



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



Private School Inspection Report

Elite Private School

Academic Year 2016 – 2017

Iqraa

Elite Private School

Inspection Date	April 24, 2017	to	April 27, 2017
Date of previous inspection	April 24, 2016	to	April 27, 2016

General Information	
School ID	9271
Opening year of school	2015
Principal	Lee Dabagia
School telephone	+971 (0)2 447 5800
School Address	Mohammad Bin Zayed City, Abu Dhabi
Official email (ADEC)	elite.pvt@adec.ac.ae
School website	www.eps.ae
Fee ranges (per annum)	Low to high (AED 17,000 to AED 31,000)
Licensed Curriculum	
Main Curriculum	American
Other Curriculum (if applicable)	---
External Exams/ Standardised tests	MAP
Accreditation	---

Students		
Total number of students	995	
%of students per curriculum (if applicable)	Main Curriculum	100%
	Other Curriculum	---
Number of students in other phases	KG	130
	Primary:	271
	Middle:	339
	High:	255
Age range	4 to 19 years	
Grades or Year Groups	KG to Grade 12	
Gender	Boys and girls	
% of Emirati Students	67%	
Largest nationality groups (%)	1. Jordanian: 12%	
	2. Egyptian: 8%	
	3. Somali: 3%	
Staff		
Number of teachers	71	
Number of teaching assistants (TAs)	7	
Teacher-student ratio	KG/ FS	1:15
	Other phases	1:23
Teacher turnover	60%	

Introduction

Inspection activities	
Number of inspectors deployed	4
Number of inspection days	4
Number of lessons observed	99
Number of joint lesson observations	19
Number of parents' questionnaires	77; return rate:10%
Details of other inspection activities	Inspectors held discussions with members of the governing body, the principal, vice principal, other senior managers, teachers and other members of staff, students and parents. They reviewed a wide range of school documentation and students' coursework. They observed assemblies, school activities, arrivals, departures and intervals.

School	
School Aims	'To offer the best education and customer service in the UAE, and beyond.'
School vision and mission	'To prepare a generation of educated, innovative, globally minded future leaders.'
Admission Policy	Admission to the school from KG to Grade 2 is inclusive. Admission to Grade 3 and above is determined by a placement test and meeting with parents.

Leadership structure (ownership, governance and management)	Leadership comprises the principal who is head of the secondary school, vice principal who is head of the primary school and five heads of department. The Governing Board comprises the owner who is also Chairman, a Director of the Board, the Business Manager, the Finance Manager, two representative members and the school principal.
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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 internally
Intellectual disability	1	0
Specific Learning Disability	0	3
Emotional and Behaviour Disorders (ED/ BD)	1	2
Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)	0	2
Speech and Language Disorders	0	1
Physical and health related disabilities	0	0
Visually impaired	0	0
Hearing impaired	0	1
Multiple disabilities	0	3

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

G&T Category	Number of students identified
Intellectual ability	0
Subject-specific aptitude (e.g. in science, mathematics, languages)	0
Social maturity and leadership	0



Mechanical/ technical/ technological ingenuity	0
Visual and performing arts (e.g. art, theatre, recitation)	0
Psychomotor ability (e.g. dance or sport)	0

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)

The school was judged to be:	Band B	Acceptable
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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						
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The Performance of the School

Evaluation of the school's overall performance

The overall performance of the school is acceptable. Although the school has experienced a very large staff turnover it has continued to improve. This is because the leadership team has established a culture for improvement and staff are committed to improving teaching and learning. Leaders meet regularly to discuss how to improve students' achievement further, and all staff work closely together and have regular meetings to take forward important developments. As a result, most students are more motivated to learn and achievement across all subjects and phases is now at least acceptable. The promotion of healthy lifestyles is having a positive impact on students. Teachers and students respect each other. New assessments have been introduced into the school. However, teachers do not yet have the analysis of assessment information they need to know precisely how well students are attaining within each ability group. While improvements have been made to the curriculum, the school has yet to improve subject programmes sufficiently to meet the needs of all students.

