



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



Private School Inspection Report

Emirates National School- Al Nahyan

Academic Year 2015 – 2016

Iqraa

Emirates National School- Al Nahyan

Inspection Date	9 – 12 November, 2015
Date of previous inspection	27 – 30 January, 2014

General Information		Students	
School ID	106	Total number of students	715
Opening year of school	2008	Number of children in KG	N/A
Principal	Nada Kaysi	Number of students in other phases	Middle: 581 High: 134
School telephone	+971 (0)2 499 3700	Age range	10 to 18 years
School Address	Hazza Bin Zayed St/ Delma St	Grades or Year Groups	Grade 5 – Grade 12
Official email (ADEC)	emiratesnatad.pvt@adec.ac.ae	Gender	Boys and girls in separate schools
School Website	http://www.ens.sch.ae	% of Emirati Students	95%
Fee range (per annum)	AED 22,000 – AED 56,000	Largest nationality groups (%)	1. Jordan 4% 2. South Africa 1%
Licensed Curriculum		Staff	
Main Curriculum	American International Baccalaureate Diploma	Number of teachers	59
Other Curriculum	-----	Number of teaching assistants (TAs)	2
External Exams/ Standardised tests	MAP/ IB	Teacher-student ratio	_:_ KG/ FS 1:13 Other phases
Accreditation	-----	Teacher turnover	40%

Introduction

Inspection activities	
Number of inspectors deployed	4
Number of inspection days	4
Number of lessons observed	83
Number of joint lesson observations	1
Number of parents' questionnaires	42; (return rate: 7%)
Details of other inspection activities	Learning walks; meetings with staff, parents and students (formal and informal); work scrutiny; data and document scrutiny.

School	
School Aims	Preparing future leaders through innovation in education and treasuring of cultural heritage.
School vision and mission	'Emirates National School (ENS) will provide students with educational programs that develop character, use technology to improve learning, and prepare students to be leaders and community members.'
Admission Policy	Admission to the Emirates National Schools is based on an assessment of the suitability of the student. The assessment may include interviews with the student, oral assessment, there will be formal written assessments in Arabic, English and mathematics.
Leadership structure (ownership, governance and management)	Principal, Campus Director and Heads of the Boy's and Girl's Schools.

SEN and G&T 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	2	0
Specific Learning Disability	1	0
Emotional and Behaviour Disorders (ED/ BD)	1	0
Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)	0	0
Speech and Language Disorders	1	0
Physical and health related disabilities	1	0
Visually impaired	0	0
Hearing impaired	2	0
Multiple disabilities	0	0

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

G&T Category	Number of students identified
Intellectual ability	The school has not yet determined who might be considered as Gifted & Talented although they know some students fall into this category including a chess champion currently away at a national tournament.
Subject-specific aptitude (e.g. in science, mathematics, languages)	
Social maturity and leadership	
Mechanical/ technical/ technological ingenuity	
Visual and performing arts (e.g. art, theatre, recitation)	
Psychomotor ability (e.g. dance or sport)	

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						
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The Performance of the School

Evaluation of the school's overall performance

The overall performance of the school is weak. Weaker provision is seen in performance standards for students' achievement and teaching and assessment than in other performance standards. The principal and many of the senior staff are new to the school and demonstrate a clear commitment to raising standards in the current school year. They realise the school has potential to improve and are seeking the right strategies to make this happen. The school has two sites with separate boys' and girls' schools. There is a different ethos presiding in each school. The girls' school is a largely calm learning environment while the boys' school can be a challenging place to work and learn due to the disruptive and disrespectful behaviour of a few boys. The school faces the additional challenges resulting from a high turnover of staff.

Attainment is acceptable in English and mathematics but weak in Arabic, Islamic education and science. There are variations between the attainment and progress of boys and girls that are less marked as students approach their final years in the school. The large majority of students enter the school with a low base in their key literacy and numeracy skills. They make steady progress in grades 5-9 but the rate of progress in English accelerates as they reach Grade 12. Almost all teachers have the knowledge and skills to provide interesting lessons, but only a large minority are able to provide the scope and depth intended by the International Baccalaureate (IB) curriculum standards.

Progress made since last inspection and capacity to improve

The school has not succeeded in sufficiently raising students' attainment in all subjects, especially those taught in Arabic. Standard Arabic is still not consistently used by students in lessons and this contributes to their weak performance in External Measurement of Student Achievement (EMSA) assessments.

