



دائرة التعليم والمعرفة
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
AND KNOWLEDGE

Inspection
report of

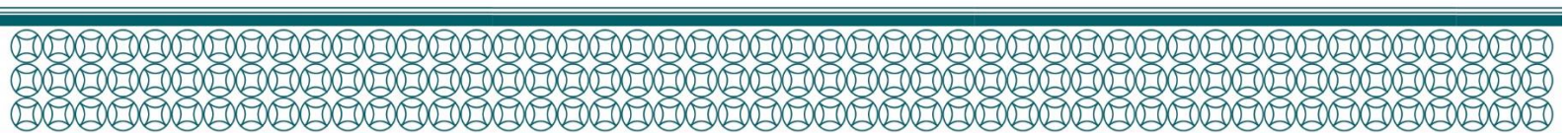
Al Najah Private School

Overall
Effectiveness

Good

Academic
Year

2019/20





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School Information

School Profile			
School Name:	Al Najah Private School		
School ID:	9197	School phases:	KG to High
School Council:**			
School curriculum:*	British	Fee range and category*	AED14,200 to AED30,460 (low to high)
Address:	Abu Dhabi, ME9 Abu Dhabi	Email:	alnajahad.pvt@adek.abudhabi.ae
Telephone:	02-5530935	Website:	www.alnajahschool.com

*Relevant for Private schools only ** Relevant for Government schools only

Staff Information			
Total number of teachers	144	Turnover rate	29%
Number of teaching assistants	26	Teacher- student ratio	1:25

Students' Information				
Total number of students	2292		Gender	Boys and girls
% of Emirati students	5 %		% of SEN students	0.26 %
% of largest nationality groups	Egypt 31%, Jordan 25%, Syria 13%			
% of students per phase	KG	Primary	Middle	Secondary
	21 %	47 %	26%	6 %

Inspection Details			
Inspection Hijri dates from:	7/03/1441	to	10/03/1441
Inspection Gregorian dates from:	04/11/2019	to	07/11/2019
Number of lessons observed:	152	Number of joint lessons observed:	24



The overall performance of the school:

- The principal has led the school over the last academic year, stepping up from the senior leadership team. The school continues to experience high staff turnover with nearly 30% of staff leaving last year. Numbers of children joining the KG phase have significantly increased.
- The overall effectiveness of the school is good. Students' achievement remains good overall, and they make good progress from their individual starting points due to good quality teaching. School leadership is at least good at all levels and has made the necessary changes identified at the last inspection. The school development plan (SDP) and self-evaluation form (SEF) documents identify the current position of the school and where the key areas for development remain.

Key areas of strength and areas for improvements:

Key areas of strength

- Attainment in lessons in Islamic education, Arabic as a first language (AFL) and social studies across all phases, and English and science in the high phase.
- The achievement of students in international examinations in high phase.
- Students' engagement in lessons and their attitudes to learning.
- Students' attendance.
- The care students receive in school.
- The school's communication systems and partnerships with parents.
- The continued effectiveness of the leadership of the school.

Key areas for improvement

- Attainment in all areas across the school, particularly in Arabic second language (ASL) in primary by:
 - engaging ASL students in a wider range of activities to help develop their speaking and conversational skills and the quality of their writing in lessons and around the school
 - further adapting the curriculum to give students greater opportunities to use modern learning technologies to research and extend their work, and to be innovative and creative independent learners in lessons.
- The further development of the quality and effectiveness of teaching by:
 - reviewing the curriculum for KG to ensure it supports children to learn through play and exploration
 - ensuring teachers' planning more precisely and consistently matches activities to the needs of individual students within groups, especially the more able.
- The role of leadership and management in supporting further school improvement by:
 - developing rigorous systems for moderating and comparing students' work

