



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



Inspection Report

Crescent International Private School

Academic Year 2014 – 15

Iqraa

Crescent International Private School

Inspection Date	29 September – 2 October 2014
School ID#	73
Licensed Curriculum	English National Curriculum
Number of Students	366
Age Range	3 to 12 years
Gender	Mixed
Principal	Charmaine Raghuraman
School Address	Khalifa City A, Abu Dhabi
Telephone Number	+971 (0)2 557 2271
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Official Email (ADEC)	Crescentint.pvt@adec.ac.ae
School Website	www.crescentschoolabudhabi.com
Date of last inspection	25 – 28 February 2013

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:

- the determination and commitment of senior leaders to improve the quality of their practices and enhance the learning opportunities for all students
- the improving academic progress in Kindergarten and Grades 5 and 6
- the welcoming and approachable management team who help parents and children to feel at ease and are open to suggestions
- the clean, well maintained and well-designed school buildings.

The main areas for improvement are:

- the attainment and progress of students, especially those who speak English as an additional language
- the regular use of standardized assessments to identify the needs of all students, track their progress and inform lesson planning
- the quality of teaching so that the needs of all students are met
- providing learning activities that improve the acquisition of the skills required for life in the 21st Century
- enriching the curriculum by increasing the quality and range of educational resources in all subject areas, particularly in the Kindergarten.

Introduction

The school was inspected by a team of 3 inspectors. They observed 50 lessons, conducted several meetings with senior staff, subject and stage co-ordinators, students and parents. They analysed test and assessment results, scrutinised students' work across the school, analysed the 49 responses to the parents' questionnaire and considered many of the school's policies and other documents. The owner, principal and vice-principal were involved throughout the inspection process and 9 joint lesson observations were conducted.

Description of the School

Crescent International Private School was originally opened in June 1991 as a villa school and moved to the current location in Khalifa City in November 2010. The school's mission is to 'develop successful, well balanced and responsible global citizens through the school values'.

There are 366 students: 214 boys and 152 girls. There are 81 students in the Kindergarten (KG). Each year group is made up of 2 classes. There are 5 students who have special educational needs (SEN) and 10% of students are deemed to be very able. Almost all students are Muslim and of Arabic heritage, and 65% are Emirati. Other students originate from a variety of Arabic countries including Egypt (10%), Jordan (5%), Yemen (6%), Oman (4%) and Syria (4%).

The school has introduced the English National Curriculum from the KG to Grade 6. At the end of the 2014 / 15 academic year, Grade 6 students will sit the Cambridge Curriculum tests in English, mathematics and science. All students who apply for entry to the KG are admitted. Students who apply for entry during the school year for Grades 1 to 6 have to sit for a test in the core subjects. School fees range from AED 10,500 to AED 14,500, which is in the 'low' category; this includes transport, books and uniform.

There are 28 teachers including the principal and vice principal and 8 administrative staff. All teachers are fully qualified. Teachers receive 25 hours of professional development annually and are subject to performance management review. The school has a newly convened governing body.

The Effectiveness of the School

Evaluation of the school's overall effectiveness

The Crescent International Private School is unsatisfactory and in need of significant improvement. This judgement reflects the school's position against international standards. The attainment and progress of the students are unsatisfactory in all key subject areas, and a substantial number of students are not acquiring the skills required for life in the 21st Century. Many teachers lack the skills to enable a significant number of students to successfully access the curriculum, especially those who speak English as an additional language (EAL). Teachers also lack a full range of resources to make learning more interesting.

Students' attainment & progress

The attainment and progress of students in all grades is unsatisfactory. It is improving in the KG and in Grades 5 and 6. Standards remain below those both in similar schools and international age-related expectations.

On entry to the KG, children's communication skills in English are well below those expected. In KG1, children are able to indicate their age using their fingers, recognise numerals up to 5, count in order and recognise two-dimensional shapes. Children are developing hand control and, in both KG1 and 2, can handle implements with reasonable confidence. Children in KG1 now make more progress than at the time of the previous inspection because of improved teaching and assessment practice.

In Grades 1 to 6, students are developing adequate comprehension and listening skills in Arabic. Progress in writing is unsatisfactory. For example, in Grade 1, students are not able to write the letter 's' in different positions and in Grade 3 they do not grasp basic grammar. Students in Grade 5 are not able to distinguish between different categories of verbs. Progress in both Islamic education and social studies is unsatisfactory. For example, students in Grade 1 are not able to memorise even the shortest verses from the Holy Qur'an, and in Grade 4 they are not able to accurately read the Holy Qur'an using the 'Tashkeel' rules of grammar. Grade 5 students are not able to name the member countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC).

