



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



New School Inspection Report

Diyafah International Private School

Academic Year 2013 – 14

Iqraa

Diyafah International Private School

Inspection Date	12 – 15 May 2014
School ID#	233
Licensed Curriculum	English National Curriculum
Number of Students	290
Age Range	3 to 10 years
Gender	Mixed
Principal	Robert Taylor
School Address	P4713 Plot, Mohammed Bin Zayad City, Abu Dhabi
Telephone Number	+971 (0)2 558 5665
Fax Number	+971 (0)2 558 5455
Official Email (ADEC)	AlDiyafah.Pvt@adec.ac.ae
School Website	www.diyafahinternationalschool.com
Date of opening	15 September 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:

- systems and routines have been established so that the school runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis
- parents, teachers and students respect the principal and his friendly, approachable manner
- some classrooms and displays are providing a stimulating learning environment
- the nurse and teachers work hard to promote students' understanding of a healthy lifestyle.

The main areas for improvement are:

- the need to prioritise the steps needed to improve the school
- the quality of monitoring of teaching and learning
- the curriculum implementation to meet the needs of all the students, particularly for those who do not have English as a first language
- provision of sufficient resources to support practical learning, for example in science and mathematics
- the use of assessment and teachers' marking to help students to know how to improve their work.

Introduction

A team of 3 inspectors inspected the school. They observed 41 lessons, conducted meetings with senior staff, the owner and school manager, teachers, students, parents and support staff. They analysed the school's records of assessment and scrutinised students' work across the school. They considered 150 responses to the parents' questionnaire and many of the school's policies and other documents. They met with the owner and school manager. The principal and leadership team were involved throughout the inspection process, including 3 joint lesson observations with the lead inspector.

Description of the School

Diyafah International Private School opened to students in September 2013. The purpose built school is situated in a residential area of Mohammed Bin Zayad City. The school's mission is to foster creative thinking, courage of convictions and a positive attitude to draw out the highest potential in every student's mind, spirit and body.

The school numbers are growing daily. At the time of the inspection, the school had 290 students of which 177 were boys and 113 girls and 71 % are Muslims. The school is divided into the Foundation Stage (FS), Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. FS has 156 students, Key Stage 1 has 87 and Key Stage 2 has 47. Of the students enrolled, 32% are Emirati, 11% are American, 11% are Pakistani, 8% are British, 6% are Indian, 5% are Jordanian, and the remaining 27% are made up of a number of other nationalities. The school has identified 13 students with special educational needs (SEN) with regard to developmental delay and behaviour difficulties.

The school offers the English National Curriculum. Children are admitted to FS subject to the approval of the school principal. Students in Years 1 to 5 are currently admitted on the basis of their previous school report and an assessment on entry. The school is registered to admit students up to Year 7 and intends to open additional classes for Years 6 and 7 students at the start of the next academic year.

Fees range from AED 24,200 in the FS, AED 26,500 in Years 1 – 3, and AED 28,700 in Years 4 – 5. The Board has now been formed, with an identified Chair of Governors. At the time of the inspection, the board had not yet met.

The Effectiveness of the School

Diyafah International is in need of significant improvement. This judgment reflects the school's position against international standards. When judged against similar Abu Dhabi private schools, Al Diyafah has some strengths. For example, systems have been established so that the school runs smoothly on a daily basis. To make the progress towards world-class provision which the Emirate of Abu Dhabi requires for all its schools, Al Diyafah must do more to promote the twenty-first century skills the students need to lead successful lives in the modern world. For this reason, this report recognises the developments that the principal and teachers have achieved. It also gives clear recommendations on what more needs to be done to take the school forward.

Students' attainment and progress

Children enter FS with skills that are below those expected for their age. They make some progress overtime. At the time of the inspection, for example, in English and Arabic, some children can read and write their names, know some of the sounds that letters make, and can read some simple words. In English, some can count to 10. The skills that children need to learn, such as how to read and write independently, talk with one another and share ideas are underdeveloped. They do not yet make choices, explore and investigate the world around them.