The behaviour of boys' and their attitude to learning has only improved marginally. The school has adopted clear and consistent expectations about the management of behaviour; a few teachers lack the classroom management skills to ensure lessons proceed smoothly so that learning can take place. In a minority of classes teachers rely on verbal reprimands, which a few boys disregard.

The requirements for teaching the IB PYP and diploma programmes are having a positive impact on the way teachers present and manage lessons; this has yet to impact on student attainment and the progress they make in class. Teachers are beginning to use a wider range of teaching and learning strategies that often

interest students and occasionally provide more opportunities to develop independent and collaborative learning skills.

Teachers make effective use of the available digital technologies in most subjects but the maintenance and repair of technological resources is not always prompt, which teachers find frustrating and hinders learning. The school has a variety of assessment data; this is still not used to plan and deliver lessons that meet the learning needs of all students.

Development and promotion of innovation skills

The adoption of the IB curriculum has provided a structured way of promoting innovation throughout the curriculum. This inquiry-based learning strategy is not fully embedded in teachers' thinking or planning. Opportunities to develop innovative skills, enquiry, entrepreneurship, research, critical thinking and investigative processes are at the early developmental stages.

The school is successful in encouraging those individual students who display an entrepreneurial spirit to develop their ideas. One student in Grade 11 has invented an innovative 'Eye Safe Zone System' designed to keep children at a safe viewing distance from a TV set and this has received a US patent. He is currently working with school staff to develop an e-card for students to wear on a lanyard. This would be used to scan a student's attendance at the beginning of the day. Chronic absentee or late arrivals would be immediately accessible to the Parent Communications Officer to make contact with the home. This system is currently being trialled by the school.

The inspection identified the following as key areas of strength:

- the commitment of the principal and senior managers to improve the overall quality of education
- respect for the heritage and culture of the UAE
- the IB curriculum provides a strong framework for ensuring students are well prepared for life in the twenty first century.

The inspection identified the following as key areas for improvement:

- the weak community ethos in the boys' school
- the attainment and progress of students in core subjects Arabic, Islamic Education and science, especially in the middle school
- the rigorous analysis of assessment data to ensure teachers plan to meet the needs of all students
- the mentoring and coaching of teachers by curriculum coordinators
- opportunities for students to undertake independent research, work collaboratively and develop their critical thinking.



Performance Standard 1: Students' Achievement

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

Attainment and progress in Arabic are weak at all grades. Older girls do make some slightly better progress in their Arabic reading but overall standards remain below curriculum expectations. Most students read and sound out words with difficulty; the struggle to read vowel sounds or 'harakat' correctly and lack expression when reading. Almost all students' speaking skills in standard Arabic are below curriculum expectations. Students express themselves briefly in colloquial Arabic but only use single words or short phrases rather than extended expression. They sometimes face difficulty conveying their understanding or how they feel. Progress in Arabic is weak because it is overly dependent on knowledge acquisition and not on the development of practical language skills. Most students do not achieve the planned lesson objectives.

The standards achieved in Islamic education are weak. Most students have difficulty reading Qur'an verses and hadith correctly and do not understand the general idea or meaning. Progress is weak due to the heavy emphasis on memorisation at the expense of understanding and learning is rarely based on 'real life' applications. Attainment and progress in social studies are acceptable. Most students can describe the basic features of the UAE.

Attainment in English throughout the school is acceptable. Almost all students are second language learners. Students arrive in the school with low levels of English reading and language use skills as tested by their Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) scores. These standardised tests place nearly all students two to three grades below their peers internationally. Students have sufficient English skills to access their lessons but are restricted when they try to answer more complex questions or convey their ideas and feelings. As they move through grades 5 to 9 almost all students, including those with special educational needs (SEN) make some progress but not sufficient to close the gap to less than two grade levels behind their peers in the USA. Older students in grades 10 to 12 make better progress and girls slightly better than boys. Most older students are articulate and fully able to convey their ideas and aspirations for the future. In one Theory of Knowledge lesson, grade 11 girls were able to discuss how different languages might shape the life of the speakers of a particular language. By the time grade 12 students are ready to leave the school, their spoken and written English skills are just sufficient to support them in their aspirations to attend an English-speaking university.