Lessons in other subject areas are conducted in English. In Grades 1 to 4, most students cannot access the curriculum in sufficient depth because they do not fully understand the teacher. They are reluctant to converse in English because they lack confidence. In Grades 5 and 6, students' progress in English appears to

accelerate; Grade 6 students can read fluently and their creative writing demonstrates insight and imagination.

Attainment and progress are unsatisfactory from Grades 1 to 6 in mathematics. Students' progress is hampered by the lack of mental arithmetic skills that slows the process of calculation. Progress in mathematics is also limited by a lack of challenge and the low expectations of the teachers. In science from Grades 1 – 4, students do not grasp basic scientific concepts. This is because they do not understand the terminology and there are no opportunities to strengthen conceptual thinking through scientific investigation. Students in Grades 5 and 6 are beginning to understand and apply scientific principles and theory.

The attainment and progress of students in other curriculum areas such as art, French, geography and physical education (PE) are very unsatisfactory. Although information and communications technology (ICT) facilities are limited, students acquire satisfactory ICT skills. For example, in Grade 4, students produced a power point presentation that included an animation.

The school has no way of accurately assessing the progress of students against international age-related expectations. Termly assessment results are recorded centrally for each student but they are not standardized. Baseline or diagnostic assessments are not undertaken when students enter the school. Consequently, the tracking of progress is not routine and there is little assessment data available to inform lesson planning or ensure that all learning needs are met.

Students' personal development

The personal development made by students is unsatisfactory. In too many lessons, in Grades 1 to 4, little learning takes place because many students do not listen and are disengaged from learning. Girls are more likely to sit quietly and engage in learning, even when the quality of teaching is poor. Boys rarely sustain their concentration for long; they are much less likely to listen and are frequently disruptive. Too many students do not treat each other with sufficient respect. Behaviour is better in Grades 5 and 6.

Boys, in particular, do not demonstrate positive attitudes to learning; they lack the confidence to work independently, ask pertinent questions or express opinions. For these reasons, many students are not fully developing the social and personal skills they need to face the challenges of life in the 21st Century.

The UAE heritage is acknowledged during daily assemblies where students stand to attention and sing quite enthusiastically. Many participate in the presentations and performances.

The quality of teaching and learning

The quality of teaching remains unsatisfactory, particularly in Grades 1 to 4. Due to the implementation of the Cambridge Curriculum, the resources to support teaching and assessment have improved. Lesson planning remains limited in scope, mainly because teacher expectations are not high enough. Teachers do not plan collaboratively and as a result, learning objectives and resources are inconsistently applied between classes and across grades.

In too many lessons, teaching strategies are limited. Prolonged questioning slows the pace and causes behaviour to deteriorate. Students do not fully comprehend the learning objectives or what they have to do, due to a lack of understanding of the language spoken by the teacher. There are insufficient activities or resources in these lessons to provide the support these students so urgently need.

There are few opportunities for discussion or paired work that could help to clarify the learning objectives. Students appear to be unable to think for themselves or learn independently due to over-direction by the teacher. Teachers assess progress by administering short tests. Information gathered from marking these tests is not used to inform lesson planning. The quality of the marking in students' books is generally unsatisfactory. There are few comments made by the teachers that could help students to improve their work.

Meeting students' needs through the curriculum

The curriculum implementation is unsatisfactory. It does not meet the needs of all students and does not adequately prepare them for their futures. There have been some improvements made to the breadth and depth of the curriculum since the last inspection. In the KG, the new and experienced co-ordinator has a clear vision for effective provision and has developed her classroom so that learning activities flow more freely. Children's levels of development in KG1 are now being measured against 'Early Years Foundation Stage' levels and guidelines. In Grades 1 to 6, the introduction of the Cambridge Curriculum in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science has provided teachers with internationally ratified schemes of work, standardised assessment procedures and an enhanced range of resources.

The needs of the large number of students for whom English is an additional language (EAL) are still not being met. A special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) has been recently appointed and she has established a routine of diagnostic testing for EAL students. Individual Action Plans (IAPs) have been written for these students but have not been implemented. There are too few

opportunities for students to be inventive, use creative ideas, explore, investigate and follow lines of enquiry.

The school has forged useful links with community partners and students undertake charity work. A range of clubs is offered weekly including activities for students to engage in Holy Qur'an recitation, cook, and practise their ICT skills. Students go on a number of educational trips and visits during the year and events such as International Day, Mothers' Day and Flag Day are celebrated.

