



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



Summary Inspection Report

Al Manhal International Private School

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Iqraa

Al Manhal International Private School

Inspection Date	27 th October – 1 st November, 2012
School ID#	093
Type of School	Private
Curriculum	Ministry of Education
Number of Students	2295
Age Range	KG1 – Grade 12
Gender	Mixed
Principal	Mohammad Abu Kassab
School Address	P.O. Box 3110, Abu Dhabi, UAE
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Introduction

The school was inspected by six inspectors. The inspectors observed 122 lessons, attended assemblies and inspected other aspects of school life including break times. They held meetings with staff, students, the accountant and the proprietor. The inspectors also scrutinised a range of documents including a statement by the new principal.

Description of the School

The Al Manhal International Private School was founded in 1973 and is a private mixed school. There are 2,295 students on roll of whom 175 are in Kindergarten and 578 in the primary phase. In the secondary phase there are 678 in the girls' section and 864 in the boys'. Almost all of the students and teachers are from Arab countries, which include Syria, Egypt and Jordan. Approximately 8% of the students are Emirati. The school day runs from 7.45 to 13.45, however Kindergarten (KG) students finish at 12.00. School fees range from AED 4,000 in KG through to AED 11,000 in Grade 12. There are additional fees for daily transport, books and uniform. Teachers' monthly salaries range from AED 2,800 to AED 7,760. The school's vision is to 'provide young people with the education, skills and experience to become forward thinking leaders of tomorrow and to take their place in a rapidly changing and expanding global community'. There are currently no students identified with Special Educational Needs (SEN). The school was last inspected in May 2010. The principal was appointed in September 2012.

The Effectiveness of the School

Band C

Grade 6

Inspectors judged International Private School to be in Band C that is a school in need of significant improvement.

The previous inspection clearly identified that the school needed significant improvement. The areas for improvement identified included raising the quality of teaching and learning, improving the effectiveness of leadership and management at all levels and enhancing the impact of the curriculum. The school has failed to address these recommendations properly. The area where there has been some progress relates to improvements with buildings and outdoor provision for KG, but even the impact of this is limited by building work. In all other respects the school is falling short of its aims. As a result, it is not providing a satisfactory level of education for students.

The Al Manhal International Private School is a harmonious, welcoming community. Most students are friendly and confident; they enjoy attending school and display favourable attitudes to learning. The relationships between staff and

students are positive. Students generally behave satisfactorily, though less so when unsupervised. Students say there is no bullying and from their demeanour and interactions it is clear that they respect each other's values and cultures. Care, on a daily basis, is good but guidance is less effective across the school. While the current building work is essential to address fundamental issues for the school, staff fail to demonstrate sufficient awareness of the potential hazards that are posed, and at present, the school is not as safe as it should be.

Attainment in all subjects, by the end of Grade 12, compares favourably with Ministry of Education (MoE) expected standards, but it is unsatisfactory when compared with international standards. In English, attainment is below international expectations. Grammatical structure is secure, but speaking and writing skills are not satisfactory. Mathematics and science standards are satisfactory, though both do too little to stretch the most able. Students' progress is unsatisfactory for a number of reasons. The narrow nature of the curriculum constrains the extent of their knowledge and understanding. The absence of any class-based assessment and the failure to use internationally standardised tests means that teachers have no accurate way to plan the next steps the students need to take. Consequently, teaching does not meet the needs of all students and their progress in most lessons is unsatisfactory. The needs of students who are gifted, able or talented are not addressed at all, leaving them to progress at the same pace as everyone else. The progress of girls is more secure than that of boys but the school has failed to address this inequality. Critical thinking, analysis and problem-solving skills are underdeveloped across the school and older students state that the work they receive lacks challenge.

Standards in Arabic and Islamic studies are above those found nationally, while standards in social studies are on a par with those expected nationally. Students' acquisition of basic skills in Arabic literacy is good. Students communicate confidently in Arabic. Girls, particularly those in Grade 11 and 12, can converse in Arabic at an adequate level and perform better than the boys. Students' writing skills in the subject are good, they are able to express themselves clearly and accurately. They also confidently recite verses from the holy Qur'an applying the correct Tajweed rules. Students are given opportunities to discuss Islamic issues, and as a result, they show a good awareness of major Islamic leaders and historical events.

In KG, the quality of provision is inadequate and at times poor. There are a number of reasons for this. Some of the teachers are not fully competent in speaking English, which diminishes the effectiveness of their attempts at dual language instruction. At the same time, the KG curriculum and the teaching styles

used are not adapted to meet the developmental needs of young children. Consequently, students' basic skills are undeveloped.

The quality of teaching across the school is unsatisfactory. While most teachers have a good understanding of their subject, they often have a limited command of spoken and written English. This means that they do not communicate ideas clearly, or model the language for the students adequately. The teachers tend to employ a didactic style of teaching, lecturing students on the knowledge they want to get across regardless of the specific needs of students. Too much time is spent in lessons going through exercises from textbooks and occasional worksheets. The lack of differentiation places a significant limitation on progress. Many tasks do not offer sufficient challenge and often require little more than a simple response. Occasionally, students are encouraged to work in groups but little collaboration is demanded.

