



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



Summary Inspection Report

Future International School

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Iqraa

Future International School

Inspection Date	27 th – 30 th May, 2012
School ID#	157
Type of School	Private
Curriculum	American
Number of Students	808
Age Range	KG–Grade 11
Gender	Mixed
Principal	Julia Keegan/Neda Oren
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Introduction

The school was inspected by a team of four inspectors, who observed 64 lessons. They considered the progress made in addressing the issues raised in the previous inspection report, students' standards and progress, the ethos of the school, and the quality of students' learning experiences and the teaching they receive.

Description of the School

The school opened in 2004. The director joined in August 2010 at the same time as the principal, who had been a deputy principal previously, was appointed. The school is now at full capacity and a sister school has been established to accommodate more students. The director manages both the schools and divides her time between the two schools.

The school has a number of aims, summarised in a mission statement: 'to provide an exemplary learning environment which develops student abilities to be confident, world-class learners capable of meeting the challenges of the 21st century while becoming productive, responsible and contributing members of society.'

Around 80% of the students are Muslim and 74% are Arabic. Students come from a wide variety of nationalities. The largest groups include UAE 35%, Filipino 18%, Egyptian 10%, and Jordanian 7% with other Arabic nations and other nationalities making up the remainder. Approximately 58% are boys. The school has identified 25 students as having special educational needs, and a further 59 are considered to require special support because of low proficiency in language acquisition and usage.

The school teaches a curriculum based on US textbooks, with adaptations to enable ADEC requirements to be met for the teaching of Arabic, Islamic studies and social studies. Annual fees range from AED 11,895 (KG) to AED 24,455 (G11). Fees for the year 2012/2013 will remain the same. The annual salaries of the teaching staff range from AED 30,000 to AED 96,000.

The Effectiveness of the School

Band C

Grade 6

Inspectors judged Future International School to be in Band C, that is a school in need of significant improvement.

The school has taken some positive steps in response to the last report, but they have not yet made a significant difference to the quality of learning and teaching, and have had little impact in raising students' performance levels. This is because they are neither focused nor sustainable. As a result, the quality of teaching and learning remains unsatisfactory, and the school is not providing a safe environment for its students or staff. A key problem, holding back improvement, is that the school does not have an appropriate middle management structure to help identify areas for improvement, and then support and sustain them. As a result, the director has been the key contributor to the school improvement plan and the school self-evaluation form. These documents reflect a lack of awareness of some critical areas in need of improvement, particularly in terms of ensuring the safety of the students and staff in case of emergencies. The lack of experienced middle managers has meant that the teachers have had inadequate help in improving their effectiveness. The school has fostered a friendly and happy ethos for the students, who generally like the school environment and their teachers. This is not supported by suitable pastoral or behaviour management systems.

Standards and progress for many students are below the levels expected internationally for students with similar ages and aptitudes. Progress is limited by inflexible teaching of a narrow curriculum that relies heavily on textbooks and worksheets. These are un-stimulating, and take no account of students' individual needs or abilities. Students have very few opportunities to practise problem-solving or enhance their critical thinking skills. In English, students' reading and writing skills are underdeveloped and the reliance on textbooks and worksheets limits the opportunities for extended writing for a variety of purposes. In mathematics, there is too much emphasis on acquisition of facts and knowledge that are rarely applied to practical, real-life problems. In science, students have very little opportunity to conduct scientific investigations or explorations. There are two well-equipped computer labs, but information and communication technology (ICT) is not used effectively beyond dedicated lessons to develop students' technical skills or support their learning in different subjects through, for example independent research. In Arabic, there is little development of writing or extended reading skills. The focus in Islamic studies is on theory that is not related to students' everyday life. Social studies also focusses on gaining knowledge at the expense of being able to apply this knowledge. Standards in

physical education (PE) are hampered by inadequate resources and little opportunity for physical activity beyond some organised games. There is no music room and this limits the progress that students can make.

The system for tracking students' progress is inadequate. Data is collected purely in terms of the results of termly exams, tests and quizzes. These do not provide appropriate information to enable teachers to measure the progress that students make or leaders to judge added value. Marking is basic, with no comments or other feedback to move students' learning on and show that what they need to do to improve their work. The director gathers exam results for each term but these have not been analysed. As a result no feedback is given to teachers to ensure there are no gaps or repetition in the work they set. Although students with different abilities are identified, there are no individual plans with learning targets based on rigorous assessments. All students participate in a baseline assessment when they join the school, but the low results are not used by the staff to establish clear starting points for students against which future progress can be measured.

The protection, care, guidance and support of students are hindered by a lack of effective procedures to support and guide learning and their personal development. Students are unsure who to turn to when they have concerns. There are only two supervisors – one for each building – and supervision is ineffective. Some boys misbehave on the buses, hit each other, distract the driver and disrespect the supervisors. The school is not robust enough in following up incidents reported on the buses, with the result that some parents have stopped their children using them. Some students reported that they are bullied by other students in the classrooms, sometimes because of their nationality. Teachers have little or no understanding of child protection policies, and think child protection is about controlling students' behaviour. The school has not done enough to clarify or emphasise these aspects of provision, or to ensure the effective management of behaviour. As a result, students do not feel safe or protected. An incident involving corporal punishment took place and was reported to the school improvement partner (SIP) prior to the inspection. The director dealt effectively with this and followed the correct procedures. The guidelines in the school child protection policy do not specifically mention corporal punishment. A student council has been elected. It is still in its infancy, but a lack of direction means that the school may miss a good opportunity to develop students' leadership skills.

