



دائرة التعليم والمعرفة
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
AND KNOWLEDGE

Inspection Report of American International School in Abu Dhabi

Overall Effectiveness: Very Good

Academic Year 2017 – 2018



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DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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School Information

General Information	Inspection date:	from	24 Jumada Al Akhirah 1439	to	27 Jumada Al Akhirah 1439
		from	12-Mar-18	to	15-Mar-18
	School name			American International School in Abu Dhabi	
	School ID			117	
	School address			Muroor, Abu Dhabi	
	School telephone			+971 (0)2 444 333	
	School official email			americanint.pvt@adec.ac.ae	
	School website			www.aisa.sch.ae	
	School curriculum			American and IBDP	
	School phases			KG to High	
	Fee range and category			High to Very High: AED 30,500- AED 55,500.	
	Number of lessons observed			118	
	Number of joint lessons observed			0	
Staff Information	Total number of teachers			131	
	Turnover rate			27%	
	Number of teaching assistants			18	
	Teacher- student ratio			1: 10	
Student Information	Total number of students			1,378	
	% of Emirati Students			28 %	
	% of Largest nationality groups			1. America 15%	
				2. Egypt 7 %	
				3. Jordan 6%	
	% of SEN students			5%	
	% of students per phase			KG: 15%	Middle: 20%
Primary: 35%				High: 30%	
Gender			Boys and girls		



The Performance of the School

Performance Standard 1

Students' Achievement

Very Good

Performance Standard 2

Students' personal and social development, and their innovation skills

Very Good

Performance Standard 3

Teaching and Assessment

Very Good

Performance Standard 4

Curriculum

Very Good

Performance Standard 5

The protection, care, guidance and support of students

Very Good

Performance Standard 6

Leadership and management

Very Good

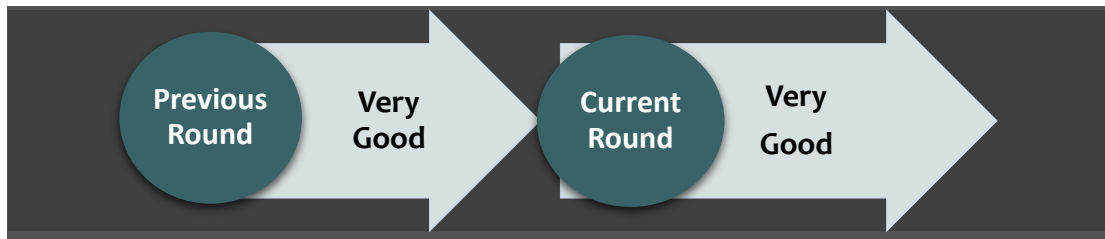


Evaluation of the school's overall performance

- The overall performance of the school is very good.
- Achievement is very good overall. Achievement is very good in Islamic education, English, mathematics, science and other subjects and good in Arabic as a first and second language and social studies. The school has maintained high standards in international examinations. Students' learning skills are very good.
- Students' personal development is very good. Strong respect for the heritage and culture of the UAE and Islamic values contribute to highly positive attitudes and relationships. Students have an excellent understanding of their own and other world cultures.
- Teaching and assessment are very good. Most teachers plan lessons which very effectively meet the needs of all students, challenge them to think deeply and develop their critical thinking and problem-solving skills. These strengths are not consistently evident in Arabic medium subjects. School assessment systems are highly effective.
- The curriculum is very good. It provides high quality cross-curricular opportunities. A minority of the students taking the high school American Diploma are insufficiently engaged in their learning.
- The overall quality of protection, care, guidance and support is very good. Staff-student relationships are exemplary. The school provides very good support overall for special educational needs (SEN) and gifted and talented (G&T) students.
- Leadership and management are very good. Self-evaluation and improvement planning processes are rigorous. Partnerships with parents are very good and national and international partnerships are outstanding. Governance is good overall.