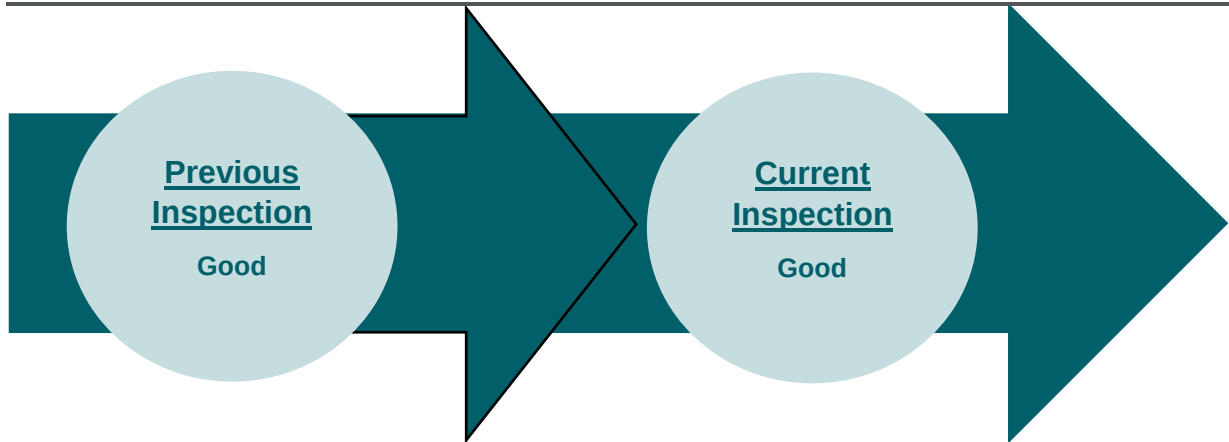


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- ensuring the SDP and SEF are more accurately based on appropriate quantitative data.



Progress made since last inspection and capacity to improve



- The school has made good progress in raising achievement in Arabic-medium subjects. Attainment is now good in Islamic education, AFL and social studies. ASL remains acceptable in the primary phase.
- Curriculum modifications have ensured that lessons are interesting and tasks more engaging for students. Collaborative working with other schools has developed consistent assessment tools to monitor students' abilities more rigorously. Peer observation is on-going with Arabic-medium and English-medium teachers sharing best practice.
- Assessment data is used more effectively, with teachers planning activities tiered in difficulty. However, teachers do not always precisely match activities to individuals' learning needs. Consequently more-able students are not challenged consistently in lessons.
- The SEN department is rigorous in their identification of SEN students and provides effective individual support.
- The KG curriculum is now in line with that of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). Teachers assess the children's development against the early learning goals. The delivery of the curriculum requires further work to ensure children have more opportunities to learn through play and exploration.
- Communication systems are now in place allowing students' progress information to be shared and parental concerns raised. The Parents' Council is active in the school and enables parents' views to be shared with the school leadership team.
- The school has built further on its previously good performance and has maintained its good capacity to improve.



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Performance Standard 1	Students' Achievement		
Judgment	Good	Change from previous inspection	No Change
Justifications	- Achievement has improved in Islamic Education, AFL and social studies and is now good in all phases. Apart from ASL in primary, students' achievement is at least good overall in other phases with the majority of students making better than expected progress in most subjects. - Students' attain well in high phase, especially in English and science where attainment is very good. - Students' learning skills are good overall. They enjoy using modern learning technologies but do not use them regularly in lessons.		

Performance Standard 2	Students' personal and social development, and their innovation skills		
Judgment	Very Good	Change from previous inspection	Improved
Justifications	- Students' attitudes to learning are very good. They are very keen to learn and behave well in class and around school. - Students show very good understanding of Islamic values and the traditions and history of the UAE. - Students' outstanding attendance contributes to their academic achievement.		

Performance Standard 3	Teaching and Assessment		
Judgment	Good	Change from previous inspection	No Change
Justifications	- Teachers plan activities that are interesting and enable students to make at least good progress in almost all subjects and phases. - Teachers, especially in Arabic-medium subjects, use assessment tasks that are more reliable having been planned with other schools to ensure rigour. - Assessments and students' work are not moderated within school or with other schools to ensure the accuracy and reliability of teachers' judgements.		

Performance Standard 4	Curriculum		
Judgment	Good	Change from previous inspection	No Change
Justifications	- The curriculum is broad and balanced offering options to students in the high phase. Cross-curricular links are well planned and enable students to apply their knowledge across different subject areas. - The curriculum is reviewed by senior leaders to ensure it prepares students for their next stage in education.		



