



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



Summary Inspection Report

Al Manahil Private School

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Iqraa

Al Manahil Private School

Inspection Date	4 th – 7 th March 2013
School ID#	144
Type of School	KG – Grade 12
Curriculum	British
Number of Students	726
Age Range	3 – 18 years
Gender	Mixed
Principal	Reeba Arthur Zulfiqar
School Address	Street 147, Building 18A, Abu Dhabi road (School Road), Al Ain
Telephone Number	(+971) 03 7672030
Fax Number	(+971) 03 7672545
Email (ADEC)	almanahil.pvt@adec.ac.ae

Introduction

The school was inspected by 4 inspectors who observed 58 lessons. They met with school leaders, teachers, students and parents. The inspectors observed assemblies, break periods and students' arrival at and departure from the school. They analysed data and documents supplied by the school. In addition, responses from parents to a questionnaire about the school were analysed.

Description of the School

The school opened in 1994. It had previously been a villa school following a Pakistani curriculum. It moved to its current premises in 2002 and offered a UK curriculum from 2005. There are 726 students on roll, 56 boys and 40 girls in KG, 314 boys and 204 girls in Grades 1- 9, 79 boys and 33 girls in grades 10-12.

About 1% are Emirati, 52% of students are from Pakistan, 11% from Egypt, 11% from Sudan, 7% from Afghanistan and smaller numbers from Jordan, Syria, Philippines, Somalia, Oman and Palestine. Three students are identified with low proficiency in English which is the language of instruction. 124 have been identified with special educational needs across the school and 68 have language difficulties. The school does have entry tests but they are internal and not moderated or standardised.

Fees range from 3,312 AED to 7,200 AED with additional charges for books, uniform and buses. These are in the very affordable category. Salaries range from 2000-3500 AED per month. These are in the very affordable category.

The Effectiveness of the School

Band C

Grade 7

Inspectors judged Al Manahil to be in Band C; that is a school in need of significant improvement.

The school was inspected in October 2011. It was judged to be poor in almost all areas. Since then it has made some progress in the key areas for improvement but the rate of progress has been very slow. The school now has a leadership structure, a system to track progress, improving KG provision, a scheme in place for Islamic studies and some early indications of teachers using lesson objectives and planning tasks to meet the needs of different groups.

Standards throughout the school are well below best international expectations in Arabic, Islamic studies, social studies, English, mathematics, science, and information and communication technology (ICT). Standards in IGCSE and GCE A level examinations are well below average. Girls make better progress than boys but, overall, students from all backgrounds are making unsatisfactory progress, especially in gaining 21st century skills.

First language Arabic speakers attain standards in Arabic that are in line with Ministry of Education expectations. Their reading is better than their writing and speaking. Non – Arab students’ writing and conversational skills are well below the expectation. They are unable to give an oral presentation effectively to show their understanding and do not understand all they read. Progress in Arabic is slowed because of the low number of lessons each week. In Islamic studies the main focus is on gaining knowledge and students rarely apply what they learn. Students, especially girls, have a basic factual knowledge of UAE history. Progress is slow because they have few opportunities to talk in depth about their learning and develop deeper understanding.

Standards in KG are well below the expectation and children make very unsatisfactory progress. Progress throughout the school in most subjects is limited by lack of suitable challenge in most lessons, especially for higher attaining students, and insufficient support for students with special educational needs. Students’ speaking skills in English are stronger than their writing and reading skills. They have too few opportunities to develop creative or extended writing skills. Oral skills are stronger in higher grades but many students in the lower grades lack confidence to speak in English. In mathematics, students in lower grades do not have secure knowledge of basic number operations. Higher attaining students in Grade 9 can use formulae to calculate areas of complex shapes and unknown lengths of the sides of right - angled triangles. Throughout the school, students have few opportunities to develop mental mathematics strategies, problem solving skills and tasks that enable them to apply their skills, limiting their progress significantly. Similarly, in science, students do not acquire practical or investigational skills and progress is limited because work does not match the needs of different groups. Students’ progress in ICT is severely impeded by a lack of practical application of skills. Standards in physical education are poor and progress is very slow because of insufficient focus on skill development, and limited use of resources to enable students to practice their skills, and poor facilities.

The majority of students are keen to learn and respond well when learning tasks are active, though these are infrequent. When lessons fail to offer suitable challenge, or proceed at a slow pace or teachers do not apply class management strategies consistently a minority of students, especially boys in lower grades, become restless and disrupt learning. Lessons provide too few opportunities for students to develop their skills of independent learning, creativity, higher order thinking, problem solving or collaboration to support them in the next stage of education or work. Different nationalities mix well together and relationships are usually positive.

They show respect to teachers and are welcoming to visitors. Students do not develop leadership skills effectively because they have limited opportunity to take responsibility. Students have mixed feelings about the school. Most like their teachers but they are aware that a small number use corporal punishment. They feel let down by the school because of the poor condition of the playgrounds, lack of extra – curricular activities, ICT resources and high teacher turnover. The school monitors attendance but systems to address absence are not very effective as attendance is 87%, this is unsatisfactory.