Most students in grades 5 to 12 are below curriculum standards across all aspects of their mathematical skills. When they enter the school, the large majority of students are up to two grades behind grade expectations with girls demonstrating slightly better attainment. Considering their very low starting points, progress is acceptable; in a minority of classes, the pace of lessons is often too slow and students' output is



limited. For example, Grade 5 boys are able to identify three different types of triangle and measure their sides, in addition grade 5 girls are able to accurately estimate and measure acute and obtuse angles. Most students demonstrate acceptable progress over time in their mathematical skills with boys making slightly better progress than girls. Most students have an adequate grasp of numeracy operations and use them to solve problems.

Attainment and progress in science is weak in grades 5 to 9 of the middle school, where there is 76% of the school's student population, and acceptable in grades 10 to 12. The school has no system to regularly gather internationally standardised test data for science. There is no secure way for the school to assess the progress of students in grades 5 to 9 and it was unable to provide any data on the progress of individuals or cohorts of students. In the secondary phase, students make their way through an appropriate modern textbook aligned to the IB program. Most students enjoy their science lessons and value opportunities to be actively involved in the scientific process.

A large majority of students in grades 5 to 9 are developing learning skills at an acceptable rate. Almost all girls and the majority of boys are able to work independently, in pairs or small groups in order to complete a learning activity. They are rarely given tasks that demand true collaboration or given the chance to take the lead in a lesson. Few students below Grade 10 are provided with tasks that require them to undertake independent research or work collaboratively on a project. In a minority of lessons, the behaviour of a few boys inhibits teachers employing learning strategies that give more responsibility to the students for their own learning. All students in grades 10 to 12 use their own digital technologies to support their learning. All students are able to access the curriculum and related resources via the internet and a majority use this facility when at home. Progress in this aspect of learning is restricted as most teachers allow students too little opportunity to work independently. By the time they reach grades 10 to 12, most students lack sufficient experience of undertaking independent or collaborative research.

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

Students make acceptable progress in their personal development. Almost all girls and most boys display a positive attitude. They approach lessons willing to learn and engage with the planned activities. A few boys, mainly in grades 5 to 10, display disruptive behaviour and are disrespectful to staff. This was a matter of regret to those boys who attended the meeting with students. These poor behaviours not only disrupt lessons but also cause difficulties around the school, particularly at the change of lessons and during breaks. The girls' school provides a calmer environment where nearly all classes were well ordered. Attendance in the week prior to the inspection had been acceptable at 93%. Tardiness is a daily occurrence with around 10% of students arriving after the singing of the national anthem.

The appreciation by older students of the role and values of Islam in UAE society is good and they have a clear understanding of how Islamic values influence contemporary UAE society. Respect for the heritage and culture of the UAE is acceptable in younger students and improves as they reach grades 10 to 12. Students are knowledgeable and appreciative of the heritage and culture that underpin and influence life in the UAE. They demonstrate a basic understanding and appreciation of their own and other world cultures and a few students would welcome this aspect of their education being further developed.

Students' work ethic, innovation, enterprise and entrepreneurship are developing. They enjoy work but often lack initiative, relying on teacher direction even in the older grades and are rarely invited to take a lead role.

Performance Standard 3: Teaching and Assessment

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

The quality of teaching and assessment is weak, especially in the middle school, where 76% of students are taught. Most teachers demonstrate secure and current subject knowledge. Teachers interact satisfactorily with students so that a majority are able to ask questions, challenge assumptions and respond appropriately to higher order questioning. Teaching is highly variable and ranged in quality from very good to lessons that were deemed very weak: 40% of lessons in core subjects were judged to be weak or very weak by inspectors. More effective teaching was observed across the range of subjects, but mainly in English.

Planning for lessons is inconsistent. The school has recently provided a lesson planning document that should be used consistently by all teachers. This is not yet the case. Learning objectives are set in almost all classes and are shared with students at the start of lessons. Only in a minority of lessons are these used to enable students to assess their own performance in relation to these objectives or that of their peers.

In the better lessons, teachers include a range of activities designed to engage students. A majority of teachers regularly include timings to help pace different parts of the lesson. This is not always achieved effectively in the longer lessons that last well over an hour, as teachers struggle to pace lessons and sustain student engagement. In other lessons, there is little or no planning and activities are overly long. It is rare for teachers to plan to meet the individual needs of students or plan differentiated activities for students with varying abilities. In a majority of lessons, students who finish their set tasks quickly are not sufficiently directed as to what to do next.

