



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



Summary Inspection Report

Vision Private School

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Iqraa



Vision Private School

Inspection Date	4 th – 7 th March 2013
School ID#	123
Type of School	Private
Curriculum	Ministry of Education
Number of Students	1822
Age Range	3 – 18 (KG to Grade 12)
Gender	Mixed
Principal	Nabil Abo Garad
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Introduction

The school was inspected by 5 inspectors who observed 77 lessons and met with school leaders, teachers, ancillary staff, students, a representative of the owners and parents. They 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 2007 and is located in a residential area six kilometres from Abu Dhabi city centre. It moved to the current premises, provided by the MoE, six years ago. The accommodation is over 30 years old and is on a large site that comprises two buildings on two floors: the boys' section (Grades 5–12), and the primary and girls' section (Kindergarten–Grade 12). Only 2.7% of the students are Emiratis; the rest are from a range of countries including Jordan, Sudan, Palestine, Egypt and Syria. The vast majority of students are Muslim. Most teachers are either from Syria or Egypt, and a few are from Jordan or Iraq. The principal has been in post for five years.

The school's stated vision is to be one of the pioneer schools that provides 'excellence in the provision of education and knowledge in terms of quality education and excellence in educational programs to achieve educational goals and objectives derived from the objectives of the ADEC.'

There are 100 children in the Kindergarten (KG), 722 students in the primary section, 483 in the middle section and 517 in the secondary section. There are 694 boys and 1128 girls making a total roll of 1822. The school identifies one male student with physical needs who is a wheelchair user, one boy and three girls with special educational needs (SEN) and no gifted and talented students. All students have Arabic as their first language. The school administers an admission test in Arabic and mathematics and considers previous school reports, but all students are admitted if there is space. Parents are a mixture of professional, skilled and unskilled workers, with 80% on lower incomes.

Annual fees for existing students begin at AED 8,540 per annum for KG, rising to AED 15,025 for Grade 12, inclusive of textbooks, transport and uniforms. Teachers' salaries range from AED 3,500 to AED 5,800 per month. Both these figures are in the low category. The school is owned by Vision: a company of five individuals who function as a board of directors.

The Effectiveness of the School

Band C

Grade 7

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

Responses from parents indicate that they have a mainly positive view of the school, especially about the way in which their opinions are valued. However, concerns were raised about the quality of teaching and health and safety from parents of children in most grades.

Standards throughout the school in Arabic, Islamic studies and mathematics are below best international expectations. In social studies, English, science and information and communication technology (ICT), standards are well below expected levels. Students from all backgrounds are making very unsatisfactory progress in most subjects, especially in gaining 21st century skills. Attainment in Arabic falls below the expectations of the UAE curriculum because students are not taught classical or standard Arabic. In Islamic Studies, students have some prior knowledge and can recite short verses of the Holy Qur'an from memory and know of the Hadith sayings of the prophets. They know about UAE culture and recognise advice given by the prophet Mohammed (pbuh). In social studies they learn basic facts, for example, about key people from the region, but do not develop sufficient deeper knowledge and understanding.

Children in KG do not make sufficient progress because tasks are not always suited to children's early learning needs. Personal, social and emotional development is well below expectations. The curriculum does not provide children with sufficient opportunities for structured play and exploration of their environment.

Students' English is below international best standards in all key skills although some students, especially girls, speak with confidence. By the time students reach Grade 5 they can read English texts with understanding, but without good pronunciation or fluency as they lack suitable models to copy. Students in Grade 11 sometimes struggle to form the correct tense of verbs. In mathematics, most older students can perform number calculations both mentally and using formulae. However, the emphasis is on memorising rather than applying their knowledge to new problems. Standards in science are well below average because students do not develop skills in investigating and recording results. Students make slow progress in ICT because they get insufficient opportunities to use school computers; this applies particularly to girls. Physical education is largely limited to playing games or moving to music. In general, girls make better progress than boys because teaching techniques widely used across the school do not appeal to boys' preferred styles of learning.

The various nationalities that make up the school show respect towards each other and to adults and are polite and welcoming to visitors. Students sing the national anthem at assemblies, pay due respect during flag-raising and listen appreciatively when other students perform. Opportunities for students to develop leadership skills and engage in social, cultural, scientific, sporting and other activities are minimal. Students' behaviour is generally satisfactory in lessons and around the school, although some lack self-discipline at times. Girls' behaviour and attitudes to learning are often better than boys'; in general, students' response in class is determined by the quality of teaching. So, when the pace of lessons slows, some students get bored and lose interest; inappropriate behaviour can then affect the learning of the class. In too many lessons, teachers ask closed questions requiring very limited responses and tasks do not enable students to use their initiative, think creatively or develop independent learning skills. Attendance during the school year stands at 98.5% which is very high.

