



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



Inspection Report

Future International Academy

Academic Year 2014 – 2015

iqraa

Future International Academy

Inspection Date	23 – 26 February 2015
School ID#	203
Licensed Curriculum	American
Number of Students	1590
Age Range	4 to 14 years
Gender	Mixed
Principal	Alaa Aljuburi
School Address	Al Sarooj, Al Ain
Telephone Number	+971 (0)3 764 6888
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Official Email (ADEC)	futureintacademy.pvt@adec.ac.ae
School Website	-----
Date of last inspection	5 – 8 May 2013

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 B;

GRADE 4

The main strengths of the school are:

- the inspirational leadership of the principal that motivates and challenges staff to improve their teaching and learning skills
- the considerable improvement of attainment and progress in Arabic and English
- the progress in spoken English by students in KG and their confident use of the language by the time they reach Grade 9
- teaching methods and resources that motivate students
- very effective communications with parents
- rigorous processes for evaluating performance in the school and supporting teachers.

The main areas for improvement are:

- attainment and progress, particularly in Islamic education
 - strengthen senior management through the appointment of a vice-principal
 - provide appropriate indoor physical education and recreation facilities for all students.
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Introduction

The school was evaluated by 5 inspectors over a 4-day period. They observed 89 lessons, conducted several meetings with senior staff, subject leaders, teachers, support staff, students and parents. The lead inspector met with the owner. Inspectors examined test and assessment results, scrutinized students' work across the school, analysed 340 responses to the parents' questionnaire and considered many of the school's policies and other documents. The principal and senior leadership team were fully involved throughout the inspection process; they undertook 6 joint lesson observations with inspectors.

Description of the School

The school opened in September 2010 as a new school in purpose-built accommodation in Al Sarooj area in Al Ain, and caters for students from KG to Grade 9. Leadership went through a period of turbulence with a succession of principals, including 6 during 2010–2011. In 2011-2013, the school had a Director who had overall responsibility for this school as well as the Future International School, also in Al Ain. The current principal was appointed in September 2013 and has brought some much needed stability.

Student numbers have grown rapidly in the last two years with 600 new students joining the school in the last twelve months. The school follows an American curriculum aligned to the Common Core Curriculum Standards as adopted by the State of California for English, mathematics and science and the Ministry of Education (MoE) curriculum for Arabic and Islamic education. The school delivers the social studies curriculum following both the American and MoE curricula.

There are 424 children in the Kindergarten (KG), 935 students in the primary section (grades 1-5) and 231 in the middle school section (grades 6-9). Students from KG to grade 3 are taught in mixed classes and from grade 4 upwards they are taught in separate classes for boys and girls. Almost all students are Muslim and of Arabic backgrounds; 53% are Emirati nationals. There are 32 other nationalities represented in the school with the highest proportion, 10%, from the Philippines and 10% from Egypt. There are 55 students identified with special educational needs (SEN); none are formally identified as gifted and talented.

On entering the school, most students are not fluent in the main language of teaching, which is English. The admissions policy is open in line with ADEC guidelines. No external tests have yet been undertaken but the school is due to begin the Measures of Academic Performance (MAP) testing and EMSA exams in March to May of 2015. Fees range from AED 13,470 to AED 29,350 inclusive of books and uniforms. These are in the medium to high category.

The Effectiveness of the School

Evaluation of the school's overall effectiveness

The school has made good progress since the last inspection and is now satisfactory and improving in almost all performance standards. This is the result of good leadership; in particular that of the principal. From the lessons observed and scrutiny of work done, students from KG to grade 9 make satisfactory or better progress in nearly all aspects of their studies and attainment mirrors that achieved by their international peers. Students' spoken and written English skills provide them with a solid platform from which to access the American curriculum. Students are nearly always well behaved. They benefit from the many opportunities to discuss their learning with their peers during the school day.

The leadership and management of the school was given a significant boost eighteen months ago by the appointment of the principal. She has begun to build a strong management team to support her in the work of school improvement.

Students' attainment & progress

The attainment and progress made by students in Arabic, English, science and mathematics is satisfactory and improving. Achievement is satisfactory in social studies taught in Arabic and unsatisfactory in Islamic education. Students' progress in other subjects outside of the core is generally satisfactory. They enjoy physical education and art and their skills and knowledge in these subjects grow steadily as they move through the school. Students enjoy their French classes and make satisfactory progress in their spoken skills.

