



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



Summary Inspection Report

Al Seddeeq Private School

Published in 2013

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Al Seddeeq Private School

Inspection Date	2 nd – 4 th June, 2013
School ID#	148
Type of School	Private
Curriculum	Ministry of Education
Number of Students	564
Age Range	3.5 - 14 years
Gender	Boys and girls in Kindergarten (KG) to Grade 4 Boys and girls separately from Grade 5 to 9
Principal	Rateb Mustafa Safi
School Address	P.O Box 16595 Road 2. Central District, Al Ain, UAE
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Introduction

The school was inspected by four inspectors. They observed 65 lessons and met with the Principal, the owner, the Vice Principal, subject co-ordinators, teachers, the social worker and students. The inspectors observed assemblies, break periods, and students' arrival at and departure from the school. Data and documents supplied by the school were analysed. Responses from the 51 parental questionnaire and the views of parents have contributed to this report. Inspectors considered the quality of students' learning experiences, personal development and the relationships they enjoyed with teachers and their peers.

Description of the School

The school opened in 2001. There are 564 students, with 115 children in KG, 331 students in Grades 1 – 5, and 118 in Grades 6 – 9. There are 183 boys and 266 girls. The majority of students are Muslim. There are 25 different nationalities in the school. The school data indicates that 74% are of Arabic heritage, of which significant groups are from Egypt, Syria, Jordan and Sudan. About 10% students are Emirati and 8% are from the Gulf States.

Al Seddeeq aspires to and is committed to improve student and staff skills and prepare them to be members of a promising community.

The school admits most students who seek admission, and all sit a simple baseline assessment test after their arrival. The school does not use international standardised tests. No students are identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The school does not have processes in place to identify SEND students or those who are gifted and talented.

The standard annual tuition fees range from AED 6,927 for the youngest children to AED 11,325 for students in grade 9. A registration fee of AED 500 is charged for each student at the time of admission. Teachers' annual salaries range from AED 24,000 to AED 60,000 per annum.

The school's board of directors has recently been formed. It is comprised of six members, including the owner and the Principal, and is supported in its management role by a planning committee. The Principal co-owns the school with the owner who holds a majority share

The Effectiveness of the School

Band C

Grade 8

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

This judgment reflects the school's position against international best standards. When judged against similar Abu Dhabi private schools, the school has lower standards. The school provides a poor education for its students. It is in breach of many ADEC requirements and regulations. Too many students make poor progress across a range of knowledge, skills and subjects. By the end of their time in school, students are poorly prepared for their future education. This is because of poor teaching, a narrow curriculum, a lack of adequate resources and poor leadership and management. To make the progress towards world-class provision that the Emirate of Abu Dhabi requires for all its schools, Al Seddeeq School must do more to develop the 21st century skills the nation needs. For this reason, this report gives clear recommendations for what more needs to be done to take the school forward.

Standards are poor and well below international standards in all subjects throughout the school. Children in KG arrive with very low attainment and make few gains in knowledge and skills in all areas of learning. Standards in Grades 1 to 9 are poor. In Arabic, although reading of simple texts is sound, writing skills are well below what is expected for students' age. In Islamic studies, some students can recite prayers and sayings in the Holy Qur'an, but their understanding is superficial. Students gain some knowledge of regional geography through social studies and are beginning to write simple sentences in Arabic. Skills in English are often limited to missing word exercises and recognising key words. In mathematics, basic errors are made in calculations and mathematical knowledge is largely restricted to number work. Few opportunities exist for problem-solving or the application of known formulae. In science, younger students have a weak understanding of the natural world and those in later years are not able to predict outcomes or recall key facts. In information and computer technology (ICT) students struggle to use internet search engines to find what they want and have only very basic keyboard skills. In art and physical education very low level work was seen.

Students' progress in every subject is poor. Students with SEND are not identified or supported. Those who are able to learn more quickly make insufficient progress. Critical thinking, collaborative working and problem-solving skills are very underdeveloped across the school. Data recorded at the school give a false impression of students' progress and their achievement.