Progress made since last inspection and capacity to improve

The school has made acceptable progress since its last inspection. Progress has been made against all the recommendations from the previous inspection. Leaders now evaluate learning and teaching more effectively. This has enabled them to identify the most effective practice and use it increasingly to help staff across the school develop their skills. Teaching across the school has improved but practice is still variable and students' learning skills are still not being promoted effectively enough. Improvements have been made to the way teachers assess students' progress but assessment data are still not used effectively enough to plan their learning. Behaviour management has improved and relationships across the school are more positive as a result. Overall, school leaders' capacity to improve the school is acceptable.

Development and promotion of innovation skills

The school is beginning to promote innovation skills effectively but only for the minority of students. It does this mainly through projects and clubs. For example, the media club prepared a film on post-traumatic stress disorder which has won national competitions. A range of STEAM projects are developing innovation skills. A good example is sustainability work in the high phase which includes making

solar panels. Work on robotics is also developing creative skills and the school holds an innovation week. However, not all groups of students are sufficiently involved. Overall, the school is at an early stage in teaching effectively the skills that underpin innovation in lessons across the curriculum.

The inspection identified the following as key areas of strength:

- improvements in attainment and progress since the last inspection, particularly in middle and high phases
- students' understanding of Islamic values and their appreciation of Emirati culture
- promotion of safe and healthy lifestyles across the school
- the leadership of the principal and the culture of improvement he has established.

The inspection identified the following as key areas for improvement:

- the quality of students' achievement and learning skills across the curriculum
- the quality of teaching and assessment across all subjects and at all phases
- the amount of challenge for more-able students through tasks and activities that are matched more effectively to their learning needs
- boys' behaviour in the middle phase and students' punctuality to lessons.

Performance Standard 1: Students' Achievement

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



The overall quality of students' achievement is acceptable. The school carried out EMSA assessments but results are not yet available. Results in Ministry of Education (MoE) examinations indicate outstanding attainment in Grade 12 Arabic and Islamic education. The school also introduced externally validated MAP assessments this year and results indicate that students from Grades 3 to 12 are achieving below UAE and international benchmarks in English and mathematics. Second MAP assessments show an improving picture for all grades in both subjects but that students are still performing below average. Observations of lessons and scrutiny of coursework shows acceptable achievement at all phases and in all subjects, other than Arabic and social studies where achievement is good. Girls outperform boys across the grades, but the gap narrows by the end of the high phase where they perform at similar levels.

Students' achievement in Islamic education is acceptable. Most students including non-Arabs are achieving age-related curriculum expectations. For example, most students can recite verses of the Qur'an in line with curriculum expectations. In KG, most children can name the five pillars of Islam and talk about Eid Al Adha traditions in UAE and make links to 'Surat Al Kawthar'. In Grade 3, most students can explain the importance of honesty and why it is a virtue in Islam. In Grade 11, most students can explain the meaning of consultation in Islam and the importance of consultation in Islamic society.

Students' achievement in Arabic as a first language is good. The majority of students are achieving above age-related expectations in reading, speaking, writing, listening and understanding. For example, the majority of children in KG can tell a short story from their own experience using appropriate vocabulary for their age group, demonstrating good speaking and understanding skills. By Grade 7, the majority of students can apply the grammar rules they have learned correctly and use them in sentences to express their pride in UAE heritage and culture. By Grade 12, the majority of students' skills in reading, speaking, listening and understanding are well developed and above curriculum expectations. Creative writing remains in line with curriculum standards.

Students' achievement in Arabic as a second language is acceptable. Most students are achieving age-related curriculum expectations in reading, speaking, listening and understanding skills. Writing skills are not as strong as other skills. For example, in primary, most students read text appropriate to their age group and answer comprehension questions correctly. By Grade 9, most students can apply the grammar rules they learned correctly. By Grade 11, most students can explain their learning and make links with Islamic education, demonstrating acceptable speaking, listening and understanding skills.

