



دائرة التعليم والمعرفة
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
AND KNOWLEDGE

Inspection Report of Aliaa International School

Overall Effectiveness: Acceptable

Academic Year 2017 – 2018



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School Information

General Information	Inspection date:	from	17 Jumada Al-Akhirah 1439	to	20 Jumada Al-Akhirah 1439
		from	05-Mar-18	to	08-Mar-18
	School name			Aliaa International School	
	School ID			235	
	School address			Al Daher 3, Mezyad, Al Ain	
	School telephone			+971 (0)3 784 8992	
	School official email			aliaaint.pvt@adec.ac.ae	
	School website			www.aliaintschool.com	
	School curriculum			American	
	School phases			KG1 to Grade 8	
	Fee range and category			AED 10,000 to AED 19,000 Low category	
	Number of lessons observed			98	
	Number of joint lessons observed			15	
Staff Information	Total number of teachers			40	
	Turnover rate			35%	
	Number of teaching assistants			8	
	Teacher- student ratio			1 : 9	
Student Information	Total number of students			372	
	% of Emirati Students			67 %	
	% of Largest nationality groups			1. Egypt 7%	
				2. Oman 7%	
				3. Syria 5%	
	% of SEN students			2%	
	% of students per phase			KG: 21%	Middle: 18%
				Primary: 61%	High: 0
Gender			Boys and girls		



The Performance of the School

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

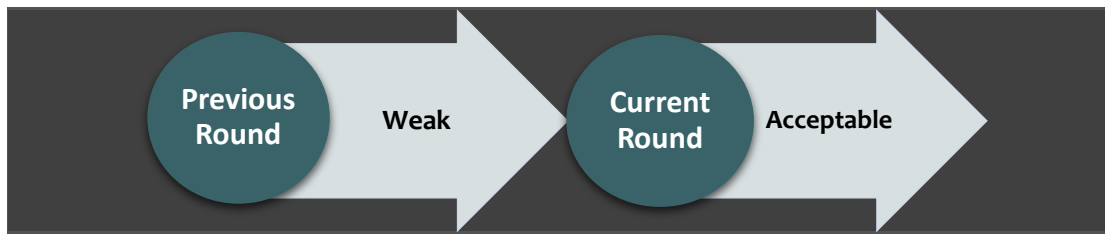


Evaluation of the school's overall performance

- The overall performance of the school is acceptable. The school has undergone a considerable period of instability since 2012. Student numbers have decreased since the previous inspection. The current principal, who was appointed soon after the previous inspection, has managed to stabilise the school.
- Students' achievement is acceptable overall. Achievement is acceptable in all Arabic and English-medium subjects and in other subjects overall.
- Students' personal and social development, and their innovation skills are good. Students have positive attitudes and show good understanding of Islamic values and UAE culture.
- The quality of teaching and assessment is acceptable overall. Teachers apply sound knowledge of their subjects and how students learn. Planning is effective, providing activities that enable students to become successful learners. The use of information and communication technology (ICT) is not consistent to support learning. Assessment to monitor students' progress is effective though the use of assessment to inform learning is less well developed.
- The quality of the curriculum is acceptable. The school's implementation and modification of the curriculum to raise students' achievement across all subjects ensures it meets the learning needs of most students.
- The protection, care, guidance and support of students is good. The school provides a safe, secure environment. Students with special educational needs (SEN) are well supported. The programme for gifted and talented (G&T) is more limited. Extra-curricular activities enable all students to develop their interests and skills.
- Leadership overall is good. Leaders have ensured targeted professional development. Improved teaching has led to improved student achievement in all subjects particularly in the KG. School self-evaluation (SEF) and school development planning are effective though not fully aligned to the inspection outcomes. Day-to-day management of the school is good.



Progress made since last inspection and capacity to improve



- Leaders have addressed most recommendations in the previous inspection report of one year ago. However, more time is needed for initiatives to develop fully and be embedded in practice. Students' achievement is now at least acceptable in all subjects and good overall in KG.
- Students' achievement in English is now acceptable overall although reading skills are in need of further improvement.
- Most teachers provide activities that enable students to develop independence and critical thinking. This is strong in KG where teachers provide a good range of activities for children to consolidate their learning. However, across the school opportunities for students to solve more open-ended problems remain too few.
- The school has provided professional development to enhance teachers' questioning skills, but this is not yet consistent practice in all lessons.
- Most teachers now include aspects of differentiation in their planning and this is having a positive impact on students' achievement. In a minority of lessons, differentiation is not effective enough to meet the needs of all students.
- Based on the progress made over the last year, leaders have good capacity to improve the school further.



Key areas of strength and areas for improvement

Key areas of strength

- The effective leadership of the principal, leaders and staff in stabilising the school and raising standards.
- Students' personal and social development, including their understanding of Islamic values, culture and heritage of the UAE.
- Teachers' improved planning, impacting positively on raising standards and overall achievement of students.
- The caring ethos and secure environment of the school and the free flow activities that enrich the students' learning experience.

