



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



Private School Inspection Report

First Lebanon Private School

Academic Year 2015 – 2016

lqraa



First Lebanon Private School

Inspection Date	January 18, 2016	to	January 21, 2016
Date of previous inspection	May 4, 2014	to	May 7, 2014
General Information		Students	
School ID	156	Total number of students	1167
Opening year of school	1981	Number of children in KG	188
Principal	Hisham Hijazeen	Number of students in other phases	Primary: 417 Middle: 316 High: 246
School telephone	+971 (0)3 780 6780	Age range	3 to 18 years
School Address	PO Box 16596, Al Ain, Falj Hazza'a, School Street	Grades or Year Groups	Kindergarten to Grade 12
Official email (ADEC)	firstlebanon.pvt@adec.ac.ae	Gender	Mixed
School website	-----	% of Emirati Students	5.1%
Fee ranges (per annum)	Very low: AED 2,700 – AED 10,800	Largest nationality groups (%)	1. Syrian (34.5%) 2. Jordanian (17.8%) 3. Egyptian (10.50%)
Licensed Curriculum		Staff	
Main Curriculum	Ministry of Education (MoE)	Number of teachers	63
Other Curriculum	-----	Number of teaching assistants (TAs)	11
External Exams/ Standardised tests	MoE, CEPA, EMSA	Teacher-student ratio	KG/ FS 1:24 Other phases 1:18
Accreditation	-----	Teacher turnover	16%

Introduction

Inspection activities	
Number of inspectors deployed	5
Number of inspection days	4
Number of lessons observed	111
Number of joint lesson observations	5
Number of parents' questionnaires	326; (Response rate: 29.5%)
Details of other inspection activities	The inspection team held meetings with the principal, senior staff, owners, governors, subject coordinators, students and parents. They observed assemblies and lessons and analysed school documents, performance data, records and students' work.

School	
School Aims	'To produce world-class learners who embody a strong sense of culture and heritage and are prepared to meet global challenges.'
School vision and mission	'To bring up a generation who strongly believe in their values; show genuine belongingness and loyalty to their nation and substantially contribute to the well-being of their society.'
Admission Policy	Students have to sit an entrance examination in order to enrol at the school. Its admission policy sets out clear guidance and procedures for students to be accepted in to the school.
Leadership structure (ownership, governance and management)	Principal, Vice Principal, 2 owners and 7 governors.

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

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)	13
Social maturity and leadership	0
Mechanical/ technical/ technological ingenuity	0
Visual and performing arts (e.g. art, theatre, recitation)	6
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)

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

First Lebanon Private school is a satisfactory school. Most students make acceptable progress in the core subjects and attain at an expected level of understanding for their age. Students enjoy school and they attend well. Relationships are a strength. Students are courteous and responsible. As a result, students demonstrate positive attitudes to learning and are keen to learn.

The principal is supported by a committed leadership team which embeds a shared vision and drive. This reflects the UAE's National Agenda and is supported by parents.

The governance of the school is weak. Governors have not held senior leaders to account sufficiently for the quality of the school's performance, including the achievement and personal development of students. An emphasis has been placed on the resources of the school and maintenance of the building, not on the outcomes of students. A new education consultancy team has already started to work with the school and additional financial support is now being provided. The school is currently restructuring the Governing Body. Relationships with parents are strong.

Progress made since last inspection and capacity to improve

The school has improved since its last inspection. It is no longer unsatisfactory and now provides an acceptable level of education and care. This is because the principal, who was appointed after the last inspection, working with the leadership team has challenged areas of weakness effectively and improved teaching and learning.

Teaching has improved over time and is now acceptable. Few inconsistencies remain. Learning activities set for students are still largely textbook and worksheet based, particularly in the kindergarten and primary phase. This is often as a result of a lack of resources and a few teachers' lack of a secure understanding of how students think and learn.

School leaders have addressed most recommendations from the last inspection report. All health and safety issues have been resolved and attendance has risen. Outcomes have improved because the quality of teaching is now acceptable across the school, including in the kindergarten. Teachers now make satisfactory efforts to modify the school's curriculum to better meet the needs of students. This has had a positive impact on the attainment and progress of lower-attaining students, as well as those with special education needs (SEN). Higher attaining students do not receive sufficient challenge in lessons. Most staff are now more accountable

for their work and are at the early stages of using data to identify strengths and weaknesses in order to improve.

