



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



Inspection Report

Zakher Private School-Boys

Academic Year 2013 – 14

Iqraa

Zakher Private School-Boys

Inspection Date	27 - 29 April 2014
School ID#	174
Licensed Curriculum	Ministry of Education
Number of Students	253
Age Range	5 to 20 years
Gender	Boys
Principal	Hasan Ahmed Alhayuti
School Address	Bldg.No. 4, 15th Street, Magar Al Dhabi, Falaj Hazza, Al Ain
Telephone Number	+971 (03) 781 1810 / +971 (03) 782 0257
Fax Number	+971 (03) 781 1820
Official Email (ADEC)	zakher.pvt@adec.ac.ae
School Website	-----
Date of last inspection	25 - 28 November 2012

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 7
------------------------------	----------------	----------------

The main strengths of the school are:

- the positive response to the last inspection report with regard to the required improvements to health and safety, and buildings and premises.

The main areas for improvement are:

- attainment and progress in most subjects and the limited development of 21st Century skills
 - the quality of teaching and learning and systems to assess academic progress
 - the effectiveness of the curriculum implementation in meeting the needs, interests and aspirations of all students, and its relevance to the real world in the 21st Century
 - the lack of an effective pastoral system and counselling service for careers or students' next stage of education
 - the limited range of high quality resources
 - almost all aspects of leadership and management at all levels.
-

Introduction

The school was inspected by 4 inspectors. They observed 55 lessons, conducted several meetings with senior staff, subject coordinators, teachers, support staff, students, parents, the owners and members of the governing board. They analysed test and assessment results, scrutinized students' work across the school, considered the 171 responses to the parents' questionnaire and evaluated school policies and other documents. The Principal and leadership team were involved and consulted throughout the inspection process.

Description of the School

Zakher Private School- boys was established in 1995 and is situated in the Falaj Hazaa schools' complex in its own walled grounds surrounded by other private schools. The school follows the Ministry of Education (MoE) curriculum and aims to 'nurture and prepare students academically and behaviourally in preparation for their future academic education and to become good citizens'. The school shares the site with the Zakher Private School, British Division. The 2 schools operate completely separately and there are no common aspects between them, though they are licensed as 1 school with 1 Principal. The Principal plays no part in the daily management of the British Division and provides professional leadership at the Arabic Division only.

The school caters for Grade 1 – Grade 12 boys. Currently, there are 253 students on roll: 57 students in the primary section (G1 – G5), 91 in the middle section (G6 – G9) and 105 in the upper school section (G10 - G12). All students are Muslim and 94% are of Arab heritage: 47% are Emirati, 9% are Syrian, 8% Egyptian and 8% are from the Comoros Islands. There are further smaller proportions from other countries including Pakistan, Palestine, Sudan, Jordan, Somalia, Oman, Yemen, Mauritania, Iraq, Lebanon and Morocco. Apart from the Grade 1 starters, 31% of the students in other grades were new to the school at the start of the academic year. Three of the teachers are also new this year. Students seeking admission must score at least 50% in tests in Arabic, English and mathematics. Students from Grade 6 to Grade 12 take Ministry of Education examinations. One student has been identified as having special educational needs (SEN).

Fees range from AED 4,600 in primary to AED 8,050 in the secondary section. These are in the very affordable to low category.

The Board of Directors comprises 8 members, including the owner and the principal. The owner is the chairman. The board is supported in its management role by 8 planning committees.

The Effectiveness of the School

Students' attainment & progress

Attainment and progress are very unsatisfactory. Students make insufficient progress across all subjects; the more able and those with SEN make poor progress.

Students make most progress in Islamic education, social studies and mathematics, though this is still below both ADEC's expectations and international standards. Students make very little progress in the development of thinking skills, the ability to work independently or work collaboratively with others. Internal assessment data does not enable the school to make accurate comparisons with international benchmarks. The only reliable sources of evidence for students' attainment and progress during the inspection were their responses during lessons and the limited amount of work in their books.

Attainment and progress in Islamic education are inadequate. Younger students make some progress in reciting the verses from the Holy Qur'an according to the 'Tajweed' rules. Their knowledge of the shorter chapters is slightly above what might be expected for their age. Across the school, students' ability to make connections between their knowledge and their daily lives is limited. The oldest students still make mistakes when reciting the chapters and some do not respect the recitation rules. Attainment and progress in social studies does not meet curriculum expectations as students' knowledge of both the UAE and the Gulf region is at a basic level.

Attainment and progress in Arabic are very unsatisfactory, especially for students for whom Arabic is a second language. Students develop the basic skills of listening, speaking and understanding reasonably well. Younger students struggle with reading simple words. Opportunities to write in sentences are limited. Older students can read longer passages from the textbook and, with help, can understand what they read. A few actively participate in discussions with the teacher. They do not have the opportunity to discuss their work in groups.

