of the school is good. There has been stability in the senior leadership team and the changes that it has put in place have started to show positive improvements.
- The overall quality of student achievement is good in all phases. English attainment and progress are acceptable overall, and progress in social studies is acceptable in the Middle Phase. Girls are outperforming boys in all phases.
- The personal and social development of the students is very good overall. Students' attitudes and behaviour are very good in KG and good in Primary, Middle and High. Attendance is very good and punctuality is good. Students demonstrate a secure understanding and appreciation of the influence of Islam and other world cultures on UAE society.
- The overall quality of teaching and assessment is good. All teachers plan lessons carefully and All teachers use their subject knowledge effectively in well-planned lessons. Assessment has been the focus of school improvement efforts. However, although assessment data is now recorded systematically, the quality of the written feedback does not enable students to make the rapid next steps required for them to make accelerated progress.
- The school's curriculum is good in terms of the breadth of opportunities offered and of the modifications made to it, especially by middle leaders. However, teachers do not consistently modify lessons plans to ensure the more able students are challenged to achieve at a higher level and are not passive learners.
- The protection, care, guidance and support of students is very good overall. The school has very effective child protection approaches. The school identifies students who have special educational needs (SEN) and those who are gifted and talented very well.
- The overall quality of leadership is good. The school principal has an ambitious vision for the school. Self-evaluation processes and school improvement planning are detailed. The school has put in place many detailed plans to drive the school's improvement work. The monitoring of teaching and learning is not robust enough to ensure consistently high levels of teacher performance and student achievement.



Progress made since last inspection and capacity to improve



- The school has made steady progress on improving against the main recommendations of the last inspection.
- Attainment of students, as measured by external attainment tests, is weak in English, mathematics and science. It has however shown a slight improvement, for example in the mathematics Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) tests. Primary phase made the most progress and improvement. The gap in performance between girls and boys remains but has narrowed. Senior leaders have made concerted efforts to improve the use of data to better inform teaching and to try to match work more effectively to the learning needs of the students.
- The grading and reporting policy has been revised this year to focus attention on clearly defined criteria. All KG students have a baseline test in Arabic, mathematics and English. The new Mastery Connect program monitors and track students' performance from KG through Grade 4.
- Senior leaders have implemented a system to improve punctuality since September 2016. They now report on 'absence from National Anthem'. A procedure is in place to contact parents for unexplained absences. The school has developed a reward system with Primary students receiving classroom certificates. Attendance is very good across all phases. Some progress has been made in improving students' punctuality.
- The school has good capacity to improve further as senior leaders are driving school improvement work relentlessly. This year, they have focused on embedding systems into daily practice to help ensure consistency amongst all staff.



Key areas of strength and area for improvement

Key areas of strength

- Partnerships with parents and the community.
- Teachers' use of digital technology to enhance learning.
- Personal development and students' appreciation of UAE culture and Islamic values.
- Care and safety of students.
- The role of middle leaders in shaping the curriculum to sustain students' achievement.

Key areas for improvement

1. Teachers should raise achievement in the Middle phase, particularly by:
 - i. developing experiential and kinaesthetic learning to engage boys
 - ii. providing more frequent competitive learning opportunities for boys
 - iii. using systems for mentoring, for example by parents or older students, to support the students
 - iv. ensuring that feedback helps students to understand how to improve their work.
2. Teachers should provide systematic challenges for the more able students by:
 - i. asking more open-ended questions that deepen the thinking of the student and help them to develop greater understanding of the subject matter
 - ii. planning and presenting learning activities that are accurately matched to the learning needs of students, particularly those more able students who need more challenging learning experiences
 - iii. providing better and more frequent opportunities for students to develop enquiry, independence and critical-thinking skills
 - iv. ensuring that assessment data is used more effectively to inform lesson planning to ensure that students are presented with learning experiences that are accurately matched to their learning needs.
3. School leaders should increase the rigour of the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning in relation to students' achievement by:
 - i. developing a monitoring system that focuses lesson observations on students' learning and progress
 - ii. ensuring a regular evaluation of students' progress with personalised action plans
 - iii. measuring the impact of teachers' professional development on students' progress
 - iv. evaluating teaching strategies on students' engagement and progress.