Students' personal development is poor. Girls, unlike boys, show respect for others. Girls also have some enthusiasm for education. There are no school activities that promote equality between students of different nationalities. Students do not take enough responsibility for their own actions. This is evidenced by the amount of litter thrown at breaks and bad behaviour seen in lessons. Students show little consideration for property or staff. Students are passive learners. In most lessons, they simply listen to teachers and follow the tasks set for them without questioning or knowing what they are expected to learn. Students develop very little understanding of how to stay safe and healthy. This is because the premises are unsafe and students are not taught safe practices. They are unaware of the importance of healthy foods and regular exercise in leading a healthy life.

Teaching is poor and shows minimal or no improvement since the previous inspection. Children in KG have a poor experience, with few opportunities to develop their physical, personal, social and emotional skills. They are taught in crowded classrooms which are bare and dirty. New toys and equipment are stored elsewhere, with many remaining in their packaging unused. Access to the KG outside area is dangerous. It is now shaded with new equipment but is unused. Throughout the school, lesson planning is often weak or non-existent. Most teaching styles and methods remain narrow and limit learning severely. Tasks are poorly matched to students' different abilities. A few examples of good practice exist in English, mathematics and science. For example, two teachers were seen using an interactive white board (IWB) effectively in English and science. Students have few opportunities to work collaboratively or develop skills for the 21st century. Some classes of boys are unruly and very limited learning takes place. Teachers focus almost entirely on developing students' knowledge through the use of worksheets or text books. Whatever subject is being taught much of the time is spent on developing students' knowledge of numbers and letters by rote or copying. Tests based on a limited range of skills taught are used to monitor students' progress. Test conditions are lax with students copying each others' work. Results are not used to track standards. Assessment is underdeveloped and limited. The Principal has established links with a local university to help develop teachers' skills. He has given some training for staff. The impact of this has yet to be seen in improvements in teaching, students' learning or the curriculum.

The curriculum planning and delivery is poor. It has not been enhanced in any way to prepare the students for their future lives in the 21st century. It lacks breadth and balance because learning experiences are too reliant on the text book. There are very limited opportunities for students to experience practical approaches to learning or developing the skills of learning collaboratively. The curriculum for art

and physical education is very limited and music is not offered. The ICT curriculum is timetabled for one session each week. There are no other opportunities to use ICT in other subjects. It follows the basic time allocations and subject recommendations in MoE guidelines. Students are encouraged to develop an understanding of UAE culture, society and values but they have few opportunities to explore the wider world. Provision in Arabic, Islamic studies and social studies is narrowly based on textbooks with too few opportunities for students to develop fluency in speaking and listening. There are no extra-curricular activities to extend learning and visits outside school have little educational value. Arrangements for assessing student's strengths and weaknesses as learners and using this information to inform curriculum planning have not been clearly established. Although the school staff are proud of their graduation ceremony, students are poorly prepared for the next stage of their education because they are not encouraged to develop independence in their learning – this is particularly true of boys. Their ability to face the challenges of living and working in the 21st century are severely impaired.

Students are unsafe in the school. Several students reported that corporal punishment is being administered as a form of discipline. Corporal punishment is forbidden and is documented as such. There is an oppressive approach by some staff towards students. Students are intimidated and threatened by deduction of marks in tests. Students do not complain as they are frightened of the consequences as they know they will be beaten more. If they complain, they say nothing is done. Sometimes students are punished by facing the wall and raising one foot. Incidents of bullying and fighting in the school and on the buses are recorded but not dealt with effectively. The social worker has insufficient time to do her job as she has a teaching commitment. There is no child protection policy and teachers are not trained to recognise abuse. Attendance is recorded and parents are phoned after three days' absence. Punctuality is an issue and is not followed up. There is no system for rewards. Lack of supervision around the school puts students at risk. The school has a mosque but it is used only twice a year for some classes. The clinic has a temporary licence but is closed as the school has no nurse.

