



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



Inspection Report

Ashbal Al Quds Private School

Academic Year 2013 – 14

Iqraa

Ashbal Al Quds Private School

Inspection Date	27 – 30 January 2014
School ID#	19
Licensed Curriculum	Ministry of Education (MoE)
Number of Students	2568
Age Range	3 to 18 years
Gender	Mixed
Principal	Omayya Elwan Abdel Hafiz Hasan
School Address	Khalifa City B, Street 25, Zone 11, Abu Dhabi
Telephone Number	+971 (0)2 586 1124 / +971 (0)2 586 1440
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Official Email (ADEC)	ashbalalquds.pvt@adec.ac.ae
School Website	-----
Date of last inspection	8 - 11 October 2012

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:

- positive relationships between teachers and students
- committed leadership focused on school improvement
- students' understanding of UAE culture and heritage
- good speaking and listening skills of older girls in English.

The main areas for improvement are to:

- raise student attainment to reach international standards
 - increase the schools leadership's understanding of strengths and weaknesses in the school's performance
 - strengthen the rigour of evaluation procedures and the accuracy of self-evaluation judgements
 - ensure purposeful monitoring of teaching and learning
 - improve student attendance, punctuality and boys' behaviour and self-discipline
 - address as a priority all health and safety issues
 - improve the quality of the Kindergarten (KG) curriculum.
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Introduction

The school was inspected by a team of 6 inspectors who observed 104 lessons as well as assemblies, snack and break periods, and students' arrival and departure. They met with school leaders, teachers, students and parents. Inspectors scrutinised students' work, and analysed performance data and documents provided by the school. In addition 428 responses from parents to a questionnaire were analysed.

Description of the School

Ashbal Al Quds Private School is located in Khalifa City B. The school was opened in 1986 and moved to the present site in 2009. The school aims to provide 'an outstanding education to prepare a generation able to invest in successes'.

There are 2,568 students and 61% are boys. Almost all students are Muslim. 28% of students are Emirati; of the remainder, 22% are Jordanian, 14% Syrian, 11% Palestinian, 8% Egyptian, 1% each are from the Gulf, Morocco and Iraq, and a small number from other countries.

The school follows the (Ministry of Education) MoE curriculum from KG to Grade 12 and the language of instruction is Arabic. There are 3 phases: KG to Grade 4, Grades 5 to 9 and Grades 10 to 12. Boys and girls are taught separately from Grade 5. Students are screened prior to admission and almost all are accepted. Annual fees range from AED 7,000 to AED 14,000 and are in the affordable to low range.

The Principal is in her twenty-ninth year as principal and the leadership team includes the, vice-principal and the English subject leader.

The Effectiveness of the School

Students' attainment & progress

Standards in most subjects are similar to those in other schools following the same curriculum. Attainment levels are below age-related expectations and best international standards. Girls' achievement levels are higher than boys. Students make satisfactory progress in Islamic education and social studies. Their performance and progress in all other subjects is more limited as a result of low expectations and work that is not sufficiently matched to students' abilities. Students' basic skills in numeracy, literacy and Information and Communication Technology (ICT) lack sufficient development to enable confident use across all subjects.

Most students' communication skills in standard Arabic and English are below international standards. They lack fluency and progress is especially restricted in younger grades because of insufficient opportunities to talk and write in lessons. By Grade 12, students demonstrate more confident English speaking and listening skills, particularly girls who show attainment close to international standards. Their reading and writing skills remain below age-related levels. In mathematics and science, attainment is broadly in line with MoE standards and has improved over the last two years. Problem solving skills in mathematics and investigational skills in science lack development. In Islamic education and social studies, students demonstrate appropriate knowledge and understanding and develop satisfactory presentational skills, particularly in Grade 10.

Students' 21st Century skills are limited because they are not given enough responsibility for learning in lessons. Their skills in working independently, reflective thinking, problem solving and research skills are under-developed in middle and lower grades and improving in higher grades. The lack of individual attainment targets contributes to lack of challenge and slow progress for the majority of students, especially the more able. KG children do not demonstrate appropriate inquiry and investigational skills as a result of limited opportunity for activity-based learning.