Teachers are qualified to teach their subject areas, but many use a very limited range of methods and approaches and this reduces their effectiveness. In the KG classes, resources are underused and the lack of play-based learning limits

students' progress. Most lessons throughout the school are teacher-centred and follow a lecture-style format. There is no clear differentiation in instruction and activities to ensure that they meet the varying needs of different ability groups. Even though teachers' lesson plans identify differentiation, they show no clear understanding of how to carry it out in practice. They do not take sufficient account of what students know, understand and can do when planning their lessons. A striking example was observed in a maths class, where students were asked to find the perimeter of shapes. All measurements were in decimals, but students found it difficult to add decimals. The result was that most of the lesson was spent making sure students could add decimal numbers correctly, so the main objective of how to measure the perimeter of shapes was not achieved.

The curriculum is not adapted well enough to meet the needs of the students and falls well below international best practice. The KG curriculum has not improved since the last inspection and is still not meeting the needs of the children through active learning. It does not encourage children to develop their independence, social skills or their cognitive and motor skills by stimulating their curiosity and involvement through purposeful play based learning, as most teaching involves just rote learning. The KG classes do not participate in a daily assembly to foster UAE values. The science laboratory lacks the equipment to enable students to do experiments, and they only experience teacher demonstrations in higher classes. The curriculum is narrow with few options on offer beyond the core subjects. The students in the higher grades are concerned that the school's curriculum and assessments are not accredited, and because of this some are planning to leave at the end of the year.

Students are placed at risk on a daily basis by some poor health and safety procedures and practices around the school. All outside doors in both the buildings are kept locked, except for the front entrance. These doors do not have push bar locks to open from the inside in case of an emergency. They all require keys that are kept by assistants, presenting a safety hazard and especially in case of a fire. Even worse, during break times the girls are in an underground auditorium with no windows and only one access in and out through a staircase. There are no tables or benches for the girls to use during break time and they sit on the floor around the room. The KG students do not have an outside play area. They have to descend two staircases to access the indoor play area in the basement at playtime, which is a further safety hazard. The school has had only one fire drill, and it has not been documented. The school plan identifies one fire drill to be conducted each trimester, but this has not happened so far. The school has not been inspected and certified by the Civil Defence regarding fire evacuation and designated areas to be used in case of school evacuations. The

school has a clinic and nurse with a temporary license, but does not promote health education or safety amongst the students. The prayer room is small and used as a classroom mostly during the day. This is for both boys and girls, and few students use it.

The school owns its own buses, and almost all of them only have seat belts in the first two rows. Even when students sit in these seats, they do not use the seat belts. Backpacks are stacked in a pile behind the driver, which is hazardous in case the bus stops suddenly or an accident occurs. The library is not sufficiently equipped with books and is not used for independent research. It is currently used to give non-Muslim students an unstructured study period while the other students are taking Islamic studies. Instructional resources are limited to textbooks and associated worksheets, and very few interactive materials are available.

A few subject co-ordinators are in place, and the director acts as temporary subject co-ordinator for the areas that do not have one. The co-ordinators do not have the understanding or experience to improve teaching and learning and thus students' progress. They have no job descriptions and have not had appropriate professional development, for example in how to conduct effective lesson observations. The director has taken steps to provide some areas of professional development for the teachers. These are not followed up well enough, and so have little effect. Teachers are not evaluated on a regular basis, and the written feedback they receive fails to identify particular areas of development to help them improve.

Parents are mainly satisfied with the school, but some parents of senior students have expressed concerns that it is not accredited. Annual fees are relatively high for a school of this type. The average salary of the teaching staff, who are paid regularly and on time, is below the level recommended by ADEC compared to the fees collected. Given the inadequate quality of provision and outcomes, the school provides unsatisfactory value for money.

What the school should do to improve further:

1. Urgently ensure the safety of the students and staff by:
 - i. fitting push-bar locks on all external doors, so they can be opened easily from the inside but do not allow access from outside;
 - ii. carrying out regular fire drills, as identified in the school, plan so that students and staff can evacuate the building safely and speedily and know where to assemble;

- iii. developing an emergency evacuation plan for students and staff that is approved and certified by the Civil Defence authority; and
 - iv. providing sufficient seatbelts in all buses, checking to make sure students wear them, and stressing to students, parents and supervisors the importance of using seatbelts effectively.
2. Improve provision in the KG classes by:
- i. appointing a qualified and experienced co-ordinator to provide leadership that fully meets the needs of the students and staff;
 - ii. providing focused training for staff to improve their knowledge and understanding of how to meet the educational needs of this age group; and
 - iii. ensuring that the curriculum supports and encourages the children in developing their learning by stimulating their curiosity and providing purposeful play based activities.
3. Improve the impact of leadership and management at all levels, and thus the quality of teaching and learning, by:
- i. addressing all areas of non-compliance as soon as possible;
 - ii. providing training for all staff that is focused, practical and sustained so that teaching is based on best practices, particularly in terms of differentiation and using other resources besides textbooks and worksheets for instruction;
 - iii. providing senior leaders with the training and support they need to monitor and evaluate the work of teachers, with a sharp focus on judging the impact of teaching on students' progress; and
 - iv. making subject co-ordinators fully accountable for outcomes in their areas of responsibility.
4. Improve the care and protection of students by:
- i. implementing an effective child protection policy, and ensuring through focused training and monitoring that is understood and followed by all staff;
 - ii. addressing misbehaviour on the buses and around the school; and
 - iii. developing an effective system of pastoral care for the students.