



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



Private School Inspection Report

Dar Al Uloom Private School

Academic Year 2015 – 2016

Iqraa

Dar Al Uloom Private School

Inspection Date		January 17, 2016		to		January 20, 2016	
Date of previous inspection		February 3, 2014		to		February 5, 2014	
General Information				Students			
School ID		186		Total number of students		1285	
Opening year of school		1999		Number of children in KG		70	
Principal		Dalal Mohamed Adeeb		Number of students in other phases		Primary: 420	
School telephone		+971 (0) 3 767 6514				Middle: 355	
						High: 440	
School Address		Falag Hazza, Al Ain		Age range		4 to 20 years	
Official email (ADEC)		daraluloomaa.pvt@adec.ac.ae		Grades or Year Groups		KG – Grade 12	
School website		-----		Gender		mixed	
Fee ranges (per annum)		Very low: AED 3,300 – AED 6,600		% of Emirati Students		5%	
				Largest nationality groups (%)		1. Syrian: 30%	
						2. Egyptian: 17%	
						3. Sudanese: 13%	
Licensed Curriculum				Staff			
Main Curriculum		Ministry of Education		Number of teachers		83	
Other Curriculum		-----		Number of teaching assistants (TAs)		20	
External Exams/ Standardised tests		MoE		Teacher-student ratio		KG/ FS 1_:_15	
Accreditation		-----				Other phases 1_:_23	
				Teacher turnover		35%	

Introduction

Inspection activities	
Number of inspectors deployed	5
Number of inspection days	4
Number of lessons observed	115
Number of joint lesson observations	4
Number of parents' questionnaires	178; (response rate: 11%)
Details of other inspection activities	Observations, meetings, work scrutiny, review of documents, surveys

School	
School Aims	To provide a high quality education to build a generation committed to its religion, loyal to its country, creative in its thoughts and skills through an adequate educational system, well qualified staff and an effective community participation'.
School vision and mission	Provide a high quality education, an interesting learning environment, an effective community participation, and a loyal creative generation'.
Admission Policy	Admission is non-selective: all students take baseline assessments on entry.
Leadership structure (ownership, governance and management)	Board of Trustees The Senior Leadership Team consists of the principal and two vice-principals

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
Intellectual disability	0	0
Specific Learning Disability	0	63
Emotional and Behaviour Disorders (ED/ BD)	0	1
Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)	0	0
Speech and Language Disorders	0	4
Physical and health related disabilities	0	3
Visually impaired	0	3
Hearing impaired	0	1
Multiple disabilities	0	0

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

G&T Category	Number of students identified
Intellectual ability	66
Subject-specific aptitude (e.g. in science, mathematics, languages)	184
Social maturity and leadership	30
Mechanical/ technical/ technological ingenuity	20
Visual and performing arts (e.g. art, theatre, recitation)	44
Psychomotor ability (e.g. dance or sport)	5

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 (C)	Weak
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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 Dar Al Uloom School provides a weak quality of education. The senior leaders and governors have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. There is inconsistent practice in addressing the areas of development and consequently improving the quality of provision to required levels of standards.

Standards of attainment in most subjects meet or are above the Ministry of Education (MoE) curriculum expectations. The trend of strong performance, in final MoE examinations, has been sustained in most subjects; standards in English have fallen. These standards of achievement were not observed in teaching and in students' work. The progress of majority of students in lessons and within different groups such as those with special educational needs (SEN) and those who are more able or are gifted and talented is weak. Students do not make the progress they are capable of in Islamic education, social studies, English, science and in other subjects outside of the core offer. Lessons lack challenge, demonstrate low expectations and utilise inappropriate strategies for meeting the needs of different students. In consequence, the overall quality of teaching is weak. The extensive assessment data collected is not used to effectively inform and change practice within the classroom. Feedback to students on how to improve is weak. The curriculum has not been effectively adapted to address the innovation agenda.

The school generally promotes a caring environment, relationships are courteous and supportive. Resources have improved but there are continuing constraints on student learning in physical education and creative subjects. The school has appropriate routines for its day-to-day management.

