



دائرة التعليم والمعرفة
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
AND KNOWLEDGE

Inspection Report of Al Nadha National School for Girls

Overall Effectiveness: Acceptable

Academic Year 2017 – 2018



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School Information

General Information	Inspection date:	from	8 Shaban 1439	to	11 Shaban 1439
		from	23-Apr-18	to	26-Apr-18
	School name			Al Nadha National School for Girls	
	School ID			8025, 9025	
	School address			P.O. Box 816, Al Mushrif, Abu Dhabi, UAE	
	School telephone			+971 (2) 447 4412 +971 (02)4477600	
	School official email			alnahdagirls.pvt@adec.ac.ae	
	School website			www.nahdaschools.com	
	School curriculum			American and British	
	School phases			KG – High	
	Fee range and category			13,300 AED - 24,600 AED: medium	
	Number of lessons observed			218	
	Number of joint lessons observed			21	
Staff Information	Total number of teachers			254	
	Turnover rate			15%	
	Number of teaching assistants			14	
	Teacher- student ratio			1: 20	
Student Information	Total number of students			5080	
	% of Emirati Students			24 %	
	% of Largest nationality groups			1. Egypt 20%	
				2. Jordan 17%	
				3. Palestine 7%	
	% of SEN students			1%	
	% of students per phase			KG: 18%	Middle: 19%
				Primary: 35%	High: 28%
Gender			Girls KG – G12 Boys KG – G3		



The Performance of the School

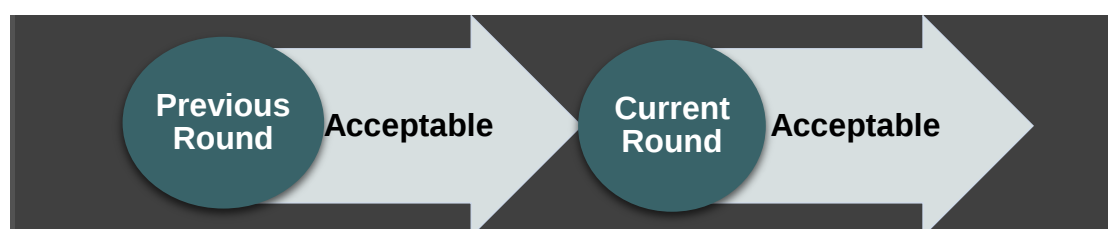
Performance Standard 1 Students' Achievement Acceptable	Performance Standard 2 Students' personal and social development, and their innovation skills Good
Performance Standard 3 Teaching and Assessment Acceptable	Performance Standard 4 Curriculum Acceptable
Performance Standard 5 The protection, care, guidance and support of students Good	Performance Standard 6 Leadership and management Acceptable



Evaluation of the school's overall performance

- The overall performance of the school is acceptable. Al Nadha National School for Girls follows the American and British curriculums, blended in the primary phase and taught separately in the middle and high school phases. During the inspection, students in the high school phase of the British curriculum section were undertaking mock examinations.
- The quality of students' achievement is acceptable overall. Around a quarter of students in the high school phase attain high standards in IGCSE examinations. Students' achievement in Arabic and the progress made by older students in English is good. Students' learning skills and their achievement in other phases and subjects is generally acceptable.
- Students' personal and social development are good and their innovation skills are acceptable. Students' attendance is very good, but their punctuality needs improvement. They demonstrate very well developed Islamic values and in-depth knowledge about the UAE. Their skills in enterprise and innovation are less well developed.
- The quality of teaching and assessment is acceptable. Whilst teachers have appropriate subject knowledge, they need to improve their skills in delivering lessons that challenge students and enable them to become independent, critical thinkers.
- The curriculum is acceptable. The planned curriculums feature appropriate links to UAE heritage and culture across all subjects and promote the development of students' Islamic values effectively. However, planning and assessment are not correctly aligned to the standards and expectations of the British curriculum, particularly in the KG and primary.
- The protection, care, guidance and support of students is good. Staff promptly identify students who have special educational needs (SEN). They take effective steps to promote all students' health and wellbeing. Aspects of the cleanliness of the school require improvement.
- Leadership of the school is acceptable. The new senior leadership team, supported effectively by the Governing Board, has identified and begun to address key aspects requiring improvement. Middle leaders are beginning to become more involved in evaluating and improving the school.

