



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



Inspection Report

Al Yaher Private School

Academic Year 2014 – 2015

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Al Yaher Private School

Inspection Date	9 – 12 February 2015
School ID#	149
Licensed Curriculum	British and Ministry of Education (MoE)
Number of Students	2738
Age Range	4 to 18 years
Gender	Mixed
Principal	Amani Abdal Aziz Husan
School Address	Al Yahar, Al Ain
Telephone Number	+971 (0)3 781 4454
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Official Email (ADEC)	Alyaher.pvt@adec.ac.ae
School Website	-----
Date of last inspection	20 – 23 February 2015

The overall effectiveness of the school

Inspectors considered the school in relation to 3 performance categories

Band A High performing (overall effectiveness grade 1, 2 or 3)

Band B Satisfactory (overall effectiveness grade 4 or 5)

Band C In need of significant improvement (overall effectiveness grade 6, 7 or 8)

The School was judged to be:	BAND C;	GRADE 6
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The main strengths of the school are:

- academic achievement in Islamic education and social studies is satisfactory
- leaders are tackling the areas for improvement from the previous inspection and continuous professional development (CPD) is beginning to have an impact on the quality of teaching
- students develop satisfactory understanding of UAE values and culture
- teachers work hard to foster a positive and caring environment in which most students behave appropriately
- the principal plays a pivotal role in the school and is well respected by students, teachers and parents
- parents and students have a positive view of the school.

The main areas for improvement are:

- standards and progress in most subject areas, particularly Arabic, English, mathematics, science, and information and communications technology
 - implementation of the curriculum to provide suitable levels of challenge, especially for the more able and those who find learning difficult
 - development of students' 21st century skills
 - resources to support learning in classrooms
 - development of leadership at all levels to ensure consistency in the use of new strategies to develop teachers' skills and rigour in monitoring their impact on students' learning.
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Introduction

The school was evaluated by 6 inspectors. They observed 115 lessons, conducted meetings with the owner, senior leaders, subject coordinators, teachers, students and parents. They analysed test and assessment results, scrutinised students' work across the school, analysed 479 responses to the parents' questionnaire and considered many of the school's policies and other documents. The principal and vice-principal were involved throughout the inspection process and undertook 4 joint observations of lessons and a learning walk with inspectors.

Description of the School

The Ministry of Education (MoE) Section of Al Yaher School opened in 1995 and the British Section (BS) in 2006. They are split into two sections for boys and girls. Both parts of the school are located in the Al Yahar area of Al Ain. The vision of the school is 'to provide the best methods of quality education for each student and implant the ideals of inclusion and respect in addition to strengthening the confidence of the student. All this leads to the creation of a generation with the ability to face the challenges of the times'. The mission is to 'prepare the future generation to achieve success in their future, to be useful to the country and distinctive amid the global community'.

In the MoE Section, there are 2269 students; 55% are boys. Of the total numbers, 51% are Emirati; 21% are from Yemen, 8% from Syria, 18% from Egypt, and the remainder are from 24 other countries. 458 children attend the Kindergarten (KG), 604 are in grades 1-3, 463 in grades 4-6, 400 in grades 7-9 and 344 in grades 10-12. In the BS, there are 469 students, 75% are boys and 75% are Emirati nationals; 6% are from Egypt, 5% are from Yemen, 3% are from Jordan and the rest are from 14 different countries. The KG through to Grade 3 accounts for the majority of enrolments in the British Section with 339 children; there are 130 in grades 4-8. The school has not identified any students with special educational needs (SEN) and 1 child has a physical disability.

The fees in both sections of the school fall into the low to medium bands. In the MoE section, the range of fees is AED 3,985 at the lower end of the school through to AED 12,050 at the top end. In the BS the fees are higher, ranging from 10,600 in KG to 23,000 in Grade 9. The school has 12 board members who include the principal and the proprietor; all have clearly defined roles.

The Effectiveness of the School

Evaluation of the school's overall effectiveness

Al Yaher Private School provides an unsatisfactory standard of education. Attainment throughout the school in most subjects is below international age-related standards. The school cannot be judged satisfactory as students' attainment and progress, the quality of teaching and learning and the implementation of the curriculum are unsatisfactory. Leaders at all levels are not improving teaching or academic standards quickly enough because they do not have a clear understanding of best international expectations.

