



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



Private School Inspection Report

The British School Al Khubairat

Academic Year 2016 – 2017

إقرأ

The British School Al Khubairat

Inspection Date	October 10, 2016	to	October 13, 2016
Date of previous inspection	June 1, 2014	to	June 4, 2014

General Information	
School ID	119
Opening year of school	1968
Principal	Mark Leppard (Headmaster)
School telephone	+971 (0)2 446 2280
School Address	Airport Road, Al Mushrif, Abu Dhabi
Official email (ADEC)	british.pvt@adec.ac.ae
School website	www.britishschool.sch.ae
Fee ranges (per annum)	High to very high (AED 41,500 – AED 62,300)
Licensed Curriculum	
Main Curriculum	English National Curriculum (ENC)
Other Curriculum (if applicable)	-----
External Exams/ Standardised tests	GCSE, AS-level, A-level, NFER, BTEC
Accreditation	AQA, Edexcel, WJEC

Students		
Total number of students	1878	
%of students per curriculum (if applicable)	Main Curriculum	100%
	Other Curriculum	----
Number of students in other phases	KG	225
	Primary:	763
	Middle:	404
	High:	486
Age range	3 to 18 years	
Grades or Year Groups	KG1 to Grade 12 (Nursery to Year 13)	
Gender	Mixed	
% of Emirati Students	12%	
Largest nationality groups (%)	1. British 65%	
	2. Australian 4%	
	3. Irish 3%	
Staff		
Number of teachers	120	
Number of teaching assistants (TAs)	8	
Teacher-student ratio	KG/ FS	1:25
	Other phases	1:25
Teacher turnover	21%	

Introduction

Inspection activities	
Number of inspectors deployed	5
Number of inspection days	4
Number of lessons observed	133
Number of joint lesson observations	28
Number of parents' questionnaires	285; return rate: 16.3%
Details of other inspection activities	The inspection team held meetings with the principal, the Governing Board, senior staff, subject coordinators, teachers, students and parents. They analysed school documents, performance data, records and students' work. Inspectors also attended assemblies and observed intervals, arrivals and departures.

School	
School Aims	'Building on our unique local heritage, we will provide a world class British education inspiring all our students to exceed expectations.'
School vision and mission	'Providing the best teachers, leadership and support in a not-for-profit environment, we nurture a genuine passion for learning.'
Admission Policy	Non-selective and inclusive of students with diverse needs.



Leadership structure (ownership, governance and management)	Ownership is through a Board of Governors. The board comprises almost entirely current or past parents. The majority are elected while the British Ambassador appoints others. The senior leadership team comprises the principal, two vice principals and five further members of senior staff. Middle leadership comprises heads of subject departments and year leaders.
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SEN Details (Refer to ADEC SEN Policy and Procedures)

SEN Category	Number of students identified through external assessments	Number of other students identified by the school internally
Intellectual disability	6	0
Specific Learning Disability	89	147
Emotional and Behaviour Disorders (ED/ BD)	15	2
Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)	1	0
Speech and Language Disorders	3	0
Physical and health related disabilities	2	0
Visually impaired	1	0
Hearing impaired	1	0
Multiple disabilities	0	0

G&T Details (Refer to ADEC SEN Policy and Procedures)

G&T Category	Number of students identified
Intellectual ability	57
Subject-specific aptitude (e.g. in science, mathematics, languages)	57
Social maturity and leadership	62
Mechanical/ technical/ technological ingenuity	10
Visual and performing arts (e.g. art, theatre, recitation)	5
Psychomotor ability (e.g. dance or sport)	67

The overall performance of the school

Inspectors considered the school in relation to 3 performance categories

Band A	High performing (Outstanding, Very Good or Good)
Band B	Satisfactory (Acceptable)
Band C	In need of significant improvement (Weak or Very Weak)

School was judged to be:	BAND A	Very Good
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	Band A High Performing			Band B Satisfactory	Band C In need of significant improvement	
Performance Standards	Outstanding	Very Good	Good	Acceptable	Weak	Very Weak
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						
Summary Evaluation: The school's overall performance						