Provision for Reading

- The quality of the programmes, extra-curricular activities and initiatives to promote reading across the school are good. The school has two libraries that are easily accessible to students and staff, and which provide a variety of spaces and resources.
- Reading comprehension is an area of focus at all grade levels and in all subject areas.
- There is no separate 'reading plan' for the school. Reading is part of the English Yearly Plan and the Library Plan. The Arab Reading Challenge and the UAE 'reading law' guides the school in its efforts to encourage reading. Parents model an interest in reading by participating in the 'Mothers' Book Club'.
- Reading is present in all curriculum areas. As the extra-curricular activities are an extension of the classroom, reading is encouraged and expected whenever students meet.
- The libraries are inviting and user friendly. The school is print rich in both the classrooms and the hallways. There is a book club for boys, a book club for girls and a primary book club.
- A large percentage of children enter Kindergarten with minimal English and few reading skills. In response to this, the school provides a suitable reading environment with approximately 10,000 titles.
- The school makes use of a range of reading assessments. There is individual screening that serves as a reading assessment at the beginning, middle and end of the year. The students participate in the MAP reading assessments.



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 additional Language)	Attainment	NA	NA	NA	NA
	Progress	NA	NA	NA	NA
Social Studies	Attainment	NA	Good	Acceptable	NA
	Progress	NA	Good	Acceptable	NA
English	Attainment	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
	Progress	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Mathematics	Attainment	Very Good	Good	Good	Good
	Progress	Very Good	Good	Good	Good
Science	Attainment	Good	Good	Good	Very Good
	Progress	Good	Very Good	Good	Very Good
Other subjects (Art, Music, PE)	Attainment	Good	Good	Good	Good
	Progress	Good	Very Good	Good	Good
Learning Skills		Good	Good	Good	Good



Overall achievement

- The overall quality of achievement for the students is good in all phases. English achievement is acceptable in Primary, Middle and High phases. Achievement is acceptable in Social Studies in the Middle Phase. Girls are outperforming boys in all subjects in all phases.
- In the recent Measure of Academic Progress (MAP) 2017 assessments, students' overall performance in primary and middle phases was weak in English, mathematics and science.
- The students' attainment in English, math and science as measured against curriculum expectations indicates very good standards overall. Their attainment in Islamic education, Arabic and UAE social studies is outstanding. However, these standards are not borne out in lessons
- While the progress made by the students and the development of their learning skills are good overall in most subjects, progress in English remains acceptable. Reading and writing skills are weaker across the phases. Learning skills are good in KG, Primary and High, and acceptable in Middle.

Subjects

- The achievement of students in **Islamic education** is good and a majority of students attain above curriculum expectations. They have good knowledge of the life of the Prophet (PBUH) and a clear understanding of Qur'anic verses and Hadeeth. They have good Qur'an recitation skills and apply what they learn in their daily life, considering the Prophet (PBUH) as their role model.
- The achievement in **Arabic** is good in all phases and a majority of students attain above curriculum standards. Listening, speaking, reading and writing skills are above curriculum standards. Students demonstrate good grammatical skills.
- Achievement in **social studies** is good overall. The majority of students in KG and Primary grades have a good understanding of the UAE culture. Students in the Middle school attain in line with curriculum expectations. They have an acceptable knowledge of geographical and historical concepts and can interpret maps appropriately.
- Students' achievement and progress in **English** is acceptable overall. Most students read well and can communicate their understanding clearly. Most



students can hold conversations with others in English at expected curriculum levels. Students' writing skills are less proficient in the Primary, Middle and High School grades.