The quality of buildings and facilities to support delivery of the curriculum are satisfactory. Teachers' morale is high and parents are very supportive. Students feel safe and like their teachers; as a result, they make adequate progress in their personal skills. The school is well managed and runs smoothly.

Students' attainment & progress

Attainment and progress are unsatisfactory. Students' attainment is broadly in line with age-related expectations and students make expected progress in Islamic education, social studies and Arabic in KG – Grade 3 in the MoE section. Attainment is below age-related expectations in English, mathematics, science, ICT and in Arabic in grades 4-12 in the MoE section and in the BS. Progress throughout the school is unsatisfactory because teachers' expectations for students are too low and there are not enough activities that offer them sufficient challenge. Academic outcomes are not satisfactory because students do not make sufficient gains in developing skills of independence, collaboration or critical thinking.

In Arabic, students develop adequate speaking and listening skills. Reading and writing are not as well developed. Writing throughout the school is below age-related expectations because punctuation and spellings are often inaccurate. Tasks are often too easy and offer inappropriate challenge. In Islamic education, students make expected progress because lessons effectively build on students' prior knowledge. Most students have a good understanding of Islamic concepts. They make slower progress when expectations are low and are not motivated to participate fully in lessons. In social studies, most students recognise the importance of industrial development in the UAE. They make slower progress when tasks do not engage them and teachers dominate lessons.

All students learn English as an additional language. Children enter KG with very little English and progress is too slow. Students learn letter sounds and blend letters at a very slow pace and are often confused by letter names. Throughout

the school students make better progress in speaking and listening than in reading and writing. Students get little opportunity to independently write extended pieces and make too many uncorrected grammar, punctuation and spelling mistakes. Feedback on the quality of their work is inconsistent so they do not know what they need to do to improve. Students' basic numeracy skills are insecure. Progress is unsatisfactory in mathematics because tasks are not sufficiently challenging and offer too few opportunities for students to develop 21st century skills. In science, students gain satisfactory levels of scientific knowledge. They have too little opportunity to develop scientific enquiry skills. In ICT, progress is too slow because tasks offer insufficient challenge.

The school has a system to track students' attainment. This assessment data is not used sufficiently well to plan suitable challenges for students with different needs, especially the more able and those who find learning difficult. The school uses annual diagnostic tests to assess students' progress. The British Section does not use any standardised tests as all assessments are set, marked and moderated internally. This means that leaders do not have an accurate view of standards.

Students' personal development

Personal development is satisfactory. Students say they feel safe, are well supported by adults and like their teachers. Attendance is well above average at 96%. Students are growing in confidence, such as in leading assemblies. Relationships with peers and teachers are positive, based on mutual respect and students listen well to the views of others. Most students behave well. In a small minority of lessons, boys' behaviour is unsatisfactory when teachers have low expectations and the pace of learning is slow.

Students do not make sufficient gains in 21st century skills to prepare them adequately for their future. They have insufficient opportunity to work independently, creatively or collaboratively. The majority of students participate in a range of visits, sports, and mathematical, English and scientific clubs. Students develop a strongly satisfactory understanding of the values and cultures of the UAE and there is no apparent tension between students from different backgrounds. The school council is a useful forum for students to express their opinions and the school has acted on some of their views. Students gain an adequate understanding of the benefits of leading healthy lifestyles through the work of social workers and the nurse.

The quality of teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is unsatisfactory. Lessons observed during the inspection ranged from satisfactory and improving to unsatisfactory. The majority of lessons were judged to be unsatisfactory. Most teachers have appropriate knowledge of their subject so that explanations are accurate. Most students share positive, mutually respectful relationships with teachers. Teaching is improving slowly as a result of continuous professional development. Teachers are starting to use group and paired work. Groups are often too big and do not develop collaborative learning sufficiently. Lesson objectives are identified in planning; they are not consistently focused on learning and are not shared in all lessons to ensure that students know the expectations. Teachers do not check enough on students' understanding or evaluate progress. Teachers rely too much on worksheets as there are insufficient resources in classrooms to support students' active learning.