Progress made since last inspection and capacity to improve

Standards in most subjects, in meeting MoE curriculum expectations, have been sustained since the last inspection. Achievement in English has fallen because of the variable quality of teaching. Most of the issues identified in the last inspections have been dealt with or partially addressed. A clear behaviour management policy has eradicated inappropriate disciplinary procedures. A detailed process for monitoring and evaluation of lessons has been created, its implementation and the impact has not been consistent. In consequence, the required improvement in the quality of teaching throughout the school has not been achieved. The impact of an extensive professional development programme has been nullified by the large turnover of staff. A strategy for distributive leadership has been introduced but the variable expertise of middle managers has not produced the required consistency

of practice. A significant financial commitment has produced improvement in resources for science, information technology, kindergarten (KG) and the library. The required improvements for resources in physical education and investigative materials for mathematics are not evident.

The lack of consistency in outcomes for students and the ineffectiveness of some middle managers indicates the school does not have the capacity to improve without further support.

Development and promotion of innovation skills

The introduction of an innovation culture and its implementation in the school is weak. The senior leadership team is aware of the importance of this initiative and has provided clear guidance to staff with regard to this. A curriculum planning group has been established to look at ways of extending the MoE curriculum, but a culture of innovation is not embedded. For example, the plan to introduce play-based learning into the KG has not been successfully implemented. In a few classes, teachers use higher order questions to challenge students to think creatively. There is too much teacher control and domination of lessons to allow for creativity and ‘thinking outside the box’. Students are provided with some opportunity for creativity in the art curriculum. Independent learning is not consistently encouraged in most subjects. Students are given little opportunity to exercise responsibility in classroom situations. Teachers do not understand what innovative practice is and how to routinely implement this into their planned activities.

The inspection identified the following as key areas of strength:

- the direction and planning initiated by the principal and vice-principals to promote school objectives
- the positive relationships and students show mutual respect for each other and their different cultural backgrounds
- behaviour and positive attitudes to work shown by most students, particularly girls.
- the attainment in almost all subjects, in comparison with MoE curriculum standards
- the provision of a scheduled programme of professional development
- the open communication with parents.

The inspection identified the following as key areas for improvement:

- attainment and progress in English particularly in speaking and writing skills
- students' progress in science, Islamic education, social studies and Arabic in the KG and primary phases of the school
- inconsistency in the quality of teaching, marking and level of challenge
- opportunities for students to develop problem-solving, critical thinking and independent learning
- the quality of assessment to inform curriculum plans to meet the different needs of students more effectively
- adaptation of the curriculum to provide a broader base for the development of enterprise and innovation experiences
- ensuring middle managers fulfil their responsibilities effectively in order to sustain school improvement.



Performance Standard 1: Students' Achievement

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



Achievement is weak overall. Attainment against the authorised curriculum standards is acceptable in the primary, middle and high phases, but against age-appropriate standards of achievement and development of learning skills in lessons and students' work are weak. Progress is weak in almost all subjects and phases and learning skills are insufficiently developed. The two key reasons for this are: the majority of lessons provide insufficient challenge and set expectations which are too low, and assessment information is not used to effectively modify the curriculum to match the needs of students.

Attainment in the KG is weak against both the licensed curriculum and age-appropriate expectations. In non-core subjects such as physical education, creative arts and information technology, attainment is low and progress weak. The limitations of resources in physical education and the creative arts have a constraining effect upon the experience provided for students and in consequence the progress in these areas is adversely affected.

Children enter KG with low starting points; they go on to make insufficient progress in all areas of learning apart from mathematics. Attainment against the licensed curriculum standards is in line with expectations for all subjects in successive phases of the school. Standards of attainment in the final external MoE examinations have shown a consistent pattern of above expectation performance in all subjects, particularly the advanced courses. Other than the MoE examinations the school has no external benchmarking. Standards of achievement as judged by work scrutiny and lesson observations are below expectations.

In English, the development of listening skills are acceptable. Reading and writing skills are very variable. The exception is the stronger reading and spelling skills shown in girls' classes in the higher grades. Students are not confident or fluent communicators. Speaking skills are ineffectively taught. For example, Grade 11 boys were only able to repeat sentences created by the teacher. Opportunities for developing relevant conversational skills in English are missed. For example in Grade 7, a theme on the need for fashionable clothes was not used as a vehicle for seeking the students' ideas. The theme of clothing is one of the several concepts repeated in successive grades. Progress in lessons is often limited by simple tasks which are not linked with the learning objective, not matched to students' needs and do not set sufficiently high expectations.