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	Modification of the curriculum by teachers does not fully meet the needs of more-able students in all subjects, or the learning styles of children in KG.
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Performance Standard 5	The protection, care, guidance and support of students		
Judgment	Very Good	Change from previous inspection	Improved
Justifications	- Safeguarding and welfare arrangements ensure students are very safe and well looked after in school. - Identification of students with SEN is rigorous and provides them with good support. - The school has highly effective arrangements to promote attendance.		

Performance Standard 6	Leadership and management		
Judgment	Good	Change from previous inspection	No Change
Justifications	- The new leadership team has put actions into place that have improved the school and moved students' achievement forward, apart from in ASL which remains acceptable. - The communication and partnership arrangements with parents keep them well-informed and enable their views to be heard. - Senior leaders are very knowledgeable about best practice but do not yet moderate students' assessments so that they are sure that benchmarking is accurate.		



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Performance Standard 1: 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	N/A	Acceptable	Good	Good
	Progress	N/A	Acceptable	Good	Good
Social Studies	Attainment	Good	Good	Good	N/A
	Progress	Good	Good	Good	N/A
English	Attainment	Good	Good	Good	Very Good
	Progress	Good	Good	Good	Very Good
Mathematics	Attainment	Good	Good	Good	Good
	Progress	Good	Good	Good	Good
Science	Attainment	Good	Good	Good	Very Good
	Progress	Good	Good	Good	Very Good
Other subjects (Art, Music, PE)	Attainment	Acceptable	Good	Good	Very Good
	Progress	Good	Good	Good	Good
Learning Skills		Good	Good	Good	Good



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Islamic Education	- Students' achievement in Islamic education is good. Progress over time, as well as in lessons, is good overall. - Attainment is good. Internal data shows very good attainment, but this is not borne out in lessons and in students' work. Attainment for the small proportion of students in Grade 12 MoE examinations is outstanding. - In lessons, students demonstrate good progress in gaining knowledge and understanding of Islamic teachings, Hadeeth and Seerah. They develop good recitation skills of the verses of the Holy Quran but they do not always follow 'Tajweed' rules. - The majority of groups of students make better than expected progress however, more-able students do not make sufficient progress to gain a deeper understanding of the verses of the Holy Quran.	
	Relative Strengths - Students' understanding of Hadeeth and Seerah - Students' knowledge of the teachings of Islam.	Areas of Improvement - Students' recitation skills following 'Tajweed' rules. - More-able students' progress in gaining deeper understanding of verses of the Holy Quran.

Arabic	- Students' achievement is good in AFL and acceptable in ASL. Progress in lessons, and progress over time, is good in AFL and overall acceptable in ASL. - Attainment is good overall. All Grade 11 and 12 students achieved outstanding results in AFL and ASL in international and national examinations. In lessons, the majority of students attain levels which are above curriculum expectations. - In AFL, students develop good listening, comprehension and reading skills. The majority of KG children can read three-letter words with long and short sounds. In primary, students read longer texts fluently with expression. Students' formal writing skills, for research and presentations, are less well developed. In ASL, primary students' writing is less well developed, as are their speaking skills. - The majority of groups of students make good progress in AFL while all groups make acceptable progress in ASL in Primary.	
	Relative Strengths - Students' listening, comprehension and reading skills in AFL. - Students' overall writing skills in ASL.	Areas of Improvement - Formal writing techniques for research and presentations in AFL. - ASL primary students' writing and speaking skills.



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Social Studies	- Students' achievement in social studies is good. The majority of students make better than expected progress in lessons and over time. - Attainment is good. Internal data shows very good attainment, but this is not borne out in lessons and in students' work, where the majority of students attain above curriculum standards. - In lessons, the majority of students make good progress as they develop their understanding in history, and the folklore and heritage of the UAE. Although students' progress in geography is good, their skills in using maps are less well developed. - The majority of groups make good progress, however more-able students do not make the rapid progress of which they are capable in all lessons.	
	Relative Strengths Students' understanding of UAE history, its folklore, and heritage.	Areas of Improvement Students' understanding of maps in geography.