Key areas for improvement

- Raising standards in all subjects by:
 - i. using the school's newly developed assessment and tracking system more effectively to identify accurately the gaps in students' learning
 - ii. ensuring that teaching addresses individual student's next steps in learning
 - iii. replacing teacher-led lessons with student-centred and independent learning
 - iv. providing different levels of challenge for students with different abilities.
- Increasing the school's focus on teaching reading, particularly in English by:
 - i. ensuring that the reading policy is implemented rigorously
 - ii. identifying accurately the reading levels of all students
 - iii. creating more opportunities for students to read with to adults and to one another
 - iv. ensuring that teaching in all subjects has a focus on developing reading
 - v. developing subject-specific vocabulary in science and mathematics where English is the language of instruction
 - vi. using ICT more effectively to support reading and literacy.
- Furthering the development of curriculum modification to meet the needs of all students by:
 - i. ensuring all gifted and talented (G&T), and higher achieving students are identified
 - ii. developing a range of activities to ensure that G&T and higher achieving students are challenged effectively in lessons
 - iii. providing additional activities for G&T students to develop their gifts and talents beyond lessons.
- Leaders' monitoring of lessons to focus on improving the quality of students' academic progress by:
 - i. ensuring all students are making the expected progress
 - ii. ensuring that planning is sufficiently differentiated to challenge higher achieving students effectively.



Provision for Reading

- The school promotes reading effectively for all students. In line with the school's reading plan, dedicated guided reading lessons are timetabled. Each class has an additional reading lesson in the library weekly.
- The library is adequately stocked with English and Arabic books. Students are encouraged to use the library to read for enjoyment. Library lessons focus on improving students' individual reading skills. Reading for comprehension is the main focus of guided reading lessons in Arabic and English. Teachers use graphic organisers effectively to support students' comprehension and their organisation of information when writing reviews.
- All teachers are trained to teach reading. A variety of stories, in line with students' reading ability, is introduced through the school's guided reading programme. Teachers use a variety of books for group reading and ask questions to assess students' comprehension skills.
- Children are encouraged to read with their parents at home and may borrow books from the KG or main school library.
- Teachers record students' progress and maintain reading records in Arabic and in English. Reading is not yet a focus of teaching across all subjects.
- The implementation of the school's reading policy is not yet rigorous enough to raise reading and literacy skills.



Performance Standard 1: Students' Achievement

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



Overall achievement

- The overall quality of students' achievement is acceptable. The school's continuous assessments (CA) show students' achievement is very good overall. The Ministry of Education CA results for Islamic education are very good overall. In Arabic and in social studies attainment is outstanding. CA as measured by the American, Californian Common Core State Standards (CCCSS), indicates that students' achievement in English is acceptable overall and good in the KG. In mathematics, it is very good overall across the three phases. In science, the CA is outstanding overall in the KG and primary, and weak in the middle phase. The Measure of Academic Progress (MAP) in English, mathematics and science indicates weak overall.
- These standards and scores are not fully borne out in the lessons seen during the inspection. The achievement of students observed during the inspection is good in the KG and acceptable overall in the primary and middle phases in all subjects. This indicates overall improvement compared to the weak standards seen at the time of the previous inspection.
- Students with special educational needs (SEN) and those who are gifted and talented (G&T) make similar progress to their peers when measured against their individual starting points.

Subjects

- Students' achievement in **Islamic Education** is acceptable overall. Achievement is good in the KG and acceptable in Primary and Middle. Students in all phases show understanding of Islamic values and are developing skills appropriately for their age. Students recite verses from the Holy Qur'an confidently. They make effective links with UAE values to real life situations.
- Students' achievement in **Arabic** as a first language is acceptable. Most students achieve standards that are broadly in line with age-related curriculum expectations in reading, writing, speaking and listening. Achievement in the KG is good where children gradually build their vocabulary, and read and write simple words. Almost all students speak clearly and use standard Arabic.
- In **Arabic** as a second language, the achievement of students in Primary and Middle is acceptable. Most achieve broadly average standards in speaking, listening, reading and writing. Students work at their individual levels and build their language skills, communicating with increasing confidence in standard Arabic.
- Students' achievement in **social studies** is acceptable in all phases. Most students develop knowledge of social, historical and geographical aspects of the UAE to



standards that are broadly in line with age-related expectations. Students relate their learning appropriately to their own lives.