The Performance of the School

Evaluation of the school's overall performance

The overall performance of the school is very good. All groups of students learn to respect each other in a strongly inclusive culture. Their personal development is very strong. Students develop very positive attitudes and have confidence in their own abilities. Staff offer very good protection, care and support while nurturing students' talents and interests. Students' achievement and the quality of teaching in subjects taught in English are almost always very good and often outstanding. This represents most of the school curriculum. In subjects taught in Arabic, the majority of achievement and teaching is acceptable and the large minority is weak. This represents a minority of the school curriculum. An acting principal took over the leadership of the school at the time of the last inspection and maintained the school's performance thereafter for four terms. The current principal has been in post for one year and has made important changes in staffing. The large majority of the school leadership team are new, through either recruitment or promotion. A new Chair of Governors (Board of Trustees) has been in post since the previous inspection. The new school leadership is now taking decisive steps to improve its provision for Arabic subjects in the context of the UAE national agenda. This involves blending Arabic learning and culture across the curriculum for all students, and improving teaching and learning in Arabic subjects. It is an overdue but important improvement initiative that is likely to have a positive impact on learning for all students and, consequently, the overall performance of the school.

Progress made since last inspection and capacity to improve

Since the last inspection, school leaders have successfully promoted the caring and supportive ethos of the school. They have maintained very high standards and strong progress in English-medium subjects through very effective teaching. The school has met four of the five recommendations made in the previous report including meeting requirements for the timetabling of subjects taught in Arabic. UAE social studies is now included in the timetable. Until very recently, the school's leadership and governance had not given sufficient priority to addressing the third action point – that of improving the Arabic curriculum. The school's recent self-evaluation was inflated because leaders gave too much emphasis to the English-medium curriculum and insufficient to the Arabic one. School leaders realised this recently and re-appraised the school's self-evaluation objectively. This important, realistic step shows that the school now has the capacity to improve.

Development and promotion of innovation skills

The school is developing students' innovation skills effectively, often through creativity, particularly in literature, music, drama and art. For example, sixth form students have produced their own high-quality literary magazine as contributors, designers, manufacturers and promoters. Their willingness to experiment and innovate is also evident in lessons. Students in high school media lessons produce artistically and technically challenging work both on video and in print. Teachers use innovative teaching strategies. For example, Grade 1 students showed good innovation skills while discovering how to make ginger bread. The school is innovative in its use of technology. For example, younger children take photographs or videos of their work and send them immediately to their parents and carers.

The inspection identified the following as key areas of strength:

- the consistently high quality of teaching and the resulting very high achievement of students in English National Curriculum subjects
- highly articulate and confident students with positive attitudes and respect for each other within a strongly inclusive ethos
- the vibrant, stimulating and caring school environment that offers support and guidance to all students
- the high aspiration of students for their future education and lives
- the exceptionally strong start that children make to their education in the kindergarten.

The inspection identified the following as key areas for improvement:

- the quality of teaching and achievement of students in subjects taught in Arabic
- the governance of the school ensuring accountability and having influence on the school's performance
- the accuracy of the school's self-evaluation, particularly of the Arabic language areas of the school curriculum.

Performance Standard 1: Students' Achievement

Students' achievement Indicators		KG	Primary	Middle	High
Islamic Education	Attainment	N/A	Weak	Weak	Weak
	Progress	N/A	Weak	Acceptable	Acceptable
Arabic (as a First Language)	Attainment	Good	Acceptable	Weak	Weak
	Progress	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable	Weak
Arabic (as a Second Language)	Attainment	Good	Acceptable	Good	Acceptable
	Progress	Good	Acceptable	Good	Acceptable
Social Studies	Attainment	N/A	Acceptable	Good	N/A
	Progress	N/A	Acceptable	Good	N/A
English	Attainment	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
	Progress	Outstanding	Very Good	Very Good	Outstanding
Mathematics	Attainment	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
	Progress	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Science	Attainment	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
	Progress	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Language of instruction (if other than English and Arabic as First Language)	Attainment	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Progress	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
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 (including innovation, creativity, critical thinking, communication, problem-solving and collaboration)		Very Good	Good	Good	Very Good

