



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



Summary Inspection Report

Dar Al Uloom Private School

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Dar Al Uloom Private School

Inspection Date	12 th – 15 th May, 2013
School ID#	104
Type of School	Private
Curriculum	Ministry of Education
Number of Students	836
Age Range	3 – 20 years
Gender	KG–Grade 5 mixed, Grade 6–12 separate boys and girls
Principal	Hamdi Al Said Morsy
School Address	PO Box 36005, Baniyas, Abu Dhabi
Telephone Number	(+971) 02 5833797
Fax Number	(+971) 02 5832878
Email (ADEC)	daraluloomad.pvt@adec.ac.ae

Introduction

Four inspectors evaluated the school. They observed 65 lessons, attended assemblies, observed break times, and met with groups of male and female students, subject coordinators, a group of teachers, the senior leadership team, the school's financial staff, social workers and nurse, and a group of parents. They examined 240 parental questionnaires. The inspectors considered the ethos of the school, the students' learning experiences, personal development and progress, the quality of teaching and how well this helps the students to learn.

Description of the School

The school opened in 1999 in the current buildings on a single site. It is one of six schools within the Bin Ham Education Group. The school is on the western side of Baniyas in an area of housing and shops. It is next door to another school belonging to the Bin Ham group. The previous report refers to a new school building being built on an adjacent site for the girls. However, that new building is in fact another school within the same group.

The school's stated aims are 'To support students to gain strong basic skills, a high level of thinking skills, self-respect, respect for others and mutual forgiveness; working locally in an international context. Health and safety are major elements of the school's ethos, along with respect for UAE values and those of other cultures within the country.'

There are 404 boys and 432 girls in the school.

	Boys	Girls
KG	31	29
Cycle 1 – Grades 1–5	168	144
Cycle 2 – Grades 6–9	120	91
Cycle 3 – Grades 10–12	168	85

All the students are from Arab Muslim families. Students are tested on entry, and the school has identified only a small number of students as having special educational needs. The school population is considerably mobile, as many leave the school when their families move elsewhere in the UAE or to return to their home countries.

The school employs 54 teachers, 2 social workers, 12 administrative staff and 11 other support staff. Teachers' salaries range from AED 2,500 to AED 5,000. The majority of teachers are from Egypt. The principal and vice principal (boys) have

been in post since February 2013 and the vice principal (girls) has been in post for 12 years. School fees range from AED 4,100 in KG to AED 8,189 in Grade 12. Additional fees cover books (AED 100) and uniform (AED 120).

The Effectiveness of the School

Band C

Grade 7

Inspectors judged Dar Al Uloom Private School to be in Band C; that is a school in need of significant improvement.

This judgment reflects the school's position against international best standards. When judged against similar Abu Dhabi government and private schools, Dar Al Uloom Private School has many strengths. These include the senior leaders' capacity to improve the school, the staff commitment to the school and to its improvement, the relationships between teachers and students in most classes, and the growing and targeted professional development program for teachers. To make the progress towards world-class provision that the Emirate of Abu Dhabi requires for all its schools, Dar Al Uloom Private School must do more to develop the 21st century skills the nation needs. For this reason, this report recognises the good things that the school principal and teachers currently do but also gives clear recommendations for what more needs to be done to take the school forward.

Students' attainment and progress are well below international standards and below those of many schools in The Middle East, with very unsatisfactory performances in MoE national tests. Attainment and progress are unsatisfactory in Arabic. Many students express ideas orally in well-structured classical Arabic. Reading skills are limited and only a few students can produce any extended writing by Grade 12. Attainment and progress are very unsatisfactory in Islamic Studies, Social Studies, English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology (ICT) and art. Lower and middle school students can recall 'Hadeeth' and the date of major events, but with no understanding of their meanings. Recitation of The Holy Qur'an is good but few students can explain its application to life. All students have some knowledge of UAE culture, values and history. In lower grades, this is limited to the contents of the MoE curricular text.