English	- Students' achievement in English is good overall. The reliability of school's internal progress data is improving and shows that the majority of students make better than expected progress over time. - Attainment overall is good. The majority of students are working above curriculum expectations, as seen in lessons and in their work. - Students develop verbal communication skills that are generally fluent and accurate. Their reading and writing skills are above curriculum expectations across phases. Their language skills improve as they move up the grades, with the oldest students applying and mastering higher order language skills during presentations. However, students' extended writing skills in the primary and middle phases are less well developed. - The majority of groups of students make better than expected progress overall.	
	Relative Strengths - Application of English language and presentation skills in high phase. - Students' self-confidence when reading and speaking in English.	Areas of Improvement Extended writing in the primary and middle phases.



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Mathematics	- Students' achievement is good overall. In lessons and over time, the majority of students make good progress. - Attainment is good overall. Internal data show that attainment is very good, but this is not borne out in lessons and in students' work, where the majority of students attain above curriculum standards. - Children make good progress in KG developing their knowledge of number and shape. They build on this learning in primary and middle, developing above expected skills in mental mathematics. Students in high can follow complex strategies to solve calculations linked to the real world. Students' application of mathematical skills through investigations and practical activities is under-developed. - The majority of students in most groups make good progress. More-able students do not always make rapid progress.	
	Relative Strengths - Students' ability to solve multi-step problems in real world calculations. - KG children's secure knowledge of number and shape.	Areas of Improvement Students' application of mathematical skills in practical activities, particularly the more able.
Science	- Students' achievement in science is good overall and very good in the high phase. In lessons and over time, the majority of students make good progress overall. Students in the high phase make very good progress in lessons and overtime. - Students' attainment in science is good in KG, primary and middle phases. In the high phase, students' attainment for the small number in external and internal assessments is outstanding. - The majority of older students have well-developed knowledge and understanding of core chemistry concepts. Younger students are knowledgeable of animals and their habitats. The majority of students have a good understanding of scientific vocabulary and terminology across all grades. Students' understanding of how to control variables and carry out fair and valid tests in investigations is not securely developed in the lower grades. - The majority of groups of students make better than expected progress.	
	Relative Strengths - Students' knowledge of advanced concepts in chemistry in the high phase. - Children's knowledge of features in the world around them.	Areas of Improvement Understanding of fair testing and controlling variables in the lower grades.



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Other subjects	- Students' overall achievement in other subjects is good. School data shows that a majority of students make better than expected progress over time. - Internal school data indicates that attainment is very good, but lesson observations and the evaluation of students' work do not corroborate this. - Attainment is acceptable overall in other subjects. In middle it is very good in French with students speaking fluently, and in the high it is outstanding in business and film. In art, primary students show limited imagination in some of their work. - The majority of groups of students make better than expected progress with a small cohort of more-able students making very good progress in some subjects.	
	Relative Strengths - Students' fluency and accuracy of pronunciation in French. - Students' attainment in business and film in high.	Areas of Improvement Students' use of creative skills in art in primary.
Learning Skills	- Students' learning skills are good overall. Students engage well with their learning tasks. They collaborate in tasks effectively especially when solving group challenges. - The majority of students can make clear links between their work and the real world. - Students are developing as critical thinkers and are able to use problem-solving skills across subjects, although they are not always innovative and creative in lessons. - Students are capable users of modern technology outside the classroom, but they do not always make use of their skills in lessons.	
	Relative Strengths - Students' engagement and interest in learning. - Students' skills to link their learning to the real world.	Areas of Improvement Students' use of learning technologies in lessons.