Relationships with students are acceptable or good in nearly all lessons. A small number of teachers do not have sufficiently astute classroom management skills to ensure the disengaged behaviour of a few boys does not create a problem for other class members. In a few classes, teachers are adept at challenging students to think more deeply about their learning. In several drama classes, students were challenged to think empathetically and infer the feelings of others on the basis of their own experience.

The school possesses a range of data from MAP assessments but this information is not used effectively to analyse trends and challenge teachers to set realistic targets for improvement. Assessment information is not used adequately to inform teaching or curriculum planning. Consequently, the needs of individuals or groups of students are not met. Most teachers do not take account in their planning how student learning will be assessed in lessons and what part the students might play in that assessment. In the high school, students are provided with rubrics against which their work will be evaluated but these play only a small part in students thinking and planning and execution of their work. Most teachers have a reasonable knowledge of their students' strengths and weaknesses. In a few lessons, this leads to flexible groupings depending on the nature of the task set and the learning skills required. In the best lessons, teachers ensure that each student has a clear role in their learning group.

Performance Standard 4: Curriculum

Curriculum Indicators	KG	Primary	Middle	High
Curriculum design and implementation			Acceptable	Acceptable
Curriculum adaptation			Weak	Acceptable
The curriculum frameworks are broad, balanced and designed to promote innovation and appropriate challenge for all student levels and abilities. They fulfil the requirements of the school's authorised curriculum and national requirements. The curriculum is American and is based on the Common Core Curriculum Standards (CCCS) as prescribed by the State of Colorado. It has a clear rationale and offers students a coherent, continuous curriculum pathway. The school has adopted the IB Curriculum Programme offering the Diploma Programme (DP) in the high phase and the Primary Years Program (PYP) for grade 5. For students in grade 11 who do not choose an IB Diploma, a parallel diploma programme of studies is offered. Students following either the IB programme or the American Curriculum track receive a diploma that is recognised by the UAE and allows for entrance into university in either the UAE or internationally. Students in the middle phase of the school (grades 5 to 9) have a restricted curriculum offer. The core subjects are well provided for but no music or additional language learning is available. As students move into grades 10 to 12 only a limited curriculum choice is possible. These options provide older students with a few choices that allow				

them to develop their interests and aspirations. For example, Grade 11 and 12 students can take college level business management and economics courses. The overall level of choice is more restricted than the IB programme envisages. At the girls' section of the school, the Tuesday timetable is dedicated to IB Units of Inquiry and student clubs. The boys' section uses Tuesdays to reinforce studies in the core curriculum. Very little provision is made for activities or clubs outside the hours set aside for lessons.

Throughout both campuses, there is little evidence of curriculum modification to meet the needs of all learners. Most plans include objectives that are broad and often unmeasurable. All students are presented with the same lesson objectives. More able students are often not challenged and in many classes become passive learners. For example, in a grade 10 Geometry class, students who learnt more quickly than their peers were restricted to solving the same problems. An identical lesson was provided for Grade 9 boys and Grade 6 girls. Most students in both classes completed the task successfully. Curriculum implementation does not consistently meet the learning needs of most students. The curriculum is not extended or enhanced to accommodate the needs of gifted and talented students. Planning curriculum content only takes occasional account of how an American based curriculum can be linked to life in the UAE. In one class comparing the relative qualities of 'upstanders' and 'bystanders' the life of Late Sheikh Zayed was used as a shining example of an 'upstander'.

Performance Standard 5: The protection, care, guidance and support of students

The protection, care, guidance and support of students Indicators	KG	Primary	Middle	High
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection/ safeguarding			Acceptable	Acceptable
Care and support			Acceptable	Acceptable
The school makes acceptable provision for the protection, care support and guidance of its students. There are reasonable procedures for the care and safeguarding of students. The child protection policy is well known by parents and staff. There is a robust, comprehensive security system in place. The premises and facilities provide a safe environment, which is mostly accessible for all students, including a physically				

challenged student. Regular checks are made on the fire extinguishing equipment and evacuation exits are accessible.

The school contracts a maintenance company to ensure that the buildings and equipment are clean and in sound condition. Internal procedures ensure that furniture is also maintained or replaced. The clinic, on both sites, is well equipped with medical supplies and the nurse ensures that students' medical needs are properly met.