Learning is least effective when teachers talk too much, suppressing the development of students' independent thinking. Teachers rarely ask questions that probe thinking or challenge students to explain their ideas in depth. There is more focus on gaining factual knowledge rather than deepening understanding and applying knowledge and skills. In too many lessons, students are passive and show limited enthusiasm. Teachers do not make sufficient and effective use of the vast amount of assessment data to plan lessons that offer consistently suitable challenge to different groups, especially more able students and those who find learning difficult. Lessons in KG do not enable children to learn actively.

Meeting students' needs through the curriculum

The implementation of the curriculum is unsatisfactory. It is adequately broad and balanced and offers physical education, ICT, art and, in the British section, French alongside core subjects. Neither the British nor the MoE curriculum planning and delivery are modified sufficiently to enable students, especially the more able and those who find learning difficult, to make the progress of which they are capable or adequately develop 21st century skills. The implementation of the curriculum in KG is too narrow as children are inactive and do not learn through discovery, exploration or child-initiated tasks.

The curriculum develops students' understanding of the values and cultures in the UAE well through assemblies and activities in social studies. Students learn about the Arabic world in which they live, its history, culture and modern day society. There is a reasonable range of extracurricular activities and clubs to enrich students' learning and develop their skills.

The protection, care, guidance and support of students

The quality of protection, care, guidance and support is satisfactory. The school has a positive ethos in which students say they feel safe, happy and well cared for. Parents and students appreciate the level of care provided. Leaders ensure the school is safe, hygienic and clean. Child protection policies and procedures are rigorous and ensure that all adults are aware of what to do if they suspect abuse. There is virtually no bullying and students know that any incidents will be dealt with quickly. The school keeps a central record of all the necessary checks to ensure all adults are suitably vetted to work with children.

Procedures to monitor attendance are appropriate. Attendance registers are taken daily and any absence is followed up rigorously. Social workers provide effective pastoral support. They know the students well and communicate with parents effectively about progress and any behavioural issues. Students do not get sufficient guidance about their choices when they leave school.

There are 3 clinics, which are clean and hygienic, and all medicines are stored securely. The nurses, their assistants and the doctor provide good level of care.

The quality of the school's buildings and premises

The quality of the school's buildings and facilities is satisfactory.. Health and safety staff make daily checks to ensure the accommodation is clean, well maintained and safe. They have clear roles and responsibilities. Corridors, stairs and social areas are of adequate size. Most classrooms are adequately sized, well ventilated and have natural light. Some classrooms are too small for the number of students.

Specialist facilities for science, ICT, and outdoor and indoor physical education (PE) are adequate to support the delivery of the curriculum. The grass pitch for boys' games is uneven with potholes that could be dangerous. The British Section has invested in a linguistics laboratory to develop students' English skills. There are 2 prayer rooms in the girls' and boys' Sections and a heritage centre. The libraries are too small for the number of students.

Electrical equipment, such as fire hoses and extinguishers, are checked weekly by the site manager and external contractors test safety and electrical equipment regularly. Rigorous evacuation procedures are in place with regular fire drills. Hazardous substances are stored safely; some chemicals have expired. First aid kits are provided on many corridors. The school does not have ramps and lifts to cater for students with physical disabilities. Canteens are extremely small. Security is rigorous and prevents unwanted intrusion. CCTV cameras are used to monitor the premises.

The school's resources to support its aims

The quality and quantity of resources to support students' learning are unsatisfactory. There are sufficient staff who are suitably qualified. Leaders provide regular professional development focused on developing teachers' skills and improving students' learning and academic progress. Specialist resources for science are insufficient to support the curriculum. Resources for PE are adequate and those for ICT have improved so that all classrooms have data show resources or a smart TV. Classrooms are not equipped with internet access and students have no computers in classrooms.

