



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



Summary Inspection Report

Darul Huda Islamic School

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Iqraa

Darul Huda Islamic School

Inspection Date	15 th - 18 th October 2012
School ID#	152
Type of School	Private
Curriculum	Indian
Number of Students	1843
Age Range	4 - 18 years
Gender	Mixed
Principal	Prof. Syed Ajmal
School Address	P.O. Box No: 15695, Al Ain, Abu Dhabi, U.A.E.
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Introduction

The school was inspected by 6 inspectors. During their time in school, the inspectors met with school leaders, teachers and students. They observed 102 lessons, as well as assemblies, break periods and students' arrival at and departure from the school. Inspectors held meetings with senior staff members, teachers and a representative of the Board of Management. They had discussions with parents and students. They analysed data and documents supplied by the school. In addition, responses from parents to a questionnaire about the school were analysed.

Description of the School

The school was established in 1988 and moved to new, purpose-built accommodation in 1995. Additional classes were added in 1999 to accommodate older students. The school caters for 1,843 students, comprising 997 boys and 846 girls. Students come mainly from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan with a small minority from other countries. Just 2% of students are non Muslim and none are of United Arab Emirates (UAE) heritage. Currently, there are 244 students in the kindergarten (KG) grades, 813 in the primary grades, 421 in the middle grades and 365 students in the upper grades.

The school offers the Indian Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) qualification and follows the related primary curriculum. The school has identified a very small proportion of students with special educational needs. The annual fees range from AED 3,486 to AED 7,141. There is an additional registration fee of AED 300 and charges are made for resources, buses and uniform. Teachers' salaries are low and range from AED 2,000 – AED 5,000 a month, with the vast majority earning AED 2,200.

The Effectiveness of the School

Band C

Grade 6

Inspectors judged Darul Huda Islamic School to be in Band C; that is a school in need of significant improvement.

The school was inspected in 2010 when the priorities identified were improving the quality of teaching and learning, raising standards, improving the buildings and premises and improving leadership and management.

The inspectors found that too few of these areas had been addressed sufficiently and some had deteriorated. Whilst most teachers are trying hard to implement their recent professional development and use more active learning techniques, only a few have grasped these techniques. This remains an area for improvement.

Assessment is being used diagnostically, but teachers do not use the information to plan their lessons to meet the needs of all learners. There is very limited use of computer technology outside the specialist lessons because there are insufficient technology resources. Practice has changed little in the Kindergarten (KG); the new play equipment and shaded outdoor areas are underused. Resources for science, physical education (PE) and computer science remain inadequate. The state of the building continues to place restrictions on learning and there are still insufficient toilets in the school. Shaded areas have been provided for the girls so that they can eat in a designated area. The outdoor sports area has had some maintenance but is still unsuitable for sports. The leadership has procedures for monitoring lessons and analysing students' performance but these are not used to evaluate the effectiveness of their improvement plans or to draft future improvements. Consequently, the school improvement plan is very general about what needs to improve, it lacks clear and measurable targets, and a budget. The school leadership and the proprietors' Management Board do not jointly create the plan, so it lacks coherence.

By the time students leave the school they have attained standards that are similar to other schools following the same curriculum, although they are lower than the best international standards. Standards in mathematics and science are the strongest with standards in English and social studies below average. Students make satisfactory progress in mathematics, science and Islamic studies, but overall progress is unsatisfactory. This is because students make slow progress in Grade KG to 8, as teaching is not good enough in these grades. Unsatisfactory progress is made in English, Arabic and social studies.

There is no major difference between the standards and progress of boys and girls. The performance of girls is best in commerce, mathematics and some aspects of science, whereas boys perform better in marketing and other elements of science.

The school identifies students with special educational needs and those who are gifted and talented, but the provision for both groups is inadequate, meaning their progress is very unsatisfactory. Heads of department are not aware which students are identified with individual needs, resulting in extremely limited provision for them through additional support or differentiated work in classes.

Standards in English are below the level expected in most grades, but closer to the expected level in Grades 11 and 12. Students' literacy skills are weak because they do not have enough opportunity to develop fluency in subjects across the curriculum. Their written work is not corrected to help them improve the accuracy of their writing. The situation in Arabic is similar, students have too little

opportunity to speak in Arabic and both teaching and learning are too dependent on textbook study. Standards are better in science and in mathematics where they make satisfactory progress. In science, younger students lack experience in practical work and are not taught how to carry out research; this slows their progress. Older students make better progress because they carry out experiments and their learning is more practical. In mathematics, students' skills are stronger in number work than they are in geometry and algebra. Older students use numeracy skills adequately in science and accountancy but the development of numeracy skills is not planned for in the younger classes. There are many missed opportunities to strengthen students' numeracy skills in other subjects. Students' standards in computer science meet grade expectations in specialised lessons. In other subjects, there are insufficient opportunities for them to use computer technology to support their learning. In Islamic studies students have sufficient knowledge of Islamic parts of prayer and Fiqh law and how this impacts on the daily life of a Muslim.

In additional subjects seen during the inspection, students were generally making satisfactory progress, for example in learning Hindi and Urdu. The vast majority of students undertook Physical Education (PE) lessons with enthusiasm but they were not given opportunities to improve their skill and tactics.

