



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



Inspection Report

Our Own English High School

Academic Year 2014 – 2015

إقرأ

Our Own English High School

Inspection Date	26 – 29 January, 2015
School ID#	168
Licensed Curriculum	Indian (Central Board of Secondary Education) British (Cambridge International Examinations)
Number of Students	1765
Age Range	4 to 17 years
Gender	Mixed
Principal	Rocky Miller
School Address	147 Khalid Bin Sultan Street, Falaj Hazza, Al Ain, Adu Dhabi
Telephone Number	+971 (0)3 767 9747
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Official Email (ADEC)	Ourenglishaa.pvt@adec.ac.ae
School Website	www.gemsoo-alain.com
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 5
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The main strengths of the school are:

- students' high levels of confidence and self-esteem, positive behaviour, respect for others and attitudes to learning
- the positive ethos and harmonious community spirit
- the high quality care of students and diligence regarding all health and safety matters
- the strong promotion of UAE culture, heritage and values.

The main areas for improvement are:

- the academic progress students make in all subjects
 - the adjustment of learning in lessons to meet the needs of all students, especially the more able
 - the quality of assessment, so that students understand what they need to do to improve
 - the development of high quality 21st Century learning skills
 - analysis of school data to help inform all levels of school planning and the development of effective systems to track and monitor progress
 - the roles of middle leaders
 - provision of sufficient resources, particularly in ICT and KG, to support learning in classrooms and independent research in the library.
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Introduction

The school was inspected by 5 inspectors who observed 101 lessons. They met with school leaders, teachers, students, parents and a member of the Board of Governors. They observed assemblies, break periods and students' arrival and departure. Inspectors analysed data and documents supplied by the school. In addition, 585 responses from parents to a questionnaire were analysed. The school leaders were involved throughout the inspection process and undertook 2 joint observations of lessons with inspectors.

Description of the School

Our Own English High School is located in Falaj Haza, Al Ain and is part of the Global Education Management Systems (GEMS) group. It opened in 1992 and moved to its current premises in 1997. The school aims to develop children into self-confident, morally upright young adults who are able to achieve their full potential and face global changes. It is led by the principal, the vice-principal and three supervisors. The supervisors lead the 3 sections of the school: KG to Grade 5, Grade 6 to 12 Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) curriculum, and Grade 6 to 12 Cambridge International Examinations (CIE) curriculum. The school delivers the GEMS curriculum in the Kindergarten (KG). Grades 1 to 4 follow a global curriculum that prepares students for either the Indian CBSE or CIE curricula that older students opt to follow. Students sit for CBSE examinations or British International GCSE (IGCSE), International Advanced Subsidiary level (IAS) and International Advanced Levels (IA).

There are 1765 students; 261 in KG, 731 in Grades 1 – 5 and 773 in Grades 6 to 12. The largest group, 47%, are of Indian heritage, 14% are Egyptian, 10% Pakistani, 7% Sudanese, 3% Emirati and 3% Syrian. Of the total numbers, 62% of students are Muslim. There are 58 students identified as having special educational needs (SENs) including specific learning difficulties, speech and language needs and behavioural issues; 14 students are identified as being gifted and talented. The school has identified 20 students requiring support with English in order to access the curriculum. Students are assessed prior to enrolment as part of the school admission's policy and unless the school is unable to cater for their specific needs, students are usually admitted.

School fees are affordable, ranging from AED 3,500 to 7,000, not including books, uniform and transport.

The Effectiveness of the School

Evaluation of the school's overall effectiveness

Our Own English High School is a satisfactory school with some improving elements, in particular the care of students and their personal development. Attainment and progress are satisfactory as most students work at age appropriate levels in most lessons. The quality of teaching is variable; stronger teaching is emerging, especially at secondary level. A significant minority of teaching, mainly concentrated in the lower primary grades, is unsatisfactory. Resources, particularly in KG and lower primary classes and for the delivery of ICT, are inadequate.

The principal and senior leaders have prioritized key areas for improvement and motivated teachers and the administration team to make the necessary improvements identified by the previous inspection report. The self-evaluation is broadly accurate. They have fully addressed some targets and taken adequate steps to meet others. Professional development priorities have been identified and basic monitoring and evaluation systems have been established.

Students' attainment & progress

Students' attainment and progress is satisfactory. In English, mathematics, science, Arabic, Islamic education, social studies, and information and communication technology (ICT), attainment and progress are at expected levels. Attainment and progress in other non-core subjects varies, but is generally satisfactory.