The overall quality of students' achievement is very good. Learning skills are very good at KG and the higher phase, and good at primary and middle phases. Attainment and progress are strongest in subjects taught in English where they are frequently outstanding. Attainment in these subjects is among the very best nationally and internationally. This outstanding attainment is the result of consistently very good or outstanding teaching over time. Attainment and progress range from weak to good in subjects taught in Arabic in the primary, middle and high phases of the school. Higher and lower attaining students who have specific educational needs make very strong progress from their different starting points across most of the curriculum. Students who have specific needs are not as swiftly identified or as well supported in Arabic-medium subjects and so do not achieve as well. Boys and girls achieve as well as each other.

Attainment is weak in Islamic education in the primary, middle and high phases where teaching is in Arabic. It is above curriculum standards in lessons taught in English. Progress is weak in the primary phase. This is because teachers dominate lessons too much and students are insufficiently engaged. Students' attainment in the MoE examinations in Islamic education at the end of Grade 12 is above curriculum standards.

Children with Arabic as a first or second language learn together in the KG and their achievement is good. In Arabic as a first language, attainment is weak in the upper grades because of weaker teaching in earlier years. Teachers in these lessons do not use Arabic as the principal language of communication. Teaching of Arabic as a first language in Grade 12 focuses too much on training students to pass the test at the expense of effective learning and literacy skills. Attainment against expectations in Arabic as a second language is better, particularly in the middle phase, where it is above age-related expectations. Students share their own experiences in the majority of these lessons. For example, Grade 9 students spoke in clear Arabic language about their own experiences of tourism in the UAE.

The progress of students in UAE social studies improves to good at the middle phase. Their attainment is also good in the middle phase, while it is acceptable in the primary phase. In most lessons where UAE social studies is taught in English, students show progress that is above expectations due to better teaching and language skills. Most of these students are fully engaged in lessons and demonstrate strong learning skills. For example, students in Grade 8 showed effective research skills in collecting facts about different Arab countries and the UAE. They present their research to class, ask questions and answer the teacher challenging questions.



Most students in English National Curriculum subjects from Grade 1 to Grade 12 attain very highly. This performance has been maintained over several years. In KG, a rich and exciting range of individual, group and whole class English language activities leads to consistently very good attainment and outstanding progress. The teaching of English letters and their sounds is outstanding. Attainment and progress in English in the rest of the school is at least very good year on year. The sixth form has a lively culture of sharing creative writing that promotes students' outstanding literary skills.

Attainment and progress in mathematics is consistently well above curriculum expectations. Early on in KG, children can use strategies such as using a number line to check that their answers are correct. Students in Grade 11 can accurately use chain, product and quotient rules when solving trigonometric functions. Results in mathematics at GCSE and A level are among the very best in similar English NC schools anywhere in the world.

Students achieve exceptionally well in science from KG to Grade 12. For example, Grade 7 students use mirrors and magnifying glasses to demonstrate how light can transfer energy over a large distance. The outstanding success of the science department means that the large majority of students go on to study science-related subjects at university.

Students' achievement in the wide range of other subjects is very good in all phases. At GCSE level, for example, almost all in drama and in media achieved a B or above. At GCE A-level, the large minority of students across all subjects attained A* or A grades. Many students achieve high standards in sport, art and music, with many achieving outstanding performance levels.

Students rapidly develop very good learning skills because of stimulating activities and a lively educational environment throughout the school. In KG, for example, teachers take every opportunity to promote and accelerate children's learning through play. As students progress through the school, collaborative and exploratory learning experiences across the English-medium curriculum foster these skills and lead to good skills overall. Students demonstrate enterprise, enquiry and critical thinking in English and science in particular. Learning skills are less well developed in lessons in the middle and higher phases due to teachers' focus on examinations.

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
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Personal development	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Good	Good	Good	Good
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good

Students' very good personal development begins when they first enter the KG. Teachers guide carefully children's choices of diverse, stimulating activities, indoors and out, to build their personal confidence and esteem. They swiftly adopt appropriate behaviour and display positive attitudes. They go on to become courteous and confident students as they progress through the school. These hard-working students have high aspirations for their future education and lives.