In Arabic, students listening and reading skills are satisfactorily developed. These skills are a stronger feature in the higher grades. In Grade 1, a few students can write sentences and recognise simple grammar rules. By the time they reach higher grades their handwriting is clear and neat. Most students do not consistently speak standard



Arabic to express views or retell stories, especially in the younger classes. In Islamic education, students appropriately memorise, read and repeat short verses from the Holy Qur'an. They have difficulty in explaining the meaning of these verses. Students show respect for Islamic values and mostly reflect these values in their daily life and behaviour, especially the girls. Most students link their learning effectively to situations found in real life. Students from earlier grades generally lack confidence when discussing the economic development of the UAE.

In mathematics, students in younger grades develop appropriate computational skills. Almost all students recognise the mathematical process and the associated number concepts when solving problems. For example, Grade 6 students are able to categorise problems related to weight, distances, and volume correctly. Older students are able to recognise geometrical properties and have a satisfactory knowledge of statistical concepts such as probability. Progress in mathematics through the successive phases of the school is consistent and acceptable overall. In sciences, the development of practical investigative skills is weak; these skills are better developed with older students. The acquisition of basic knowledge and understanding of scientific concepts is acceptable for most students. For example in Grade 3, students were able to differentiate between renewable and non-renewable energy resources and connected that to the real-life situation in the UAE with regards to the depletion of fossil fuels. Attainment in geology, biology, and chemistry is stronger than in physics. Students' achievement in physical education (PE), art and music is weak.

The development of learning skills is weak across all phases of the school. The opportunity to promote higher order skills such as critical thinking and problem solving are limited. The presentation of information and the organisation of notes is a general weakness in the school. Most students show an inclination to learn but a minority come ill prepared to begin the lessons. The organisation of their resources and a willingness to settle into their set activities is not a consistent feature across lessons. When given the opportunity, students work well together and collaborate effectively in activities presented but the ability to work independently is not well-developed. The promotion of technology skills does not figure in most subjects on the curriculum.

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	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

Students' personal and social development is acceptable; the development of innovation skills is weak. Most students have positive attitudes to their learning and enjoy school life. This is reflected in good attendance rates of 95% and the general punctuality to lessons and school. Most students are self disciplined and behave well inside classrooms and during break time. A minority of boys, specifically in Grade 4, are disruptive in lessons and are reluctant to comply with school rules regarding dispersal at the end of break times. Most students maintain an acceptable relationship with each other and appreciate the opportunity to interact with a wide range of different nationalities. Most students are courteous and respectful towards adults. They take responsibility for the leadership opportunities that are given in and around school, for example as prefects, ushers and members of the student council. Senior students consider the council to be an effective link between them and the administration. They report that senior leaders value their views. Most students have an appropriate awareness of the advantage of a healthy lifestyle.

Most students have an acceptable understanding of Islamic values and the impact they have in daily life. They are familiar with the cultural heritage of the UAE and appreciate the country's economic achievements and historical influence. The majority of students show respect for the UAE flag and participate appropriately in the singing of the national anthem.

Students take opportunities to promote the community ethos such as organising debates between boys and girls on, for example, "the importance of Education". They show appropriate levels of responsibility and consideration for the needs of others, for example, organising events to raise money to support immigrant families from Syria. Most students show a willingness to participate in class activities; the work ethic

is more consistently maintained amongst girls. Students have an appropriate awareness of environmental issues. The establishment of an Eco-club in the school enhances this. There are few opportunities for students to show enterprise or innovation.

Performance Standard 3: Teaching and Assessment

Teaching and Assessment Indicators	KG	Primary	Middle	High
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Teaching for effective learning	Weak	Weak	Weak	Weak
Assessment	Weak	Weak	Weak	Weak

Teaching and assessment are weak. The quality of teaching observed by inspectors ranged from acceptable to very weak. The majority of lessons were judged to be weak or very weak and only a very few were deemed good. Better teaching was seen in the higher grades and greater consistency was demonstrated in the teaching of mathematics. The least effective teaching was mainly observed in English, science and Islamic education.