In English, students develop good listening skills and comprehension. Grade 11 boys develop good intonation and diction, but are hesitant in reading and speaking and by the end of Grade 12, writing remains limited to short sentences. Attainment in mathematics and science is well below national and international expectations. Few students in Grade 1 could identify components of a number, and Grade 4 students struggled to convert fractions into decimals. Lower grade science students could recite rules for healthy living, but Grade 11 physics students could not differentiate between the unit of sound frequency and the tool used to

measure it. Whilst the lesson objectives in upper grades are in line with international expectations, students' attainment and progress in mathematics and science are impaired, as they have no understanding of problem solving or scientific method, hypothesis, observation, testing and evaluation.

There is some progress in physical education (PE) in terms of strength, teamwork and motor skills. However, progress is severely limited by the lack of space in which to develop fitness or extend those skills. Attainment and progress in other subjects are similarly limited, particularly in ICT, art and music. Children in the kindergarten were able to draw letter shapes, pronounce them phonetically and apply them to images on the board, but could not apply their knowledge to real-world examples.

Students' personal development is unsatisfactory, although there are few behaviour issues. Most are eager to learn, express their views and demonstrate appropriate moral values. Their contributions to the community and participation in social, cultural, scientific or sporting activities are restricted by the limitations of the curriculum and resources. Contributions to lessons are often limited by teaching methods, and students have few opportunities to take leadership roles. Most students respect their teachers and each other, but lack independent thinking skills. While students take pride in the UAE, they rarely meet others from different cultures. Students do not take responsibility for their environment and have a limited understanding of healthy living. Overall attendance is average at 90%, and absenteeism is a norm in some higher grades, especially in the boys' section. Punctuality is not addressed rigorously enough. Students are not able to make decisions about the next stages of their lives; they lack the necessary 21st century skills and there is an unusually high dropout rate in the upper grades.

Teaching is very unsatisfactory. Some teachers have inadequate subject knowledge and even when it is secure, limited teaching methodologies and the severe shortage of resources lead to some disengagement and poor behavior among the students. Teaching in the kindergarten does not take account of how young children learn - they have no opportunity for learning by discovery through indoor and outdoor environments. Across the school, most students listen carefully but do not analyse or acquire higher-order thinking skills. There are elements of good practice in some subjects. New termly lesson planning has been introduced, but this does not always translate into practice in the classroom. Teachers often provide lesson objectives, but they do not lead to clarity of purpose or targeted learning outcomes. Teachers rarely consider students' prior learning, and do not adapt either their teaching or the learning activities to meet individual needs. Lessons rarely provide enough challenge, especially for the more-able students. Students are eager to learn, but teacher assessments do not

provide enough guidance on how to improve. Students rarely have opportunities to evaluate their own or others' work. Despite low salaries and limited resources, teachers are committed and there has been little change of staff recently. There are no teaching assistants to support learning in KG or for students who have special educational needs. The new leadership team has placed a great emphasis on teachers' professional development. This addresses all aspects of improving teaching and learning, but it is too early to measure the outcome in the classroom. Parents do not resort to private tuition.

The curriculum delivery is very unsatisfactory. The curriculum is not compliant with MOE Arabic minimum periods per week in some grades. There is no framework for learning objectives to ensure progression across subject areas and grades. Teaching heavily depends on MoE texts and the school makes no provision to include enrichment materials. The curriculum is not sufficiently broad or balanced, as it does not adequately cover art, ICT or music. It is not adapted to meet the needs of students with special educational needs, or the gifted and talented. The KG curriculum offers no active learning to meet the needs of younger children. Some extension activity supports UAE cultural understanding, including visits to the National Museum, celebration of Islamic festivals, and visits from the police and the blood donor service. Progress in Arabic and social sciences is supported by poetry competitions and an environmental caricature competition. However, there is no programme of extra-curricular activities to support other learning. Opportunities for physical activity are totally inadequate and unavailable to most students. The curriculum does not prepare students for the next stage of their education or career. Visits are arranged to Abu Dhabi University and to banks, but there is not enough counselling or guidance.

The school leaders and staff are committed to students' care and welfare, which are satisfactory. Students say they feel safe from bullying and intimidation. Parents feel strongly that their children are safe and the school is committed to their emotional well-being. The behaviour policy is shared with students and parents. Absences are followed up, but not necessarily on the first day. Certificates and rewards acknowledge positive behaviour. Corporal punishment is forbidden. All staff are committed to this.