In English, students make inadequate progress in listening and understanding and very unsatisfactory progress in speaking, reading and writing. A few older students can hold a basic conversation, but pronunciation is often inaccurate. Most can read a few familiar words and sentences and a few attempt to decode longer words. There is limited evidence of students reading longer texts and writing skills are poor. Progress is very unsatisfactory and by Grade 12 attainment for most students is what might be expected of those who have been studying the language for two years.

Attainment and progress in mathematics are unsatisfactory. Most students have satisfactory basic skills in numeracy and most can calculate using the four operations. They have a satisfactory understanding of algebra and geometry and use this to answer questions from the textbook. Their understanding of statistics and their ability to investigate number, solve problems and see the relevance of mathematics in the real world are underdeveloped. In science, students acquire simple scientific knowledge in line with curriculum expectations. For example, they have a basic knowledge of floating and sinking, sound waves and how light is reflected and refracted. Their understanding and application of scientific method are well below international standards. They do not have opportunities to plan and carry out investigations and their skills in predicting, observing, recording and analysing results are inadequate.

Students make unsatisfactory and inconsistent progress in using ICT and by the time they leave school, their skills are very unsatisfactory. Attainment and progress in art is satisfactory and in physical education they are very unsatisfactory.

Students' personal development

Students' personal development remains very unsatisfactory. Most are reasonably well behaved in class and are keen to learn when given the opportunity. They are compliant but passive in most lessons. A few show interest when teaching is better and when using ICT. Attendance is well below average at 70%. Punctuality is poor: only about half of the students are in time for morning assembly. A few are given responsibilities for reading from the Holy Qur'an. They remain silent when the national anthem is played.

Students are developing moral viewpoints that are broadly in line with their cultural background and understand that others may have different opinions. Most treat their teachers and each other with respect. Their skills in collaborating are underdeveloped and they can rarely work alone for sustained periods. They are not developing leadership skills and rarely show any independence or initiative. Their understanding of how to live healthy lives is underdeveloped. A significant number appear to have a limited understanding of the importance of fitness for a healthy lifestyle and few participate in sport. Most are not well prepared for the next stage of education.

The quality of teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning remains very unsatisfactory. Professional development has been largely ineffective. Teachers generally have secure knowledge of their subjects and relationships are amiable in most lessons. Teachers' understanding of how students learn is limited to conveying knowledge

whilst students listen, often for long periods. Virtually no attention is given to developing the skills students' require for learning in the 21st Century. Planning usually follows the textbook rigidly with little or no account taken of students' different abilities, interests and learning styles. The purpose of lessons is not made sufficiently clear to students; expectations are low and lack challenge. There are very few high quality resources to enhance learning and facilitate understanding of abstract concepts.

Teachers usually ask questions which require students to recall information. They rarely enable students to use higher order thinking skills. On occasion, students ask a question merely for clarification rather than to challenge theories and extend their learning. Opportunities for students to discuss a topic and explain or justify their answers are rare. Group work is ineffective because students are not used to exchanging ideas and learning together. They can use technology to enhance learning in the ICT laboratory. They have no access to technology or reference books in the classrooms to carry out their own research. They have limited opportunities for investigation in science, to solve problems in mathematics or to hold a conversation and write at length in English.

Teachers' support for individual students is random rather than targeted at need. Teachers rarely give constructive feedback to students on their progress. As a consequence, students have a limited understanding of how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve. Progress in most lessons is very unsatisfactory and students are often passive and become disenchanted. A significant number of students have private tuition.

Meeting students' needs through the curriculum

The implementation of the curriculum does not meet students' needs. It lacks breadth: provision for art and physical education is restricted. The intended outcomes and expectations for each subject are not clearly defined and measured. Provision for developing students' understanding of the UAE family and community values and the diverse society of Abu Dhabi is inconsistent.

Subject content is not enriched or extended to meet the needs, interests and aspirations of students. No modification is made for those with SEN or the more able, gifted or talented. There are some opportunities for a few students to participate in inter-school competitions. Limited use is made of the locality and community to enhance understanding of good citizenship. Students have no opportunities to take on responsibilities. Only a few participate in trips planned by the school. Links with external partners are insufficient. Students are gaining very little from school. Progress in most subjects is severely inhibited. Their long-term career prospects and readiness to face life in the 21st Century are very limited.

The protection, care, guidance and support of students

The protection, care, guidance and support of students are very unsatisfactory. Checks are made to establish employees' suitability to work with children and a central register is maintained containing the required information. Staff are aware of their responsibilities regarding the child protection policy. Corporal punishment is forbidden. The rare incidents of bullying are dealt with appropriately.