Students' personal development

Personal development is mostly satisfactory. Girls behave significantly better than boys. Boys' self-discipline out of lessons is unsatisfactory and misbehaviour occurs at break-times and changes between lessons. Many boys arrive late to school and a few students are sometimes late arriving for lessons. Most students have positive attitudes to learning and respect their teachers. Older girls, in particular, are confident and enjoy discussions and opportunities to express themselves and

work together. Boys' collaborative skills are limited because many teachers talk too much in lessons and provide too few opportunities. Equally, teachers do not encourage younger students sufficiently to inquire and share their thoughts and ideas. Students do not have enough chances to make choices and become confident and independent learners. Most of them thrive when allowed to undertake leadership roles and show responsibility, particularly the younger children. Students understand and value the UAE culture and its traditions; in assembly, they sing the National Anthem, respect the national flag and say prayers to support each another. They share the importance of healthy lifestyles and most show care and respect for each other. The improved number of school visits support more understanding of the world outside school. Students have limited opportunities to contribute to their community outside of this.

The quality of teaching and learning

The quality of teaching is unsatisfactory and adversely affects learning. Teachers' subject knowledge is secure, particularly in subjects taught in Arabic. Their understanding of how students learn best is not always secure, particularly teaching to meet the developmental needs of KG children. Their understanding of activity based learning is improving but remains underdeveloped. Planning is not sufficiently detailed in meeting the range of most students' learning needs. There is an over reliance on worksheets and this often slows progress for the majority of students because tasks are too easy. Learning objectives are mostly shared with students. Activities that are planned often lack sufficient purpose and are not linked specifically to curriculum targets. There is too much teacher talk in many lessons and this limits opportunities for problem solving, critical thinking and time for students to reflect on the progress they are making.

Resources are limited and, when available, are not always used well by teachers and students to support successful learning. In the best lessons, students use group work and this quickens the rate of progress because they discuss and share their learning. This approach is working well with older girls but is inconsistently used elsewhere in the school. Teachers' questioning is often closed- and many teachers accept one word or short phrase answers. In better lessons, teachers take the opportunity to use questioning to extend students' reasoning and promote higher order thinking. In these lessons, teachers have a better knowledge of what students understand and what they find difficult.

Teachers' tracking of student progress and evaluation of assessments is insufficiently effective. There is too much reliance on test marks and insufficient focus on what students need to do in order to improve. This contributes towards many teachers' lack of understanding of students' individual strengths and

weaknesses. The majority of students are unaware of their individual learning targets and in many lessons opportunities for students to self-evaluate or reflect on what they have learnt remain limited. Many teachers in the lower and middle grades consistently use a whole-class teaching approach, and often the same work is set for the majority of students. This leads to insufficient challenge, particularly for the more able students. Students who find learning difficult do not have appropriate support in lessons to accelerate their learning. KG children are not given sufficient opportunities to become independent learners who are able to make choices, explore and enjoy action-based learning. Teachers maintain positive relationships with students and behaviour management in lessons is appropriate.

Meeting students' needs through the curriculum

Implementation of the curriculum is unsatisfactory. It is narrow and provides students with limited choice especially access to extra-curricular activities. There are limited opportunities for older students to participate in physical activities. This was a concern raised in some responses to the parent questionnaire. The KG curriculum does not provide sufficient opportunities for children to be involved in activity-based learning. Activities are often not well planned and do not consistently identify what young children need to learn. Curriculum planning is not effective in providing different levels of challenge to meet the needs of students, particularly the more able and those who find learning difficult. Curriculum planning is beginning to have a positive impact on the effectiveness of teaching and the delivery of Arabic and English. The school appropriately develops students' understanding and celebration of the culture and life in the UAE, and particularly family and community values. There are limited opportunities for students to develop their independent and inquiry-based learning skills, particularly in mathematics and science. There are some positive links with the local community, such as liaison with Zayed University and growing links with local companies though guidance and advice for further education and careers remains limited.

The protection, care, guidance and support of students

The rewards and sanctions to support management of boys' behaviour are not fully understood by boys and effectively used by all teachers. There is appropriate awareness of issues such as bullying. Corporal punishment is forbidden and the child protection policy and procedures are fully understood by all staff. Attendance is unsatisfactory being below 90%; buses often arrive late and procedures to monitor and improve attendance and punctuality are not rigorous enough. Social workers provide caring support and advice to students. The

systems to sustain students' academic progress are not sufficiently robust and those who are underachieving are not always identified and supported. Guidance for older students does not sufficiently prepare them to make choices about further education and careers. The school nurse is caring and appropriately qualified and first aid provision is effective. Arrangements ensure students' safety when they arrive and depart school, and when using school transport. The kitchen is clean and hygienic and provides healthy options for students.