Very positive relationships across the school are enhanced by the competitive house system. In one primary school assembly, for example, a tug-of-war brought Grade 12 and primary students together as teams in friendly rivalry. The very good behaviour of students is evident in all school activities both in lessons and beyond. Students look after themselves as well as each other through healthy eating and regular exercise. Attendance is good at 95% and students are punctual.

Students' awareness of Emirati and world cultures is generally good overall. Their understanding of Islamic values is not as well established and for most students is much less secure. A few students behaved poorly and had negative attitudes in a few Arabic lessons in the primary phase.

Overall, students have a positive sense of social responsibility. For example, they volunteer for community action both in the UAE and in other countries. For some, this had involved working in an orphanage in Tanzania. Students regularly organise non-uniform charity days at school to raise funds for the Red Crescent. Attendance is high at an environmental club after school. In addition, students are enterprising in business, supported by visits from Emirati entrepreneurs.

Performance Standard 3: Teaching and Assessment

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

The very good quality of teaching and assessment in the KG leads to highly effective learning, through creative and purposeful play. Arabic teaching is good because it is centred on the children. Children receive an outstanding start in mathematics and in science, often through exploration and discovery. The contribution made by teaching assistants is particularly strong.

The quality of teaching in the primary, middle and high phases of the school is very good overall. In Arabic as a first language and Islamic education and UAE social studies taught in Arabic, the teaching is less effective than in other areas. Teachers dominate too much, provide few opportunities for students to speak the language, and do not do not match work to students' interests and needs. When taught Islamic education and UAE social studies in English, students collaborate well in a range of activities. In Arabic as a first language, the majority of students do not show positive attitudes and just follow teacher direction. In English national curriculum subjects, almost all teachers demonstrate very strong subject knowledge. Learning is engaging because it is active and varied, including with innovative use of handheld technology in the classroom and of the school's computer network. Literacy skills are taught very successfully in English. In mathematics, teaching is consistently strong in all phases. Students make very good progress in science lessons because of teachers' comprehensive knowledge of their subject and of how students learn through investigative and experimental work. The teaching of other NC subjects is also very good because of the high level of teachers' expertise.

The school has developed improved systems of assessment since the last inspection. Almost all teachers of English-medium subjects are able to share accurate and helpful information with their students. Teachers use student assessment data consistently well to plan and adapt lessons to meet the needs of all groups of students. As a result, almost all students are clear about their progress and targets in these subjects. Most marking is frequent and developmental in almost all phases and subjects in the

English NC. Not all teachers consistently apply the school's assessment policies, particularly at the primary and middle phases.

Performance Standard 4: Curriculum

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

The school's curriculum is good overall. The implementation of the English NC is broad and balanced. It includes a very wide range of creative, physical and practical experiences. In the KG, it is delivered through carefully designed themes. This links and layers experiences and learning to build a broad and robust foundation for future years. In the middle and high phases of the school, there is an extensive range of options at GCSE level and GCE A-level. Languages include French and Spanish, while popular design technology courses cover product design, food technology, graphics and textiles.

The curriculum is structured in the English subjects so that learning is seamless. Students are well prepared for each new phase. For example, Grade 5 students have a full month's induction into Grade 6 and students in Grade 10 are given taster courses of subjects on offer in Grade 11. Students are very well prepared for university, gaining places at renowned, world-class institutions. Further work is needed to improve progression and continuity in the Arabic-medium subjects.

The curriculum is not explicitly aligned to the UAE national agenda. Teachers do not always take the opportunity in lessons to relate material to appropriate Emirati national and cultural examples. Since the previous inspection, the school has ensured that its timetable and delivery is compliant with national regulations. The school has not always found solutions to timetabling that give appropriate emphasis to Arabic-medium subjects.

There is an exceptionally rich programme of extra-curricular activities for all students. This includes after-school clubs, weekend courses, out-of-term educational visits and a dedicated activities week. The school also brings in the outside world through speakers and cultural events. The school's English national curriculum is up to date with recent changes in assessment and course structure.

