



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



Summary Inspection Report

The British School – Al Khubairat

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Inspection Date	19 th – 22th November, 2012
School ID#	119
Type of School	Private
Curriculum	British (English National Curriculum)
Number of Students	1,815
Age Range	3 – 18 years
Gender	Mixed
Principal	Paul Coackley
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Introduction

The inspection of the British School Al Khubairat took place on 19-22 November 2012. The school was inspected by six inspectors. During their time in school inspectors considered the school ethos, the quality of students' learning experiences, personal development and the teaching they receive. The inspectors observed 116 lessons and other aspects of school life such as break-times. They held meetings with staff, students, parents and governors of the school. The inspectors also examined school documentation and information from parental questionnaires.

Description of the School

Founded in 1968 as a small primary school serving the British community, the British School Al Khubairat is now a large, not-for-profit school providing a British-style education for boys and girls aged 3-18. The school moved to its present purpose-built site in 1980, expanded into secondary education in 1999 and opened a sixth form in 2003. The governance of the school is vested in a board made up of governors appointed by His Excellency the British Ambassador and others elected by the parent body.

The school follows the English National Curriculum for the foundation stage, primary and secondary school and GCSE and A Level post National Curriculum. It also provides Arabic, Islamic studies and part of the Ministry of Education (MoE) prescribed social studies course.

There are 1,815 students on roll of which 918 are boys and 897 girls. Students are admitted to the school according to their ability to access the curriculum in English. Most students come from advantaged socio-economic backgrounds,

Sixty two percent of students are British. The rest come from more than fifty nationalities, including: Emirati twelve percent, Australian four percent, American three percent, Irish two percent, Canadian two percent and one percent each for the following nationalities Pakistani, Indian, South African and Lebanese. Thirty three percent of students are Muslim. Many students are multi-lingual.

Approximately 200 students receive additional support with learning, across a range of different needs. The turnover of students is relatively low at 10%.

Fees are as follows: foundation stage 34,054 AED, primary 44,160 AED, secondary 59,296 AED. Teachers' salaries are well above UK averages, ranging from 13,904 AED to 28,659 AED per month plus additional allowances.

The school's main aim is to maximise the potential of each individual. It places a high value on academic achievement and personal development. There is a strong emphasis on developing students' independent learning skills, including enquiry, critical thinking and proficient research.

The Effectiveness of the School

Band A

Grade 2

Inspectors judged the British School Al Khubairat to be in Band A; that is high performing school.

The school has maintained very high standards since the previous inspection by the Independent Schools Inspectorate and acted on the recommendations in the report. All aspects of the curriculum for personal, social and health education (PSHE) are now taught as planned in primary. The teaching methods used in most lessons in Years 10-13 engage students' interest well and provide appropriate challenge and opportunities for creative thinking. The school is developing imaginative, but as yet not fully effective, approaches to improving Arabic, Islamic studies and social studies.

Standards achieved by students and the progress they make are very good and at times outstanding in almost all subjects. Students make very good and often excellent progress from their starting points in English, mathematics and science as they progress through the school. In foundation stage students are already showing a great potential for learning. This enables them to make rapid progress in communication, reading, writing and mathematics. Children also make rapid progress in developing their creative, personal and social skills and knowledge and understanding of the world. By the end of foundation stage 2 many children have developed their listening and speaking skills very well. They read sentences, spell regular words and write a short sentence correctly. They know the names of mathematical shapes and have well developed mathematical skills.

As students progress through the school they continue to perform at a level which compares well with the best international standards. In primary, all students make very good and often excellent progress in English, mathematics and science. The standards achieved by the most able students in Year 6 are outstanding. Students convert fractions to decimals and percentages at high speed. They write extended pieces, using well-structured sentences and imaginative vocabulary. Students with special educational needs make very good progress in basic skills of literacy and numeracy. Students make excellent progress in history, geography, music and physical education and standards are often high. Students in Year 6 showed excellent enquiry skills when researching

their history topic. They used information from a range of books and information technology and showed an ability to work collaboratively as a team.

Throughout the school students make excellent progress in their thinking skills and use of information and communication technology (ICT) to access the curriculum. Students make satisfactory and improving progress in Arabic and Islamic studies as observed in lessons. Standards are satisfactory and improving in Islamic studies and satisfactory in Arabic. Year 6 students were able to write up their own CV in Arabic, and Year 7 were able to write about their vacation experiences with minimal support from the teacher. In general across year groups, students' comprehension when reading Arabic is less strong and many found it difficult to discuss what they had just read and were reluctant to converse in Arabic. Students' skills in reciting the Quran are underdeveloped.

Results in GCSE and A level examinations show that students consistently achieve standards which are well above the average for non-selective schools following a similar curriculum. These results and the progress observed in lessons, indicate that students make very good and sometimes exceptional progress when compared to others of similar ability. Students are very well prepared for the next stage of their education, with virtually all students gaining places at universities around the world.

Students' personal development is outstanding. They are well-motivated and take responsibility for their own learning. They make excellent progress, throughout their time in school, in developing independent learning skills, including enquiry, critical thinking and research skills. The behaviour of students is exemplary in lessons and at break-times. The school is a harmonious community and students relate exceptionally well to each other. They have a very good understanding and respect for the different cultures and faiths represented in the UAE. Students readily accept responsibility. Students' practical understanding of how to live safe and healthy lives is very good, demonstrated by their actions and lifestyles in school. Students enjoy school and embrace the many opportunities provided for developing skills and personal qualities that will support them very well in education and employment. Many take part in the 'Duke of Edinburgh Award' scheme, field study trips and sporting events around the world.