The quality of the school's buildings and premises

The site and buildings meet ADEC requirements in some respects; overall, the quality of the buildings and premises is unsatisfactory. There are adequate science laboratories and spacious corridors. The indoor sports facilities limit opportunities for students to keep fit and healthy. The indoor premises are maintained in a safe condition. There are shortages in specialist areas, given the number of students, and this limits support for the curriculum. There is over-crowding in a few classes. Electrical maintenance is adequate. Daily maintenance checks do not sufficiently ensure good standards of hygiene in toilets throughout the day. Evacuation procedures are not sufficiently rigorous and clearly understood by all staff and students. Security procedures are adequate and they are carefully followed by security guards.

The school's resources to support its aims

Teachers have the required qualifications and are sufficient in number. They are committed to supporting students' learning. Not all teachers have an understanding of how students learn best. Professional development has given some focus to collaborative learning and has supported more awareness about effective teaching methods. There is adequate provision of data projectors in classrooms and technology development is supported by two ICT suites. The quality, quantity and range of resources are limited in many areas: PE equipment, reading books in classrooms, science resources in the laboratories, and fiction and reference books in the library. KG resources to support an age-appropriate curriculum are unsatisfactory. The shortages restrict effective access to curriculum content and particularly limit the development of literacy, investigative and research skills. School transport is appropriately maintained in a safe and reliable condition. Emergency procedures are not sufficiently rigorous and understood to ensure safe and orderly evacuation from those classrooms which are overcrowded.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

The school is not providing an adequate education for its students and the overall effectiveness of leadership and management remains unsatisfactory. Senior

leaders are committed to improvement and there are early signs of some development; this does not have enough urgency. Leaders are beginning to have a better understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The self-evaluation form (SEF) is overly positive and is not sufficiently linked to school development planning (SDP) in order to drive priority developments in all aspects of provision. Leaders and teachers do not sufficiently use the results of student performance data in order to inform improvement planning. The system for monitoring improvement lacks sufficient rigour.

Monitoring of teaching and learning does not provide sufficient focus and insufficient feedback is given to teachers to guide improvement. Senior leaders are beginning to provide support for subject leaders to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning. Professional development opportunities are regularly available to staff. It is not sufficiently linked to their performance management and the results of lesson observations and monitoring of its impact is limited. Resources are not always allocated or managed well enough to support learning and promote 21st century skills.

The day-to-day running of the school is adequate and there is a calm and caring ethos. Parents are supportive of the school and they are keen to be more involved. Responses to the parent questionnaire indicate generally a positive view of the school.

Progress since the last inspection

The school has not made adequate progress on addressing the recommendations from the previous inspection. Some progress has been made since the last inspection to improve care and guidance as well as health and safety. Leaders have undertaken self-evaluation of the school; judgments lack reliable evidence and are overly positive. There is a school development plan; the impact on improving standards and progress and the effectiveness of teaching is limited. Professional development has resulted in limited development of strategies used in lessons, such as collaborative learning.

Progress is not evident in areas such as the need to produce a sharply focused SDP, effective analysis and use of assessment to set challenging tasks and monitor progress, and planning to provide challenge for all students.

The school and senior leaders do not have the capacity to sustain improvement without external support.

What the school should do to improve further:

1. Improve the quality of teaching and learning so that all lessons are at least satisfactory and improve the pace of student learning by:
 - i. ensuring planning is detailed and takes account of students' prior attainment by analysing and using the results of assessment
 - ii. using individual attainment targets to accurately track the progress of students and to identify strengths and areas of improvement
 - iii. ensuring teachers and students make more effective use of learning resources including ICT
 - iv. enhancing teaching strategies including questioning techniques to challenge students and accelerate progress.
 2. Focus professional development opportunities and monitor their impact in order to:
 - i. improve teachers' understanding of, and skills in, how students learn best, particularly KG children
 - ii. support teachers in making effective use of resources
 - iii. improve teachers' understanding and use of assessment for learning.
 3. Develop the quality of professional leadership and management of the school by:
 - i. ensuring thorough evaluation of school performance that is closely linked to the priority goals in the school development planning
 - ii. providing more direction and opportunity for middle leaders to take responsibility for monitoring and evaluating performance in order to guide subject-specific improvement.
 4. Urgently address all health and safety concerns by:
 - i. implementing and practising safe and orderly evacuation procedures so that they are understood by students and staff
 - ii. regular maintenance checks and monitoring to ensure a high level of toilet hygiene.
 5. Improve the quality of the KG curriculum by identifying academic outcomes based on active and positive approaches to learning to meet learning needs.
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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								