Children in KG are keen and motivated to learn. Most have had limited exposure to English and they are excited when presented with activities. Children make satisfactory progress or better in their development of English language speaking skills and are beginning to build a range of vocabulary that enables them to access their learning with confidence.

In the elementary and middle school grades, students demonstrate confident use of Arabic and English and this includes their ability to write accurately in both languages. They use their language skills to good effect in lessons. They regularly discuss their work and cooperate effectively in groups to agree and present their completed tasks. In mathematics and science, students use their English to access the technical and specialist vocabulary. In one Grade 9 chemistry class, students were able to apply their knowledge of the structure of English to quickly assimilate new specialist terminology into their learning. Students do not make similarly quick progress in Islamic education and by Grade 4 many students could not describe the 5 pillars of Islam. Students do build their understanding of the

values and culture of the UAE as they are presented with opportunities to refine and apply their knowledge in almost every lesson during the school day.

Students' development of cooperative learning skills is good. In almost every lesson, they are required to work within their groups to discuss their learning, a task which most achieve with diligence and maturity. This has not yet developed into working collaboratively on new and self-chosen topics. They have sufficient opportunities to work independently and pursue lines of research that add breadth and depth to the curriculum. They rarely have the opportunity to use digital technologies in the classroom to support their learning.

Students' personal development

The personal development students' make is satisfactory and improving. They generally behave well inside and outside the classroom. They move about the building in an orderly manner and older students manage this without high levels of supervision. They are generally relaxed and feel at home in their school so that they talk to visitors in a friendly and confident manner. Students show respect to their teachers and generally to each other. They respond quickly when asked to reduce noise levels, which can become elevated when teachers do not manage the pace of learning effectively. Students in nearly all classes share ideas as well as resources with uncommon generosity.

Students are confident and find it easy to take leadership roles. Each class throughout the elementary and middle school elects one of their peers to the student council. This body meets regularly but many on the council feel their voice is not sufficiently strong to influence change. Student council members undertake monitoring duties during morning assembly but this does not sufficiently develop their contribution to the school community. Learning groups are active during nearly every lesson and each member has a distinct role assigned to them. This encourages students in all grades to take ownership of their learning. Many younger students drop litter in the playground or corridors; students themselves have decided that action is needed and have formed the 'Anti-Garbage Girls' who actively encourage students to use the plentiful recycling opportunities.

Students respect the values and heritage of the UAE, which is a constant theme in lessons. Most students sing the national anthem with pride and vigour during morning assembly.

The quality of teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are satisfactory and show continuing signs of improvement. Most lessons were judged to be satisfactory or better and almost 20% were good or better. Examples of the most effective teaching were seen in English, mathematics and science; the least effective lessons were observed in Islamic education and social studies.

Teachers make detailed plans and all use these consistently. They present clear learning objectives and warm-up activities are used well to engage students from the very beginning of the lesson. Most teachers inject good levels of pace so that the available time is used to its full. Teachers encourage students to reflect on their learning, and undertake self and peer assessment.

Group work has become an effective part of lessons and has made a substantial contribution to improvements to teaching and learning since the last inspection. Teachers organise groups of students so that each member has a defined role and ensures more able students do not dominate. Students cooperate with each other to share information and negotiate their response to activities. Most teachers recognise that learning activities need to match the abilities of all students in the class and differentiate learning tasks so that each student can successfully achieve the learning outcomes.

Teaching methods and resources are usually effective in engaging and motivating students. Many teachers are not aware of the 'instructional shifts' that require teachers to provide depth and challenge to the Common Core; most accomplish this by putting into practice skills learnt in their professional development. In English lessons, teachers are able to introduce reading activities that challenge students to examine texts below their surface meaning. Teaching in KG is satisfactory and improving because teachers are developing a better understanding of how young children learn so that there are fewer whole class activities. Children now spend more of their engaged and active in tasks that interest them.

Nearly all teachers have secure subject knowledge. They are developing their pedagogical and classroom management skills through well-targeted professional development and the benefits of good coaching from the principal and department heads. Assessment practice is improving and teachers use the available data from assessment to plan their classroom groups and learning activities. They share the rubrics in the common core curriculum with students and use them rigorously when grading their work.