Performance Standard 2: Students' personal and social development and their innovation skills

Indicators:	KG	Primary	Middle	High
Personal development	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good	Very 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	Good	Good	Good	Good
- Overall, students' personal and social development is very good, and the development of their innovation skills is good. - Students have very positive and responsible attitudes. Behaviour, and students' relationships with others, are very good around the school. - Students are highly aware of how to keep themselves safe in and out of school. They know how to keep themselves healthy by making good food choices and by being active. - Attendance is outstanding at 98%, and students are punctual to school and lessons. - Students have very good understanding of Islamic values and UAE culture and heritage. They actively celebrate Islamic and national occasions, such as Ramadan and Flag Day. They are proud of their own cultures and show strong understanding of other world cultures. - Students show responsibility towards their school and local community social initiatives, such as the Operation Smile charity. The active senior and junior Students Council has clear roles in organising events throughout the year. - Students are knowledgeable about global and local environmental issues but do always take responsibility to ensure the school is litter free after breaks, particularly in the lower phases. - Students have good innovation skills overall. For example, they clearly enjoy STEM laboratory sessions where they learn through exploration and practical activity. They do not always use their innovation and creative skills in their lessons. Areas of Relative Strength: - Students' positive attitudes to learning, behaviour and attendance. - Students' knowledge and respect of the UAE culture, heritage and Islamic value. Areas for Improvement: - Awareness levels of environmental issues especially in KG and primary. - Students' use of their innovation and creative skills in lessons.				



Performance Standard 3: Teaching and assessment

Indicators:	KG	Primary	Middle	High
Teaching for effective learning	Good	Good	Good	Good
Assessment	Good	Good	Good	Good
- The overall quality of teaching and assessment is good. Teachers have secure subject knowledge. Through joint planning and professional development, they choose effective strategies to help students learn. - Teachers generally plan activities to motivate and enable students to make good progress. Teachers use extracts from films and the Internet to promote students' understanding. Mostly teachers use resources effectively to facilitate student-centred learning. However, this is not consistent across all lessons, particularly where learning is overly teacher-directed. - Relationships and interactions in lessons are positive and promote students' engagement in learning. In the best lessons, teachers ask open-ended questions to promote critical thinking and elicit students' considered responses. - Planned differentiated activities meet the learning needs of most groups of students. Lesson plans do not yet match more personalised activities with students who need more individual support or challenge. - In the best lessons, activities promote problem-solving and critical thinking. Learning technology is used effectively in the high phase although resources are limited in other phases. Exploratory and play-based learning activities are limited in KG. - The school has consistent assessment systems. Internal assessments are benchmarked against national standards and the data is used to track students' progress through regular testing. However, information is not used consistently by all teachers to inform more personalised learning plans. - Students' work is not moderated to ensure assessments are accurate. - Opportunities for students to engage in self and peer-assessment are developing. Most teachers mark students' work regularly, although the quality of teachers' feedback to support further improvement is inconsistent.				
Areas of Relative Strength: - Teachers' knowledge and support for students' learning in lessons and interactions which ensure students engage in their learning. - Analysis of assessment data to monitor students' progress.				
Areas for Improvement: - Further development of strategies to meet the learning needs of individual students more effectively, including exploratory and play-based learning activities in KG. - Moderation of students work with other schools using the English National curriculum.				



Performance Standard 4: 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. It is broad, balanced and follows the authorised licenced curricula and the national statutory requirements. - The opportunity in high school for students to select from the International Baccalaureate programme and the English National curriculum gives students the chance to follow their interests, talents and aspirations. - Cross-curricular links are planned and meaningful and help students transfer knowledge and skills between subjects. A wide range of extra-curricular activities, including art, ballet and STEM activities, enriches students' learning. However, research and use of learning technology are not consistently embedded in lessons. - School leaders review the curriculum to ensure continuity and progression. Learners build on previous knowledge and skills and are well prepared for the next phase in their education. - Planned activities are modified to meet the needs of the different groups of students, but the adaptations are not precisely matched to the needs of individuals, especially the more able and for the learning of children in KG. - Links to the local culture and society are good, developing students' understanding of the UAE heritage and Islamic values. - Moral education is taught as a standalone subject. The impact of these lessons is reflected in behaviour and attitudes around the school, as students are courteous and respectful and take care of each other.				
Areas of Relative Strength:				
- Links to help students' understanding of UAE culture and heritage. - Cross-curricular links to further enhance students' learning.				
Areas for Improvement:				
- Curriculum adaptation to suit the needs of the different groups of students, especially the more able and in KG. - Independent research and creativity through the use of technology in lessons.				