Progress made since last inspection and capacity to improve



- Overall, the school has made acceptable progress in addressing the recommendations of the previous inspection. The majority of improvement activities has taken place within the current academic year. Much remains to be done to embed improvements so that they impact on students' learning and achievement.
- The school has made limited progress in improving students' learning and innovation skills. Students continue to have too few opportunities to work collaboratively on large, complex tasks. Whilst information and communications technology (ICT) resources have been upgraded, these are not yet being used regularly by students for independent learning.
- Teachers have implemented consistent approaches to lesson planning. They do not yet share learning objectives clearly with students, or provide them with sufficient feedback to recognise when they have been successful or have improved their work.
- Teachers now assess students' learning regularly. Assessment data is gathered by senior leaders and used to provide more informative reports to parents. It is not yet used effectively by teachers when planning for students' learning, or to track standards and set clear targets for improvement.
- The school has begun to improve the effectiveness of leadership. The new Director and acting Vice-Director are developing their understanding of what needs to improve, and initiating important changes. The middle leadership team has been reinforced, with support from a partner school, to develop the school's own leadership capacity.
- School leaders have reviewed the curriculums to improve continuity and progression, and have recently agreed to adopt benchmarking assessments for the American Curriculum. They have yet to align the British curriculum and assessment in the KG and primary phase with appropriate age-related and stage-related expectations.
- Based on the progress made since the last inspection, the school's capacity to improve is acceptable.



Key areas of strength and areas for improvement

Key areas of strength

1. High standards of attainment in IGCSE examinations for those students entered for them.
2. How well the school develops students' Islamic and UAE values across all that it does.
3. The support and guidance given to students which promotes their good health and personal safety.

Key areas for improvement

1. Raise attainment in all subjects by:
 - I. raising expectations across the school
 - II. aligning teachers' planning with the curriculum expectations at each stage, and with their assessment of students' existing skills and knowledge
 - III. implementing rigorous curriculum-linked systems for assessing and tracking students' attainment and progress
 - IV. monitoring trends in attainment closely and taking immediate action to address weaknesses.
2. Improve the quality of teaching, particularly in KG and primary by:
 - I. implementing a more rigorous and focused system of monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning.
 - II. reinforcing the continuous professional development programme linked to the outcomes of monitoring and evaluation
 - III. developing a clear and shared understanding of how younger children learn and develop.
3. Develop students' learning skills so they become independent learners by:
 - I. ensuring students understand the objectives of lessons and receive the feedback they need to improve their work
 - II. developing opportunities for students to think critically, solve problems and carry out independent research
 - III. increasing students' use of learning technologies.



Provision for Reading

- The school's libraries are adequately stocked with a wide range of fiction and non-fiction books in English and in Arabic, and a few e-books.
- The school is effectively developing students' understanding of the importance of reading in Arabic and in English. Students at most stages participate in regular guided reading sessions and are forming positive, lifelong reading habits. They have opportunities to participate in competitions and have been successful in Arabic poetry reading events.
- Teachers have received training which has helped them to improve students' reading skills in Arabic and in English. There is a shared expectation that all curriculum plans include opportunities for students to read as part of their learning. This initiative has had a positive impact on students' functional reading skills.
- The school supports students' progress in reading for information and understanding using a commercial reading scheme which extends from KG to Grade 6. Students develop their vocabulary, an enjoyment for stories, and considerable general knowledge through the breadth of this programme. Children in the KG have too few opportunities to enjoy listening to stories and those in the primary phase do not read regularly for pleasure.
- Library periods are scheduled for English and Arabic classes and these support the school's programme to encourage reading for pleasure. Students are encouraged to read at home and to record their thoughts about the books they read.
- The school assesses and monitors students' progress in reading against UAE expected reading levels and international age-related expectations, and celebrates students' success and achievement in assemblies.