The school's leadership team demonstrates the capacity to improve. They know the main areas needed to further improve teaching and to raise students' achievement. This capacity is strengthened through the support and vision of the new owner.

Development and promotion of innovation skills

The school has embedded a few of the skills associated with innovation in its curriculum but has yet to develop these through a range of activities. Students' critical thinking and reasoning skills are developed in lessons. Students have recycled used paper for different purposes. Their ideas are creative and imaginative. Students' critical thinking and reasoning skills are acceptable in lessons. Most students enjoy work but sometimes lack initiative, particularly in lessons where learning is less engaging and too teacher directed. Opportunities to develop students' learning skills through critical thinking, problem solving and collaboration are not consistently embedded across the school and remain weak in the kindergarten.

The inspection identified the following as key areas of strength:

- the strategic vision of the school leadership, especially the principal
- attainment of students, particularly by the end of high school phase
- the respect and promotion of the Islamic values and appreciation of UAE culture and heritage
- the school's relationships and partnership with parents
- the attendance rate of students.

The inspection identified the following as key areas for improvement:

- children's learning skills in the kindergarten
- greater challenge for the high achieving students in lessons
- feedback to students to help them improve their work
- subject leaders' overview and analysis of assessment data in their subjects
- the impact of governance.



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	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
	Progress	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Arabic (as a Second Language)	Attainment	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Progress	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Social Studies	Attainment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
	Progress	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
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)		Weak	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable



Students' achievement is acceptable. Children start the kindergarten with skills expected for their age. By the time students leave the school, most attain at a level that is in line with national and international standards. A few exceed this standard. In lessons, most students make acceptable progress. As a result of improved teaching and students' attainment in their written work, most students make acceptable or better gains in their knowledge, skills and understanding when compared to curriculum standards, particularly overtime.

In kindergarten, children's achievement in Islamic education, Arabic and social studies is acceptable. Children have a secure understanding of Islamic values and how these relate to their everyday life. Almost all children who start the kindergarten are not able to speak English. Through lessons and the learning environment, students make steady gains in their ability to read, write and speak in English. By the time they leave kindergarten, they can write simple words and sentences. In mathematics, children are able to use, record and group numbers to 10. Greater challenge is needed to accelerate the progress of high achieving children. These children are not fully challenged in lessons. Children have acceptable attainment and progress in science and non-core subjects. Opportunities to learn through play are not fully embedded in the kindergarten and, as a result, children's learning skills are weak. Few opportunities are provided to learn through structured play or to collaborate with one another in lessons.

In the primary and middle phases, students' achievement in Islamic education, Arabic and social studies is acceptable. For example, in one Grade 2 class, most students demonstrated that they are able to understand and memorise passages from the Holy Qur'an. In one Grade 7 class, most students demonstrated the ability to identify, define and use adjectives and adverbs in Arabic and write these in sentences. This is as a result of acceptable teaching. Progress is weakest in writing in both English and Arabic across these phases. This is because students are not given enough opportunities to write at length in different subjects and in different ways. Attainment at the end of both phases is in line in English, mathematics, science and non-core subjects when compared with curriculum and age-appropriate expectations. As they move through the middle phase of the school, most students, including students with SEN, make acceptable progress in all subjects. By the end of Grade 9 the large majority can speak, read, calculate and investigate at levels appropriate for their age. Students' progress across both phases is slower in a minority of lessons. Teachers do not consistently adapt the curriculum in lessons to meet the needs of the high achieving students. Students' innovation skills are not fully integrated in all lessons.