Most teachers have adequate subject knowledge particularly in Arabic, mathematics, Islamic education and science subjects. Teachers have limited understanding of how students learn to ensure they benefit from the activities presented to them. Most lesson planning identifies general objectives and is not specifically geared to the individual needs of the students in the class. Teachers are not always aware of how to share concepts with students in an age-appropriate manner. Students are rarely given sufficient support to take their learning forward independently. Many teachers of English have weak language skills, specifically poor pronunciation. They do not model language accurately or appropriately. In the KG, teachers show a limited understanding of how young children learn most effectively and so the activities presented do not give sufficient opportunity for the children to make choices.

Relationships in classes are generally acceptable. Teacher-student interactions are often focused on logistics and resources. Key ideas are not developed effectively through the use of challenging questions. Very few questions are open-ended to develop higher-order thinking. Opportunities for students to be creative and innovative or develop critical thinking are limited, particularly at the primary and middle phases. Most teachers are unclear as to how to use differentiated tasks to

support the learning needs of different groups of students. The use of technology in lessons to promote research activities is rare.

Systems for recording internal assessments are well established and provide a wealth of data. Although this data is used to identify gaps in students' learning, the appropriate modifications to the curriculum are not made because of the perceived urgency associated with covering course requirements. Diagnostic assessments are not used consistently to group students by ability or need. For example, baseline assessments are used with children entering KG. These assessments rely on the child's ability to answer basic questions about themselves and initial letters sounds; no systematic record is kept of the outcome. The assessment does not have sufficient depth to identify fine gross motor skills, ability to make choices or how the children play and communicate. The information collected about students with SEN and those who are gifted and talented is not organised or disseminated efficiently so as to inform practice in the classroom. In many subjects, students do not receive constructive feedback on their performance so as to enhance their learning. Work in books often receives a perfunctory tick. Occasionally it is marked incorrectly which leads to students been given inaccurate messages about the quality of their work.

Performance Standard 4: Curriculum

Curriculum Indicators	KG	Primary	Middle	High
Curriculum design and implementation	Weak	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Curriculum adaptation	Weak	Weak	Weak	Weak

The quality of curriculum design, implementation and adaptation is weak. Curriculum delivery does not provide a sufficient level of challenge to meet the needs of the majority of students, particularly those of the more able and those identified with possible SEN.

The school routinely follows the MoE curriculum plan, which has been fully implemented in grades 1 to 12. This provision gives basic continuity to the learning experience of students. Additional subjects such as PE and creative arts enhance the core provision. The core programme is dominated by adherence to the content of textbooks related to specific grades. This practice limits opportunities for students to work independently on research projects so as to develop problem-solving and

critical thinking skills. Curriculum plans are not adequately adapted to meet the specific needs of SEN students or those who are gifted and talented. The focus of advanced courses in grade 12 appropriately prepares students for the next stage of learning for further education.

Cross-curricular links are not adequately developed so there are missed opportunities to reinforce concepts introduced in different subjects such as mathematics, science and information technology. Links within the curriculum plan relating to Emirati culture and the UAE society are acceptable. Innovation strategies do not figure prominently in curriculum plans. Curriculum planning for the KG is weak. Insufficient attention is given to the provision of activities that will allow choice so as to begin the process of independent learning and collaboration through sharing resources. The school reviews the curriculum in compliance with the introduction of new texts such as for the science programme. The school does not make provision for reinforcing the technical vocabulary of students in order to give them confidence in discussion. Extracurricular provision is very limited and both students and parents express the desire that the school should provide more opportunities.

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	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Care and support	Weak	Weak	Weak	Weak

The school has adequate formal procedures for the safeguarding of students. An appropriate child protection policy is in place and staff have had relevant training in this. Child protection procedures are clearly defined and well understood by students. Arrangements to ensure health, safety and campus security are adequately established. Maintenance and record keeping are appropriately maintained and relevant certificates are in place. The school clinic is effectively run and medical records are appropriately maintained. The school premises are adequately maintained. Assemblies are held in a hard-surface area where physical education also takes place.