Students' achievement in social studies is good. The majority of students are achieving above age-related curriculum expectations. For example, in Grade 3 they can suggest and explain different ways to preserve traditions making links to their own life contexts. In Grade 9, the majority of students can give clear examples of UAE social care foundations such as Sheikha Fatima's and Sheikh Zayed's organisations and explain their impact on UAE society. In a Grade 8 lesson for non-Arabs, students could talk knowledgeably about the difficulties of living in the desert and what is needed to survive.

Students' achievement in English is acceptable. Most students are achieving age-appropriate curriculum expectations. For example, by the end of KG, most children can understand simple instructions and read and write letters and sounds. By the end of primary, most students can understand and explain more complex English vocabulary. Acceptable progress continues in the middle phase where, in Grade 9, students can explain and use grammatical rules when constructing sentences. By Grade 12, most students can critically discuss aspects of literature. Speaking and listening skills are strongest across the school. Students' writing is generally weaker than their other skills in English.

Students' achievement in mathematics is acceptable. Most students are achieving age-appropriate curriculum expectations. In KG, most children have an acceptable understanding of numbers to 20 and can write the words and the numerals. By Grade 10, most students learn to handle the properties of arithmetic and geometric sequences with increasing complexity and can compare them in age-appropriate ways for their grade. By Grade 12, most students have a firm understanding of indefinite integration and can find this through using the power rule. Across the phases, students do not apply their problem-solving skills independently.

Students' achievement in science is acceptable. Most students are achieving age-appropriate curriculum expectations. For example, almost all children in KG can understand the sequence of the seasons. Most can make healthy choices and group different foods into unhealthy or healthy categories. In Grade 7, progress in science is more variable because of fewer active, investigative and independent learning opportunities. In Grade 10, students have appropriate opportunities to research and this contributes to their acceptable investigative skills.

Students' achievement in other subjects is acceptable. Most students make age-appropriate progress in information and communications technology (ICT). In middle and high phases, students are developing their coding and programing skills including making and programing robots. Achievement in art and physical education (PE) is acceptable across the school. For example, at the end of primary, most students in gymnastics can do a backward roll and in Grade 9 they can dribble and

pass efficiently in basketball.

Students' learning skills are broadly acceptable across the school. In most lessons, students have suitable skills for working collaboratively. Students' skills in the range of higher order skills such as critical thinking, problem solving, creativity and evaluation are not consistently as strong as they need to be to enable many students to progress as strongly as they could. In the best practice, for example, in Grade 11 in science and mathematics, students reflect on their learning and apply their problem-solving skills. This practice is not consistent across the school, however.

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	Good	Good	Good	Good
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

Students' personal and social development and their innovation skills are acceptable. Most students have positive attitudes to learning and they respond well to their teachers. While behaviour has improved overall since the last inspection, the behaviour of the minority of boys in the middle phase remains poor. Students know how to lead a safe and a healthy life. For example, they participate enthusiastically in PE lessons and are aware of the benefits of healthy eating. At 94%, attendance over time is good. However, the minority of students who arrive late to lessons throughout the school day are disruptive to the flow of learning for others.

The quality of students' understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures is good. Students appreciate Islamic values and their influence on

society. The school celebrates many Islamic occasions such as Hijri New Year, Ramadan, Isra'a and Me'raj. Students are knowledgeable about the heritage and culture of the UAE. Students demonstrate clear understanding of their own and other world cultures and a few have visited Japan and will visit Korea for a media competition.

The quality of students' social responsibility and innovation skills is acceptable. Most students understand their responsibilities as members of the school community. Few opportunities exist for students to develop enterprise and entrepreneurship skills. The students' council and Eco club are active and influence the school community. The school is part of the National Paper Separation and Recycling Project and students volunteer to clean Saadiyat beach. Students are developing a few innovation skills but not yet applying these in most lessons.