In the upper phase of the school, improving trends over time in examination results are notable. Learning in lessons shows that progress, although acceptable overall, is

sometimes stronger in Grades 10-12. This is often due to students' positive attitudes to learning and good teaching. Attainment for most students in all subjects by the end of the upper phase is at least in line with national expectations. Recorded school attainment data indicates that attainment is better than what the classwork suggests presently that achievement is acceptable for most students. By the end of Grade 12 most students are fluent speakers and can read and write appropriately for their age. For example, in Arabic most students are able to define the letter **ص** as it appears in different shapes and forms in words. In English, students were observed discussing and writing coherent paragraphs about the advantages and disadvantages of attending university. Students work collaboratively together in the minority of mathematics lessons. High achieving students are not always sufficiently challenged. Students demonstrate positive learning attitudes and have developed age-appropriate critical-thinking skills. External MoE examination results show that lower-attaining students, and those with SEN, are now achieving at an age-expected level when benchmarked against national tests. This is an improvement over time and is as a result of the school's focus on this group of learners. In the higher phase, girls outperform boys in Grade 10, especially in Arabic, English and science. The attainment gap has started to close by the end of Grade 12.

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	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
Overall, students' personal and social development is acceptable. Relationships between adults and students are effective and promote a positive environment where students want to learn. Behaviour is largely acceptable across the school and				

most students treat one another with respect and courtesy. Behaviour is occasionally weaker in the primary phase, particularly when teachers move from one class to the next or when students enter the school after lunch. The school is aware of this and is addressing this issue.

Attendance has improved since the last inspection. As a result of strong parent partnerships, students' attendance is now 96% which is very good. Students enjoy coming to school because the quality of the teaching and learning is no longer weak. Leaders need to continue improving students' punctuality to school and lessons as a few students arrive late. The school has procedures to challenge this but so far is having limited impact.

Most students demonstrate acceptable attitudes towards healthy eating and maintaining active lifestyles. Students participate in a range of sporting events across the school and eat food that promotes healthy living. In one kindergarten lesson, children sorted different foods into groups and could identify which foods were healthy and unhealthy. They demonstrated an acceptable understanding of what foods they should eat and why.

Students' understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures is typically good across the primary, middle and upper phases. This is also a strength of the kindergarten. Students wear national dress, recite the Holy Qur'an and narrate from the Hadeeth. Students apply the principles of these teachings to their everyday lives. For example during assemblies, students explain the importance of treating all people with respect in order to live harmoniously.

Students have opportunities to become involved in projects both in local and global communities. They have raised money for charities to help people with diabetes. Students have also raised others' awareness of breast cancer and have participated in a march to show their support. The school has a few extra-curricular activities for students to participate in. These include various sporting activities and a recycling club. Students have recycled used paper for different purposes. Their ideas are creative and imaginative.

The school participates in a range of competitions with other schools at both a local and national level. Gifted and talented students typically take part in these events. They attain at a high level including, for example, securing seventh place in a mathematics competition across the whole of the UAE. Links with universities have been developed to inspire students and challenge their knowledge, skills and understanding in English and science.

Opportunities for students to develop their innovation skills are inconsistent across the school. Older students are given greater opportunities to work independently and collaboratively. Resources, including ICT, are limited but often provide adequate opportunities for students to be independent and creative learners. This is less apparent in the kindergarten and the primary phase where learning is still often too teacher directed.

Performance Standard 3: Teaching and Assessment

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

Teaching has improved since the last inspection and is now acceptable in all subjects. Previous weaknesses in teaching have mostly been addressed. A few inconsistencies remain. Relationships between staff and students across the school are good. As a result, most students are willing learners and demonstrate positive attitudes to their work.

Teaching in the kindergarten is now acceptable. It is a positive and welcoming learning environment. Children's routines are adequately embedded resulting in a positive climate for learning. Greater opportunities are needed for the children to learn through independent and structured play by exploring and experimenting. For example, in one English lesson, children were completing several worksheets about a letter in the alphabet. The children could recognise and write this letter but few opportunities were provided to extend children's learning beyond this. As a result, children made only acceptable progress. A few high achieving children were not challenged in this lesson.

Teachers know their subjects well and often convey this adequately to students. Teachers model learning effectively and lesson plans typically consider the needs of all learners at a basic level. Consequently, learning is usually matched adequately to lower- and middle- performing levels of groups of students. Most lessons do not sufficiently challenge high achieving students.

