



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



Summary Inspection Report

Horizon Private School

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Iqraa

Horizon Private School

Inspection Date	5 th – 9 th May, 2013
School ID#	103
Type of School	Private
Curriculum	Ministry of Education
Number of Students	1102
Age Range	3 – 18 years
Gender	Boys and Girls Mixed
Principal	Mahmoud Attiya
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Introduction

During the process of the four-day inspection, five inspectors, of whom two are fluent in Arabic, observed teaching in 91 lessons. Meetings were held with the owner's representative, the school Principal, staff, students and parents. All of their views were taken into account. Inspectors scrutinized student's work, analysed available data, and evaluated documentation including policies and future planning. Inspectors looked at every aspect of school life across all grades and the Kindergarten (KG). Progress since the last inspection was considered, as was the school's capacity to improve and the extent to which it provides value for money.

Description of the School

The school opened in 2003. It is located in Khalifa City 'A'. It accommodates students from KG to Grade 12. Girls and boys are taught separately, with the exception of KG where they are mixed. The language of instruction is Arabic. The school has 54 classrooms, four playgrounds, two art rooms, four multi-purpose halls, six science laboratories, two information and communication technology (ICT) laboratories, separate prayer rooms for boys and girls, a library, a clinic and an administrative section.

The school follows the Ministry of Education (MOE) curriculum. There are currently 1,103 students on roll, as follows:

	Boys	Girls	Total
KG	90	85	175
Cycle 1- Grades 1 – 5	229	183	412
Cycle 2 – Grades 6 – 9	207	87	294
Cycle 3 Grades 10 – 12	141	81	222

100 % of the students are Muslim of which 98% are Arabic nationals. 55.26% of the students are UAE nationals, the remainder coming mainly from Bahrain (18%), Saudi Arabia (9%), Jordan, Yemen (7.8%), Egypt (7.3%), (6.26%), Palestine, (5.17%), and Sudan (3.72%).

The school states that one student has a special educational need and/or disability (SEND) and that 300 are gifted and talented.

The school employs 99 teachers and 18 teaching support staff. Teachers' salaries range from AED 3,150 to AED 6,388. Teachers come from eight different countries. The Principal has been in post since the school opened in 2003. One Assistant Principal supports him.

School fees range from AED 9,000 in KG to AED 22,394 in Grade 12, and include the cost of books, transport, and school uniform.

The school attracts students from mainly middle- to upper class professional families.

Advanc-Ed accredits the school.

The Effectiveness of the School

Band C

Grade 8

Inspectors judged Horizon Private School MOE to be in band C; that is a school in need of significant improvement.

This judgement reflects the school's position against international best standards. When judged against similar Abu Dhabi government schools, outcomes are only average, and some aspects below average.

Since the inspection of 2011 the school has made minimal improvement. This is because the school's leadership does not provide a clear steer for its staff. It has not used the information from the last report, the school monitoring visit or its school improvement plan (SIP) to make effective improvements to the school. Care, guidance, protection and support of students is also poor, as is provision for KG children. While some minor improvements have been in some areas, for example, in teaching, this is more due to the efforts of individual members of staff than from the impact of school leaders, and is not consistent throughout the school.

Student achievement is limited by the narrowness of the delivery of the MoE curriculum. As a result, progress is very unsatisfactory in all major areas. Girls do better than boys in most subjects other than English and science where there is no appreciable difference in their achievement. Opportunities for all students to develop 21st century skills are lacking in all subjects across the school. ICT is not available in classrooms or integrated into the curriculum. In the KG, activities tend to be abstract and not linked to real learning. Children do not develop knowledge, skills or positive attitudes to learning. In English, students have very basic levels of comprehension, reading and writing skills which are not transferred to developing their competency in speaking English. Standards and progress in mathematics are very unsatisfactory, and opportunities to apply skills to real life situations are very

limited. Progress and standards in social studies are also very unsatisfactory across all grades. Students' understanding of UAE culture and history are satisfactory overall with girls demonstrating greater aptitude than boys. In science, students in all grades have limited understanding of the subject and make little progress, mainly because teachers, rather than students conduct experiments. Standards achieved in both Arabic and Islamic studies, by both boys and girls, are low. Students do not speak, read or write standard Arabic with any accuracy or confidence. Students have only a basic knowledge of Islam. Students' reading of the Holy Qur'an is very unsatisfactory, and their ability to recite verses and apply correct recitation rules is weak.

