



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



Summary Inspection Report

Beit Al Maqdes International Private
School

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Iqraa

Beit Al Maqdes International Private School

Inspection Date	8 th – 11 th October, 2012
School ID#	100
Type of School	Private
Curriculum	Ministry of Education
Number of Students	1873
Age Range	3 – 18 years
Gender	Mixed
Principal	Hussain Abu Mousa
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Introduction

Beit Al Maqdes International Private School was inspected by six inspectors. During their time in the school, they considered the school ethos, the quality of students' learning experiences, the standards they achieve, their personal development and the teaching they receive. The inspectors observed 110 lessons and other aspects of school life, such as break-times and assemblies. They held meetings with staff, students, parents and the owner of the school. They also examined school documentation and parental questionnaires.

Description of the School

Beit Al Maqdes International Private School is situated in the commercial area of Musaffah, on the outskirts of Abu Dhabi. It was founded in 2000 by the school's owners and the Beit Al Maqdes International Private School Group. The school aims to provide a supportive and caring learning environment in which students can achieve their potential. The school's values are enshrined in its motto 'One loving family'.

There are 1873 students on roll of which 1027 are boys and 846 are girls. Almost all students are Muslim. There are a small number of Christians. Ninety five per cent of students are of Arabic heritage background, mainly from Jordan (19%), Syria (15%), the Yemen (12%), Palestine (11%) and Egypt (18%).

Most students come from working families and many live in the commercial area close to the school. Admission to the school is based on an initial assessment of ability. There are no students identified as having special educational needs. Student retention rates are very high.

School fees are low ranging from AED 4,914 in Kindergarten to AED 10,020 in Grade 12. A small charge is made for uniforms and books.

The teaching staff are all Muslim and from Arab heritage backgrounds. The turnover of staff is similar to other international schools at between 16% and 20% per annum.

The Effectiveness of the School

Band B

Grade 4

Inspectors judged Beit Al Maqdes International Private School to be in Band B; that is a school that is satisfactory.

There have been significant improvements in the overall effectiveness of the school since the last inspection. These have resulted in improved teaching and higher student achievement. The previous inspection made suggestions for improvement in several areas, including buildings and premises, teaching,

standards, leadership and guidance for students. The principal has acted on the recommendations and ensured that significant improvements have been made in each area. The school has ensured that security is good and there are no risks to students' health and safety. Improvements to the buildings and premises, including new specialist facilities, learning resource rooms and computer labs, are benefiting students in higher grades, particularly in science. Students appreciate the pleasant and spacious learning environment, which contributes to their enjoyment of school.

The leadership team and supervisors have analysed student data rigorously. This, with observations of lessons, has enabled them to gain a clearer picture of the strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning.

There have been improvements in the quality of teaching as a result of well-planned professional development and coaching by subject supervisors. Most teachers are now using a range of teaching methods, including the use of new technology. The quality of teaching is still too variable in each subject. There is more to do to improve the methods of teaching in Kindergarten (KG) and the lower grades to meet the needs of young learners. Standards have improved in Arabic, Islamic studies and social studies. Relevant guidance on options for further study and future careers has been provided for students in high school.

There has been an improvement in the overall standards achieved by students of all abilities and in their rates of progress. Standards are similar to schools following the same curriculum. Progress accelerates as students move up the school. Progress is good in Arabic, Islamic studies and social studies. By the end of Grade 12 students achieve good standards in Arabic, Islamic studies and social studies. Progress in English, mathematics, and science is satisfactory and improving. Standards in mathematics are satisfactory and in English and science they are satisfactory and improving. Girls make much better progress than boys. Students working at different levels all make similar satisfactory progress.

Standards in KG and Grades 1 and 2 are weakest. Progress is hindered by a lack of opportunities to learn through practical activities which are carefully matched to individual needs. Many children begin KG with limited language skills, particularly in English. They improve their listening skills steadily in both Arabic and English. Their progress in speaking, learning sounds, reading and writing letters and words is slow. They learn to count numbers and recognise mathematical shapes. They begin to explore the world around them through their senses. Social and creative skills and knowledge and understanding about the world are underdeveloped.

Standards in Arabic are good in all grades. In Grades 1 to 3 students make good progress in listening, speaking, reading and writing. They continue to make good

progress in their use of spoken and written Arabic. By Grade 12 most students speak fluently and read with understanding and expression. They write detailed and well-structured accounts with accuracy. Standards in Islamic studies are good in all grades and students make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of Islamic values and recitation skills. Standards in social studies are good and students make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of the Arab world, its heritage and geographical features.

Standards in English from Grades 4 onwards are satisfactory. Students make more rapid progress in the middle and higher grades. By the end of Grade 12, most students have an extensive spoken and written vocabulary. They read increasingly complex texts with understanding and can summarise and extract relevant details. They have a satisfactory knowledge of grammar and spelling rules. Their writing is coherent and ideas are structured logically. There is too much variation in students' ability to spell correctly and apply grammar rules in their written work. Girls achieve higher standards than boys.

Standards in mathematics are satisfactory. Students' ability to calculate mentally and apply their knowledge to problem solving is underdeveloped in some classes. Progress is inconsistent across grades. Girls make better progress than boys. Standards in science are satisfactory. Most students show a secure understanding of scientific concepts and the skills to apply their learning to practical tasks. Standards in information communication technology (ICT) are satisfactory. The use of ICT as a resource for learning in other subjects is underdeveloped.

Students in the lower grades show self-confidence in trying out new experiences. As students progress through school they show consistently positive attitudes to all aspects of school life. They collaborate well in groups and supported each other in learning. Students behave well in lessons and at break times. They have a strong sense of right from wrong. This is evident in the respect they show to each other and to their teachers. Students in lower grades do not always follow the school's rules about putting litter in the bins provided. Students in Grade 12 show a high level of personal responsibility and have high aspirations for their future.