Progress made since last inspection and capacity to improve



- The school has made very good progress in addressing the recommendations in the previous inspection report.
- School leaders have delivered high quality training on assessment for learning and differentiation, and improving practice is evident in lessons.
- Close monitoring of teaching quality by leaders and the development of collaborative planning has resulted in more varied teaching strategies, including in Arabic and social studies. Good practice in teaching and learning is now shared across all subjects, through an effective lesson study programme which includes peer observation.
- The school has maintained very high standards in English, mathematics, science and other subjects. Achievement in Arabic as a first and second language, and in social studies has improved to good. The very good results in the IB Diploma at the previous inspection have been raised further in English, mathematics and physics.
- A parent representative has attended a meeting of the governing body. Stakeholder representation has yet to be broadened beyond this.
- Attendance has improved since the last inspection and is now very good.
- All the recommendations of the previous inspection report have been implemented or are in the process of implementation. Overall, school leaders' capacity to improve the school is very good.



Key areas of strength and area for improvement

Key areas of strength

- Students' personal and social development, their understanding of Islamic values and their knowledge of UAE heritage and culture.
- The high attainment of students in English, mathematics, science, Islamic education and other subjects.
- The high levels of learning skills and engagement by students.
- The commitment and ability of the school leadership to develop the school further.
- The care, guidance and protection of students.

Key areas for improvement

- I. Raise attainment in Arabic and social studies to match the high standards achieved across the rest of the school by:
 - i. ensuring that teachers use assessment data to plan lessons which precisely meet the needs of different groups of students, including SEN students
 - ii. increasing the range and quality of activities and resources used in lessons to engage all students actively in the learning process
 - iii. raising the quality of questioning and interaction between students to improve their literacy standards and higher order thinking skills.
2. Develop the American Diploma high school curriculum to more purposefully engage a minority of students in learning by:
 - i. further developing opportunities which allow students to apply their learning to their understanding of the world
 - ii. developing themes which reflect their culture and traditions
 - iii. Including further activities which prepare students effectively for the next phase of education.

3.



Provision for Reading

- The school has one large library with a good stock of English and Arabic books. Each class visits the library weekly in primary and fortnightly in the middle school. Teachers use available space to create comfortable book corners in their classrooms.
- Literacy development in English and Arabic are important goals in departmental plans. Students choose from levelled readers in English and Arabic and are taught in guided levelled reading groups. Reading skills developed in English are used effectively in cross curricular units with the science department. The majority of children demonstrate above age-related reading skills across the curriculum.
- The school provides an after school levelled literacy intervention program in which 60–70 students participate regularly. Students borrow books from the library to read for pleasure, and primary children show enjoyment in dressing as famous book characters in reading week. Students in primary and middle school enjoy sharing their ideas about themes in books in class.
- Teachers have been effectively trained in how to use reading records to track progress and how to base a unit of work around a story.
- The English and Arabic departments collect reading record data three times a year and leaders monitor students' progress in improving comprehension levels across the curriculum.
- The Kindergarten (KG) use a phonics development system effectively and has provided workshops to guide parents in understanding early reading skills. Parental support of reading is encouraged across the school, for example through their signing of student planners.



Performance Standard 1: Students' Achievement

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



Overall achievement

- The overall quality of students' achievement is very good. Attainment is very good in the majority of core subjects, and in other subjects. Standards are consistently very high across phases in English medium subjects.
- Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) and internal data indicate that attainment in English, mathematics, science and other subjects is very good. Results in the International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma, Grade 12 examinations, and the American Diploma are very good overall. These data are borne out by student attainment observed in lessons.
- Students make very good progress overall in lessons and over time. SEN and G&T students make similar progress to their peers from their starting points, as do boys and girls.

Subjects

- Students' achievement in **Islamic education** is very good. The large majority attain above age-related expectations. Students make good progress in primary and very good progress in other phases in developing their understanding and appreciation of Islamic values and in recitation and reading of the Holy Qur'an.
- Students' achievement in **Arabic** as a first language is good overall. The majority attain above curriculum expectations. Overall, students make good progress in developing their speaking, listening, reading and writing skills. In the middle school, where students' achievement is acceptable, they make only acceptable progress in developing age-related writing skills.
- Students' achievement in **Arabic** as a second language is good. The majority attain above age-related expectations. Students make good progress across phases in developing their speaking, listening, reading and writing skills.
- Students' achievement in **social studies** is good. The majority of students attain above curriculum expectations. Students make good progress across phases in developing their knowledge and understanding of UAE geography and history.
- Students' achievement in **English** is very good. The large majority attain above age-related expectations. They make very good progress across the school in developing their skills in speaking, listening and reading. This contributes to their confident presentations and high quality written projects.
- Students' achievement in **mathematics** is very good. The large majority attain above curriculum expectations. They make very good progress across the school in developing their knowledge and understanding of mathematical concepts and skills in calculation and mathematical problem-solving. Primary



students accurately use measurement to calculate perimeter, area and volume, and high school students demonstrate very strong skills in solving challenging problems collaboratively.