Performance Standard 1: Students' Achievement

Students' achievement Indicators		KG	Primary	Middle	High
Islamic Education	Attainment	N/A	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
	Progress	N/A	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Arabic (as a First Language)	Attainment	N/A	Good	Good	Good
	Progress	N/A	Good	Good	Good
Arabic (as additional Language)	Attainment	N/A	Good	Good	Good
	Progress	N/A	Good	Good	Good
Social Studies	Attainment	N/A	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
	Progress	N/A	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
English	Attainment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good
	Progress	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good	Good
Mathematics	Attainment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
	Progress	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Science	Attainment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
	Progress	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Other subjects (Art, Music, PE)	Attainment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
	Progress	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Learning Skills		Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable



Overall achievement

- The overall quality of students' achievement is acceptable. Children's achievement in the KG is acceptable in all subjects. In the primary, students' achievement is good in Arabic and acceptable in all other subjects. 84% of students are enrolled in the British curriculum at this stage. Their attainment in standardised assessments is only in line with curriculum expectations because these tests are applied by the school later than the curriculum stage they are designed to assess.
- Students' achievement in the middle and high school phases is acceptable in both American and British sections. Students' achievement Arabic, and in English in the middle and high school phases is good, particularly in reading.
- By the high school phase, 80% of students are enrolled in the American curriculum. Almost all students graduate with a high school diploma and a few achieve additional qualifications such as SAT1 and IELTS. Students' achievement at this phase in the American curriculum is acceptable overall.
- A fifth of high school students sit IGCSE examinations and those who do perform very well.

Subjects

- Students' achievement in **Islamic education** is acceptable overall. Most students can recite the Holy Quran verses correctly. In the middle and high school phases, students recite different Surahs following Tajweed reciting rules.
- Students' achievement in **Arabic as a first language** is good. The majority of students demonstrate speaking, listening and reading skills that are above curriculum standards. They speak clearly in formal Arabic and read fluently following the proper 'Harakat'. Students' writing skills are less well developed.
- Students' achievement in **Arabic as a second language** is good. The majority of students demonstrate speaking, listening and reading skills that are above curriculum standards. They speak classic Arabic and communicate with understanding. Students can write at an age-appropriate level.
- Students' achievement in **social studies** is acceptable. Most students achieve levels that are in line with curriculum expectations. Most students in grade 5, for example, can explain the goods traded in the old markets in the UAE. By grade 9, students can explain the benefits of different kinds of renewable energy. Most students show appropriate skill in reading and interpreting maps.
- Students' achievement in **English** is acceptable overall. Achievement is



good in high phase and is very good in the British curriculum at middle and high phases. The majority of students achieve above curriculum levels in high school where they speak and read with fluency. Most students in KG and primary phases make acceptable progress in reading, listening and speaking. Students' extended writing skills are less well developed across curriculums and phases.

- Students' achievement in **mathematics** is acceptable overall. Most students achieve standards in line with curriculum related expectations. In the primary and middle phases, students, for example, can explain the angles in a range of 2-D and 3-D shapes but are less skilled at calculating decimals and fractions. By grade 10, most students can apply formulae but few can select formulae to solve real-life problems.
- Students' achievement in **science** is acceptable. Most students demonstrate knowledge, skills and understanding in line with curriculum standards. Students in the primary have appropriate knowledge about plants and animals but cannot plan a scientific investigation confidently. By the middle phase, students' investigation and enquiry skills have improved considerably.
- Students' achievement in **other subjects** is acceptable overall. Students demonstrate impressive levels of skill in aspects of Art. By grade 9, they can use ICT confidently. Those in grade 5 can read basic musical notation. By Grade 8, students can conduct simple conversations in French. Older students show proficiency in research and share their ideas confidently with peers in humanities.

Learning skills

- Students' learning skills are acceptable overall. Children in KG are enthusiastic learners, but they are rarely able to follow their own interests and learn by enquiry. Students are developing their learning skills more effectively in Arabic and in English because they are regularly given opportunities to share ideas in purposeful group tasks that develop creative thinking. Students' skills in enterprise and critical thinking are not well developed across the curriculums.

Areas of Relative Strength:

- Attainment in IGCSE examinations.
- Students' achievement in Arabic.
- Students' progress in English in middle and high school.