An example of this undemanding approach was observed in a KG class and a mathematics lesson. Students were simply asked to stick shapes or beads on to paper. This use of mundane tasks, and other similarly limited activities, fails to encourage children to think through problems in order to arrive at solutions and does little to develop independent learning skills. Most teachers lack the basic skills to teach information communication technology (ICT) or the understanding to enable students to use it as a tool for learning. The new leadership of the school recognises the shortcomings in teaching and has plans to expand professional development to address the problems and closely monitor the impact. Many teachers demonstrate a desire to improve their performance but have not begun to change their classroom practice.

The quality of the curriculum remains unsatisfactory. It is primarily delivered through workbooks. It is restricted, lacking breadth and balance. It does not enable teachers to help students acquire adequate levels of basic number and English language skills, nor is provision sufficiently adapted to meet the needs of different ability groups. There is a very restricted curriculum of core subjects with the addition of art, music, ICT and physical education. Not all subjects are available to all students. The limitations imposed by student transport arrangements restrict the range of extra-curricular activities that is offered. The limited provision includes an environmental club and some good involvement with the wider community, but students feel that these opportunities are insufficient in number, scope or breadth.

There are well-documented procedures for most aspects of the care and guidance for students. However, the Child Protection Policy is not effectively documented even though teachers, when questioned, understood what procedures to follow if

they suspect any form of neglect or abuse. All MoE regulations relating to staff authorisation and moral checks are in place and adhered to. Attendance procedures are effective and the school consistently demonstrates to students the difference between right and wrong. The behaviour policy of rewards and sanctions is fully implemented and understood. There is no corporal punishment. In a few classes, teachers shout to gain control but this is not the norm. Facilities for prayer are in place in for both boys and girls. Pastoral support is good. Students are well cared for in most respects, though their welfare is not best served by transport arrangements. They know who to go to if they need any help. The clinic is well managed and provides effective treatment and care for those students who need it.

Guidance to students and the way in which they are prepared for later life is unsatisfactory. Teachers' marking in books is not helpful to them; it does not tell them what they have done well and what they need to do in order to improve their work. Discussions with students revealed that they do not always get the support they need to make informed decisions about what is possible when they leave school.

The buildings and premises are undergoing improvement, but there is insufficient awareness among staff about the impact of this on the safety of students. A sufficient number of science laboratories are maintained in good order, but building work has severely reduced the outdoor play area for KG. Security is satisfactory and hazardous materials are safely stored. Most classrooms are adequate in size to support learning but some rooms need upgrading. The owner confirmed the purchase of electronic display equipment for every classroom and the provision of wireless internet across the whole school. School transport is adequately maintained and first aid kits and fire extinguishers are accessible. Students do not always wear seat belts and support staff do not enforce this requirement. The canteen provides hygienic, healthy food.

There are enough qualified teachers but some are ineffective. The library has insufficient books to support independent research and study. There are additional staff to support learning in each class in the KG. These staff are not always effective because they do not have the knowledge, skills and understanding of how best to support early learning. No other classes receive any form of support, which occasionally hinders students' progress. For example, in an ICT lesson the teacher was not able to focus on teaching because her time was spent getting the machines to function. The computer room houses enough computers for a whole class but insufficient use is made of them outside set periods. Classroom materials are limited and not sufficient to support effective

teaching. Sports facilities are limited and students do not have adequate sports equipment.

The principal took up post in September 2012 having been away from the school for two years. He has identified the key development needs of the school and itemised these in a school improvement plan. It is too early to measure any impact as this plan has yet to be shared with the staff. The plan is detailed but does not provide precise information on how the actions will be funded or how the impact of these actions will be measured.

The principal has the confidence of the school community and the parents. He is highly visible and offers support to colleagues. Staff say they appreciate his support and that morale is good. Middle leaders for core subjects are in place and are effective in implementing processes and practices that ensure the school runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis. They have some impact, on improving the standards and progress of students but this is not yet sufficient to ensure consistent improvement. While the principal's initial plans show a commitment to improving standards, there is recognition that some of the leadership team lack the knowledge, skills and understanding to drive improvements forward. For example, lesson observations undertaken by the senior management team do not rigorously evaluate teaching that focuses on students' learning and progress. This means that the school, which has recently increased its fees, is not yet providing value for money. The school's capacity for sustained improvement is therefore unsatisfactory.

What the school should do to improve further:

1. As a matter of urgency, respond fully to the issues raised in the previous inspection report.
2. Raise achievement by:
 - i. improving assessment in all subjects, ensuring that students' work is marked regularly and they receive regular feedback on what they are doing well and know how to improve their work;
 - ii. setting challenging targets for all students; and
 - iii. enabling older students to accurately monitor their own progress towards meeting their targets.
3. Improve the leadership and management by:
 - i. increasing the capacity of the senior leadership team, including subject leaders, to drive improvements;

- ii. ensuring that senior leaders undertake more rigorous evaluation of teaching by focusing on the extent of students' learning and progress in lessons;
 - iii. providing leadership training for subject co-ordinators so that they are able to improve the quality of teaching within their own subjects and hold teachers to account; and
 - iv. providing more precise information on actions listed in the school improvement plan, showing how they will be funded and how the impact will be monitored and evaluated.
4. Improve teachers' skills to enable them to meet the full range of students' learning needs by:
- i. developing teachers' speaking, listening, writing and comprehension skills in the English language and Arabic in order to best meet the needs of all students;
 - ii. extending the repertoire of teaching styles to enable all students to be fully engaged and appropriately challenged in their learning; and
 - iii. identifying and providing learning opportunities for more able students to further extend their thinking.