On entry to KG, children have skills that are broadly similar to those typically seen for this age group. The vast majority speak English as an additional language. Children's skills, especially in personal, social and emotional development, physical development and numeracy develop appropriately. Children learn about the sounds letters make and can identify letter names. They handle books and are aware that print has meaning. Most can count accurately to 20 and beyond, and have an understanding of the value of numbers and how to manipulate these to solve simple problems. Opportunities to use technology are limited. They make satisfactory progress and their skills when leaving KG are broadly at expected levels.

Over the past 3 years, all students have consistently passed CBSE Board exams. The number of students scoring above 90% saw a marked improvement from 36% in 2013 to 52% in 2014. In the CIE section results have also improved with higher percentages of students achieving A*-C grades in all subjects and results are above international world averages in almost all subjects. An increasing number of

students are awarded the highest grades. A small number of students take A Levels; the results are improving with higher percentages gaining A*-C grades and in a growing number of subjects results exceed world average figures.

Students of Arab heritage, especially Emiratis, those identified with SENs and the more able make slower progress than other groups of students. The school has identified these differences but currently does not provide sufficient support to meet their specific needs.

The progress and attainment of student in English is more varied. The vast majority of children speak little English on entry to the school. They make satisfactory progress in the acquisition of English skills in KG. Most students make satisfactory progress as they move through the school; the pace of progress especially in English lessons is more varied, and slows in Grades 1 – 3. In middle and secondary phases progress gathers momentum. Speaking and listening skills are strong and students develop and use an extensive range of vocabulary. Most can reliably comprehend and extract information from factual text. A few find it more difficult to identify and understand inferences and subtleties within prose. Written work is often factual and creative writing opportunities are more limited. Spelling and punctuation is mostly accurate. Handwriting is neat and legible, much of it cursive. Students following both the Indian CBSE curriculum and British CIE curriculum make satisfactory progress and their examination outcomes are in line with international standards. Students acquire adequate basic skills in speaking, listening, reading, writing, numeracy, thinking and use of ICT.

In Arabic, most students listen carefully and understand a wide range of vocabulary. Older students can skim text to answer specific questions, though reading comprehension is a relative weakness. Almost all first language Arabic speakers use grammar rules appropriately, but their extended writing is limited. Non-Arabic native speaking students use grammar less accurately and speaking, listening, reading and writing skills are at a satisfactory level. In Islamic education, students have an acceptable understanding of the general principles of Islam, prayers and ablution and know about the Prophet's life. Across the grade levels, students have age appropriate skills in recitation and memorization of the Holy Qur'an. Students demonstrate a good depth of knowledge and understanding about the values, heritage and culture of the UAE in social studies.

In mathematics, students confidently demonstrate an appropriate understanding of concepts and there are regular opportunities to carry out practical work allowing them to make sense of what they learn. For example, in Grade 5 students were able to calculate the perimeter and area of two-dimensional shapes. In Grade 10, they investigated the volume of a cone and the relationships between

volume and radius. By Grade 12, students were able to use linear programming to solve everyday problems.

In science, most students have an age appropriate knowledge and understanding of definitions, terms and scientific processes. They can classify, observe, draw and label diagrams. Their knowledge of concepts is in line with curriculum expectations. Students' investigative skills are underdeveloped as opportunities to carry out experiments are limited.

ICT skills are at an age appropriate level and progress acceptable, but hindered by limited access to computers. For many year groups half of their ICT lessons are theory based and this restricts the more rapid development of skills. Older students' write code competently.

Students' personal development

Students' personal development is satisfactory and improving. Almost all students behave well and are self-disciplined. Attitudes to learning are good and students say they enjoy coming to school. Attendance is above average at 94% supports this. Relationships with peers and teachers are highly positive and students of all ages show great respect to teachers and support staff. Students listen to each other and willingly discuss their views and ideas with sensitivity. They respect the values of the UAE and have a good understanding of, and respect for, the different cultures represented in the Emirates. In a few lessons in lower primary, where learning is less engaging, behaviour deteriorates.

There are good opportunities for students to positively contribute to their community through the school council, a system of prefects and monitors, and Head Boy and Girl roles. Students take pride in their responsibilities and develop well in self-confidence as a result. Students from Grade 6 upwards join in a range of social, cultural, scientific, sporting and other activities. There are too few opportunities for younger students to develop leadership roles or participate in extra-curricular activities. Students of all ages have a satisfactory practical understanding of how to live safe and healthy lives.

