



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



Inspection Report

First Lebanon Private School

Academic Year 2013 – 14

Iqraa

First Lebanon Private School

Inspection Date	4 – 7 May 2014
School ID#	156
Licensed Curriculum	Ministry of Education (MoE)
Number of Students	1143
Age Range	3 to 18 years
Gender	Mixed
Principal	Suhil Arif Amarnah
School Address	Falaj Hazzah, Al Ain
Telephone Number	+971 (0)3 780 6780
Fax Number	+971 (0)3 780 6006
Official Email (ADEC)	firstlebanon.pvt@adec.ac.ae
School Website	www.firstlebanonschool-net
Date of last inspection	February 26 th – 29 th 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 6
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The main strengths of the school are:

- teachers are very knowledgeable in the subjects they teach
- students are very keen to learn
- students are well behaved, especially girls
- medical care, a weakness at the last inspection, is now a strength.

The main areas for improvement are:

- assessment and tracking of students' progress
 - the curriculum planning to meet the needs of all students, especially for weaker and more able students
 - the quality of provision for children in the Kindergarten
 - provision of increased opportunities for students to develop 21st century skills
 - the principal's role in the appointment of new senior and middle management to ensure they are capable of accurately evaluating the work of the school
 - partnership with parents to ensure their children arrive on time and do not collect their children before the end of the school day.
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Introduction

The school was inspected by 5 inspectors. They observed 88 lessons, conducted several meetings with senior staff, subject co-ordinators, teachers, support staff, students and parents. They analysed test and assessment results, scrutinized students' work across the school, analysed the 199 responses to the parents' questionnaire and considered many of the school's policies and other documents.

Description of the School

The school was opened in September 1981 in the Falaj Haza'a district of Al Ain. It follows the Ministry of Education (MoE) curriculum. Its aims are 'to provide students with academic skills and personal capabilities in accordance with international standards'. The school has two owners and a parent representative on the Board of Trustees. It is a popular school with parents; there is a waiting list and selection tests are used to decide on admission.

There are 1143 students enrolled: 191 in KG, 473 in Primary, 249 in the middle section and in the upper school there are 230. Almost 60% are girls. Almost all students are Muslim and all are of Arab heritage; 9% are Emiratis, 36% are Syrian, 18% are Jordanian, 12% Palestinian and 8% Egyptian. There are further small proportions from other countries including Iraq, Lebanon, Iran, Yemen and Sudan. Only 5 students are identified with special educational needs (SEN): 2 are unspecified, 1 with moderate learning difficulties, 1 with severe learning needs and 1 has a hearing impairment. The school has identified 124 gifted and talented students. Students are tested at the end of each term. In Grades 6 to 12 the school uses MoE examinations.

Annual fees for KG are AED 4,000, primary AED 5,050, middle AED 7,800 and upper school AED 11,300. In addition all parents pay AED 650 for textbooks and other activities. Since the last inspection the school has appointed a new Principal who started in September 2013 and a new Vice-Principal who started in April 2014. There are 68 teaching staff and many have served at the school for over 5 years.

The Effectiveness of the School

Students' attainment & progress

Standards in Arabic, Islamic education and social studies are close to the standards achieved in schools following the same curriculum. Attainment in all other subjects is below the levels expected of students of similar age and aptitude. By the end of Grade 12, girls' attainment is higher than that of the boys. Students' progress is satisfactory in Arabic, Islamic education and social studies. Their progress in other subjects is unsatisfactory. The main reasons why progress is limited are: firstly, there is too much emphasis on acquiring knowledge at the expense of developing skills and understanding, and secondly the level of challenge in lessons for many students is too low.

In Arabic, reading, speaking and listening skills are in line with ADEC expectations. Students are able to read with reasonable accuracy and understanding. Writing skills are weaker because there are few opportunities during lessons to promote these skills. Attainment and progress in Islamic education is varied though satisfactory overall. For example, Grade 9 students demonstrate deep knowledge about the Prophet's companions who migrated to 'Al Habashaa' (Ethiopia) in the early stage of Islam while students in Grade 12 do not demonstrate age appropriate understanding of Prophet's message and teachings. In social studies, Grade 8 students are able to name the countries that were first part of the Arabic league. This represents satisfactory levels of attainment and progress.