Areas for Improvement:

- Students' achievement in all subjects.
- Students' skills in research, creativity and critical thinking.
- Students' use of learning technologies.



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	Good	Good	Good	Good
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Good	Good	Good	Good
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
- The overall quality of students' personal and social development is good. Their innovation skills are acceptable. Students have positive attitudes and behave well around the school. They focus well in lessons and work hard on homework tasks. - Relationships between students and teachers are respectful. Most students are kind and caring towards one another, and bullying is rare. Students understand how to keep themselves safe and bring healthy lunches to school. They enjoy physical education but have access to too few resources and limited space for active play at break times. - Students' attendance is very good at 97%, but their punctuality needs improvement. They demonstrate sound understanding about the UAE culture and heritage, and enjoy celebrating national events together. Students demonstrate well-developed Islamic values in their work ethic and tolerant, inclusive attitudes. - Students have appropriate understanding of sustainability and their own responsibilities for caring for the environment. They learn about the needs of others through well-established links with the Red Crescent. - A few older students are developing innovation skills in robotics projects. However, students have insufficient opportunities to develop skills of enterprise and innovation in lessons.				
Areas of Relative Strength:				
- Students' attendance. - Students' appreciation of Islamic values and their knowledge about the UAE heritage and culture.				
Areas for Improvement:				
- Students' punctuality. - Students' skills in enterprise and innovation.				



Performance Standard 3: Teaching and Assessment

Teaching and Assessment Indicators	KG	Primary	Middle	High
Teaching for effective learning	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Assessment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
- The overall quality of teaching and assessment is acceptable. Almost all teachers have appropriate subject knowledge and most have adequate understanding of how students learn. Almost all teachers give clear explanations illustrated by resources which help students to understand. They are less skilled in engaging students in learning independently. - Most teachers plan lessons linked closely to curriculum outcomes; however, the selected outcomes in the KG and primary stages in the British curriculum are sometimes not advanced enough. - Most teachers give students opportunities to work independently and in groups on tasks which help them to consolidate their understanding. These activities do not consistently support and challenge all students in the class to build on their existing knowledge and skills. - Most teachers ask questions to check students' understanding. Only the minority encourage students to think deeply and give extended responses. In the best practice observed, teachers give students problems to solve independently and collaboratively which challenge them to think critically. - Teachers use an appropriate range of assessments to find out about students' skills at the start of courses and monitor their progress in learning. Information from these assessments is not consistently used to plan for individuals and groups of students to take their next steps in learning. - Senior leaders are introducing measures of students' achievement into the American curriculum. Some assessments in the British curriculum are administered by the school later than the curriculum stage they are designed to assess.				
Areas of Relative Strength:				
- Teachers' subject knowledge and clear explanations. - Regular assessment of students to check their progress.				
Areas for Improvement:				
- Teachers' skills in promoting independent learning and critical thinking. - Teachers' use of assessment data to plan appropriately-challenging learning experiences.				



Performance Standard 4: Curriculum

Curriculum Indicators	KG	Primary	Middle	High
Curriculum design and implementation	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Curriculum adaptation	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
- The overall quality of the curriculum is acceptable. The school follows the American and British curriculums, blended in the primary phase and taught separately in the middle and high school phases. The curriculums are appropriately broad and balanced. - Curriculum planning ensures that students' experiences are progressive over time, especially from middle to high school. However, teachers' planning and assessment are not correctly aligned to the standards and expectations of the British curriculum, particularly in the KG and primary. - Cross-curricular links are planned inconsistently. These are more effective in the upper grades where there are good links between areas of learning that enable students to apply knowledge from other subjects. - The school conducts regular reviews of the curriculum, and assessment data is beginning to influence its design. The curriculum is particularly effective in supporting the personal development of students. The school makes appropriate modifications to the curriculum to meet the needs of most students. However, further work is needed to ensure more consistent planning and appropriate support to meet the needs of all students. - A few opportunities for problem solving, co-operative learning and innovation are provided but are not consistently evident in teachers' planning. The school offers very few extra-curricular activities to enrich students' learning. - The curriculum is enhanced by a variety of community links, events and projects. There are appropriate and well-planned links to UAE culture and values in almost all aspects of the curriculum. Understanding of other nationalities and cultures is less well developed. - Moral Education is well integrated into the curriculum's design and there are well-planned activities that promote Islamic values. The values taught are demonstrated by students during assemblies and in their behaviour.				