There is too much reliance on worksheets, textbooks and workbooks in classrooms, limiting the development of students' imagination, independence and thinking. Additional resources to support students' learning are insufficient. KG resources are limited and do not enable children to learn actively. KG outdoor areas have an adequate range of large equipment to develop children's gross motor skills. The libraries are very small with too few books to develop students' reading skills. Some of the ICT laboratories have too few computers for the number of students. The canteens are clean and hygienic and food is stored in refrigerators. The nurse checks daily on the food served and the school promotes healthy eating effectively. Procedures to maintain transport in a safe and reliable condition and for the safe use and care of students are followed vigilantly.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

The principal is well respected by students, teachers and parents. Leaders are beginning to address the recommendations from the previous inspection. They are starting to have a positive impact on the quality of teaching and development of students' 21st Century skills at a basic level. They have successfully created a school with a positive learning environment and caring ethos. The owner knows the families and the school well, and is aware of the areas that need improving.

Strong teamwork means that all staff share the same view of the school and the vision for improvement. They were all involved in developing the school's self-evaluation form (SEF) as committees include leaders and teachers for each performance standard. The SEF is based on outcomes from systems to monitor the quality of teaching and students' performance. The judgements are too generous because they are not focused enough on the quality of learning and best international expectations. The school analyses the outcomes from the SEF to identify the priorities for the school development plan (SDP), which is well organised and focuses on the key areas for improvement. Middle leaders are not fully effective and are not held to account for their actions to observe, coach and mentor colleagues.

Professional training to develop teachers' skills is starting to have an impact; this is at a basic stage and strategies are not consistently applied. The school has thorough systems to monitor students' attainment. Systems to monitor the quality of lessons provide regular points for development for all teachers. The impact of monitoring and provision of professional development to develop teachers' skills is improving. Leaders are developing links with a number of outside agencies to enhance students' learning.

Parents are supportive, especially about the level of care, and communication about students' progress, the standards students achieve and the quality of teaching. There are appropriate procedures in place for dealing with parental complaints.

Progress since the last inspection

The school has made some improvements since the previous inspection, the principal is the driving force behind these improvements. The impact on improving teaching is not fast enough to significantly raise standards. The school has provided professional training to develop teachers' skills. The impact is evident in many lessons at a basic level. Systems to monitor teaching are in place and teachers are provided with development points. There is still too much focus on teaching, not learning. ICT resources have improved as all classrooms have new technology. During the inspection week, students were observed to use seat belts on buses when required.

Senior leaders have not demonstrated the secure capacity to improve the quality of teaching and students' academic progress to at least a satisfactory level rapidly enough. They will require external support to ensure that the modest improvements since the previous inspection are sustained and embedded.

What the school should do to improve further:

1. Raise standards and accelerate students' progress to match best international age-related expectations, especially in Arabic, English, mathematics, science and ICT by:
 - i. using standardised assessments related to international benchmarks in the British Section
 - ii. using assessment data more effectively to plan lessons that offer suitable challenge for different groups, especially more able students and those who find learning difficult
 - iii. improving students' 21st century skills.
2. Strengthen the effectiveness of teaching and learning by:
 - i. providing further training and coaching to develop teachers' skills and monitor the impact rigorously clearly focusing on learning
 - ii. providing consistent opportunities for students to use 21st century skills effectively and to ask questions to clarify their thinking
 - iii. using clear and shared learning objectives to check students' understanding, evaluate their progress and refine plans to meet their needs
 - iv. making more effective use of questions to probe students' thinking, enable them to explain their thoughts in depth and extend their understanding
 - v. improve the range, quality and use of learning resources to extend students' active learning and deeper understanding
 - vi. planning KG lessons that enable children to learn through more active, play-based approaches.
2. Improve the impact of leadership at all levels on academic progress by:
 - i. identifying good practice both in school and in visits to other schools
 - ii. providing further purposeful professional development for teachers to develop their skills
 - iii. developing rigorous systems to evaluate the school's strengths and weaknesses, accurately referenced to best international practice.

Inspection Grades

	Band A High performing			Band B Satisfactory		Band C In need of significant improvement		
Performance Standard	Outstanding	Very Good	Good	Satisfactory & Improving	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Very unsatisfactory	Poor
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Standard 1: Students' attainment and progress								
Standard 2: Students' personal development								
Standard 3: The quality of teaching and learning								
Standard 4: The meeting of students' needs through the curriculum								
Standard 5: The protection, care, guidance and support of students								
Standard 6: The quality of the school's buildings and premises								
Standard 7: The school's resources to support its aims								
Standard 8: The effectiveness of leadership and management								
Summary Evaluation: The school's overall effectiveness								