In English, speaking and listening skills are a strength for older students. Most students are able to read their textbooks to a satisfactory standard. Opportunities to improve reading skills are limited because of the small number of fiction and non-fiction books in the school. Writing skills throughout all grades are weak because students are given insufficient time to develop them. In mathematics, students, especially in the higher grades, develop appropriate calculation skills. Progress is restricted because students have few opportunities to develop mental mathematics strategies, problem solving skills or tasks that enable them apply their skills. In science, progress is limited. It is overly dependent on knowledge rather than the development of investigative and critical thinking skills. Students have few opportunities to conduct scientific experiments. Gifted and talented students and those with special educational needs (SEN) make inadequate progress because the level of challenge in tasks set, does not meet their needs.

In Kindergarten (KG), attainment and progress are unsatisfactory. Teachers do not use the assessment of children's progress to plan activities that will allow them to build upon their prior attainment. Support assistants are not being used effectively to help children learn.

Students are failing to develop 21st Century skills because there are insufficient opportunities provided in lessons. The school does not use high quality standardized tests and results of assessments are not used effectively to establish students' skills and understanding in order to accurately measure progress.

Students' personal development

Most students are confident and have positive attitudes to learning in all subjects. Students behave well throughout the school, especially girls. Students respect the values of the UAE and celebrate their pride and love for their own home countries. Students relate well to each other and are courteous and respectful towards their teachers and visitors. They do not show the same level of respect towards the school's buildings and playgrounds, with the amount of litter they drop being unacceptable.

Attendance is average at 90% and punctuality remains poor. The school does not do enough to encourage parents to bring children on time for the start of the school day. Too many parents collect their children before the end of the school day. Most students do not take leadership roles in the school and the school provides few such opportunities. This limits the development of the personal skills that will prepare them for the next stages in their learning. Many students show limited understanding of leading healthy lifestyles.

The quality of teaching and learning

Teachers have good subject knowledge and maintain positive relationships with students. The management of behaviour is mostly good. Some teachers have good questioning techniques, especially in Arabic and in the higher grades in English. Few teachers share expected learning objectives with their students. In many lessons teachers spend too much time on whole-class teaching, where only one student has the opportunity to answer. This leads to many students becoming passive learners. There is too much reliance on textbooks. In most lessons, students have very few opportunities to develop their research, investigative or thinking skills. Many students are not fully challenged, especially gifted and talented students and those with SEN.

There are weak assessment practices throughout the school. This results in few students being set tasks that meet their needs and restricts the progress they can make. Some teachers have very high expectations for their students; this is not consistent. In KG there is evidence of a lack of understanding of how young children learn best.

Meeting students' needs through the curriculum

The school provides a sufficiently broad, balanced and relevant curriculum for most students and the time allocated to individual subjects meets ADEC requirements. There still remains a narrow choice of courses for senior boys. The curriculum implementation in KG is weak and does not reflect best practice in early years' education. In KG, the delivery of curriculum lacks breadth. It does not adequately support continuity of learning, adequate progress or high expectations. The curriculum provides a good understanding of UAE family and community values, culture, and the pluralistic society of Abu Dhabi and the UAE. The curriculum has not been sufficiently modified to meet the needs of gifted and talented or those with SEN. There are few enrichment and extra-curricular activities.

The protection, care, guidance and support of students

The positive ethos is reflected in the high quality relationships throughout the school. Medical care is provided by a qualified nurse in a well-equipped clinic. High quality first aid kits are available in the different sections of the school and on the buses. Attendance registers are accurate and parents are contacted for students who are absent for more than a few days.

There is no formal system in place to monitor students' personal or academic progress, including SEN students. The behaviour policy is unclear and there are no policies for anti-bullying or child protection. There is a lack of consistency in rewards and sanctions practices with some teachers using merit points, others using sweets. The procedures for dealing with lateness are ineffective. The provision and impact of guidance for careers is weak.