Performance Standard 5: 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	Very Good	Very Good
- The quality of protection, care, guidance and support for students is very good. - The school has rigorous procedures to safeguard students from all kinds of harm and bullying. All stakeholders are conversant in the child protection policy procedures. - The school provides a very safe, very well-maintained environment for students through strong supervision throughout the school and on school transport. - There are regular and very effective safety checks for all required aspects in the school. The school is inclusive, and all facilities are accessible to all students. - The school provides a wide range of activities that effectively promote healthy lifestyles, including lectures. Almost all students bring healthy food from home understanding the importance of healthy eating. - Staff have very positive relationship with all students. Systems and procedures for managing students' behaviour are successful. - The school has very effective procedures and policies to promote attendance and punctuality which are outstanding. - The school has rigorous system to identify SEN and G&T students. The school provides effective support to SEN students in lessons and in withdrawal sessions. SEN coordinators provide individual education plans (IEP) for each student and monitor their progress effectively. G&T students are challenged through extra-curricular activities, but they are not always challenged in lessons. - The well-being of all students is effectively monitored, and they are provided with good support and guidance in their transition to the next step of their education. Areas of Relative Strength: - Procedures and systems to keep students healthy, safe and secure. - Attendance policy and procedures. Areas for Improvement: - Challenge for G&T students in lessons.				



Performance Standard 6: 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	Good
- Leadership and management are good. With the drive and ambition of the principal behind them, the senior and middle leaders have ensured the school has improved since the last inspection. Senior leaders are very knowledgeable about best practice and have worked actively to share this with middle leaders. The continued commitment to school improvement and to achieving the UAE national goals for education is clear across the school. - The SEF is accurate and clearly identifies the strengths and further development areas. The SDP identifies clear improvement points. Neither document makes best use of the available data to frame actions or to review progress the school has made in specific areas. Student progress and the quality of teaching are reviewed effectively, with coaching and support provided if necessary. - Steps have been taken to improve the reliability of school-based assessments. The school has yet to review the accuracy of the assessments made within school and with other schools. - Parents are much more engaged in the life of the school. The home/school electronic portal is an effective two-way communication tool with parents. Parents with children with SEN are kept very well informed about the support their child receives and their development. The school is involved in a range of activities supporting local and national events. - The Board of Trustees supports the school with financial and business expertise. It reviews students' achievement to assess the effectiveness of the school. - The school runs smoothly each day. Classrooms are clean and provide appropriate learning environments. Modern learning technologies are still to be integrated into lessons. - Leaders recognise the importance of benchmarking students' achievement against that of others both nationally and internationally. They prepared students for the TIMSS assessments in 2019 through using the previous ADEK 'Question-a-Day' programme.	
Areas of Relative Strength:	
- Effective senior leadership to promote further school improvement. - Accuracy in self-evaluation to inform school improvement planning.	
Areas for Improvement:	
- The use of quantitative measures in self-review documents and school development. - Moderation of students' work within school and with other schools.	



Provision for Reading

Provision for Reading

- The refurbished school library provides a pleasant and comfortable reading environment with 3000 English and Arabic fiction and non-fiction books. Senior students also have a designated library and reading area. All classes have timetabled library periods and they can borrow books.
- Each classroom has an age-appropriate library for extension work and to improve comprehension skills. Guided and independent reading periods are in weekly lesson plans and teachers facilitate individual support to students. Arabic students have a school-devised comprehension booklet to assess their progress in reading.
- The school has an annual reading plan to promote reading across the curriculum with targets to improve reading against international measures.
- The school celebrates annually important literary dates including Roald Dahl Day. Parents participate by taking part in group reading and class presentations.
- The school hosts book fairs. Reading initiatives include a Bedtime Story Event, reading challenges between classes and grades and Abu Dhabi Reads to promote the love of reading in school.
- Annual reading baseline assessments are conducted to assign levelled reading books. The school shares information with parents about the students' progress. Students are assessed every term to determine their reading level against the English National curriculum standards.
- The school encourages reading at home and supports parents by sending home reading guides and information documents.