



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



Summary Inspection Report

Crescent International Private School

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Iqraa

Crescent International Private School

Inspection Date	25 th - 28 th February, 2013
School ID#	073
Type of School	Private
Curriculum	English
Number of Students	314
Age Range	3 – 13 years
Gender	Mixed
Principal	Charmaine Raghuraman
School Address	Khalifa City A, Behind Police Station, Abu Dhabi
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Introduction

The school was inspected by 4 inspectors who observed 56 lessons, assemblies, break times and other activities. Arrival and departure arrangements were also observed. Students' work was scrutinised and performance data analysed, school documents were considered and discussions were held with staff, students and parents.

Description of the School

Crescent International Private School was established in June 1991 and moved to its current location in November 2010. The number of students on roll has increased since the move from villa premises. The school offers education based on an English curriculum from Kindergarten (KG) to Grade 6. The mission statement is to focus on the development of the whole child and to promote respect for all cultures. The school population is 314, 128 girls and 186 boys, almost all are Muslims of Arab origin. There are 15 nationalities in the school, 60% are Emirati, 9% Egyptian, 9% Jordanian, 6% Syrian, 5% Sudanese. The school is organised into two main sections consisting of KG and Grades 1 to 6. There are 75 children in the Kindergarten and 239 students in the other grades. Approximately 2.5% of the whole school population is identified as having special educational needs, including those with moderate learning difficulty, behavioural problems and attention deficit disorder. The school is non-selective and admits all students who seek admission. Fees are 10,500 AED for the youngest children to 15,500 AED for students in Grade 6. The students who transferred from the previous villa school premises receive a 50% reduction in tuition fees. There are additional charges for books, bus transportation, and uniform. Teachers' annual salaries are between 26,400- 132,000 AED. There is an owner, but no governing or other supervisory body.

The Effectiveness of the School

Band C

Grade 7

Inspectors judged Crescent International Private School to be in Band C; that is a school in need of significant improvement.

The school was regarded as requiring significant improvement by the previous inspection. The subsequent monitoring visit in April 2012, judged the school's progress in addressing the issues raised at the inspection as unsatisfactory. There were four main areas for improvement identified: teaching and learning, leadership and management, resourcing and the provision for the Kindergarten. There were also no formalized procedures to ensure the safeguarding of children and no child protection policy. Leadership, with the effective support of the Vice Principal, has begun to tackle the major issues. Progress is slow and the impact of

what has been put in place is not fully evident. However, the aspects identified as in need of attention have improved, but as the Principal said ‘there is a long way to go’.

Inspectors also found that there was a positive picture of continuing improvement in students’ personal development and in their care, guidance and support. The school is now well placed to build on these improvements in order to ensure the rapid improvement to teaching and students’ academic progress that is required.

When children first start school, and when they join the higher grades, many struggle to communicate in English. Children do not make the progress they should in Kindergarten. Those who are more able and learn quickly are not given sufficient opportunity to use their skills to become increasingly independent and inquisitive. Many can count and they enjoy singing and being active, but these types of activities do not happen often enough. Skills using their hands are developing and they can control their movements to make marks and write letters. They are not able to choose their own activities in order to develop their skills in concentrating, persevering and being inquisitive and enquiring learners. In all subjects from Grades 1 to 6 students’ attainment is well below what is normally expected for their age. In English students’ skills in speaking and listening are reasonable, but older students, who join the school in the upper grades have difficulty expressing themselves. Writing in both English and Arabic is not developing fast enough. Reading skills in Arabic are well below expected levels, because students do not have the opportunity to read often enough and most of their learning has been memorised. In mathematics, whilst students can count and to a certain extent complete calculations, their skills are still well below expectations in solving problems. They are not able to apply what they know in a variety of situations. Many do not have secure ideas about different number operations as they are not given enough opportunities to use these in a range of scenarios. In science, the lack of investigative and explorative work means that students do not have skills that equip them to make reasonable hypotheses and to predict outcomes. Their skills in using computers and developing critical thinking are weak.

Students say they enjoy school and they have positive attitudes to their work and each other. They respect others most of the time and willingly carry out the work they are asked to do. This is despite some tasks being mundane, boring and repetitive. Usually they are able to self-regulate their behaviour, sometimes when lessons are dull they find this more difficult and react in less positive ways. During assemblies and at break time they behave appropriately, show their enthusiasm and most like to participate in activities. They know what constitutes a healthy

lifestyle, but do not always take advantage of opportunities to be active or to choose the healthy option for snacks.

They are willing and keen to be involved, but do not take on roles of responsibility around the school a great deal, although this is developing. They do not have the skills to explore, think creatively and independently to reach their own conclusions because these opportunities are denied them.

Teachers usually have secure subject knowledge and appropriate lesson plans are produced. In lessons most students are respectful and relationships are secure.

Behaviour is generally appropriate, but there are times when lessons are boring and repetitive and students become restless, inattentive and do not comply with requests. Strategies for dealing with this type of behaviour are not used consistently by staff, who can find themselves at a loss as to how to deal with this type of situation.

