



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



Inspection Report

Grace Valley Indian School

Academic Year 2014 – 2015

إقرأ

Grace Valley Indian School

Inspection Date	19 – 22 January 2015
School ID#	208
Licensed Curriculum	Indian Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE)
Number of Students	995
Age Range	KG to Grade 9
Gender	Mixed
Principal	Sainudeen Perumannil
School Address	Falaj Hazzaa, Al Ain
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Official Email (ADEC)	Gracevalleyaa.pvt@adec.ac.ae
School Website	www.gracevalleyschool.com
Date of last inspection	9 – 12 June 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 C;

GRADE 6

The main strengths of the school are:

- a harmonious school community where students have high levels of respect, strong moral viewpoints, satisfactory behaviour and attitudes to learning, and good relationships with teachers.
- students are well cared for and feel safe in school; the vast majority are happy and keen to learn
- the school has the support of parents, who feel well informed

The main areas for improvement are:

- attainment and progress across all subjects and grades
- students' 21st century skills across all grades
- opportunities in KG for children to explore, investigate, problem solve, think independently and make choices
- the quality of teaching, with particular regard to teachers raising their expectations of what students can achieve
- modification of the curriculum to meet the needs of all learners, particularly the more able
- resources to support learning, in particular the limited range and availability of information and communications technology (ICT) equipment
- monitoring and evaluating the impact of professional development on the quality of teaching.
- using the analysis of student outcomes and the quality of teaching to inform the school's priorities and areas for improvement.

Introduction

The school was evaluated by 4 inspectors. They observed 57 lessons, completed a learning walk across 14 KG classrooms, and conducted several meetings with senior staff, subject coordinators, teachers, support staff, students and parents. They analysed test and assessment results, scrutinized students' work across the school, analysed 532 responses to the parents' questionnaire and considered many of the school's policies and other documents. The principal and 2 vice-principals were involved throughout the inspection process and completed 5 joint lesson observations with inspectors

Description of the School

Grace Valley Indian School opened in May 2010 with 140 students from Kindergarten (KG) to Grade 4 and now has 995 students up to Grade 9. Next academic year it will expand to cater for students up to Grade 10 and will offer a further 300 places. The school's vision is: 'Grace Valley Indian School' aims to be an institution of excellence, dedicated to produce leaders of tomorrow.' The mission is 'To render ace quality education; To impart practical worldly wisdom; To mould a new generation for the society; To cater life oriented pedagogy; To provide a quality education using state-of-the-art technology.'

There are 995 students: 83% are Muslim, 56% are boys. Of the total student population, 40% are from India, 35% from Pakistan, 11% from Afghanistan, 11% from Bangladesh, and a small number of others from Iran, Nepal, Sri Lanka and the Philippines. There are no Emirati or students of Arabic heritage. The school has identified 3 students with Special Educational Needs (SEN) and there are a further 16 students who have difficulties with the English language, or are low achievers; 20 students are identified as gifted and talented.

The school follows the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) curriculum and the medium of instruction is English. Students are tested throughout the year using internal teacher assessments. As Grace Valley is a growing school with no students yet in grades 10, 11 or 12 they do not take CBSE public examinations; 38 students have been registered to take the Assessment of Scholastic Skills through Educational Testing (ASSET) International benchmarking test in February this year. Admission is open to all students if they begin school in KG; from Grade 1 students sit a standardised admission test covering English, mathematics and general knowledge.

The school's leadership team consists of the principal, 2 vice-principals, 4 supervisors, heads of departments and 2 social workers. There is low staff

turnover; there are now 61 staff and this number is growing due to increased student numbers, Annual fees range from AED 3,975 for KG to AED 9,000 for Grade 9. This is in the low category.

The Effectiveness of the School

Evaluation of the school's overall effectiveness

The overall effectiveness of Grace Valley Indian School is unsatisfactory and it is in need of further improvement. This judgement reflects the school's position against international standards and ADEC's expectations. The main strength of the school is its strong sense of community, where the vast majority of students are happy and keen to learn.

The attainment and progress of students are unsatisfactory in almost all key subject areas and students do not acquire the skills considered important for life in the 21st century. The quality of teaching and learning is inconsistent and generally unsatisfactory across the school. Many teachers lack the skills to enable a significant number of students to make the progress they are capable of. Classroom resources and specialist facilities are insufficient to support effective learning. The curriculum does not provide sufficient challenge, breadth and balance, particularly in KG. There is no clear or consistent approach to regular classroom evaluations, and these do not have enough impact on improving teaching and learning. The analysis of student outcomes and the quality of teaching does not adequately inform the schools priorities and areas for improvement.