Assessments of students' skills are made when they enter the school, and teachers regularly consider their progress. The assessments they use are of a poor quality and do not give a clear and accurate picture of students' progress across the key subjects, in any of the year groups including FS.

In all key subjects, students' attainment, and the progress they have made, is below that expected for their age. The progress of the many students who do not speak English as a first language is poor when compared to their peers.

In English, although students' reading skills are improving in relation to their starting points, they are still below expectations. Students' progress in writing is significantly below their development of reading skills. Students' speaking and listening skills are underdeveloped. In mathematics, their skills are below age-related expectations. In science, their progress is limited. There are insufficient opportunities for students to learn independently or to work collaboratively. They do not get opportunities to solve problems for themselves and ICT skills are lower than expected. The better progress of some students in Years 4 and 5 is still below expectations. In Arabic in Year 5, some students read and write with few mistakes. In Islamic education, they are able to read long Surah and Hadith. They show appropriate progress in understanding Islamic principles and values.

Students' personal development

Students enjoy coming to school, and their attendance is broadly average at 89% in the FS and 92% in Years 1 to 5. Students show an appropriate understanding of how to eat healthily and know the difference between healthy and unhealthy foods.

They are not yet developing the personal qualities they will need to participate in the modern world, for example perseverance and curiosity. They do not work collaboratively with each other. They rarely ask questions. Some students are not yet fully engaged in learning, and do not always listen carefully or put enough effort into their work. The school has not yet developed the structures to promote good behaviour or positive attitudes to learning. Students have insufficient opportunities to take responsibilities or leadership roles in school.

The quality of teaching and learning

Teachers have developed some effective classroom routines, and in the better lessons students respond appropriately when learning with the whole class, or when they are working in a group. This type of classroom management also helps new learners to settle into the school. Some classes have a stimulating learning environment, where the best of students' work is displayed. Interactive whiteboards are used by some teachers to engage students, and improve their learning.

Across the school, teachers do not pay enough attention to the different abilities of students when planning activities. They do not take students' levels of spoken English into account when they are teaching, and when they prepare activities for them to complete independently. They do not prepare activities that are carefully matched to what students need to learn next. They do not offer more able students activities that help them to make faster progress. When teachers mark books, they do not make comments that will help students to know how to make their work better. Teachers do not assess written work to find out exactly what the students have learnt during the lesson. They do not provide enough practical activities to help them to learn.

The school has not yet developed a planned programme of professional development to help teachers to improve their teaching, or their skills in assessing students' understanding and progress in lessons.

Meeting students' needs through the curriculum

The school has successfully developed a system to promote healthy lifestyles. It provides a sound enrichment of the curriculum through trips to interesting places

in the community. There are a number of planned after-school clubs that students of all ages enjoy.

The English National Curriculum has not yet been fully implemented, or adapted to suit the students in the school. It is not yet well balanced because too much attention is paid to the development of reading skills. Active learning is not promoted within the curriculum implementation. The curriculum planning and delivery does not promote students' investigative and problem-solving skills. Students with additional needs, such as those with special educational needs, and those who are more able, do not have a curriculum which is adapted appropriately to help them to succeed. There is no planned programme of assemblies to develop students' leadership skills and their personal development. The school has not yet developed a robust implementation of the curriculum, with adequate coverage across all the subject areas.

The protection, care, guidance and support of students

The importance of attendance is promoted well by the school. The first aid facilities and the storage of medicines are managed well. The health and safety committee use effective checklists to ensure students are safe when they are in school. Suitable checks have been carried out on staff. There are well developed systems in place to keep students safe when they arrive and depart on school buses.

The pastoral systems to support students' personal development are underdeveloped and rely too heavily on informal patterns of care. There is some inconsistency in the application of the behaviour management system. There is some evidence of poor behaviour among students. The school has not yet developed a system of targets and next steps to guide students in their learning. There is not yet a system to support the development of those students who have additional needs.