A daily register of attendance is taken. The arrangements for promoting good attendance and following up on absence have limited effect and latecomers are not consistently challenged. The system for rewards and sanctions is not clearly understood and not consistently applied. Medicines are stored safely. A prayer room is available for Muslim students. The arrangements for supporting and advising students regarding their next stages of education and their careers is inadequate.

The quality of the school's buildings and premises

The buildings and premises have improved and are now satisfactory. The premises are sufficient in size for the small number of students. The school is clean, tidy and mostly free of litter. Toilets are hygienic and washing facilities are provided. Classrooms are well ventilated and well lit. Most are bare and do not present an inspiring environment for learning; students' work is rarely displayed. Outdoor areas include a shaded sports area, a small grassy field and a well cared for vegetable garden. Health and safety practice has improved since the last inspection. Maintenance contracts are in place and a named officer makes daily checks and reports defects to the companies responsible. A health and safety committee share responsibility. Regular evacuation procedures take place. Cupboards in the science laboratory are locked. A full-time security guard registers visitors to the school, the perimeter is secure and closed-circuit television (CCTV) has been installed.

The school's resources to support its aims

The school's resources remain very unsatisfactory. They do not adequately support the curriculum and students' progress is significantly hindered. The number of teachers is adequate for the number of students. A counsellor works with students to develop their social and emotional wellbeing. Classroom furniture is old and of poor quality. Most teachers rely on textbooks, worksheets and a whiteboard. A few classrooms have projectors. The ICT laboratory has an adequate supply of computers. Students have no access to technology in the classrooms and the science laboratory is inadequately equipped. The library has insufficient stock of books in either Arabic or English. There are no specialist staff or resources to support learning for students with SEN. Sports equipment is

sparse. Recreational equipment for students at break times, especially the younger ones, is limited. School transport is well maintained. Snacks and drinks are stored and served hygienically.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management is very unsatisfactory and the school does not meet its stated aims. The owner and the principal are well meaning; health and safety issues from the last inspection have been addressed and the accommodation is now satisfactory. A significant amount of the limited available funds was allocated to provide professional development for teachers. As only a few teachers include some new strategies in their lessons this has been largely ineffective.

The owner, board members and the principal do not have an objective view of the school's performance. Self-evaluation procedures are weak and do not provide an accurate view of the schools' strengths and weaknesses. The plan for improvement does not state clear and measurable targets for accelerating progress and raising attainment. School leaders and managers have neither sufficient time, nor the necessary skills to provide effective support in order to improve the quality of teaching and learning. As a result, students continue to make inadequate progress in lessons and over time.

Most parents are supportive of the school. The school listens to them and works with them in an attempt to improve behaviour and attendance. Their suggestions for improvement regarding the curriculum and resources are rarely taken into account. There are insufficient links with other organisations and with the local community. Finances are audited appropriately and salaries are paid regularly.

Progress since the last inspection

All of the issues identified during the last inspection concerning health and safety have been satisfactorily addressed. Professional development has been provided for teachers. Academic attainment remains well below the levels expected of students of similar ages both in the UAE and internationally. The rate and extent of students' personal development are very unsatisfactory. These standards are so low because much of the teaching remains uninspiring with a narrow focus on transmitting information from textbooks and neglecting important aspects of learning in languages, mathematics and science. Students have little or no opportunity to develop their ability to speak and write at length, to apply their mathematical knowledge to solve problems and to investigate and experiment in science.

The current leaders of the school, though well intentioned, lack the capacity to ensure that the teaching and other aspects of provision improve sufficiently. The school continues to provide a very unsatisfactory standard of education and requires urgent improvement.

What the school should do to improve further:

1. Secure the services of a leadership team capable of:
 - i. setting and articulating a clear vision for the school
 - ii. accurately evaluating key aspects of the school's performance and implementing strategic and effective plans to improve them
 - iii. motivating and mobilising the entire school community – staff, students and parents – in support of a determined and consistent drive for improvement
 - iv. raising attainment and accelerating progress in all subjects and ensuring students develop the skills necessary for the 21st Century
 - v. improving the quality of teaching and learning and establishing effective assessment procedures
 - vi. reviewing and enriching the implementation of the curriculum to ensure it meets the needs, interests and aspirations of all students and has relevance in the context of the real world in the 21st Century
 - vii. establishing an effective pastoral system to support students in their personal, social and emotional development
 - viii. establishing a counselling service to advise and support students in their options for careers and their next stage of education
 - ix. ensuring there are sufficient high quality resources to support the curriculum and to enhance learning in all subjects and in all grades.

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								