Students' personal development is very unsatisfactory. Girls in the upper section of the school experience a reasonable range of social and sport activities. They carry out charitable work to raise money and help the poor in the true spirit of Islam. They take part in competitions jointly with other schools. Many students, particularly boys in the higher grades, have little enthusiasm for education. Students complain that the school does not promote equality between students of different nationalities. Only boys in the upper grades have a student council that exists to maintain school discipline. Students have limited guidance in how to live safe and healthy lives. Some, for example, were observed, in the presence of an adult, eating pasta out of a dish on the ground. Students do not take enough responsibility for their own actions, as shown by the amount of litter thrown in playgrounds and the bad behaviour seen in lessons.

Most aspects of teaching in school are very unsatisfactory resulting in weak standards and students' progress. The school's Principal and teachers do not know and understand how children learn. They have no pedagogical training and lack the skills to be effective teachers. This is particularly evident In the KG where children fail to build on their natural enthusiasm for learning. They become passive learners due to inappropriate teaching methods and lack of resources to foster their development. The outdoor area is far too small for the numbers of children who are restricted to using it at set playtimes.

From grade one the didactic methods of teaching continue to demoralise students, such that their attainment and progress in lessons is minimal. Student indifference to learning continues throughout the school, resulting, in some cases, in bad behaviour and lack of respect for adults. This is particularly apparent in the boys' sections. Teachers mainly teach subjects through expendable published books, which require little or no feedback from students, either verbal or written. There are no baseline measures for children on entry to school and there is no evidence of assessment for learning and progress throughout the school. This

means that teachers have no notion of where students are in terms of their levels of ability, and what their subsequent learning requirements will be. The needs of more able students, and those needing extra support with learning, are not addressed. Students are ill prepared for the demands of their future life in modern Abu Dhabi.

The curriculum delivery by the school is very unsatisfactory and does not provide children in the KG or students throughout the school with quality experiences which will enrich and extend their learning. There are no schemes of work. Lesson planning is inconsistent throughout the school and not focused on students' achievement. Subject coordinators make efforts to support colleagues but their lack of pedagogical knowledge renders them ineffective because they do not know or understand how students learn. The textbook based curriculum is not enhanced with activities to secure the interests of the students. There is very little evidence that art takes place in the school and there is no teaching in music. Teachers of physical education (PE) work very hard to keep students active but the quality of this work in terms of physical development is weak, and not all students take part. Girls in the higher section, with encouragement from staff in the school, take the initiative to be involved in charity work. School trips are provided, but these opportunities are occasional and added randomly with no planning for learning. Teachers are unaware of the benefits of making links between subjects across the curriculum, one saying that this was a 'bad thing'.

Protection, care, guidance and support throughout the school are poor. The school has a child protection policy but it is not effective in terms of keeping the students safe from harm. Students do not know what to do when they feel unsafe, and staff are unclear about how to cope with students' problems. The school does not deal firmly with bullying and many incidents go unreported. Corporal punishment is forbidden, and the school ensures that teachers do not use it. The school has ineffective procedures for following up students' absence, and its response to poor punctuality is lax. It provides very limited guidance and support for students to help them make choices about their future careers and education. The school does not recognise that some students have barriers to learning and nothing is done to support those who have learning difficulties. Pastoral care is very limited.