- Students' achievement in **science** is very good. The large majority attain above curriculum expectations. They make very good progress across phases in developing their scientific knowledge and understanding and their skills in investigating, researching, experimenting and reporting. Students formulate hypotheses, make predictions, and reach conclusions using well developed higher order thinking skills.
- Students' achievement in **other subjects** is very good overall. In music, students make very good progress in their composition and performance skills. In art students demonstrate very good skills in drawing, painting and sculpting. In physical education (PE) they demonstrate very good dribbling, shooting and tactical skills in basketball.

Learning skills

- Students' learning skills are very good. Almost all are very well engaged and take responsibility for their own learning. They demonstrate very effective communication skills. Students make meaningful connections with the real world and with other subjects. Most are innovative, use technology very well, and demonstrate well developed problem-solving skills.

Areas of Relative Strength:

- The very good achievement in Islamic education, English, mathematics, science and other subjects.
- The very good learning skills of students.

Areas for Improvement:

- Achievement in Arabic as a first language, particularly in middle phase, and in Arabic as a second language and social studies.



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	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	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
- Students' personal and social development and innovation skills are very good. Their attitudes are very positive and responsible, and their relationships very respectful and considerate. Students' behaviour is very good. - Students have a secure understanding of healthy food and the importance of personal hygiene, exercise and safety. They bring healthy lunches and participate vigorously in PE activities. Attendance, at 96%, is very good, as is punctuality. - Students are very respectful of the heritage and culture of the UAE. They have a secure appreciation of Islamic values. They have an excellent understanding of their own and other world cultures. - Students are active in making social contributions, for example in raising money for the Red Crescent and taking part in community projects such as beach cleaning. They have a very good awareness of environmental issues. At recess they actively keep the school clean by using the recycling bins. They are keen to learn about sustainability. - Students design and complete innovative projects and develop their creative skills very well. Their enterprise skills are relatively less well developed. Areas of Relative Strength: - Relationships with teachers and their peers. - Understanding of Islamic values, UAE heritage and culture, and other world cultures. Areas for Improvement: - Students' enterprise skills.				



Performance Standard 3: Teaching and Assessment

Teaching and Assessment Indicators	KG	Primary	Middle	High
Teaching for effective learning	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
Assessment	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
- The overall quality of teaching and assessment is very good. Most teachers plan effectively in teams and use varied resources to teach engaging lessons. They ask purposeful questions and encourage students to think critically and engage in thoughtful discussions. A few teachers in Arabic medium subjects rely upon closed questions to evaluate the students' knowledge. - Most teachers give the students very effective opportunities for innovation, independent learning and problem solving. They use assessment carefully to plan activities which meet individual and group needs. In the minority of lessons in Arabic medium subjects, use of these approaches is less effective. The planning of a few teachers in high school does not engage a minority of students on the American Diploma course. - Internal assessment procedures are coherent and consistent and well-linked to curriculum standards. The school effectively benchmarks student outcomes against external expectations, including international standards. Leaders carefully analyse assessment data and use this information to track progress and ensure that the needs of almost all groups of students are met effectively. - Teachers have very good knowledge of their students. They share success criteria very effectively, mark work thoroughly and give effective feedback about how to improve. They provide regular peer and self-assessment opportunities for students.				
Areas of Relative Strength:				
- Teachers' knowledge of students' strengths and needs. - Planning opportunities for independent learning, innovation and problem-solving.				
Areas for Improvement:				
- Consistently very high-quality teaching and assessment in Arabic medium subjects. - Meeting the needs of all groups of students in the American Diploma course.				