- Students' achievement in **mathematics** is good overall, and is very good in KG. Students demonstrate good skills in discussing and explaining their calculations using appropriate mathematical terminology. They apply their mathematical knowledge to real life situations effectively.
- Students' achievement in **science** is very good overall and steadily improves from good in KG to very good in the High phase. Attainment is good, with most attaining above the expected curriculum standards. Progress is good in KG and very good in Primary as they use investigative methods and research skills effectively.
- Students' achievement in **other subjects** is good, overall. The majority attain above curriculum expectations in all subjects. In art and PE, most students achieve good standards. Progress in technology, international history and geography is good and students transfer these skills to their other lessons.

Learning skills

- Students' **learning skills** are good overall though boys' do not always engage well in learning in the Middle phase. Most students in KG, Primary and High are engaged learners who work productively on their own and in groups. More-able students are not always challenged to extend their learning.

Areas of Relative Strength:

- Students' knowledge and understanding of UAE culture, heritage and value.
- Students' achievement in science, Arabic and Islamic education.
- The impact of digital technology on students' progress.
- Collaborative group work.

Areas for Improvement:

- Students' attainment in external examinations.
- Students' attainment in English.
- Boys' engagement in the Middle Phase.
- Extension of learning for more-able students with more challenging tasks.



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	Very 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
- Students' personal and social development and their innovation skills are very good. Relationships between staff and students and between students themselves are very respectful. Student behaviour is very good. There are a few incidents of misbehaviour in the Middle phase in boys' sections. Bullying is rare. - Students are aware of the importance of following a safe and healthy lifestyle. They make appropriate dietary choices. - Attendance is very good at 96% across all the phases and punctuality is improving. - Students show a very good understanding of UAE culture and Islamic values. They demonstrate very good environmental awareness. They sing the National Anthem enthusiastically and are committed to the recitation of the Holy Qur'an. Students are proud of their cultural identity and have a very good understanding of the different cultures. - Students contribute well to the life of the school and have set up an Eco-Club. As a result, the school was nominated by the federal environmental agency as a sustainable school. - Students are creative and demonstrate well-developed innovation skills through competitions.				
Areas of Relative Strength:				
- Appreciation and respect of UAE culture and Islamic values. - Students' healthy lifestyles. - Students' environmental awareness.				
Areas for Improvement:				
Boys' behaviour in the Middle phase.				



Performance Standard 3: Teaching and Assessment

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

- The quality of teaching and assessment is good overall.
- Across the curriculum, teachers use their good subject knowledge to plan work that engages their students. Assessment for understanding is relatively weak and teachers do not always move lessons swiftly enough into new learning. Expectations are not always as high in boys' Middle school lessons. Teaching does not always engage boys in the middle phase. Teaching in science is good overall and particularly strong in the primary and high phases.
- Work is well matched to students' needs in the majority of lessons although the most able students are not always catered for as effectively. Early finishers do not always have higher level tasks to extend and deepen their learning.
- Teachers ask relevant questions but these do not always deepen learning or promote mastery for the more-able. Introductions to lessons are not always precise enough.
- Overall, teachers plan lessons which promote the development of students' learning skills. They promote links well between subjects and with real life. Teachers use learning technology well to support students' progress. Teaching of critical thinking and problem solving is acceptable. Teachers do not always offer enough challenge to higher achievers with these skills.
- Internal assessment processes are good throughout, providing a coherent approach across the curriculum.
- Teachers' marking of work is regular though not always sufficiently detailed to enable students to know what to do to improve to the next level. Verbal feedback is more effective.
- Teachers have an abundance of well-analysed assessment information but this is not always used to influence teaching effectively.



Areas of Relative Strength:

- Teacher's good subject knowledge.
- Use of learning technologies to promote students' progress.

Areas for Improvement:

- Boys' engagement in the Middle phase.
- Engagement of more-able students in more challenging learning activities.
- Provision of consistently high-quality feedback to help students improve.