Students' attainment & progress

Students' attainment and progress is unsatisfactory in all subjects apart from Islamic education where they are satisfactory. Students do not achieve in line with their peers following either the same curriculum or international expectations. The school is expanding rapidly and students join with a wide range of educational experiences, backgrounds and ability to speak English. Systems are in place for recording student assessment grades, but the analysis of this information is not used to hold teachers to account for the progress made by individual students. Students' attainment and progress is limited as a direct result of teachers' low expectations, a lack of challenge and opportunities to develop 21st century skills.

Most children enter KG as beginners in English and their development in other areas is below age-related expectations. They make unsatisfactory progress, reaching standards that are below international levels. Some more able children are not challenged sufficiently and the expectations of their progress is very unsatisfactory.

In Islamic education, students reach satisfactory standards of attainment. They demonstrate an appropriate understanding of Islamic concepts and values and have sufficient ability to read the Holy Qur'an. They have a limited knowledge of Islamic history and some students are unable to apply their learning. In Arabic, students display appropriate listening skills and are able to have short conversations with the teacher. Their ability to read and write is below expected curriculum levels.

In English, students' confidence in speaking grows as they increase their vocabulary. Their ability to read in English is below curriculum expectations and this sometimes hinders their ability to access other parts of the curriculum, for example reading mathematical problems. Phonics are not taught in KG.; as a result, students have few tools to help them work out the pronunciation of unfamiliar words.

In mathematics, students demonstrate strengths in data handling, numbers and algebra. In KG, they can count and match numbers up to 10; high achievers are secure in counting to 20. They are given insufficient opportunities to apply their mathematical knowledge. In science, most students are aware of scientific facts and figures. They are able to define, categorize and label easily. Students demonstrated age appropriate knowledge of concepts. Limited opportunities for practical work hinder the development of investigative skills in science and application of skills remains underdeveloped. Progress in other curriculum subjects was limited by repetitious and uninspiring teaching; as a result, attainment was unsatisfactory.

Students' personal development

Personal development is satisfactory and improving as students have positive attitudes to learning. In lessons, students behave sensibly and value each other's contributions, showing high levels of mutual respect for one another and their teachers. Some students lack confidence in speaking to adults. Students have a satisfactory understanding about the importance of leading a healthy lifestyle. The attendance at 92% is average and almost all students are punctual to school.

Older students have many opportunities to develop leadership skills particularly through their roles such as head boy and girl, house captains, club secretaries and school council members. These opportunities are rare for younger children; this limits their opportunity to enhance age-appropriate personal skills and qualities.

The heritage of the UAE is acknowledged during daily assemblies where students stand to attention and sing enthusiastically. Many participate in the presentations and performances, which contribute to the development of their moral viewpoints. Students take part in a variety of activities, celebrations and

competitions, which promote UAE culture and values well, but the depth of understanding demonstrated in lessons is limited.

The quality of teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is unsatisfactory. Almost half of lessons observed by inspectors were judged to be unsatisfactory. Ineffective lessons were seen in all subjects with the exception of Islamic education where all lessons were deemed satisfactory. Teachers generally do not make effective use of a wide range of teaching methods and learning strategies and have limited access to effective resources.

Teachers have appropriate subject knowledge and manage behaviour well. Relationships between teachers and students are conducive to learning. In many lessons teachers use videos and PowerPoint presentations to engage students; sometimes these are highly relevant and appropriate. Teachers regularly provide opportunities for students to work collaboratively on group tasks. However, sometimes these groups can be too large for all students to participate fully. The more able students often take the main role, leaving little opportunity for the less able to make a contribution. Activities do not give enough opportunity for students to develop 21st-century skills mainly because there are too few opportunities to work independently or develop higher order or critical thinking skills.

Teachers do not adequately consider the needs of students' different abilities, so that often they are not sufficiently challenged or adequately supported to make the progress they are capable of. The pace of learning is too slow and expectations in most lessons are low. Teachers do not use well-targeted questions to probe students' understanding. Learning is often based on the acquisition of knowledge, not understanding or skills development. Lesson objectives are rarely explained by the teacher and are too general rather than specifically related to what students should learn in a particular lesson. As a result, students do not clearly know the purpose of their learning and cannot judge the extent to which they have achieved the objectives.