- Students' achievement in **English** is good in KG and acceptable in Primary and Middle. Children in KG use phonics well to underpin their reading. They listen and speak with increasing confidence. Students in Primary Middle develop reading, writing, speaking and listening skills to broadly average curriculum expectations overall. The majority are not yet skilled enough to read age-appropriate texts aloud with fluency. Increasing students' reading attainment is a priority to enable them to access the English-medium curriculum.
- Students' achievement in **mathematics** is acceptable overall. In KG, children's achievement and progress is good and they develop their numeracy skills well. Students in Primary and Middle achieve age-appropriate curriculum expectations and, in Primary, have an appropriate knowledge of fractions. Most students in Middle have age-appropriate understanding of equations and percentages.
- Students' achievement in **science** is acceptable overall. Students in Middle make good progress. Most students perform investigations and develop exploration, scientific observation and recording skills appropriately. In Middle, students show evidence of problem solving skills; they make predictions, estimate, hypothesise and experiment. This aspect is less well developed in the lower grades.
- Students' achievement in **other subjects** is acceptable overall. Achievement in **music** is good where most students learn to play an instrument. It is good in **computer science** where the students in the higher grades achieve skills to above average standards. In physical education (**PE**) and **art**, students' attainment is acceptable. In **French**, student achievement is weak overall. Students' achievement of average standards overall is a result of their limited opportunities to develop creative and independent learning skills.

Learning skills

Students' learning skills are acceptable overall but good in the KG. Students develop skills to standards that are broadly in line with age-related expectations. They are keen and enthusiastic to learn. When they are given the opportunity, students work collaboratively and discuss and share learning effectively. Students' leadership skills are developing appropriately. Students have few opportunities to use ICT to support their learning in lessons across the curriculum.



Areas of Relative Strength:

- Students' improving progress in most subjects.
- Improvement in students' learning skills overall and the impact of these on their overall progress.

Areas for Improvement:

- Continuing to improve students' knowledge and skills in all subjects.
- Improving the quality of students' reading particularly in English.
- Development of critical thinking and problem-solving skills, particularly in the lower grades.



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	
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Good	Good	Good	
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Good	Good	Good	
- Children's personal and social development, and their innovation skills are good. Students have positive attitudes to learning and are self-disciplined. Bullying is very rare. - Student and staff relationships are positive and productive. Students show care and respect for one another and are sensitive and inclusive towards all students within the school community. Attendance at 96% is very good. However, a few students are not yet responding effectively to the school's punctuality procedures. - Students demonstrate good understanding of healthy living and know the importance of maintaining good health. This evident in the healthy food they bring to school and their active participation in exercise during PE and sporting activities. Older students show good awareness of personal safety and the importance of secure use of the internet. - Students' understanding of Islamic values and appreciation of UAE culture and heritage is good overall. They show character and confidence when they read poetry, engage in role play and sing in assembly to share, for example, core values such as 'honesty'. Their awareness of other cultures is less well developed. Students make regular contributions to national and international communities through their charitable activities with the Red Crescent. - Students contribute to the school's recycling scheme and help to maintain a clean school environment. - Students accept and perform leadership roles responsibly and effectively. Their innovations skills and more open-ended problem solving are less strong.				
Areas of Relative Strength:				
- Students' positive attitudes and understanding of Islamic values. - Students' very good attendance.				



- Students' responsible approach to their leadership roles.

Areas for Improvement:

- Extending students' appreciation of other world cultures.
- Strengthening work on developing students' innovation skills and engagement in more open-ended problem solving.
- A few students' punctuality.



Performance Standard 3: Teaching and Assessment

Teaching and Assessment Indicators	KG	Primary	Middle	High
Teaching for effective learning	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable	
Assessment	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable	

- The overall quality of teaching and assessment is acceptable. Teachers apply their secure subject knowledge and understanding of how students learn effectively. Most teachers now plan purposeful activities which is having a positive impact on students' engagement and attitudes to learning. Teaching is a strength in the KG. Teachers provide stimulating and welcoming learning environments in classrooms and around the school.
- Interactions between students and teachers are purposeful, positive and enhance the quality of students' engagement in learning. The use of questioning to challenge deeper thinking is not consistent in all lessons. Most teachers provide activities suited to higher, middle and lower achieving groups of students although this is not yet consistent in all lessons.
- Students with SEN are well supported in class and with specialist support. Planned activities do not always provide effective challenge for higher achieving students. ICT is used effectively in a few lessons.
- In the KG, teachers group students by ability and promote independence and collaboration. Skills for solving more open-ended problems to develop critical thinking are less well developed in all phases. In Primary and Middle, a minority of lessons are overly teacher led.
- Systems to analyse internal and external assessments are effective and data is used to track students' academic progress. This information is not yet being used effectively enough to close the gaps in students' learning. Teachers use external benchmarks to assess students' progress against national and international expectations using Measures of Academic Progress (MAP). In most classes, assessment information is used appropriately to organise students into ability groups. Most teachers mark students' work regularly and provide comments on how to improve. This is not yet consistent in all lessons.
- In the best lessons, teachers provide opportunities for self-assessment. This is not yet consistent across the whole school.