Some teaching, for example in science in the older grades gives students the opportunities to engage in practical tasks or to observe demonstrations. In too many lessons, students are not interested or engaged. There is an over-reliance on worksheets, textbooks and ineffective use of information and communication technology, which do little to enhance learning. There are also not enough opportunities for students to have visual and tactile stimuli to help them to understand new ideas, through observation, exploration and investigation. Mostly lessons lack pace and challenge and are not planned sufficiently to meet the range of needs and abilities in the class. This is especially the case for those students who are learning English as an additional language. Students in Grades 1 and 2 do not have positive learning experiences as the work they are asked to do is too formal and the way in which it is presented is not engaging or suitable to their age and stage of development. Assessments of what students already know and can do are not used in any meaningful way to plan what students are to learn next. Children in the Kindergarten do not learn through play as much as they should. There is too much adult direction, rather than interacting with the children and engaging them in conversations to develop their language skills as well as encouraging them to explore. The curriculum does not have the required, breadth, balance and relevance, particularly for young children and those in Grades 1 and 2. It covers the expected subjects to promote basic skills in literacy in English and Arabic, numeracy and science. Islamic and social studies are offered, as are physical education, French, geography and art, and history is covered through work on UAE. There are limited creative elements such as music or design technology but the curriculum is not sufficiently motivating or effectively promoting progress. It does not promote independence or personal skills,

especially as it is not student centred in content. In Kindergarten there is not the expected range of activities to enable the children to initiate their own play.

There are very limited opportunities for developing a range of skills and the curriculum does not meet students' needs sufficiently. This is especially the case for students identified as having special educational needs, those who are gifted or talented and those learning English as an additional language. The curriculum is not preparing students sufficiently for their futures. Links are being fostered with other organisations, but these are still developing and the curriculum does not compare favourably with other schools in similar or international contexts. There are some extra-curricular clubs, which are a relatively recent addition to the school's provision and students have already decided they would like more of these.

Procedures and policies have been put in place and are known to staff to ensure the students are cared for and their welfare needs are met. The school is a caring environment, where students say they know their teachers will look after them and ensure their well-being. There are few instances when bullying occurs and care and support for the students' personal development are secure. Parents' views and concerns are considered and acted upon and the safety and welfare of the students are of importance to staff. Systems which track the progress students make are still only at the initial stages of development. In lessons, assessment is not used to adapt teaching to meet the needs of individual students. The result is insufficient guidance for what students can achieve based on what they already know and can do.

The school building is suitable, fit for its purpose and offers adequate space for the students. It is kept clean and tidy, made safe and hygiene arrangements are effective.

The accommodation is suitable to meet the demands of the curriculum. It is a light, airy building and provides an appropriate environment. There are rooms for art, information and communication technology and science, and a library and canteen. Moving around the building is eased because there is reasonable space between classrooms and corridors are fairly wide. Materials and equipment are stored safely. Children in the Kindergarten have an outdoor space for their use, and there are areas outdoors for games and exercise. There is an upper floor to the building, but this is not currently in use.

Resources to support the curriculum and meet the students' needs are very limited. The quality and quantity of resources to support English, mathematics and science are not adequate and do not enable students to be involved in practical work and hands on experiences. In the KG classrooms there are interactive white

boards. There are plans to introduce these in other grades. There are too few computers for the students to use as a class. Poor organisation means that too many students have to share and therefore do not have the opportunities they should to develop their skills in ICT. There are few books in the library in either English or Arabic and there are far too few resources for the students to explore, investigate and develop critical thinking skills. Those for creative activities lack variety and are not stimulating or imaginative. Resources in Kindergarten are sparse. They do not provide enough of the types of experiences very young children need to develop their ideas, engage in share sustained thinking and to solve simple problems using practical materials.

The Principal took over the role in 2009 and managed the move from the villa premises into the present accommodation. The Vice-Principal was appointed in September 2011. These two senior staff have established a caring and positive ethos and manage the running of the school effectively on a daily basis. There is a sense of purpose and an awareness of what needs to be done to improve. There is not enough rigour to this process to bring about the rapid change that is necessary to raise attainment and improve progress. There are appropriate links with parents who generally feel well informed about their children's progress. Some would like this more frequently, but they feel the communication is regular and informative. Parents' responses to questionnaires were very positive and most when asked for their comments felt content with what the school offers. Students also reinforce this view and said they usually enjoyed school. The owner deals with financial matters and has no specific role in overseeing the education of the students.

The process of self-evaluation now involves several staff, who are in fairly recently created middle management roles. The completed self-evaluation is not a realistic or objective picture of the school's effectiveness. That said the aspects for development are identified and link to those issues that have been raised as in need of improvement.

There is some professional development, but this is still at an early stage and so far there is little impact of this on students' attainment, learning and progress.

The middle management structure is the school's first attempt at creating a delegated leadership, but this is in its earliest stages of development. Staff are unsure of their roles and the extent to which they need to become familiar with how their subjects are taught across the whole school. Assessment is not used effectively by staff, who view this as a process of testing students' knowledge rather than comparing their skills, knowledge and understanding against a standard assessment framework. There is very little meaningful recording or

analysis of the students' knowledge and understanding and the tests that are undertaken, lack clarity, depth and relevance. This means the progress

students make is not considered from their relative starting points and this has to be addressed as a matter of urgency. There is no secure system as yet to enable academic progress and achievement to be recorded in a meaningful and informative way to show students what they need to do next to improve their learning. There is no overall shared vision for what the school should provide for the students, which means there is limited capacity to improve and value for money.

What the school should do to improve further:

1. Improve teaching and learning by ensuring that lessons are planned to meet the needs of the different abilities of students, and that these are based on secure assessment of what students already know, can do and understand.
2. Improve leadership by adopting a more rigorous approach to self evaluation and improvement planning so that changes happen more quickly.
3. Improve the curriculum so that it meets the needs of all groups of students especially those in Grades 1 and 2 and those learning English as an additional language.
4. Improve resourcing in the school, so that students are able to be involved in practical activities and develop their own ideas, solve problems and engage in creative and critical thinking.