The clinic now has a separate access for girls. Medicines are stored securely. The nurse is licensed but she is shared with another Bin Ham Group school on the adjacent site. There are social workers responsible for all student issues. They provide guidance for future education and careers, but students feel this needs to be better. There is a newly constructed prayer room for boys, but no provision for girls. There is a child protection policy and staff have received training in handling

concerns and the rights of a child. There is a single register recording all appropriate checks undertaken on staff.

The buildings and premises are very unsatisfactory. They are a major obstacle to school improvement. Many classrooms are too small with no storage for bags, which cause a tripping hazard. Specialist facilities are totally inadequate to meet curriculum requirements. There is no indoor facility for PE and the site is too small to provide suitable outdoor spaces. The ICT rooms are inadequate. There is no art room and only one laboratory, located in the girls' section. Dangerous substances are securely stored in the laboratory. Access for students who have physical impairments is unsuitable, preventing their use of the library, laboratory or prayer room. There is no suitable outdoor learning environment for KG children, although an area has been appropriately shaded in preparation for a KG playground. There is no system for regular checking of electrical equipment. The storage of cleaning materials is inadequate. These are used in classrooms during lessons and yet many classrooms are not cleaned well enough, are poorly ventilated and littered with food wrappings. Evacuation routes are clear and fire extinguishers are properly serviced. The school site is secure; doors are locked or appropriately guarded.

Resources are very unsatisfactory. Teachers are qualified and appropriate in number. A minority lack the specialist knowledge or competence to teach their subject or age group. Classrooms have no books or other resources. There is insufficient modern technology to support the curriculum. There is no ICT provision in any classroom and internet access is limited to the teachers' workstations in the computer rooms. Library stock is totally inadequate. Books are of poor quality and are not classified according to students' levels. There are no English fiction or non-fiction books. There is little equipment for PE and none for art or music. The rented buses are appropriately maintained by the provider and supervised by staff. However, many are untidy with seat belts missing or not used. The canteen is licensed by ADEC. It is hygienic and provides good quality and generally healthy food. The personnel serving are hygienically dressed in protective gloves and headwear.

Leadership and management are unsatisfactory. However, the greatest strengths of the school are the new senior leadership team and the staff's commitment to school improvement. Since their appointment in February, the leadership team has shown significant capacity to improve the school. They have created a new strategic plan based on the findings of the previous inspection report. They have already made some essential structural changes, although the process is severely constrained by financial pressures. The senior leaders have developed and shared a clear vision for the school. There has been a significant amount of targeted

professional development, including topics on relationships for learning, characteristics of successful teaching, the rights of the child, and child protection. Teacher exchanges have been established, to explore best practice in other schools. There are strong links with parents, who have confidence in the senior leaders and understand their strategy for the school. The strategic plan reflects an understanding of the key priorities for improvement and the heritage and culture of UAE. It acknowledges the school site, standard and capacity of the buildings as significant obstacles to 21st century learning. The leadership team acknowledges that the new vision has not been translated into focused, detailed development planning and not all subject coordinators have a clear understanding of how to improve teaching and learning or how to identify and meet the needs of all students, especially those with special educational needs and the gifted or talented.

What the school should do to improve further:

1. Improve leadership and management by:
 - i. increasing subject coordinators' understanding of what is good teaching and learning. Focusing their observation on evaluation of lessons and providing coaching to develop the quality of teaching.
2. Improve teaching and learning by:
 - i. ensuring that lesson planning provides opportunities for students to develop critical thinking, analysis and independent research skills; and
 - ii. improving the systems for marking and evaluating student outcomes during lessons.
3. Improve attainment and progress of students by:
 - i. developing the KG curriculum to reflect the ways in which young children learn;
 - ii. creating opportunities for additional activities to extend all students' learning and making it relevant to their lives; and
 - iii. addressing the attendance issues, especially in upper grades.
4. Improve the premises by:
 - i. working with the proprietor to provide the necessary resources to create a stimulating 21st century learning environment for all students, but especially for older boys;
 - ii. developing indoor and outdoor learning facilities for r KG; and
 - iii. improving facilities for PE, art and music.
5. Address health and safety issues by:
 - i. ensuring buses are fitted with seat belts, and students wear the belts and do not move around inside moving buses.