The quality of teaching and learning

Teaching and learning is satisfactory. It is more effective in KG and in lessons from Grade 4 upwards. Teachers' subject knowledge is generally secure and in KG the developing early years practice is having a positive impact. Relationships are positive and behaviour management strategies are generally effective. Teachers are beginning to use a variety of learning strategies to promote basic skills acquisition and create more opportunities for students to work collaboratively.

In some lessons, the pace of learning is slow and activities are insufficiently planned to engage, challenge or develop independent learning skills. In mathematics, social studies and science lessons students are given opportunities to work cooperatively in groups to discuss and solve problems. In other lessons, groups are used as a means of organisation rather than as a useful teaching and learning strategy. Too often activities occupy students; they do not promote quality learning and in KG there is not always not enough underlying structure to some activities.

The need to match learning to the differing abilities of students is widely recognized by teachers but few effectively meet the needs of those requiring additional support or provide enough challenge for the more able. Learning objectives are usually clear and there is some informal assessment for learning; marking is not used to inform students about what they have achieved and what they need to do next to improve.

Meeting students' needs through the curriculum

Students' needs are adequately met through the implementation of the curriculum. The school provides a wider than normal range of curriculum opportunities; CBSE and CIE from grades 6 – 12 and language options of French, Hindi, Urdu and Malayalam, in addition to compulsory English and Arabic. The Ministry of Education (MoE) curriculum is followed in Arabic, Islamic education and social studies.

The curriculum promotes a positive understanding of the UAE family, community values and culture through a range of planned projects, assignments, trips, assemblies and events. It is starting to be adjusted to meet the learning needs of all students, but this is not effective enough. More able students in particular, are not challenged sufficiently. The curriculum delivery is inconsistent in providing opportunities for students to develop 21st Century learning skills such as critical thinking, research and independent learning across subjects.

There is a range of extra- curricular activities, sporting events and competitions to stimulate students' interests and enrich their learning. These are largely available for middle and secondary aged students. The KG curriculum has been enhanced and now reflects a modern early years' philosophy.

The protection, care, guidance and support of students

The protection, care, guidance and support of students has been a major priority and as a result, it is satisfactory and improving. The positive culture of care that has been established provides an environment where students' safety, protection and guidance are well promoted by all adults. A school counsellor provides good

support, and first aid provision is of high quality. There are carefully considered procedures and systems for all aspects related to health and safety.

The school has a rewards and sanctions policy that students understand and say is fair. Effective systems are in place to ensure that the school is virtually free from all forms of bullying and the follow up of all reported incidents are thorough and rigorous. As a result, students say they feel safe. Students speak highly of the careers advice. The school provides good quality guidance so that students can make informed choices about the courses they opt to study and their post-school destinations.

Students' personal development is well supported. The tracking and monitoring of students' academic progress is underdeveloped. Students identified with SEN and those who are gifted and talented are starting to benefit from improving provision; the impact of this remains limited. Child protection policies are in place and staff trained to ensure that students are safe and secure. A few staff demonstrate limited understanding of how to recognise students at risk.

The quality of the school's buildings and premises

The school buildings and premises provide a satisfactory environment and include science laboratories, ICT labs, library, prayer rooms, and a multi-purpose auditorium and upgraded outdoor sports facilities. Some classrooms are reasonably spacious; others are too small and are not conducive to good learning. Prayer facilities are too small for the number of students wishing to use them. Designated staff are responsible for how the building is maintained and appropriate records are kept. Buildings and premises are clean, well maintained, and safe and fit for purpose. Regular evacuation drills ensure that procedures are well known to everyone and are swift and effective. Displays in many areas of the school are adequate and sometimes well used to support learning or celebrate students' achievements.

Good levels of security are in place to prevent intruders gaining access. There are dedicated security personnel and high numbers of CCTV cameras. Buses parked outside the school are not shaded and the school is concerned this makes them unnecessarily hot at certain times of the year.