Areas of Relative Strength:

- Curriculum links to UAE heritage and culture.
- The development of students' Islamic values.

Areas for Improvement:

- Alignment of the British curriculum with age-related standards.
- Modification of the curriculum by teachers in lessons to meet the needs of all students.
- Opportunities for enterprise and innovation within the classroom.

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	Good	Good	Good	Good
Care and support	Good	Good	Good	Good

- The overall quality of the protection, care, guidance and support of students is good. Staff and students are fully aware of arrangements for ensuring that students are safe in school. The school is effective in protecting students from harm, and teaches them how to protect themselves from harm while using the internet. The school clinics provide an effective service including regular health checks and advice.
- Staff ensure that buildings are generally hygienic and that equipment is safe and maintained properly. Graffiti needs to be removed from some areas. Regular safety checks and emergency drills are certified by civil defence agencies. The school promotes healthy lifestyles, including during morning assembly and PE lessons.
- Across the school, positive relationships are based on respect and courtesy between adults and students. Although attendance rates are very good, staff have not effectively addressed students' poor punctuality to school.
- Effective systems are in place for identifying and supporting students who have SEN or are gifted and talented. There is acceptable provision for students with SEN and members of the support team modify class work for them. However, the learning needs of the highest or lowest achieving students are not yet met as well by class teachers in all lessons.
- Staff monitor students' health, well-being and personal development effectively.



Good arrangements are in place for helping students to make appropriate academic choices and decide on their future pathways when they leave school.

Areas of Relative Strength:

- Students' care, safety and well-being.
- The early identification of students who have SEN.
- The health support offered to students by school clinics.

Areas for Improvement:

- Students' punctuality.
- Meeting the learning needs of the highest achieving and lowest achieving students in all lessons

Performance Standard 6: Leadership and management

Leadership and management Indicators	
The effectiveness of leadership	Acceptable
Self-evaluation and improvement planning	Acceptable
Partnerships with parents and the community	Acceptable
Governance	Good
Management, staffing, facilities and resources	Acceptable
• The overall quality of leadership is acceptable. The new senior leadership team is giving appropriate priority to raising achievement and improving the quality of teaching. The middle-leadership team from a partner school is supporting the school's own middle-leaders to take these priorities forward. • Communication between staff is supported by a clear organisational structure. A range of committees engage staff in planning improvements. However, committees and middle leaders have yet to make a significant impact on raising standards in their designated areas of responsibility. • Senior leaders have begun to gather data about students' performance and the quality of teaching. They have yet to share this information with staff and involve them fully in raising standards. Appropriate professional development opportunities are linked to the school's identified development needs. • Partnership with parents is acceptable. The parent teacher association involves the parent community in the life and work of the school and takes account of their views. Senior leaders are establishing a complaints committee to ensure that parental concerns are dealt with effectively.	



Parents receive regular reports on their children's progress. The school has received an award from the Red Crescent for its charitable work.

- The governance of the school is good. The board of governors includes representation from stakeholder groups and takes account of parents' views. The board monitors the school's actions and has supported the new senior leadership team with advice and guidance. In the absence of clear data on student achievement, governors have not been able to recognise that the school's progress in raising standards has been slow.
- The school's premises are adequate to deliver the curriculum. However, resources for enriching the curriculum, including through sports and play, are too limited.
- The school's examinations co-ordinator is developing strategies to improve students' performance in international examinations, for example by training students to answer examination questions and giving them daily practice.

Areas of Relative Strength:

- The new senior leadership team has identified and begun to address some important priorities for improvement.
- The support provided by the governing board.
- The support provided by the parent teacher association.

Areas for Improvement:

- Middle leaders' effectiveness in monitoring, quality assurance and improvement procedures.
- Resources for younger children to learn independently.