Most teachers have secure knowledge of their subject, but have a very limited understanding of how students learn effectively. Progress in most lessons is very unsatisfactory because of an over reliance on workbooks and work sheets, resulting in the same expectations being placed on all students. Rarely do teachers set and share learning objectives with students or check that expected learning has taken place. Whilst a few teachers provide active learning opportunities to help students develop independence, this interactive approach is seldom seen across the school. Many students, especially girls, are compliant and rarely present the challenge to teachers which might result in them developing a wider repertoire of teaching and learning strategies. Teachers' assessment of work, for example in English, is often over-generous and does not reflect the exam marks achieved. This does not give students a clear idea of what they need to improve.

The school meets the requirements of the Ministry of Education curriculum in the time allocated to the teaching of Arabic and Islamic Education, and it promotes respect for the values and culture of the UAE. It is very unsatisfactory overall because it lacks breadth and balance, offering a very limited range of subjects and very few opportunities for students to gain skills in creative and performing arts. Based almost exclusively on workbooks, the curriculum does not enable students to become independent learners nor prepare them well for the next stages of their education or for the world of work. It fails to meet the needs of those students who struggle with their learning or those who are able to move forward more quickly and reach higher levels. Extra-curricular provision is poor.

Students say they generally feel safe in school and that there is no bullying. No corporal punishment was seen, and students confirm that none takes place. The

school nurse is well qualified and the clinic is appropriately equipped. She offers a high level of care and encourages healthy living habits. The school has no child protection policy to ensure that staff are aware of their responsibilities and how to carry them out. Attendance records are well kept and there are very good procedures for alerting parents of absence. Guidance to older students on career, further education and employment choices is very limited.

Concerns remain about the safety of bus transport, particularly with students not wearing seatbelts and having insufficient space for carrying their bags. Fire drills are held monthly and written and photographic records are kept. However, students take too long to evacuate the buildings. Security has recently been improved with the installation of CCTV cameras and the identity of visitors is now checked. There is only one prayer room which is for the use of girls.

The school site is of sufficient size to meet ADEC requirements. Buildings are kept clean and tidy, but the general condition is poor. There is a fenced outdoor shaded area for use of KG children. Other outside space is adequate and provides suitable shade, although it is hard surfaced. Many classrooms are too small for the number of students using them and are in need of refurbishment. Few displays of students' work can be seen around the school. There is just one library – in the girls' school - with very limited resources and which is not used effectively to support learning. There are too few toilets for the number of girls on roll and none of a suitable size for KG children. Facilities for science and physical education are inadequate.

The school has a sufficient number of qualified teachers. In contrast there are not enough teaching assistants in KG and classes up to Grade 3. A central register shows details of all adults working in the school and the checks made on their suitability to have access to children. There are sufficient workbooks for students' use, but other resources, including regular access to computers, are very unsatisfactory. There is little in the school to motivate students to learn or stimulate their interest. Boys have no access to a library.

The school's leaders and owners have recently invested in new electricity supply cabling and air conditioning as well as various security measures. They are aware of the inadequacies of the building and shortcomings in provision. A list of desirable improvements to the school has been agreed, although recent major expenditure may constrain further spending over coming months. Uncertainties over the future site of the school are affecting long-term planning and throwing doubt over future investment.

Relationships with parents are generally positive and support students' development. There are very few links with organisations within the UAE and

abroad. There is no rigorous monitoring of classroom practice or students' progress which would enable support to be targeted effectively at raising standards. Despite this, there is a determination to improve teaching and learning by developing teachers' skills and improving resources; some sharing of better teaching in the school has now begun. The school leadership will require support to secure further improvements.

What the school should do to improve further:

1. The school must address the urgent concerns that have been repeatedly stated in the previous inspection report and subsequent monitoring visit. In particular:
 - i. provide a broad and balanced curriculum that supports international standards in all grades; and
 - ii. ensure that all students are safe and well cared for by addressing outstanding health and safety issues and implementing a child protection policy that all staff understand and use.
2. Ensure that students develop the necessary skills for living and working in the 21st century.
3. Improve teaching and learning by sharing the best practice in the school through observation, modelling, training and evaluating success.
4. Provide suitably qualified support staff in all classes up to Grade 3.
5. Improve the quality, range and appeal of learning resources to enrich the curriculum and extend students' knowledge and experience beyond workbooks and task sheets. The school should provide a library for boys.
6. Establish a prayer room with facilities for use by male students.
7. Improve the specialist facilities for science and physical education and make more effective use of the computer room in the girls' school.