The buildings and premises are poor. The building is small, poorly maintained and not fit for purpose. This significantly impedes the students' education and places them at risk. Certain hazards might cause risk to students. The steep steps to the KG playground and the closeness to the road is a concern. The school is open to the main road and the fire exit door leads directly to it. There is no cooling or ventilation in many classrooms. Classrooms provide poor environments with broken windows and desks. Currently, the internal hall of the building is being

used for breaks, assembly and PE lessons as there is no outside space. The library is small with few books, and houses the only IWB. Chemicals in the science lab are not stored properly and cleaning products are open to access under the stairs. The number of bathrooms is insufficient and unhygienic. Some buses are not well maintained and lack seat belts or air conditioning. Fire extinguishers on the bus are not well maintained or updated. The social worker's office is shared with the supervisor which jeopardizes confidentiality when with parents. Gates are not manned though the school has a security guard.

The school's resources to support its aims are poor. Teachers and support staff are insufficient in number and are not well utilised. Staff competency and inadequate material resources lead to ineffective teaching and learning. Professional development is limited. As a result, the school's ability to develop as a professional learning community is inadequate. The computer and science laboratories, school library, and classrooms are poorly equipped. There is insufficient computer equipment, IWBs, projectors, books and other teaching and learning support materials. Teachers provide some resources at their own expense. The budget does not support the delivery of a 21st century curriculum.

Leadership and management of the school are poor. Progress in tackling the recommendations in the previous inspection and monitoring visits is poor. Severe breaches of ADEC regulations and health and safety issues remain. The owner continues to be actively involved in the day-to-day running of the school. Other members of the Principal's family continue to be employed. Requested information, data on student and staff numbers, student fees, salaries and financial information is confusing and inaccurate. The leadership and owner show no capacity to improve the school. A school improvement plan and a strategic plan have been created. Both are vague showing no costing, no responsibilities allocated and no clear indication of how priorities will be achieved to drive improvement. The recently formed governing body is in breach of ADEC requirements. The Vice-Principal has a full teaching commitment so has limited opportunity to affect change in the school. Co-ordinators are appointed for some subjects and offer advice to teachers. Some are not good role models themselves so this has limited value. The Principal's infrequent monitoring of teaching and learning is ineffective. Leaders lack the knowledge and understanding of how students learn. This limits the school's ability to make improvements in teaching or in the curriculum. They are unable to raise students' achievement and prepare them for the future. The Principal recognises some of the breaches in ADEC requirements including his co-ownership of the school. The Principal and owner told inspectors of the many parent complaints and some of these are recorded.

What the school should do to improve further:

In order to move towards international standards in provision and students' learning the school should:

1. Improve the safety of everyone in the school by:
 - i. taking immediate action to ensure that corporal punishment is not allowed or practiced by any staff member or adult in the school;
 - ii. establishing a child protection policy with regular staff training so that they are able to recognise signs of abuse and deal with the situation appropriately; and
 - iii. as a matter of urgency correct the breaches of regulations and health and safety concerns to ensure that all students are safe in school and that the school complies with ADEC regulations.
2. Strengthen leadership in the school by:
 - i. immediately providing a strong leadership team with the capacity to move the school forward;
 - ii. completing a thorough and accurate school self-evaluation;
 - iii. writing a school improvement plan with a timeline, specific goals, clear responsibilities and a budget that is focused on raising students' standards and progress;
 - iv. supporting the above with a full training programme for staff at all levels; and
 - v. regularly monitoring the impact of this training on students' progress in lessons.
3. Secure effective teaching and learning by:
 - i. providing teachers with targeted professional development to improve their skills and teaching methods;
 - ii. developing a system of continuous assessment of students' skills to rigorously inform planning so that tasks and activities in lessons meet the needs of all students; and
 - iii. providing more opportunities for collaborative and practical learning.