The buildings and premises are very unsatisfactory. Most classrooms are of inappropriate size for the student numbers except for the higher grades. The majority of rooms and other school areas are not clean and are poorly maintained. Some doors are in poor repair and floors in bathrooms are slippery. Fire drills and emergency evacuation procedures are not in place, and emergency exits not

marked. As there are no records to show that electrical equipment has been tested, student safety is at risk. Cleaning tools and detergents are accessible to students. The school has sufficient laboratories, ICT rooms, and PE areas but they are not well used. There is a library but it is not well stocked and is inaccessible to girls. All students now have access to prayer facilities. Systems for checking intruders are not effective. Toilets for students are not adequate in number and some are shared with adults. KG classrooms are too small to facilitate play-based learning.

The school's resources are very unsatisfactory and do not meet its aims. The school has an adequate number of teachers who have knowledge of their subjects, but who lack sufficient competence to provide the standard of teaching that leads to effective learning. Professional development seldom takes place, there are few support staff, and the school's ability to develop learning is therefore limited. ICT equipment has been increased since the last inspection but is still inadequate and is not used to best effect in supporting the curriculum. There is no ICT provided in the KG. The classrooms are poorly equipped. There is little in the way of resources and school staff are providing from their own pockets to support teaching. This is unacceptable and demonstrates that leaders do not value their staff, or take steps to provide them with the financial support they need to deliver a satisfactory curriculum. Students who do not have the expected textbooks in lessons are left doing nothing in class. In these cases they have made no progress in their learning. Science resources are very limited. School transport is not safe as most buses lack safety belts. Students eat their food in an unhealthy and unhygienic environment. No adequate risk assessments have been conducted.

Leadership and management throughout the school is poor. Documents and procedures for developing the school's aims are weak and poorly communicated. The Principal is unable to provide effective leadership, with very little direction to implement any effective change. The Principal understands what good practice in education is, but is unaware that this is not happening in the school. There has been minimal improvement since the last inspection. Processes for school self evaluation are not in place and judgments of the school's effectiveness are inaccurate and not evidence-based. School development planning is poor and does not provide a clear steer for improvement. The school does not monitor progress of any standard in the school. It does not maintain efficient running of the school on a day to day basis. For example the school has a child protection policy yet students and staff do not know what to do in the event of a serious concern. This leaves students vulnerable to harm or injury. Senior leaders do little to effect positive change in the school. Leadership in the KG is poor and does not

direct staff appropriately to develop learning and ensure that children are safe. The school lacks knowledge of how students learn so are ineffective in raising standards, supporting students' progress or enhancing the quality of students' learning experience in school. Value for money is poor and the leadership and management in the school has no capacity to improve.

What the school should do to improve further:

1. Provide competent and effective leadership capable of securing strategic direction to implement effective change with the skills to:
 - i. ensure the safety of students and staff;
 - ii. establish robust processes, including regular monitoring and evaluation of provision in school, and especially of teaching and learning, to inform self-evaluation; and
 - iii. Develop a school improvement plan based on a clear set of aims, communicated to all in the school, and monitored for success.
2. Secure appropriate care, guidance, protection and support of students by:
 - i. addressing all breaches of regulations and health and safety concerns
 - ii. Developing a whole school child protection policy with clear procedures focused on eliminating any possible harm to students;
 - iii. developing a behaviour policy which is fully communicated to staff, students and parents, and is regularly monitored for effectiveness;
 - iv. dealing with bullying in all its forms so all students learn in an emotionally well-cared for environment; and
 - v. ensuring that the learning needs of all students are met in all lessons, including those with SEND.
3. Improve teaching and learning by:
 - i. ensuring that continuous professional development is provided for all teachers matched to their individual needs. Monitor the impact of the training on students' progress in lessons;
 - ii. training teachers in the features of a good lesson. Ensuring all teachers assess students' progress in lessons and use this information to plan for and deliver lessons that match individual student needs and abilities more closely; and
 - iii. ensuring that all staff in KG understand how young children learn. Develop a KG curriculum that provides activities based on the natural curiosity and imagination of young children.