Students have very positive attitudes to learning and show a good capacity for independent learning. They have too few opportunities to develop higher order study and thinking skills and consequently, these skills are underdeveloped. The behaviour of students is good with girls behaving a little better than boys. Students were very welcoming to the inspection team, going out of their way to tell them what they liked about their school and sometimes what they did not like. They showed great maturity and confidence as well as pride and responsibility for their school. Students are becoming very good citizens, showing respect for their own culture and all cultures represented in the school. They have a strong commitment to the United Arab Emirates (UAE). Older students said they would like to learn more about the UAE. In assemblies students gave high quality presentations on current world affairs, including the importance of healthy eating and a need to share the earth's resources with those who do not have enough to eat.

Teachers' subject knowledge is secure; a number lack the understanding and strategies needed for teaching their subjects successfully, particularly for the full ability range in a class. For example, they do not always explain things clearly to students or pick up on common mistakes and misconceptions in their feedback. In a minority of lessons the learning objectives are clearly explained so that the

students know and understand what they will be learning in the lesson. More often objectives describe the activities to be covered and not what will be learned. Teachers frequently pitch the lesson at the middle ability; consequently some students struggle and others find the work too easy. In KG, children are not provided with sufficient opportunities to learn through structured play and there is limited provision to develop independence. Teaching is better in the senior part of the school, where there is more specialised teaching, particularly in elective courses.

Whilst the curriculum meets the requirements of the Indian CBSE, it does not enable students to reach the best international standards. This is because it is fairly narrow and does not provide a breadth of learning experiences. For example, there are few opportunities for students to be creative. Teachers rely too heavily on course textbooks and repetitive pen and paper tasks. There is limited provision for extra-curricular activities. Students respond positively to what is on offer, for example, Olympiads in mathematics and science and inter school sporting events. The number of hours allocated for Arabic, UAE social studies and Islamic Studies does not meet the Ministry of Education (MOE) requirements.

Students are well cared for on a daily basis by teachers and medical staff. The child protection policy is not completed and staff have not been trained in child protection awareness and procedures, which is a matter to be addressed urgently. Attendance and punctuality are well recorded and attendance is very good at 98%. Students report there is hardly any bullying in the school and on the rare occasion it does occur, the school takes effective action. Provision is made for prayer, but the present facilities for boys are inadequate, as the previous facility was demolished and arrangements are made in a multi-purpose hall. Basic guidance is given to students before they begin their secondary courses through an orientation programme and a further orientation programme in Grade 12, including careers fair, before they leave school. Some students said they would like more careers advice.

The unsatisfactory school buildings significantly impair the quality of teaching and learning. Classrooms are small and very cramped, particularly for older students. This restricts more active learning techniques and group work although some teachers have tried hard to overcome these difficulties. Learning and progress is particularly restricted in science and sports. Some parts of the building are not well maintained, for example, inspectors found toilets to be in a poor condition on more than one occasion. Health and safety checks are not carried out regularly, delaying the identification of faults and hindering repairs. The health and safety

manager has not yet received the appropriate training. A health and safety check was carried out on the last day of the inspection but there is no evidence of regular testing of electrical equipment. The school building is secure and security staff check visitors into the building. Buses are regularly serviced and maintained but do not have seat belts as required by law.

Learning in all subjects is hampered by a lack of good quality resources. The library, which is small, serves the whole school, but is inadequately resourced. Fiction books in particular are of a poor quality. In the laboratories chemicals are left unlocked and exposed and students did not wear safety goggles or gloves. In the Kindergarten there is a shortage of play material.

The school leadership works hard to provide an environment where everybody is respected and valued. Students are helped to become mature young people ready to take their place in the UAE and beyond. Communication between all the stakeholders in the school is not effective. Inspectors found many differing views on school policy and practice amongst teachers, students and parents. The school leadership fails to adequately communicate the outcomes of its monitoring to middle leaders and teachers, who consequently have little or no involvement with the school improvement plan and school self-evaluation report.

Teachers are paid at the lower end of the pay scale. They have heavy teaching loads, but are willing to take on additional management responsibilities if given sufficient time to carry these out effectively.

Parents are generally supportive of the school. Parent questionnaires showed the vast majority were satisfied in most respects; although a significant minority of parents felt that the school ignored their opinions, or provided insufficient help if their child had difficulty, or did not prepare students sufficiently for the next stage of their education.

In spite of the relatively low fees the outcomes of the school are not as good as they could be and there are significant breaches in health and safety. Many areas for improvement identified at the last inspection have not been adequately addressed. For these reasons the school does not give satisfactory value for money and the capacity to improve is unsatisfactory.

What the school should do to improve further:

1. Improve the leadership and management of the school by:
 - i. addressing the breaches of regulations and health and safety concerns;
 - ii. establishing effective communication between all stakeholders in the school;
 - iii. monitoring the impact of professional development to improve teaching and learning and supporting further training and development where necessary;
 - iv. instigating joint school improvement planning with the school leadership and Management Board to ensure plans are appropriately and realistically budgeted;
 - v. engaging middle leaders in school self-evaluation and all staff in school improvement planning; and
 - vi. providing all leaders with sufficient time to carry out their responsibilities.
2. Improve the quality of teaching particularly in kindergarten to Grade 8 by:
 - i. ensuring there are adequate resources to promote learning in all subjects;
 - ii. planning to meet the learning needs of students of all abilities in lessons;
 - iii. engaging students in more active learning and providing more emphasis on higher order learning and thinking skills; and
 - iv. providing effective feedback to students to help them to know how to improve their work.
3. Raise standards by:
 - i. developing the use of English, literacy skills and numeracy skills in all subjects;
 - ii. providing more interesting and creative opportunities in the curriculum particularly in kindergarten to Grade 8;
 - iii. ensuring students of all abilities are sufficiently supported and challenged in lessons; and
 - iv. providing more opportunities to use computer technology in all subjects.