Areas of Relative Strength:

- Teachers' secure subject knowledge and improvement in planning.
- Positive relationships and stimulating learning environments for learning.
- Effectiveness of teaching in KG.

Areas for Improvement:

- Further provision for group work, independent learning and use of ICT.
- More effective challenge for higher achieving students.
- More effective use of data to identify accurately the gaps in students' learning.
- More consistent feedback to enable students to improve their work.



Performance Standard 4: Curriculum

Curriculum Indicators	KG	Primary	Middle	High
Curriculum design and implementation	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable	
Curriculum adaptation	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable	
- The overall quality of curriculum is acceptable. The curriculum is based on the California Common Core State Standards (CCSS). It meets the learning needs of most students and provides for continuity and progression in their learning. - Cross-curricular planning promotes students' transfer of learning between subjects for example, through recycling and 'My Identity'. Enrichment activities through the school's free flow activities and after-school clubs are effective. - The curriculum is reviewed regularly. Adaptation of the curriculum to provide more student-centred activities is enabling boys in Middle to engage with learning more effectively. Further adaptation is required to ensure it meets the needs of all groups of students particularly the higher achieving students. - The Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) initiative, providing opportunities for innovation, has been extended from Grade 5 to Grade 8. ICT is integrated appropriately, although it is not used effectively to support students' language development. Islamic values, UAE culture and heritage are integrated effectively. - Moral education is implemented appropriately. Teachers promote good moral values in assembly. Dedicated lessons engage students in discussion, role play and presentations. Students' understanding of the importance of maintaining high moral values is reflected in their behaviour.				
Areas of Relative Strength:				
- Improved planning and modification of the curriculum. - Effective links between subjects that promote the transfer of learning skills.				
Areas for Improvement:				
- More effective curriculum provision for the development of reading. - Matching learning activities more effectively to meet the needs of higher achieving students.				



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	
Care and support	Good	Good	Good	
- The overall quality of protection, care, guidance and support for students is good. The school is a safe, secure, well-maintained and welcoming learning environment. Policies and procedures for child protection are known to staff and parents. - Maintenance and record keeping are thorough and effective. Students are well supervised including when they transfer to and from buses. - The nurse is proactive in promoting safe and healthy lifestyles. Age appropriate talks and lectures by the nurse and local professionals are organised for all students. Relationships between teachers and students are good, creating a positive culture for learning. - Procedures for monitoring attendance are effective. However, systems to improve punctuality are not rigorous enough. - The school is inclusive. All students with SEN are enabled to participate in all activities. Gifted and talented students and the more able are not always challenged sufficiently. - The school's academic, personal and careers guidance for students in Grades 7 and 8 is underdeveloped. Areas of Relative Strength: - The school's promotion of students' good behaviour and attitudes, and healthy living. - Effective procedures to monitor and promote attendance. - Support for students with SEN. Areas for Improvement: - Quality of students' academic and careers' guidance. - Furthering the identification and provision for higher-achieving students and those who are gifted and talented. - Systems to improve punctuality.				



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Performance Standard 6: Leadership and management

Leadership and management Indicators	
The effectiveness of leadership	Good
Self-evaluation and improvement planning	Good
Partnerships with parents and the community	Acceptable
Governance	Good
Management, staffing, facilities and resources	Good
• The quality of leadership and management is good overall. The leadership and dedication of the new principal have stabilised the school and improved achievement in all subjects and performance standards. The school's vision is closely aligned to the UAE national priorities. • Leaders are well supported by staff who are committed to further improvement. • All staff contribute to the school's self-evaluation and school development planning. Leaders monitor progress through lesson observations and learning walks. Monitoring is not yet focused sufficiently on improving the quality of students' academic progress. Professional development is closely aligned to the school's priorities for development. • Partnerships with parents and the community are acceptable and improving. Parents are now represented on the governing body and they support the school appropriately. The school has established links with the local business community for example the Municipality and Al Ain Zoo. • A governing body, which is chaired by owners and includes parent representatives, meets regularly to monitor school performance. Views of parents, teachers and students are considered regularly. • The day-to-day management of the school is good. Facilities are well maintained with disability access to all levels. Staff are well qualified, receive effective professional development. Resources overall are good. • To promote student attainment in international assessments, the school implements that question-a-day initiative. It also monitors students' attainment and compares it with national and international performance benchmarks.	



Areas of Relative Strength:

- The effectiveness of leaders in raising the quality of education provision.
- Improvement in the self-evaluation and school development planning.
- The support of governors to improve the quality of the school's provision.

Areas for Improvement:

- Leaders' role in securing further improvements in achievement in all subjects.
- Continuing the school's work on involving parents more effectively.
- Leaders to monitor rigorously the progress being made by students in lessons.