Teachers now share learning outcomes with students. This results in students understanding what they are learning. Teachers are beginning to use more open-



ended questions to challenge thinking. They identify and address misconceptions but rarely adapt lesson content to better meet students' needs. In most subjects, lessons are textbook and worksheet based. These lessons often do not promote critical thinking, innovation and independent learning skills. The high achieving students can often complete the work set and they make limited progress. 'Challenge' activities are often given to students once other work is completed. High achieving students need access to these types of activities sooner in order to stimulate and probe their thinking.

Lessons in music, sport, ICT and science lessons often help to engage students and secure an acceptable level of understanding through a range of practical learning activities on offer. Resources to support learning are beginning to be developed. Where these are available, they are typically used adequately to support learning. The school needs to provide more resources in the kindergarten to promote learning through play.

The school now has a range of assessment data. Staff carry out termly assessments to track students' attainment. These assessments are not analysed effectively to help inform improvement of subjects by leaders or to steer future planning of lessons. As a result, lessons are not consistently adapted to further challenge students who find work too easy.

Feedback to students about their learning needs to be improved across the school. Students' work is regularly marked with a tick. Marking does not yet provide feedback comments to let students know what they need to do in order to improve. Where work is marked, comments often praise students. Incorrect answers are neither frequently corrected or improvement points made. Few lessons were seen where students were assessing their own learning.

Performance Standard 4: Curriculum

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

By the time they leave the school, most students demonstrate an acceptable level of knowledge, skills and understanding in almost all curriculum subjects. The school's curriculum is broad and balanced and curriculum plans usually build on previous learning resulting in adequate progress by most groups of students.

The school enriches its core curriculum through an adequate range of extra-curricular provision in music, art and sport. Themed days complement the curriculum and develop students' understanding and appreciation of UAE culture and heritage. These include 'Cultural Day', 'Flag Day' and 'National Day'. Parents often contribute to and engage in these events. Few cross-curricular links are planned in the curriculum. This results in students not always transferring skills between subjects. There are a few examples of good practice: in one Grade 5 English lesson, students were learning to speak English whilst learning in science about dinosaurs.

The school has made acceptable progress in reviewing and modifying the curriculum to better meet the needs of all groups of students. Most curriculum and lesson plans now adequately meet the needs of SEN, lower-achieving and middle-achieving students. Further work needs to be done to review curriculum plans to better meet the needs of the high achieving students, including those who are gifted and/or talented. In the majority of lessons, the curriculum does not always challenge the needs of these students. Lesson plans make some attempt to consider this group but curriculum plans do not provide detail about how skills are developed from one year to the next.

The curriculum is still largely based on students completing textbooks and worksheets in most lessons and subjects. This results in a stronger focus on developing students' knowledge and not always enough focus on their skills. Teachers are not consistently adapting the curriculum to better meet the needs of their students. Only the large minority of teachers is starting to provide opportunities for students to collaborate, use technology and apply a wider range of resources to support learning.

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	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Care and support	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

The school has acceptable procedures in place to ensure students are protected and stay safe. There is a written child protection policy which adults understand and follow. Leaders provide appropriate child protection training for staff. All staff have been appropriately checked to ensure they are suitable to work in school. The school maintains a central register. Adequate records of any incidents are recorded. Students are safe. They enjoy school. Attendance figures and the views expressed by parents confirm this. Bullying is rare. The school teaches students how to stay safe online and through social media. Relationships between staff and students are positive. Staff manage the behaviour of students effectively with an appropriate balance of rewards and sanctions. Most students respond appropriately when corrected by staff.

Arrangements to ensure the safety and security of students now meet statutory requirements. The school has successfully addressed issues concerning health and safety noted in the last inspection report. Any issues concerning the maintenance of the building raised during this inspection were rectified immediately.

The school building is maintained adequately. Security officers monitor access to and from the building and CCTV cameras are used. A qualified nurse operates the school's clinic. Medication is appropriately stored and records of incidents logged. Procedures for students going home are supervised. Adults monitor students leaving the premises and ensure that students are not left unsupervised.

The school building has two levels. The site is fully accessible for students who currently attend the school. Most specialist learning facilities can be located on the ground floor, including the recreation grounds and prayer rooms. Food served in the canteen promotes healthy eating. This is further reinforced through the school's curriculum. Classrooms vary in size. Most rooms are too small for large classes to work in. This sometimes has an impact on students' concentration and learning. This was noticed particularly in the kindergarten and primary phase where classes are larger.