Performance Standard 4: Curriculum

Curriculum Indicators	KG	Primary	Middle	High
Curriculum design and implementation	Good	Good	Good	Good
Curriculum adaptation	Good	Good	Good	Good
- The overall quality of the curriculum is good. The curriculum is well planned and offers a wide range of opportunities to motivate most students. The curriculum aligns well with the mission, vision and core values of the school. The curriculum includes activities to promote Emirati and UAE culture and cross-curricular linkages through thematic topics. - Middle leaders, along with teachers, conduct termly reviews of the curriculum to ensure compliance and coverage of learning outcomes. There is good progression in almost all subjects. - The school modifies the curriculum well to meet the needs of most groups of students. The needs of SEN students are adequately met and they are carefully identified, but there is insufficient challenge for the more able. - Opportunities for enterprise and innovation are evidenced in almost all curriculum areas but the extra-curricular offerings for students are limited particularly in the Middle and High phases. Students enjoy taking part in competitions such as FED Day, STEAM and the Think Science Competition. - The curriculum provides numerous opportunities to develop students' understanding of Emirati culture and the UAE society. The teachers teach students well to distinguish right from wrong and to promote the moral values in Emirati society, such as respect for others. - Moral education ensures students are mostly good at distinguishing right from wrong. They raise their aspirations in accordance with the moral values of UAE society such as responsibility, honesty and respect for others.				
Areas of Relative Strength:				
- Ongoing curriculum review - Curriculum breadth to ensure students are well prepared for later life. - Links between UAE culture and values and the curriculum.				
Areas for Improvement:				
- Modification of the curriculum for the high achieving students. - Extra-curricular activities for Middle and High phases.				



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	Good	Good	Good
- The overall quality of protection, care, guidance and support is very good. The school has a rigorous system for safeguarding of students. - The school building is very well-maintained and the school keeps records of incidents that arise, and deal with them promptly. The school provides a clean, hygienic and safe learning environment for students. The learning environment supports the needs of all students. - The school promotes safe and healthy living through a variety of means, including through the school nurses who provide effective medical care and healthy living guidance to students, and through a variety of school activities. - Staff-student relationships across the school are very positive. The School Counsellor provides academic guidance and support for students in high school. - The school has a rigorous system in place to identify special educational needs students and gifted and talented students from an early age in kindergarten and primary school. However, there is limited support provided for gifted and talented students during lessons other than English. Areas of Relative Strength: - School's safeguarding of students and providing them with a healthy and secure environment. - Staff-student relationships and the care provided by school staff to meet the various needs of students. - Identification of SEN and gifted and talented students. Areas for Improvement: - Support for the gifted and talented students.				



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	Very Good
Governance	Good
Management, staffing, facilities and resources	Very Good
• The overall quality of leadership and management is good. Senior and middle leaders, including the principal, provide strong leadership. Staff relationships are professional and effective. • The school's self-evaluation identifies the strengths and areas of development. However, senior leaders measure only the actions taken and do not examine critically sufficiently the impact these have on raising standards. The school development plan and other key planning documents are in place. The school development plan contains priorities, targets and evidence, but it lacks precise actions to measure the impact of the plans and professional development on the school's improvement. • Partnerships with parents and the community are very good. Parents contribute very well to the school life. They welcome online access to measures of their child's progress. • Governance is good. Governors monitor the school's actions and hold leaders accountable for students' performance. • The day-to-day management of the school is very effective. Teachers benefit from regular professional development. Premises and resources fully support the effective delivery of the curriculum. • School leaders benchmark student's performance against international data. They have reviewed their assessment policy to be aligned with international examinations' criteria such as PISA and TIMSS, but this has yet to have full impact in rapidly raising standards.	



Areas of Relative Strength:

- The relentless drive of senior leaders and governance for improving the school.

Areas for Improvement:

- Greater precision in measuring the impact of the actions taken by leaders to improve the school through professional development.
- Strengthen evaluation of the impact work done on each performance standard for each phase of the school.