Performance Standard 3: Teaching and Assessment

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

The quality of teaching is acceptable. Most teachers have secure subject knowledge and they know how students learn. In KG and early primary, teachers give appropriate attention to the learning needs of younger learners. Teachers manage time effectively and lesson structures are planned appropriately, although planning is not always done well enough to meet the learning needs of different ability groups of students. Teachers usually make effective use of resources such as ICT to help enhance students' learning. Teachers' relationships with students are constructive and friendly, although in the middle phase disruptive behaviour by the minority of boys causes some friction. Questioning is used mainly to check students' attention and learning but rarely to challenge them to think or to probe their perceptions. As a result, students' answers are short and factual and only occasionally based on critical or evaluative thought. Collaborative learning techniques are being developed but are not well enough organised by teachers. The school has not yet developed systems to encourage critical thinking that are appropriate to each grade, age and stage of development. This is beginning to improve, for example in the high phase, but is not yet in place as a teaching strategy

across the school.

The quality of assessment is acceptable. Teaching units have rubrics to encourage teacher assessment and these are beginning to be used to help students carry out their own self-assessment. At times, teachers' internal assessments are not accurate or realistic enough and provide an inflated judgement about students' progress. Assessment information is used in a general way to inform a few aspects of lesson and curriculum planning. The data is not used effectively enough to help teachers to match different learning tasks to different ability groups in a way which will challenge and support them individually.

Performance Standard 4: Curriculum

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

The quality of curriculum design and implementation is acceptable. The school follows the approved American curriculum aligned to the state of California, which is appropriately broad and balanced. Students in the high phase have access to a more demanding curriculum, particularly in Grade 12, as they prepare for university. Some cross-curricular links are planned including, for example, in KG where children sort foods into different categories, linking with mathematics when they learn about making healthy choices in a science lesson. These links are also developed in the high phase where, for example, students link science to life experiences while giving presentations on drug awareness. The school now regularly reviews its curriculum and is becoming more successful in meeting the needs of a wider student cohort.

The quality of curriculum adaptation is acceptable. Provision for students with SEN has improved but there remains scope to develop this further through more effective alignment of specific learning tasks to individual needs. In addition, while the curriculum is being adapted and modified more effectively to meet the needs of most students, the school has yet to ensure all teachers in different subjects and grades adapt learning activities to meet the needs of different ability groups of students. This is particularly the case for more-able students who generally need to

be challenged more. The school provides only limited opportunities in lessons for enterprise, innovation and creativity. Links with Emirati culture and UAE society are good. The curriculum successfully develops students' knowledge and understanding and appreciation of the heritage, values and culture of the UAE, including by using topics such as, for example, 'my identity'.

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	Good	Good	Good	Good
Care and support	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

The quality of health and safety, including safeguarding, is good. The school has effective policies for the safeguarding of students. The school works hard to protect students from bullying and the dangers of the internet. Children and students are appropriately supervised and health and safety procedures are effective. School buildings and equipment are well maintained. The school keeps accurate and secure records. The premises and facilities provide a safe physical environment. Resources, equipment and facilities enable staff to meet the needs of students. The school promotes safe and healthy living effectively. Students are making healthy eating choices at the canteen. Healthy living projects are built into the curriculum and most aspects of school life. For example, senior students recently gave a presentation on drug awareness.

The quality of care and support is acceptable and staff promote caring and supportive relationships with students. Overall, behaviour has improved since the last inspection. However, middle phase boys' behaviour is still poor. The minority of boys at this phase talk through lessons, shout across the room and are generally disruptive. Too many students arrive for lessons late which is affecting their learning but also disrupting teaching and learning for other students. The school's behaviour management and punctuality policies have not been successful in addressing these issues. The school now has a SEN department which has developed an appropriate system to identify students with special educational needs. Those students with

IEPs are having their needs met well and their targets reviewed appropriately. Resources are suitably modified to meet the needs of individual SEN students. The school does not cater well enough for gifted and talented students because it has not yet developed procedures to identify them formally or to plan to meet their specific needs. The school provides appropriate advice and guidance about career choices and higher education opportunities to older students.