Meeting students' needs through the curriculum

The implementation of the curriculum is satisfactory. In Arabic, Islamic education, English, mathematics and science it is given breadth through teaching strategies that introduce additional material that provides more challenge and relevance for all students. Lessons in mathematics and science introduce students to interesting and challenging ideas or involve them in experimental and practical activities. US based textbooks provide the backbone to the curriculum; teachers throughout the school provide effective ways to make learning relevant to lives of children in the UAE. In one English class, students were able to compare the behaviour of a character in the text they were studying to that of behaviour expected of residents in the UAE and those following Islam. The early learning curriculum in the KG follows a programme used in the US and its implementation by teachers ensures that it takes appropriate account of the development of children's creative, physical and social skills.

A number of the teaching staff have some experience of teaching to the core curriculum standards in a US school and are native English speakers. Heads of department and curriculum coordinators work with their teams to create the necessary detailed medium term planning that establishes the scope and sequence of the skills, knowledge and understanding students need to acquire during each trimester.

The school does recognize the needs of its many students with SEN and has recently created detailed and useful individual education plans. This structure enables students with SEN to make similar progress to their peers. Students on the autism spectrum and others are welcomed in the school and this adds to the school's inclusive ethos. Those students identified with weaker literacy skills, in Arabic or English and at risk academically, receive additional support from dedicated staff. The school does not match its diligence with students who learn at a slower pace with the provision for students who are gifted and talented. The school promotes students with exceptional artistic and creative skills but does not sufficiently identify or meet the needs of the academically gifted.

Extra-curricular activities are built into the weekly school schedule so that one lesson a week is available for interest-based activities. Students have a wealth of activities from which to choose including music, craft, cooking and a particularly active and accomplished chess club. Many students cannot access their activity of choice, as numbers are too great and many default to the physical activities that attract very large numbers of students, many of whom take little part in the activities.

The protection, care, guidance and support of students

The school successfully promotes an ethos of care. It has rigorous processes for tracking student progress and providing pastoral care for all its students. The counsellors are accessible to staff and students and they keep meticulous and comprehensive records of all students who are either vulnerable or need extra care. They maintain an oversight of students' academic and social needs so that both are given equal consideration. The policies and processes for establishing and maintaining good behaviour are effective and no students have been excluded permanently. Attendance is above average at 93%.

The school has a child protection policy that is sufficiently detailed to provide clear guidance to staff. The school provided training for staff and they are fully aware of the policy's contents. The principal and most staff demonstrate a desire that all students should enjoy their time in school. There is satisfactory provision for the health needs of students and they learn in a safe and secure environment.

The quality of the school's buildings and premises

The school building is now 4 years old and provides satisfactory accommodation. The principal and school leaders have managed the large intakes of additional students by efficient and flexible use of the available accommodation. This compromises ongoing investment in buildings as sections of the school move to meet the growing demand.

There are sufficient specialist facilities to support most of the curriculum. Nearly all classrooms are of sufficient size to allow students to enjoy regular opportunities for group work and active learning. The ICT suites are of a good size but have poor acoustics so that teacher instructions are hard for students to follow. The science laboratories are not yet fully functional so that some experimental and practical work is undertaken in classrooms. There is a large sports hall that has not been finished to a high enough standard that would allow for the safe use of students taking part in team games. There are 2 grassed areas that are well used by classes of students during the cooler weather. The uneven and hard flooring and lack of padding on the pillars make the current indoor play facilities unsuitable for children in KG. The building is maintained to a reasonable standard and maintenance issues are dealt with speedily. Classrooms, toilets and shared areas are maintained to good level of cleanliness and hygiene.

Regular servicing is provided for fire-fighting equipment and electrical appliances. There is clear signage for exit routes and procedures for emergency evacuation are practised regularly throughout the school year. Records show that students can exit the school and assemble outside within 3 minutes. Ramps into the 2 main buildings are provided for students and adults who might have limited mobility;

there are no lifts to the upper floor of the main building where the majority of specialist rooms are located.

The school's resources to support its aims

Resourcing of the curriculum is satisfactory. The principal applies rigorous selection criteria for the appointment of staff; all of whom are appropriately qualified and experienced. Nearly all classrooms present colourful displays of student work. There are sufficient practical resources placed in classrooms to support the acquisition of literacy and numeracy skills.