Activities provided in KG occupy children but do not always promote purposeful learning. There are very few opportunities for children to explore, investigate, problem solve, think independently and make choices. Resources are limited. All activities are teacher directed and not sufficiently differentiated to meet the needs of individual children. Some more able students are not challenged sufficiently and expectations for their progress are far too low. Language development is restricted by poor modelling of spoken English by class teachers and an over reliance on closed questioning requiring single word answers, with

too few opportunities for children to engage in conversation. Classroom assistants are not trained or expected to support learning.

Assessment of student progress is overly reliant on test results and assessment for learning is largely ineffective. In many lessons, students have opportunities for self and peer assessment, but this only assesses low-level knowledge. Assessment of student's work in exercise books is infrequent and sometimes work is marked as correct when it is not. Students do not know how to improve or what their next steps in learning are. They do not have individual targets for improvement. Parents do receive reports and information about their child's progress after every assessment and students are aware of their marks.

Meeting students' needs through the curriculum

The implementation of the curriculum is unsatisfactory. The curriculum is broad and balanced and follows the expectations for CBSE across grades 1 to 9 but lacks opportunities for creativity. The schemes of work are well laid out with brief details of objectives and outcomes and the number of periods allotted for each topic; these provide a good guide for new teachers to understand what they have to do next.

The curriculum is not well adapted to meeting the needs of all students. In lessons, some more able students are rarely given sufficient challenge to help them progress rapidly and those who find learning difficult are not always given the support they need. Remedial coaching for low achievers provides academic support to some extent, but there is no systematic and sustained support for all students with special needs or those who find learning difficult.

In KG, the curriculum does not meet the developmental learning needs of young children and there are issues with continuity and progression of skills and understanding across all areas of development. Expectations for the progress of children in KG are too limited.

The school offers a choice of 4 languages and students from Pakistan and Afghanistan are provided additional English in place of Hindi. This is a very appropriate modification because students who have recently arrived from other countries have difficulty in accessing much of the curriculum due to their lack of English.

Many students are given opportunities to participate in interschool competitions and out of school activities and some older students have opportunities for leadership. Field visits and clubs also extend and enrich learning. Students receive very little preparation or guidance for the next stages of their education. The extent to which the curriculum develops students understanding of UAE family

and community values is satisfactory. There are few opportunities for developing investigative and independent learning skills or using ICT across different subjects.

The protection, care, guidance and support of students

The protection, care, support and guidance of students have improved and are now satisfactory. The school provides a calm and harmonious community where students feel safe and well cared for. Students report that there is no bullying and the vast majority appear happy in school. Since the last inspection, the school has appointed a female social worker to care for the pastoral needs of female and KG students. There is careful monitoring of students' attendance, but absence is not followed up on the first day. There is insufficient tracking of students' academic progress to enable timely intervention to support those who are falling behind or not making the progress they are capable of.

Procedures for the recruitment of staff are thorough and the necessary checks are undertaken and recorded. Since the last inspection, the school has also introduced a clear and effective Child Protection policy, which staff and students understand. The school forbids corporal punishment, but students report that it has happened in the past. There is still only one room for prayer and this is too small for the number of Muslim students in school. Students report the lack of opportunity to pray during the school day. First aid facilities are appropriate and provide satisfactory care of students' medical needs. There is insufficient structured and objective guidance for older students to help them make decisions about possible careers and subject choices.

The quality of the school's buildings and premises

The quality of the school's buildings and premises have improved and are now satisfactory. Since the last inspection, the school has made improvements, so that now outside areas are covered, there is a play area for KG and there are more toilet facilities. Generally, the premises are clean and adequately maintained; some classrooms are littered and dirty by the end of the school day and some are in need of minor repair. All the required health and safety checks are undertaken, fire drills are carried out regularly and evacuation is swift. Robust procedures to ensure safety, including risk analysis, are in place.

There are currently no outside sporting facilities due to the construction of the new school building. The facilities for science, art and ICT are insufficient. Students only have access to the ICT laboratory once a week and this has an impact on the development of 21st-century skills. PE resources are limited for the delivery of effective lessons and students share the courtyard area. Students do make use of the facilities of another school for tournaments.