Performance Standard 4: Curriculum

Curriculum Indicators	KG	Primary	Middle	High
Curriculum design and implementation	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
Curriculum adaptation	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good

- The school's curriculum is very good. It has a clear rationale aligned to the national vision and to the Common Core Standards (USA), The international Baccalaureate is also offered to students in high phase. It is relevant and promotes innovation. Collaborative planning ensures very good progression and continuity in learning.
- The range of subjects offered provide older students with very good opportunities to develop their interest and aspirations. The American Diploma curriculum, however, does not fully engage a minority of students in purposeful learning.
- Outstanding cross-curricular links integrate the development of skills across subjects, providing highly effective opportunities for students to develop their skills of literacy, enquiry and independent learning.
- The school reviews the curriculum regularly and makes systematic modifications to ensure very good provision overall.
- Opportunities for problem-solving and co-operative learning embedded within weekly learning plans develop students' creativity and innovation very effectively. Use of technology is fully integrated in planning across almost all lessons. There are very good links with Emirati culture and UAE society across almost all subjects. Opportunities for enterprise are less well developed in the classroom.
- Moral education, is well integrated within the curriculum and key values such as tolerance and respect are taught within humanities. Moral values are also promoted in displays around the school and students embracing these values contribute to the harmonious environment in the school diverse community.

Areas of Relative Strength:

- Outstanding links between subjects to consolidate learning.
- Opportunities for innovation and problem-solving.

Areas for Improvement:

- Planning for more purposeful learning in the American Diploma curriculum.



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- Opportunities for students to further develop their enterprise skills.



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	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
Care and support	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
- The overall quality of protection care, guidance and support of students is very good. Students, parents and staff know and understand the very effective child protection policy and related safeguarding procedures. The school premises are very well-maintained and comprehensive records are kept of maintenance and safety incidents. - The school is a very safe, hygienic and secure environment. Supervision of students is very effective, including arrangements for departure and bus transportation. Health records and medicines are carefully stored. Promotion of safe and healthy lifestyles permeates school life, through the taught curriculum, and the activities of the nurse and counsellors. - Staff-student relationships are exemplary, and the behaviour management system is highly effective. The school successfully promotes very good levels of attendance and punctuality. - Rigorous systems identify SEN and G&T students. SEN students receive very effective care in specialist lessons. Support for SEN students is more effective in lessons in English medium subjects than in Arabic and social studies. G&T students are well challenged by demanding, differentiated tasks in most subjects. - The school monitors the personal development of all students efficiently and counsellors give very effective academic guidance to senior students. Areas of Relative Strength: - Care, guidance and protection of students. - Relationships between staff and students, and behaviour management. Areas for Improvement: - Consistently very high quality of support for SEN students in Arabic medium lessons.				



Performance Standard 6: Leadership and management

Leadership and management Indicators	
The effectiveness of leadership	Very Good
Self-evaluation and improvement planning	Very Good
Partnerships with parents and the community	Very Good
Governance	Good
Management, staffing, facilities and resources	Very Good
- The overall quality of leadership and management is very good. The principal and senior leaders have established a clear vision, linked to that of the UAE, which is understood by all. Morale is high, and teachers share their professional commitment in very effective professional learning communities. Leaders have developed the school very effectively since the last inspection. They are aware that they need to enhance the American Diploma curriculum to better motivate the minority of senior students. - Self-evaluation and improvement planning processes are very good. The self-evaluation form (SEF) evaluates the school skilfully and uses data very well to identify key priorities. The school development plan (SDP) is strategic and contains very well focused actions. Leaders' monitoring of teaching is more effective in English medium subjects, than in Arabic and social studies. - The school has developed strong partnerships with parents, who participate very well in the life of the school. Parents feel that senior leaders listen to, and act upon their suggestions. Communication and reporting are very good. Community partnerships are outstanding. International and national partnerships include those with the Model United Nations, an American high school and the Sheikh Zayed hospital in Baltimore, USA. - Leaders recognise that governance does not yet extend to all stakeholders. A parent representative has attended one board of governors' meeting. Governors hold school leaders accountable for the school's performance and exert a positive influence upon them. - The school is very well organized from day-to-day. Suitably qualified staff are well trained and deployed. Premises have been well maintained to support high levels of achievement. High-quality resources are well matched to curriculum requirements. - Leaders are committed to international assessments. Students have performed very well in the PISA mock examination and the school is	



participating in the 'Question a Day' initiative in preparation for the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS). Relevant assessment data is analysed rigorously to identify strategies to raise attainment further.

Areas of Relative Strength:

- Self-evaluation and improvement planning processes.
- Community partnerships.

Areas for Improvement:

- Monitoring teaching in Arabic medium subjects.
- Extending the representation of stakeholders on the governing body.