Teaching is satisfactory and improving. There is some good and very good teaching in each subject. Most teachers have good subject knowledge. Some are less secure about how to teach their subjects, particularly in KG and the lower grades. In the best lessons, teachers have high expectations of all students and adapt their teaching methods to suit the learning objectives and needs of

students. Group work is used productively in English lessons to practise language skills and share ideas.

Most teachers use questioning to check understanding. Questioning is less effective in provoking higher order thinking and challenging more able students. In most lessons teachers supplement the work in textbooks with posters, worksheets and students' own contributions on the whiteboard. They do not always make the best use of ICT resources to enhance learning.

In most lessons tasks and activities are motivating and relevant to the learning objectives. Students engage readily with the tasks. In a minority of lessons teachers spend too much time talking to students and do not allow sufficient time for them to complete tasks to a high standard. Too often there are missed opportunities to provide constructive advice to students on how to improve their work in lessons and through marking. As a result students are not always challenged sufficiently to do their best. Teachers have a good knowledge of their students and are willing to support those experiencing difficulties. Specific tasks are not always provided for the less able and more able students. Teachers have high expectations of behaviour and there is consistency in the way most teachers manage students. The learning environment in the girls' section is pleasant and stimulating and the displays supported learning effectively. This may partly account for the good progress that girls make. The boys' section is stark, by contrast. There is little evidence of celebration of student work and achievement.

The curriculum is satisfactory overall. The programmes are clearly focused on equipping students with the knowledge, understanding and skills to enable them to move on to the next stage in their education. In particular, the science programme prepares students well for higher education in the fields of engineering, computer science and medicine. Many of the activities that students are engaged in, especially in English, mathematics and science, are motivating for students. The curriculum takes account of the different needs of students by providing additional support or challenge. It gives students a good understanding of UAE values, culture and society. It is less successful in ensuring that students receive a breadth of learning experiences. In this regard it does not compare well to the best curricular standards internationally. For example, opportunities for sport are limited and music is not offered. In KG the learning experiences are not always well matched to the needs of young learners. There are insufficient opportunities for children to learn through active involvement using a range of suitable practical resources. The lack of resources limits children's opportunities to develop independence in their learning and to apply their learning. From Grade 3 onwards the curriculum builds on what students already know and can do and there is a smooth transition to Grade 4. In subsequent grades students build on

their knowledge, skills and understanding further in all subjects and begin to apply their learning. Continuity and progression are helping to raise standards and accelerate progress. Students are regularly engaged in a range of interesting and relevant extra-curricular activities. All of these activities are carefully planned to promote interest, high achievement and personal development. Opportunities for independent learning, enquiry, and research using ICT are limited in curricular planning.

The school provides good care for all students. Members of staff show a genuine interest in students' academic progress and well-being. There is a very positive ethos in the school. Students say that they feel safe in school and that their teachers and supervisors are approachable if they have any concerns. They value the help that teachers provide outside lessons. The school provides a suitable place for prayer. There are very high expectations of student attendance. Procedures to monitor student attendance are very effective and as a result it is consistently above 98%. The students are well supervised on their arrival and departure from school.

The school buildings and premises are satisfactory. They are well maintained and provide a safe and hygienic learning environment. The new accommodation, including specialist facilities, is good and is benefiting older students' learning, particularly in science. Students appreciate the opportunities for learning in spacious, purpose built rooms. Some classrooms are small, particularly in Kindergarten. This restricts the opportunities for learning. Most aspects of resources are satisfactory and are adequate to support students in their learning. Teachers are well qualified and most are well matched to the courses and ages they teach. There is a shortage of teaching assistants in Kindergarten. Professional development is given a high priority and is well planned to meet individual needs. Resources for ICT are good. Their use in supporting learning in subjects is limited. There is a shortage of good quality books in both libraries. Practical resources for developing language and mathematical skills are limited.

The principal provides strong leadership and clear strategic direction. He has the full support of the leadership team and subject supervisors. There is effective team working in all aspects of the school's activity. Leaders, at all levels, are deeply committed to the school and to improving the school further. They have ensured that improvements have been made in all areas since the last inspection. Supervisors are fully involved in evaluating the performance of the school and planning for improvement. The principal is highly visible around the school and knows his school well. He has high expectations of staff and students. The owner has a good understanding of his duties as proprietor and enables the leadership team to function effectively. There are thorough systems in place which ensure

that financial and administrative aspects of the school are managed effectively. The school has well-judged priorities for improvement and a strong capacity to improve standards further. It provides very good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further:

1. Improve the provision for children in Kindergarten by:
 - i. providing learning experiences which are well matched to the needs of all learners;
 - ii. improving the resources for practical activities;
 - iii. providing more opportunities for children to be supported by an adult in a small group; and
 - iv. structuring the school day to provide a balance between teacher led activities and opportunities for children to choose well planned activities for themselves.
2. Continue to improve the quality of teaching by:
 - i. ensuring that the best practice is evident in all lessons; and
 - ii. supporting teachers in using methods that best suit the needs of young learners in KG, Grades 1-2.
3. Broaden the curricular opportunities for all students by:
 - i. increasing the range of sporting and creative activities, including art and music; and
 - ii. providing more opportunities for students to develop higher order thinking and proficient research skills using ICT.
4. Continue to raise standards in English, mathematics and science, particularly for boys by:
 - i. ensuring that all students are sufficiently challenged and supported;
 - ii. providing tasks and activities which are well - matched to their needs; and
 - iii. involving students in assessing their progress and taking more responsibility for their learning.