There are data show projectors in all classrooms and teachers use them effectively to engage student interest and use timers to ensure that lessons proceed at a challenging pace. There are no computers in classrooms for students to use to support their learning. The library does not provide an attractive resource that would stimulate in students a love of reading. Resources including fiction books in English and Arabic, research materials and digital resources to support the curriculum are in short supply.

Classroom resources in KG, including those for imaginative and creative play are adequate and teachers have begun to create learning centres in their rooms. There are teaching assistants in all KG and some Grade 1 classes, these are not always deployed effectively to support teaching and learning.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Leadership and management are good. The principal has led by example and provided inspirational leadership for a school that had very unstable beginnings. Her leadership, with the support of the owner has been the dominant factor in the rapid improvements since the last inspection. The principal has a good relationship with the owner based on trust and effective communication.

The principal is a very visible presence in the school and has established friendly and productive relationships with staff at all levels. She has quickly determined the school's strengths and weaknesses and concentrated her efforts on improving teaching and learning; she carefully linked the programme for professional development to this priority. She has developed a coaching style of leadership and this has developed the school's middle management team so that they in turn are able to offer coaching to subject and classroom teachers.

The principal has been responsible for establishing rigorous processes for evaluating the performance of the school. The self-evaluation form (SEF) was largely accurate, if a little modest in its judgments and is founded in a good range of evidence. The associated good quality school development plan (SDP) contains precise, measurable objectives focused on improving the quality of teaching and

learning. Senior and middle managers conduct lesson observations on a regular basis and appropriate detailed plans for improvement are constructed. The progress made by teachers in meeting their targets is monitored at regular intervals and this continues until improvement is noted. A range of improvement strategies that include targeted professional development, coaching, self-evaluation and peer observation support teachers' efforts to improve.

Parents are provided with good information about their child's progress and work. The school's 'web portal' enables parents to know on a day-to-day basis what their child is doing in each subject, homework that has been set, records of tests and assessments and also directs them to further web pages that will support their child's learning. Communication with parents also comes through daily diaries, newsletters and weekly sheets containing information about what their child will be learning in the coming week. The school is developing competent and confident students and many are seeking to make a more direct contribution to decision making in the school.

Progress since the last inspection

The school has made considerable progress since the last inspection. It has taken the recommendations from the previous inspections and used these as a critical part of the SDP. The attainment of students in Arabic and English has improved significantly since the last inspection and are now at or very close to national and international grade levels. The improvements in teaching and learning, and more rigorous assessment techniques have made a major contribution to this improvement. Students now take greater ownership of their learning by understanding that they bear some responsibility for what they learn through discovery and discussion. They are also learning how to manage their time in lessons effectively and make decisions for themselves.

There is less reliance on textbooks as teachers seek in every lesson to go beyond the text to explore how the curriculum has relevance for students living in the UAE in the 21st century. The school now has a comprehensive assessment policy rigorously applied and monitored. Course work and exam marking are moderated to ensure consistency of marking.

The principal has contributed to the enhanced skills of middle managers. Her coaching style has encouraged heads of department and other leaders to try new approaches without fear of failure. They are now becoming confident coaches in their own right. The appointment of a vice-principal remains important if progress is to continue at the same pace. The school, in particular senior leaders, have demonstrated good capacity to make further improvements.

What the school should do to improve further:

1. Improve attainment and progress in Islamic education and social studies taught in Arabic by:
 - i. ensuring good teaching and learning is shared more effectively between teachers and subjects
 - ii. providing greater opportunities in KG for children to think creatively, make decisions and exercise choice
 - iii. building on the existing skills of students in the use of cooperative learning by extending these skills to include, collaborative learning, research and self-supported study.
2. Provide improved facilities for students' physical education and recreation by:
 - i. improving the flooring and protection in the internal play area
 - ii. refurbishing the gym by putting in student friendly flooring and facilities for team games.
3. Improve resources that support learning by:
 - i. providing an enhanced library facility that ensures a wider number and range of books in Arabic and English and digital resources in a student friendly environment
 - ii. providing the practical science equipment that will ensure students have full access to the experimental aspects of science
 - iii. making greater use of ICT in the classroom.
4. Consolidate the existing strengths in leadership and management by:
 - i. expediting the appointment of an academic vice-principal
 - ii. further enhancing the skills of middle leaders so that they have the capacity to extend their impact on the quality of teaching and learning.

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								