Teaching is very good and often excellent. There are many examples of inspirational teaching in all subjects. Teachers are very well qualified for the subjects they teach and use methods and resources which engage students' interest and accelerate their progress very well. Teachers have high expectations of students and there is a high level of challenge in most lessons. Teachers use questioning very effectively to provoke thinking. They provide interesting tasks

and activities which stimulate higher order thinking skills. In Arabic planned activities do not always sufficiently engage students. Relationships are excellent and students respond well to their teachers. They feel secure in responding to questions and asking when they do not understand. Assessment is used very effectively; this ensures that students of all abilities are well catered for. Good use is made of self-assessment and peer group assessment. Teachers provide constructive advice on how to improve students' work during lessons. Advice given through marking is less effective; it is not consistent in all subjects. Support staff are deployed effectively and make an important contribution to student outcomes.

The curriculum has many strengths. It is particularly successful in motivating students and developing their independent learning skills and personal qualities. It meets the full range of students' needs exceptionally well, including students with special educational needs and those who are gifted and talented. The provision for foundation stage is excellent with an appropriate emphasis on language and mathematical skills, teacher- directed and child- initiated learning.

The curriculum in primary is imaginatively-planned to make learning relevant and interesting; it is very successful in making links between subjects and ensuring progression in knowledge, skills and understanding. In music, Year 4 students composed ostinato rhythms to a song about ancient Egyptian Gods and sang a song about the seven emirates in the UAE. A wide range of subjects are provided at GCSE and A level. Curriculum planning is excellent and ensures that the needs of all students are met. The school has reviewed and improved the Arabic curriculum and methodology and is well placed to improve further the standards achieved by students although there is more to do in social studies to ensure that all the requirements are covered.

The school promotes an understanding of UAE family values and culture as displayed by students in discussion groups. Students report on a wide range of opportunities at the school to learn about and celebrate the UAE values and culture. These include curriculum activities such as a course in the history of the UAE, population studies, Arabic cookery, cultural design in clothes and textiles. Each year the school celebrates National Day and Cultural Day. At morning registration, the national anthem is sung and students salute the flag. The curriculum is enriched by an outstanding range of extra-curricular activities which make a significant contribution to students' academic and personal achievement. There are high levels of student participation. A well-planned programme of themed days, educational visits and visiting speakers further enriches students' experience. The e-learning site where students can log on for further links to subject topics supports learning very well.

The protection, care, guidance and support for students are exemplary. The school provides excellent care for all students. Staff show a genuine interest in students' academic progress and well-being. They are very alert to each student's needs. There is a very positive ethos in the school. Students say that they feel secure and well-supported and that their teachers are approachable if they have any concerns. The excellent induction arrangements for students who join the school help them to feel welcome and enable them to settle in quickly. Students in upper school use the local mosque for prayer. The designated place for prayer in the school is small for the number of Muslim students. The school has high expectations of attendance. There are very effective procedures to monitor attendance, which ensure that attendance is consistently above 95%. The students are well supervised on their arrival and departure from school.

The inspirational design and outstanding quality of the buildings and premises make a significant contribution to students' learning and wellbeing. Students appreciate the pleasant, comfortable and stimulating learning environment that is very well-adapted to the age of students. The spacious classrooms and communal areas for foundation stage children provide an exceptional environment for learning. There are excellent library and sports facilities, including a fitness centre and generously sized swimming pools. The specialist rooms, including laboratories, a theatre and music rooms are very conducive to high achievement. The buildings and premises are maintained to a very high standard, reflecting excellent health and safety practice.

The quality, quantity and range of resources throughout the school are excellent. Teachers and school leaders are very well qualified and make a significant contribution to students' outcomes. Teacher/student ratio is very good. The curricular programmes are very well resourced. Well-equipped activity centres in foundation stage support learning very well. All classrooms and specialist rooms are equipped to a very high standard. There is an extensive range of suitable fiction and non-fiction in the libraries. The school is very well equipped with computers and interactive whiteboards.

The quality of leadership and management is very good. The principal and headteachers have proved themselves capable of sustaining impressive outcomes for students through providing a high quality of education for students. The principal has distributed leadership responsibilities effectively and with the leadership team has close oversight of the work of middle management. There is effective team working in all aspects of the school's activity and staff morale is high. Leaders, at all levels, are deeply committed to the school and school improvement. The school has well-judged priorities for improvement which are informed by a thorough review and evaluation process. Leaders at all levels are

accountable for their performance. The performance management process for teachers is very effective in improving teaching performance and student outcomes. Targets are closely linked to the priorities in the strategic plan and to individual professional development needs. Professional development is given a high priority, including access to Master's degree programmes through a UK university. Many teachers with leadership responsibilities have completed the 'International Leading from the Middle' programme. Staff turnover is low. Links with parents are excellent; there is a high level of satisfaction about the work of the school. Detailed informative reports about students' academic progress are sent out termly. Parents receive helpful handbooks about the curriculum, regular newsletters and excellent publications such as the 'Desert Star'. The school provides good value for money and has a strong capacity to improve standards further.

What the school should do to improve further:

1. Continue to further improve standards in Arabic by:
 - i. ensuring that there is a strong focus on the acquisition of basic skills in curricular plans;
 - ii. providing more opportunities in lessons for speaking, reading and writing in standard Arabic; and
 - iii. providing relevant and purposeful tasks and activities which motivate and engage students' interest.
1. Raise standards in social studies by further improving the effectiveness of cross-curricular planning taking account of the requirements.
2. Allocate dedicated space for prayer in the school for all students.
3. Improve the standards and consistency in teaching further by ensuring all teachers provide students with effective feedback on their completed work.
4. Ensure compliance to ADEC approved curriculum for Social Studies and in teaching hours for Arabic, Islamic studies and UAE history.