Teachers work hard and are enthusiastic. They have secure knowledge of their subjects so teaching is accurate. Teachers are beginning to share learning objectives with students in most lessons. Sometimes these do not specify what the students are expected to learn, just what they are going to do. The school has provided some professional development to improve the quality of teaching and there are signs of progress, though it is very slow and not consistent across the school. Tasks do not offer sufficient challenge in most lessons as too many teachers rely on textbooks and work sheets. This means that students with special educational needs and higher attaining students do not make sufficient progress. Too often teachers provide step-by-step guidance, suppressing students' independence and deeper understanding. For example, in a mathematics lesson the teacher modelled learning effectively and checked on students' understanding but then continued to talk through additional problems instead of challenging students to apply their new knowledge and think for themselves. Most questions require a very basic factual answer. They do not enable teachers to evaluate the learning of different groups or individuals. Answers are often shouted out by large numbers of students and questions rarely probe wider understanding or enable students to explain their thoughts in depth. On the rare occasions that teachers enable students to work and think independently and use questions effectively to test students' understanding, such as in a grade 12 physics lesson, students make good progress.

The school follows a limited UK curriculum and it is not broad and balanced. It places sufficient emphasis on the understanding of the UAE culture and history but music is not offered and the range of courses for grades 11 and 12 is too narrow. The time allocation for grades 11 and 12 students is too low. They only have three lessons each week in each subject, sometimes only studying one subject, plus 2 lessons in Arabic and Islamic studies and this is a contributory factor in low academic standards. Throughout the school the curriculum is not planned to meet the needs of different groups as learning in most lessons is driven by all students following the same tasks in text books. Students with special educational needs and those who are gifted and talented have been

identified but their needs are not met because tasks are not planned to enable them to learn effectively. There are no computers in classrooms and the ICT suite is too small with too few computers. Access is mainly restricted to examination candidates so lower grades do not get sufficient time to gain ICT skills, and often their progress in research skills is limited because tasks are theoretical rather than practical. Students get very few opportunities to enhance their learning and apply their skills through enrichment activities. The KG curriculum is narrow but the coordinator has started to develop an English Early Years curriculum and has introduced 'Jolly Phonics' to improve literacy skills. Consequently, teachers are starting to make learning more interactive, visual and tactile. There are insufficient opportunities for child-initiated activities, limiting childrens' independence and development of social skills.

The school keeps a central record for all staff and makes the required checks when they are recruited. The school clinic is licensed and well maintained and medicines are stored safely. The school has a child protection policy in place but does not provide training so that staff are aware of the policies and procedures. Some students, supervisors and parents reported that teachers sometimes hit students. The school is aware of this and one teacher has been given two warnings. The majority of buses do not have seat belts and where they are in place they are not used. The school provides limited guidance for students on their choice of career or courses, although some students attend conferences run by Abu Dhabi University. Students have suitable access to prayer rooms.

The school buildings have improved in some ways since the last inspection. Boys and girls have their own prayer room, the interior has been painted, KG has an outdoor play area and security at the gate is in place to prevent intrusion. The major concern is the playground surface that is unsafe because it is very uneven with lots of loose stones. In several areas of the buildings there are sharp pipes protruding from the wall. Water fountains are not all hygienic as some are dirty. Many classrooms are cramped and have a negative impact on learning. Specialist facilities for science and ICT are inadequate. The science laboratory is too small for more than a very small number of students to do practical work. Facilities for physical education are poor and have a very negative impact on skill development. The school is trying to make the environment more stimulating and some classes and corridors have displays, including students' work.

Teachers are suitably qualified and sufficient in number. The high turnover of teachers is a concern of parents and students because it slows progress and prevents consistency in teaching quality. The quality and range of resources is very unsatisfactory and does not support learning in most of the school. Additional resources in KG have been provided, especially for English and

mathematics, but they still do not enable teachers to provide sufficient interactive and independent learning. There are insufficient books in the library to foster an enjoyment of books or develop students' independent study and research skills.

The owners' representative does not interfere with educational priorities but is aware of the low standards, lack of resources for ICT and the need to improve buildings. Subject coordinators are enthusiastic and have a role to monitor teaching, provide feedback and support staff in their areas. There are signs of some improvement but it is very slow and not consistent across the school as there is no system to evaluate the impact of professional development. Assessment data is extensive but does not give an accurate view of standards and progress because all assessments up to Grade 8 are internally set and marked but are not moderated or standardised. Leaders talk of their ambitions to improve but the school improvement plan does not provide a clear strategic direction to improve teaching and learning. The school provides very unsatisfactory value for money and does not have satisfactory capacity to improve based on the slow progress in the past. Parents spoken to had very negative views of the school, especially about low standards, lack of challenge, communication about progress, boys' behaviour and insufficient development of 21st Century skills. They do appreciate the ambition of the principal and General Director but consider that improvement is very slow.

What the school should do to improve further:

1. Ensure leaders at all levels have the capacity to sustain quicker improvement through the use of rigorous self -evaluation procedures to identify precise strategies to improve teaching and learning.
2. Improve standards and progress in all areas across the school and develop students' 21st century skills to prepare them for their future education and work.
3. Provide continuous professional development for teachers to improve the quality of teaching, especially in planning tasks that offer suitable challenges to different groups, and monitor the impact.
4. Increase the quality, quantity and use of resources to enhance learning and provide more interactive and independent learning tasks.
5. Ensure all areas of the school provide a safe and healthy environment and specialist areas are fit for purpose.