Staff are considerate of students and show appropriate levels of concern for their safety. The KG has created a caring environment. Behaviour management systems are in place but are not used consistently to ensure that an acceptable level of order is consistently maintained. There is an adequate day-to-day routine to record absence but the school is not active enough in promoting the importance of attendance amongst senior boys. The school provides limited support for students who require additional learning support and those who are gifted or talented. The identification and intervention strategies lack specific learning and progress targets and individual education plans (IEPs), are not systematically monitored and reviewed to ensure that students' make adequate progress. The well-being and personal development of students is not regularly monitored. Career guidance for senior students is inadequate because of the absence of a planned programme.

Performance Standard 6: Leadership and management

Leadership and management Indicators	
The effectiveness of leadership	Weak
Self-evaluation and improvement planning	Acceptable
Partnerships with parents and the community	Acceptable
Governance	Acceptable
Management, staffing, facilities and resources	Weak
The overall quality of leadership and management is weak. Middle managers lack the expertise to transfer the guidance given by the senior leadership team (SLT) to their line management responsibilities. The monitoring and feedback to staff has not produced consistency in teaching outcomes. The capacity to innovate and improve is consequently weak because of the lack of effectiveness at this level of management. Expectations for improvement are high but outcomes in some areas such as the KG and current standards in English are unsatisfactory. Issues relating to provision in the KG and inconsistency in the quality of teaching were evident at the time of the last inspection. These challenges still remain so improvement over time is weak. Governance fulfils an appropriate oversight role and is a major influence relating to financial matters. A regular reporting procedure ensures the SLT are held appropriately accountable. The Board of Trustees make an acceptable contribution to	



the strategic direction and planning of the school. There is a systematic process for self-evaluation and judgements are largely accurate and the resultant school improvement plans provide an appropriate direction and agenda for change. The SLT are knowledgeable about the curriculum and best practices in teaching and learning; these are not realised and developed effectively at middle leadership levels. There is a commitment to distributive leadership with support and guidance provided by the principal and vice principal which has not yet had the impact on improving leadership across all levels. Relationships are mostly cordial and professional. Staff were given appropriate opportunities to be involved in generating and collecting evidence to help complete school self-evaluation. The school has systematic processes for the collection of data. This process ensures that issues are appropriately highlighted. The input from staff has resulted in acceptable action plans for addressing key issues. The implementations of these plans has been less effective.

The majority of parents are supportive of the school and mostly value the experiences provided for their children. Parents are appreciative of the open door policy, which enables them to make comment and suggestions at an individual level. The school has an appropriate range of strategies to maintain links with parents to keep them informed of issues relating to their child. Informative achievement reports are produced on a regular basis. General meetings for parents' supplement this reporting process.

A suitable management structure and established routines promote an ordered environment. These routines are not consistently enforced by staff. The school has an appropriate staffing complement for subject specialisms. Classroom support is only provided in the KG. The learning environment has been improved through significant financial investment but resource limitations still exist in areas such as art, physical education and music. Library resources have improved but there are insufficient resources to conduct investigative work in subjects such as mathematics or to develop a range of activities in the creative arts.

What the school should do to improve further:

1. Improve achievement and progress in English by:
 - i. using assessment to accurately identify the level of English skills and track the progress of students
 - ii. increasing the quality of discussion in classes through open-ended questioning
 - iii. provide opportunities for more independent writing
 - iv. provide professional development for teachers relating to the most effective strategies for students who speak English as an additional language.
2. Improve the quality of teaching, particularly in science, social studies, Islamic education and Arabic in the lower phases of the school by:
 - i. producing lesson plans that focus on the needs of different groups of students
 - ii. promoting more challenging lessons through open-ended questioning in order to promote more independent and critical thinking
 - iii. raising expectations about what students can achieve and provide constructive feedback through informative marking
 - iv. professional development for teachers on active learning.
3. Improve the effectiveness of middle management by:
 - i. identifying clear accountabilities and responsibilities for improvement
 - ii. producing strategic overviews and related action plans for improvement in their areas of responsibility
 - iii. producing regular reports to SLT as part of a review process
 - iv. providing professional development in effective management.
4. Adapt the curriculum to more effectively meet students' needs by:
 - i. identifying cross curricular links where innovation and enterprise experience can be provided
 - ii. modifying curriculum plans to implement intervention strategies to support students with special educational needs and gifted and talented students
 - iii. providing more opportunities for students to develop problem-solving, critical thinking and independent learning across subject areas.