The protection, care, guidance and support of students

The care, protection, guidance and support of students are unsatisfactory. The school has a caring environment and students say that they feel safe. The school has established a child protection policy, trained staff and appointed a child protection officer. There is also a behaviour policy, and staff have received training on its implementation. The policy has not improved the behaviour of boys sufficiently, which remains unsatisfactory. Students are not able to articulate what constitutes bullying. The school provides little information to inform Grade 6 students and their parents about transition arrangements to the next stage of their education.

Facilities that provide support and care in the school are well maintained. There is a prayer room that is used appropriately. The clinic is clean and well organized. Medication is stored appropriately and the accompanying documentation is in place. Records are kept of school admission, registration and attendance, which is average at 91%. The school site is secure. The required checks are made about suitability and qualifications of staff and these are kept in a central file.

The quality of the school's buildings and premises

The school buildings are fit for purpose and provide adequate space and the necessary facilities. The environment is light and airy. Premises are well maintained and all the required health and safety checks are routinely undertaken. The school is clean and tidy. The provision of toilets is adequate for the number of students and toilet areas are clean and hygienic.

Since the last inspection, covered areas for basketball and football have been developed. There is sufficient outdoor space; large canopies provide shade to the assembly area and KG playground. The school has a science laboratory, a library, an ICT suite and an indoor P.E. room. The laboratory and library are underused and the P.E. room is too small for a whole class and is poorly equipped.

The school's resources to support its aims

The provision of resources is unsatisfactory in all grades and does not adequately support the aims of the school. Teachers are sufficient in number, qualified and demonstrate a commitment to the students. There are classroom assistants in the KG, Grades 1 and 2 but they focus on behaviour management rather than the support of learning.

In a few classrooms students' work is displayed. All classrooms are now equipped with 'data show' facilities and these are being used effectively. The science laboratory is not fully equipped and this facility is not often used for practical scientific work. The school library is not well resourced; there are few books and no ICT stations where students can undertake investigative work. The facilities for storage and preparation of food are clean and hygienic and safety requirements are maintained.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

School leaders are committed to the school and the need to improve more rapidly. School managers are well organised and the school runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis. A governing body has been recently convened, is chaired by the owner and includes parents' representatives. There has been insufficient investment in developing the range of learning resources. Senior leaders do not have a sufficiently accurate view of the quality of lessons and teachers' professional development is not sufficiently targeted to students' needs. Overall, the leadership and management of the school remain unsatisfactory.

The school's self-evaluation form (SEF) is broadly realistic. School development planning (SDP) requires more urgency, clarity and rigour. Performance management procedures are not appropriately clear and rigorous and lesson observations are frequently over positive. Teachers now have access to increased professional development opportunities though these are not adequately linked to the evaluation of lesson observations in order to develop individual teacher effectiveness. The impact of this professional development remains limited.

The parents' questionnaire and meetings with parents demonstrate that they are supportive of the school. Parents say that their suggestions are taken seriously. Parental complaints, and the outcomes of these, are thoroughly recorded.

Progress since the last inspection

There have been some improvements to most performance standards since the last inspection and many of the issues raised by the last inspection have been tackled. These have not had a significant impact yet to enable the school to provide at least satisfactory quality of education. Attainment and progress have

improved in KG1 and in Grades 5 and 6 due to the appointment of some additional teachers. The provision of ‘data show’ facilities in all classrooms has also improved the quality of teaching.

The school has recently implemented the Cambridge Curriculum, which has increased the resources available to both students and teachers. This also provides an internationally standardised framework for assessment in the core subjects. A child protection policy has been drafted, staff trained and a child protection officer appointed to work closely with the school counsellor to enhance protection, care, support and guidance. A SENCO has been appointed to diagnose and organize interventions for students with special educational needs including those with English as an additional language and the more able. The new KG co-ordinator has considerable experience in ‘early years practice’ and has improved provision in KG1. Although committed, the leadership would require external support to bring about the necessary improvements in the quality of education Crescent International provides.

What the school should do to improve further:

1. Improve the impact of senior leaders and managers by ensuring that self-evaluation measures the impact of new curriculum initiatives and is linked to an accurate assessment of the quality of teaching and learning.
2. Ensure that all students can access lessons more effectively, particularly EAL, SEN and the more able by:
 - i. providing targeted training to equip teachers with the range of techniques needed to support specific learning needs
 - ii. focusing lesson observations on the effectiveness of student learning and understanding
 - iii. widening assessment techniques so that they are continuous and are moderated against a standardized assessment framework
 - iv. using standardized baseline and attainment data to track the progress of all students, so that teachers can plan learning activities based on a more accurate knowledge and understanding of learning needs.
3. Enrich the curriculum by improving resources in all subject areas so that:
 - i. there are more opportunities for the development of the investigative, creative, and analytical skills required for living in the 21st Century
 - ii. the KG curriculum can be delivered more effectively.

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								