The school's resources to support its aims

Resources are unsatisfactory. Children in KG do not have sufficient access to modern technology, and basic resources are not always of a high enough quality to support learning well. Teachers are appropriately qualified and they have regular access to a programme of professional development. This has had a

positive impact on the quality of teaching. Vacancies of 2 teaching positions have not been filled and a newly recruited SENs teacher is still to arrive. In the KG, 3 staff provide adequate assistance for children's practical needs; there are no teaching assistants and this restricts their academic progress.

There are sufficient resources in the science laboratories and adequate physical education (PE) equipment to meet the needs of the curriculum. Resources in classrooms are not always sufficient to adequately support learning. For example, in lower primary classes students do not have enough physical materials and resources to support the development of mathematical concepts or investigative science. ICT resources in the school's 2 laboratories are sufficient in number and quality. Additionally, there is a set of 30 laptops but these are not sufficient in number to fully support the delivery of the ICT curriculum. As a result, too many ICT lessons inappropriately focus on theory. Although facilities in the library have been improved, the stock of books and the number of computers available to support students' study and research remain limited. Teachers use laptops and data projectors in lessons and wireless internet access is available across the school campus.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Leadership and management is satisfactory. The school runs well on a daily basis and there is a calm, safe and caring environment. The principal and newly restructured leadership team are having a positive impact. The Board of Governors, including the GEMS advisor, have an objective and supportive view of the school and set appropriately challenging accountability goals aligned to the recommendations made in the previous inspection report. Senior leaders demonstrate a strong commitment to improving their practice and enhancing learning opportunities. Together they have motivated staff and students and gained the support of parents. The roles of middle leaders are inconsistent and underdeveloped; accountability is not sufficiently focused on raising student attainment and they do not have sufficient allocated time to carry out their duties effectively.

The self-evaluation form (SEF) highlights the improvements made since the last inspection. It is generous in some of its judgements and does not provide sufficient measureable evidence to demonstrate the impact of the initiative on student outcomes. The school development plan (SDP) is reasonably well structured and focuses on key improvements. Lesson observations are carried out regularly and are increasingly focused on the effectiveness of students' learning. Feedback is provided to teachers; it is not having a rapid enough impact on raising the quality of weaker teaching.

Parents have very positive views on the quality of care and education. They appreciate the open door policy, frequent communication and progress updates. The responses from the parental questionnaire were almost entirely positive, some parents did not feel that the school valued their opinions. There are appropriate procedures in place for dealing with parental complaints. There is no parent representative on the Board of Governors.

Progress since the last inspection

There has been satisfactory progress since the last inspection. The school has established a coherent and effective senior management structure, with clear roles and responsibilities and defined lines of accountability and communication. Whole school priorities are identified in the SDP and these appropriately target key areas highlighted by the last inspection. The monitoring of teaching and learning is an established process carried out by senior leaders and gradual improvements in teaching and learning strategies have resulted in significantly improved examination results and better progress for most students. Curriculum planning has improved, especially in KG. Differentiation of the curriculum and the promotion of 21st Century skills are at an early stage of development.

Clear expectations of student behaviour have been established and there is now a calm and well-ordered school environment. Robust monitoring procedures have led to improved attendance levels. The library space has been expanded and sports facilities upgraded. Resources have increased but are still not sufficient.

Senior leaders have clearly demonstrated the satisfactory capacity to make further improvements.

What the school should do to improve further:

1. Accelerate the rate of academic progress in all subjects and for all groups of students by:
 - i. ensuring activities provide students with high quality and frequent opportunities to think critically, solve problems, investigate, be creative and work independently
 - ii. using assessments of students' prior knowledge and skills to plan effective learning activities matched to their identified needs
 - iii. ensuring that lessons have good pace and sufficient challenge.
2. Improve the implementation of the curriculum by:
 - i. more accurately meeting the needs of all learners, particularly the more able
 - ii. providing frequent and high quality opportunities for students to develop 21st Century learning skills, including the use of ICT across all subjects.
3. Improve the quality and quantity of resources to more effectively deliver the curriculum, especially in ICT and KG.
4. Continue to improve leadership and management in order to raise standards by:
 - i. ensuring that the monitoring of teaching and learning is focused on what students' learn and the progress they make
 - ii. developing the roles of middle leaders to ensure consistency across subject departments so they can have greater impact on raising the quality of teaching and the rate of students' progress
 - iii. gathering accurate assessment data so that it can be analysed and used to accurately identify strengths and weaknesses, inform planning at all levels and set targets
 - iv. tracking and monitoring student progress from secure baseline assessments and against challenging individual student targets.

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								