The quality of the school's buildings and premises

The buildings are clean, well maintained and hygienic. Most displays are attractive and used to encourage and celebrate learning. There are adequate facilities for students to use at break time.

The indoor facilities are not sufficient to develop students' physical skills, or engage in competitive games. The FS accommodation, such as the role-play room and the library, is not yet used enough to develop young children's skills. Outdoor areas in the FS are not yet used effectively for planned active learning. Specialist rooms in the school, such as the art room and ICT suite, are underused and so do not support a broad curriculum. Currently, students eat in their classrooms.

The school's resources to support its aims

Some teachers use resources such as interactive whiteboards effectively, to help students to make connections in their learning, for example, they show videos and prepare presentations to engage their interest, or show them different methods to complete mathematical calculations.

There are insufficient practical resources in all classrooms, and an insufficient number of books in English and Arabic to supplement learning. The resources to develop students' skills in science, mathematics, and physical education are not sufficient. Some teachers do not yet have the skills or subject knowledge necessary to be effective in the classroom. The school has not yet developed an induction programme to support new teachers as they join the school. It has not created a training programme that will help all teachers to continue to improve.

The school buses are well maintained and managed.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Parents, teachers and students find the principal approachable and helpful. The school has developed an appropriate team spirit between the teachers and support staff. It helps new teachers to quickly learn daily routines, and the school runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis.

Owners and leaders are not yet providing sufficient clear and strategic direction to improve the school. The school's board of governors has not yet met to develop the work of the school. The school's financial resources are not currently aligned with the school's priorities. The current school leadership does not effectively evaluate or monitor the work of the school. Although the school has rapidly expanded since it opened in September 2013, it has not yet developed a whole school approach to teachers' professional development in order to improve the quality of teaching and learning. Systems are not yet in place to adequately inform parents of their children's academic and personal progress.

Capacity for further development

The school opened in September 2013 with just over 100 students. The school has grown considerably since then, and current numbers now stand at just under 300. Since opening, the school leaders have focused on dealing with the organisational demands of the increasing number of students arriving during the school year. They have settled new students into school, liaised with parents, and helped new teachers, arriving at different points in the school year, to learn the school routines.

The school's capacity to develop from these difficult beginnings is unsatisfactory. The short-term practical issues, linked to the growth of the school in its first year of establishment, have overwhelmed the management team. The school does not yet identify accurately its strengths and weaknesses. Although school leaders know that the quality of teaching and learning, curriculum, and leadership and management need urgent improvement, they have not been able to identify how these areas can be improved, and by whom. The school's ability to address its current issues also depends on external factors that have not yet been resolved. Future plans to develop the school further, for example by increasing the number of specialist teachers, resources and facilities are dependent on increased pupil numbers.

What the school should do to improve further:

1. Improve the professional leadership of teaching and learning by:
 - i. monitoring the quality of teaching in the school
 - ii. developing and using assessment to judge the effectiveness of teaching and learning
 - iii. providing teachers with a high quality programme of professional development
 - iv. providing new teachers with an induction programme that will enable them to successfully teach their age group and the English National Curriculum
 - v. helping teachers to make effective use of assessment to inform planning of activities that are matched closely to students' needs.

3. Develop the quality of teaching and learning by:
 - i. developing teaching strategies to enable students who speak English as an additional language to make better progress in all lessons
 - ii. giving feedback to students when marking work, so that they know how well they are doing and what they need to do next to improve their work
 - iii. providing more practical activities to help develop students' skills and support their understanding especially for children in FS.

4. Ensure that the curriculum implementation is fit for purpose by:
 - i. aligning it fully to the English National Curriculum
 - ii. adapting it to meet the needs of all the students, particularly those who are learning English as an additional language, those with special educational needs, and the more able students
 - iii. developing daily assemblies that promote the values and culture of the UAE.

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								