Most students behave well. Adults manage behaviour and reward achievements. Behaviour management is less effective in the primary phase. Adults do not supervise students sufficiently when teachers move from one class to the next or when students come in from lunch. Students need reminding not to run down the corridor or close classroom doors without an adult in the room.

Students' attendance is very good. A few students are not punctual to school or to lessons. This means they miss part of the school's morning assembly and positive approach to fostering students' understanding of the UAE heritage, culture and Islamic values.

All students who have SEN have been externally assessed. These students receive additional provision through a daily intervention programme. Students with SEN receive additional one-to-one support by a teacher. Data shows that SEN students now make acceptable progress across the school. Positive links have been established with their parents. Student targets are shared with parents as well as ideas about how they can support learning at home. Parents believe that SEN students make sound progress and that the school welcomes them on its roll. The school adequately identifies gifted and talented students. Although these students are not always fully challenged in lessons, extra-curricular provision does challenge their thinking.

The school provides effective support for older students. They receive career guidance and are well informed about university courses to continue their education.

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	Good
Governance	Weak
Management, staffing, facilities and resources	Acceptable

The leadership and management of the school is acceptable. It has improved since the last inspection as a result of the principal's leadership, drive and vision. Along with the senior leadership team and subject coordinators, the school has improved the quality of teaching and outcomes for students.

The educational leadership of the school is now acceptable. Most leaders demonstrate a satisfactory understanding of the curriculum and know what constitutes effective practice in teaching and learning. Since the last inspection, the school has introduced more rigorous forms of monitoring to raise the profile of teaching and assessment. The school now collects and uses data to track students' achievement. This is beginning to be used more effectively by key leaders to identify the main strengths and areas for improvement in core curriculum subjects. Subject coordinators now need to analyse data so that they know about the quality of students' achievement across the whole school. They should begin to use data to identify how all groups of students are achieving in order to know where support, provision and finances are best placed to improve the outcomes for students.

Relationships and communication between staff are good. Staff have clearly defined roles and responsibilities and work together effectively. Performance management arrangements now hold teachers to account for the attainment and progress students make. The principal provides regular training for teachers in teaching and learning. Little subject-specific training has been given to staff. The leadership team monitors parents' complaints.

The school's self-evaluation is acceptable. Key leaders have identified the main areas for improvement. The self-evaluation form (SEF) is sometimes graded over generously. A school development plan (SDP) outlines key areas for improvement. It

states clearly what needs to be done, by when and who will be responsible for each action.

Parent partnerships are a strength of the school. Parents are now actively involved in shaping its development. A parent council has been elected. It regularly meets senior leaders to share views on how the school can improve. The council's ideas inform the SDP. The parent council also helps monitor the progress towards these targets. The school prides itself on its communication with parents. It keeps parents informed through telephone calls, text messages, parents' evenings, written reports and through the school's website which was designed by a student in the school.

Governance is weak overall. Governors meet regularly and minutes of meetings are recorded. Issues discussed are mostly concerned with resources, the deployment of staff and school finances. Governors do not frequently hold the school to account for the quality of teaching or student outcomes. The day-to-day management of the school is acceptable. Routines and procedures are in place to ensure the school runs smoothly. Most teachers are adequately deployed to support learning. Teaching assistants offer limited support in class. Resources do not always promote good learning. For example, ICT resources are not always reliable and the minority of these do not work. This hinders students' progress. The new owner has already established the need for more reliable technology and has purchased new ICT resources for the school.

What the school should do to improve further:

1. Improve children's ability to learn in the kindergarten by providing regular opportunities to:
 - i. learn through exploring and experimenting
 - ii. be more independent in their learning
 - iii. learn through structured play.
2. Improve teaching and learning by:
 - i. providing greater challenge for high achieving students in lessons
 - ii. giving more effective feedback to help students improve their work.
3. Strengthen leadership and management by ensuring:
 - i. subject coordinators analyse data so that they have an overview of the areas for development in their subjects across the school
 - ii. governors hold senior leaders to account for the performance of the school.