Performance Standard 5: The protection, care, guidance and support of students

The protection, care, guidance and support of students Indicators	KG	Primary	Middle	High
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Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection/safeguarding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Care and support	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good

Students, staff and parents feel that the school provides an excellent level of protection, care, guidance and support. This is evident in the delighted parents and smiling faces of children in the KG, for example. It is just as evident in the confident and articulate, Grade 12 students preparing for interviews at elite universities around the world. The school's exemplary provision is most evident, however, in the harmonious school ethos that brings together all ages and all cultures. Relationships between students and between staff and students are respectful and kind. The school has very effective systems for behaviour management that centre on negotiation and making appropriate choices. Systems to promote attendance and punctuality are very good with clear records and swift follow-up.

The school has a very well equipped clinic with four nurses who provide first class health care for the whole school community. The school has highly effective procedures for the safeguarding of students. Training for all staff is regularly updated and refreshed. The school's safety drills include 'lockdown' procedures. The school's procedures to ensure the safety of students arriving and leaving the school premises are appropriate. The school's system of student care is coherent, linking counsellors, careers guidance and heads of year.

Students who need additional support or challenge are well taught in most areas of the curriculum. A dedicated team of very effective learning support teachers works closely with individual students in class and outside. Students who are identified as being gifted and talented receive additional provision in clubs and competitions. These students are challenged insufficiently in Arabic-medium lessons. Similarly, support for students with special education needs requires decisive improvement in these lessons.

Performance Standard 6: Leadership and management

Leadership and management Indicators	
The effectiveness of leadership	Good
Self-evaluation and improvement planning	Acceptable
Partnerships with parents and the community	Very Good
Governance	Acceptable
Management, staffing, facilities and resources	Very Good

Leadership and management of the school are good. The new principal has provided strategic direction for the school after a period of turbulence followed by inertia. He has formed a new leadership team and has consulted all stakeholders in order to reaffirm the school's vision. This has been within a national and international context. The impact of this strategy is only beginning to emerge. School leaders at all levels are ambitious for the school and its students. They have high expectations and encourage an aspirational culture. This led to an overly optimistic evaluation of the school's current performance. School leaders were reflective and presented a more realistic self-evaluation in the course of this inspection, demonstrating their capacity to improve. Subject and year leaders, in collaboration with senior leaders, have very successfully led and improved teaching and learning across most of the school curriculum leading to the very good achievement of students.

The new principal has ensured that the school recruits and retains only those staff who demonstrate this commitment. Parents are supportive of the school and its new leadership team. They are aware of the need to do more to locate the school's British traditions within the UAE national vision.

Governance of the school is acceptable. The school's governors are committed to the ethos and values of the school. They maintained continuity during recent changes in leadership. They did not ensure accountability in addressing, as swiftly or effectively as required, the last inspection's recommendations regarding Arabic subjects. The school's leadership team has been taking very recent steps to make good this deficit. They have not been sufficiently engaged in the school's self-evaluation.

The school has very high-quality premises and resources which enrich the quality and breadth of students' learning experiences. The management of the school on a day-to-day basis is always in the best interests of students.

What the school should do to improve further:

1. Improve the quality of teaching and achievement in subjects taught in Arabic by ensuring that:
 - i. teachers and students always use the Arabic language as the principal means of communication in lessons
 - ii. students develop their literacy skills through increasingly independent study
 - iii. lessons are stimulating and engaging and lead to positive attitudes towards the Arabic language.
2. Strengthen the governance of the school by ensuring that governors:
 - i. require senior leaders to meet improvement requirements by specific and appropriate deadlines
 - ii. scrutinise and respond to students' performance in all aspects of the school's work.
3. Strengthen the school's self-evaluation, particularly of the Arabic language areas of the school curriculum, by ensuring that school leaders:
 - i. make a realistic assessment of student achievement and the quality of teaching
 - ii. set specific targets for improvement in the Arabic curriculum and monitor progress closely
 - iii. produce a robust evaluation through involving all stakeholder groups in the process.