The quality of the school's buildings and premises

Many of the classrooms are too small for the number of students, especially in the KG. This limits the range of activities that can take place. The facilities for physical education (PE) are inadequate. There is no indoor provision for PE and the outdoor surfaces are uneven. There have been some improvements in the accommodation since the last inspection, especially for provision science and information and communications technology (ICT), and there is now a prayer room for girls. The security of the site is good.

Arrangements for parents collecting students at the end of the school day are inadequate with insufficient space for car parking. Some improvements are planned to increase the number of spaces available. Toilet facilities are adequate and sufficient attention is paid to monitoring their cleanliness. Clear procedures exist for the safe use and storage of chemicals. Electrical equipment is regularly

checked. There are satisfactory health and safety practices on the site. In the outdoor areas there are unprotected pillars and insufficient bins for students to deposit the packaging from their lunches.

The school's resources to support its aims

The quality, quantity and range of resources do not adequately support effective curriculum delivery especially in science, physical education and KG. In science students do not have sufficient resources to conduct experiments. In KG there are insufficient resources to support active learning. The number of books in the libraries is very low. There have been some improvements in the libraries with the addition of computers for use by students. The two ICT suites with new computers are satisfactory. Students in many classes have to share computers restricting the progress they can make. There are insufficient ICT resources in classrooms to support teaching and learning.

Teachers are adequately qualified and sufficient in number, and a central register is maintained. The food delivery area is unsatisfactory with a wash area that is not clean. Staff serving food, do not wear gloves or have their heads covered. Some of the food served does not contribute to healthy living.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

The newly appointed principal is committed to improvements. He is aware that the pace of development needs to accelerate, and is open to advice. For example, the school was quick to place fire extinguishers inside the school buses following inspectors' comments. The school's self-evaluation document (SEF) and school development plan (SDP) are not accurate or realistic. The SDP does not tackle all the issues identified by the last inspection though the principal has a clear awareness of the need to improve the quality of teaching and learning and to raise academic standards. He does not have sufficient high quality senior and middle leaders to provide the leadership required, especially in the Kindergarten, to make the necessary improvements.

The principal and key staff members know students well and have a clear concern for their wellbeing. Students like and respect the principal. There is a lack of clear policies and systems for monitoring students' personal development. Regular classroom evaluations and the scrutiny of data do not take place. As a result, teaching and learning is not improving quickly enough. Professional development is targeted to meet teachers' individual needs and the needs of the school. Too few teachers attend the appropriate workshops.

Parents are generally positive about the school. Not all ensure their children arrive on time or that they stay till the end of the school day. A number of parents would like more information on students' progress.

Progress since the last inspection

There have been some improvements since the last inspection, and some of the issues pertaining to the regulations and safety, identified in the previous report have been tackled. A prayer room has been provided for girls. Job descriptions have been introduced for all staff. Resources for ICT and accommodation for science have improved. Little or no progress has been made in improving the effectiveness of leadership and management. There have been no significant improvements in the quality of teaching and learning. Some aspects of improving the implementation of the curriculum remain to be tackled, particularly in KG.

The school has not demonstrated that it has the satisfactory capacity to make sustained improvements to the quality of teaching and rapidly raise academic standards. It will require external support to make further improvements.

What the school should do to improve further:

1. Improve the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school by:
 - i. ensuring that the assessment of students' work identifies targets for improvement for each student in each grade and in each subject
 - ii. providing more opportunities for students to develop 21st century skills in particular ICT, thinking, investigative and research skills
 - iii. modifying the delivery of the curriculum to ensure that the level of challenge meets the needs of all students, especially for weaker and more able students.
2. Improve the quality of teaching and learning in KG by:
 - i. providing professional leadership to ensure adequate training for teachers on early years pedagogy
 - ii. ensuring curriculum planning and delivery caters for the needs of children in KG and includes features of best practice for early years
 - iii. enhancing the quality of resources to enable active learning for children in the Kindergarten.
3. Develop suitable recruitment procedures, enabling active involvement of the principal for key leadership positions to ensure they have the required competencies and experience to support school development.
4. Develop effective strategies and partnerships with parents to ensure they deliver their children to school on time for assembly and do not collect their children before the end of the school day.

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								