The pastoral care of students is supported by counsellors for each of the boys' and girls' schools for academic monitoring, especially for the high school students. The Dean of students in the boys' school and the Head of the girls' school monitor the behaviour of students appropriately. Sanctions are not always imposed consistently. The school does not yet have a robust procedure for confronting and reducing tardiness.

The school makes reasonable provision for students with SEN. There are lifts to the upper floors in both buildings and established procedures for emergency evacuation for those with impaired mobility. For those with a formal identification, from an agency outside the school, individual education plans (IEP) are in place with copies for class and subject teachers. Where appropriate a 'shadow teacher' is employed by the child's parents. In one class, three students have IEPs relating to their attention and behavioural disorders. No additional support was provided for these students who presented a significant impact on class cohesion. The school has no formal procedures for identifying its gifted and talented students. One student who is a gifted chess player is released to take part in international chess tournaments.

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	Acceptable
Management, staffing, facilities and resources	Acceptable
Leadership and management are acceptable. The principal, who was appointed shortly after the previous inspection has, together with the campus director, gained	



a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Together the leadership team display commitment to improving the quality of provision. The school is supported by the Emirates National School Group who oversee the school's budget and future development. The school has very good facilities for supporting academic and physical development. Ensuring the continuity of class and subject teachers year to year continues to be a major challenge: 40% of teachers left the school at the end of the last academic year. Staff turnover impacts negatively on the quality of provision.

The principal and staff of the boys' and girls' school have worked hard to gain the active support of parents; they now attend training and information evenings in large numbers. Parents praise the good communication with the principal but a few are concerned about the behaviour of boys in grades 5-8. Parents have good access to information about their child's progress through written reports and the school's on-line platform. Parents and teachers report that the complexity of the current timetable was confusing and hindered student learning.

Processes for assuring and improving the quality of teaching and learning have become more regular since the last inspection. The impact of these to improve standards and quality of teaching in lessons has not been sufficient to achieve the required improvements. The principal and heads of school conduct regular 'walkthroughs' as well as a few longer formal observations. These are intended to provide the basis for a 'coaching' model of staff development. Teachers report that feedback is not always sufficiently rapid and that the intended coaching is rarely available. Curriculum supervisors have insufficient time during the school day to provide the mentoring and coaching important for the many new staff that join the school each year. Professional development is a weekly aspect of each teacher's programme but the very high turnover of staff has a significant and negative impact on its effectiveness. The school does not measure the impact of its professional development programme.

Processes for completing the school's annual self-evaluation do not sufficiently involve contributions from staff or students. The overall judgements made by senior leaders were broadly accurate but the evidence on which the evaluations were based was not sufficiently robust. The school development plan (SDP) focuses rightly on three core areas for improvement: the attainment of students, the behaviour of boys and the support given by administrators for improvements in teaching and learning. The targets for improving student attainment are ambitious and are not secured by a firm understanding of the data. The targets in the SDP are subject to regular review, but no reviews have yet been completed.

The school has developed highly effective links with various branches of the UAE and Abu Dhabi governments. One student, a highly successful inventor has been invited to showcase his achievements at a forthcoming exhibition.

What the school should do to improve further:

1. Take action to create a more empathetic culture in the boy's school so that behaviour and relationships are improved by:
 - i. creating more social spaces that students can use during breaks in the school day
 - ii. providing more planned social activities and clubs during the school day
 - iii. ensuring that students have daily opportunities to make creative contributions to morning assemblies
 - iv. introduce and promote strategies that promote and reward respect such as recognising 'small acts of kindness'.
2. Improve attainment in all core subjects so that the majority of students make expected and better progress in relation to their starting points and curriculum expectations by:
 - i. ensuring all students have realistic but challenging targets for improvement and have them in front of them during lessons
 - ii. using rubrics more consistently in lessons so that students are clear about what they need to do complete work successfully
 - iii. reviewing the timings of lessons and the structure of the timetable to ensure that classes in core subjects are a daily experience for students.
3. Continue to improve teaching by:
 - i. ensuring middle managers have the time to provide monitoring and coaching to staff in their departments
 - ii. using data from formative and summative assessment to plan lessons more effectively to meet the needs of students at all levels of ability
 - iii. ensuring teachers use a consistent format when planning lessons and units of work.