The school's resources to support its aims

The school's resources are unsatisfactory. Teachers are sufficient in number and have appropriate qualifications. The number of teachers required continues to grow; these teachers are recruited from India and many lack both expertise and experience. There are too few classroom assistants across the school, particularly in KG; the 'nannies' are not trained or expected to support learning.

The library has a large range of fiction and non-fiction books, but is a small and unwelcoming place which does very little to promote a love of reading. There is currently only 1 science laboratory with few resources and this is rarely used, so that students have few opportunities to undertake experimental work. The range and availability of ICT equipment is limited. The majority of classrooms have data projectors, only 3 KG classrooms have projectors. Space is limited and there are very few resources that students can select and access for themselves in KG classrooms.

School transport is appropriately maintained and due regard is paid to students' safety. The school does not have a canteen.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Leadership and management are unsatisfactory. The school runs very smoothly on a day-to-day basis and administrative arrangements are organized and effective. The Board members are supportive of the school and provide challenge to the principal. They are fully aware of the improvements the school has made since the last inspection; they are unaware of the amount of unsatisfactory teaching across the school or what the school needs to do to improve.

The self-evaluation form (SEF) was completed with the input of all staff; it is not sufficiently evaluative and the judgments are over optimistic. It is not sufficiently focused on driving up the quality of teaching and student outcomes. The school has worked with an external consultant on the school development plan (SDP) who has highlighted pertinent issues. Priorities for improvement are not sufficiently influenced by the accurate monitoring of students' performance or the quality of teaching.

The school ensures adequate working conditions and provides continuous professional development for teachers. Evaluating the impact of professional development on the quality of teaching is not focused on ensuring rapid improvement. The provision of targeted professional development is not adequately focused on the results of lesson observations to ensure its effectiveness. Heads of department, supervisors and senior leaders regularly

monitor teachers, but the inconsistency in procedures and lack of clarity in the targets set, restrict improvements to the quality of teaching.

The school has the support of parents who feel well informed and able to approach teachers and the leadership team as required. Students also felt the school took account of its views, particularly via the school council.

Progress since the last inspection

There have been improvements to all performance standards since the last inspection and almost all of the issues raised by the last inspection have been tackled. These improvements have not yet had a significant impact on the quality of teaching and students' attainment and progress remain unsatisfactory. A female social worker now provides guidance to female students. All students have the opportunity to participate in extra-curricular activities. There is now an effective child protection policy in place, staff have received training and students made fully aware of their rights and responsibilities. Improvements to the building include a play area for KG, outside areas are now covered and there are more toilet facilities.

The school has provided significant opportunities for professional development for all staff including specific training for KG staff and the development of 21st century skills. This has had little impact as academic progress is unsatisfactory, the activities in KG still do not promote purposeful learning, and few opportunities are provided to develop students' 21st century skills.

Written plans for strategic improvements with clear and measurable goals are in place. These are not sufficiently influenced by monitoring of students' performance and information from staff appraisal regarding the quality of teaching.

Senior leaders have not demonstrated that they have the satisfactory capacity to make further improvements to the quality of teaching. They will need significant external support in this area.

What the school should do to improve further:

1. Raise standards and accelerate students' progress in all subjects by:
 - i. ensuring teachers have consistently high expectations of all students of different abilities, especially the more able
 - ii. ensuring objectives are specific and can be measured in all lessons
 - iii. improving the quality of teachers' verbal feedback during lessons and ensuring that written feedback is accurate and helps students to understand how to improve and identify their next steps in learning
 - iv. providing more opportunities in lessons for developing students' 21st century skills, particularly their use of ICT, higher order thinking, enquiry and research skills.
2. Improve delivery of the curriculum, particularly in KG by:
 - i. increasing opportunities for children to explore, investigate, problem solve, think independently and make choices
 - ii. increasing the range and quality of classroom resources
 - iii. increasing expectations for the progress of all children, especially the more able
3. Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management at all levels by:
 - i. monitoring the impact of professional development on the quality of teaching
 - ii. ensuring consistency in the procedures for lesson observation
 - iii. ensuring the targets set for teachers are clear, specific and measurable
 - iv. using the analysis of student outcomes and the quality of teaching to inform the school's priorities and areas for improvement.

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								