Performance Standard 6: Leadership and management

Leadership and management Indicators	
The effectiveness of leadership	Acceptable
Self-evaluation and improvement planning	Acceptable
Partnerships with parents and the community	Acceptable
Governance	Good
Management, staffing, facilities and resources	Good
The overall quality of leadership and management is acceptable. The school vision is now shared and embraced by the school community. The principal has helped the school to develop a culture of improvement and this is now bringing about important changes since the last inspection. Together with the leadership team, he recognises that much remains to be done. Senior leaders provide broadly effective leadership and direction but their impact is not yet sufficient to bring about strong improvement across several subjects. However, because of improvement since the last inspection, most students in the middle and high phases are now achieving at an acceptable level. Staff morale is positive and staff willingly engage in the school's comprehensive programme of personal development with a focus on improving teaching. This is important because of the high number of new staff now in the school. The quality of self-evaluation and improvement planning is acceptable. The school's self-evaluation form (SEF) is not well enough aligned to national standards. The school development plan (SDP) has been effective in helping the school to improve most recommendations of the previous inspection report. Senior and middle leaders observe lessons across the school and discuss their evaluations with staff. This is helping to bring about improvement in several subjects, but does not focus sufficiently on the quality of students' learning or progress.	



The quality of partnerships with parents and the community is acceptable. Parents are becoming more involved in school life. The parents' committee discusses school priorities and policies such as child protection. Parents now run clubs within the school. Parents who responded to a recent survey were satisfied with some aspects of the school but were not generally positive overall.

The quality of governance is good. Governors regularly challenge the principal over school improvement. To sustain improvement, they have agreed to fund additional posts such as a personal development co-ordinator. They are supportive of the school and are helping provide improved resources which are essential to school improvement. These include a new school management system, MAP assessments and the Robotics programme.

The quality of management, staffing, facilities and resources is good. The school is run well on a day-to-day basis with effective procedures and routines. The school is now suitably staffed. The premises are well designed and resources and learning areas support teaching and learning generally well.

What the school should do to improve further:

1. Improve the quality of students' achievement and learning skills across the curriculum by:
 - i. identifying the weakest performing elements in each subject and planning interventions and setting targets to bring about improvement
 - ii. using assessment information more consistently to provide challenging lessons
 - iii. providing relevant collaborative activities where students need to work as a team to succeed
 - iv. developing suitable challenge projects for students to work on independently and in groups
 - v. modifying teaching approaches during lessons to meet students' needs.
2. Improve the quality of teaching and assessment across all subjects and at all phases by:
 - i. raising teachers' expectations about what all students are capable of achieving
 - ii. ensuring teachers ask open-ended questions that encourage students to think deeply before answering
 - iii. ensuring that teachers have a robust system of assessment that helps them to gauge accurately what different ability groups of students are achieving
 - iv. developing systems to encourage critical thinking that are appropriate to each grade, age and stage of development
 - v. involving students in the assessment process, including through peer- and self-assessment approaches.
3. Improve punctuality to lessons and boys' behaviour in the middle phase by:
 - i. making a decisive, visible intervention in the middle school, involving all staff and students, to tackle directly disruption caused by lateness to lessons and poor behaviour
 - ii. using the school management system to record late coming and poor behaviour
 - iii. involving parents directly to address persistent late coming and poor behaviour and developing reward strategies for improvement

- iv. seeking the views of the Parents' Committee and the wider parent body to help identify practical ways of addressing punctuality and behavioural issues
- v. developing pastoral support plans for students who consistently misbehave or who are regularly late to school or lessons.