



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



Summary Inspection Report

International Private School

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Iqraa

International Private School

Inspection Date	24 th – 27 th September, 2012
School ID#	125
Type of School	Private
Curriculum	Ministry of Education
Number of Students	1,006
Age Range	KG1 – Grade 12
Gender	Mixed
Principal	Fatina Al bitar
School Address	Al Sarooj District, Al Ain
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Introduction

The school was inspected by four inspectors. The inspectors observed 67 lessons and undertook some joint lesson observations with the principal. The inspectors attended assemblies and inspected other aspects of school life including break times. They held meetings with staff, students, an external consultant, the accountant and the proprietor. The inspectors also scrutinised a range of documents.

Description of the School

The International Private School was founded in 1988 as a Villa School. The school moved to a new site in September 2011 and is now housed in a former girls' public school. Almost all of the students and teachers are from Arab countries, which include Syria, Egypt and Jordan. Approximately 8% of the students are Emirati. The school day runs from 7.45 to 13.45 however Kindergarten (KG) students finish at 12.00. School fees range from AED 4,000 in KG through to AED 11,000 in grade 12. There are additional fees for daily transport, books and uniform. Teachers' monthly salaries range from AED 2,800 to AED 7,760. The school's vision is to 'provide young people with the education, skills and experience to become forward thinking leaders of tomorrow and to take their place in a rapidly changing and expanding global community'. There are currently no students identified with Special Educational Needs. The school was last inspected in May 2012. The principal was appointed in September 2012.

The Effectiveness of the School

Band C

Grade 6

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

The previous inspection judged the school to be in need of significant improvement. Areas for improvement suggested in the last report included: improving the quality of teaching and learning, leadership and management at all levels plus improving the curriculum. The school has not acted on these recommendations. Whilst there has been some progress since the last inspection, particularly with buildings and outdoor provision for Kindergarten (KG), the school is falling short of its aims. It is not providing a satisfactory level of education for its students.

The International Private School is a harmonious, welcoming community where most students are friendly and confident. They enjoy attending school and display a positive attitude to learning. Relationships between staff and students are positive. Students generally behave responsibly, however, when unsupervised,

some are less well-behaved. Students say there is no bullying. They show respect for each other's values and cultures and are educated in a safe and secure environment. Care, on a daily basis, is good but guidance is less effective across the school.

Attainment in all subjects, by the end of grade 12, compares favourably with Ministry of Education (MoE) expected standards but is unsatisfactory when compared with international standards. Students' progress is unsatisfactory over time because of the constraints of the narrow curriculum. There is no class-based assessment or use of internationally standardised tests to inform planning. As a result, teaching does not consistently meet the needs of all and progress in most lessons is unsatisfactory. The progress of girls is, however, more secure than boys but the school has not yet addressed this inequality. Critical thinking, analysis and problem-solving skills are underdeveloped across the school and older students state that the work they receive lacks challenge. Kindergarten provision through dual language is inadequate and at times poor because the teachers are not fully competent in speaking English. Standards and progress in KG are unsatisfactory and sometimes poor. This is because the curriculum and teaching style is not adapted to meet the developmental needs of young children. Consequently, students' basic skills are undeveloped.

Standards in Arabic and Islamic studies are below those of national and international expectations and in social studies are well below. Students' acquisition of the basic skills in Arabic literacy is satisfactory. Girls, particularly in grade 11 and 12, converse adequately in Arabic and perform better than boys. Boys lack confidence to express themselves using simple Arabic. Students' writing skills are also underdeveloped, as they do not have a sound grasp of Arabic grammar to express themselves confidently and correctly. Students find difficulty in reading verses from the holy Qur'an and applying correct recitation rules. Students are given very few opportunities to discuss Islamic issues. As a result, they lack awareness of major Islamic leaders and historical events. Students do not understand the geographical and historical concepts or the reasons behind the change in the social system or the main events in UAE. Students are, however, aware of Islamic values and apply these in their daily life.

Most teachers have a good understanding of their subject but often have a limited command of spoken and written English. This provides poor modelling for students. Teaching is frequently didactic. Teachers focus on delivering the curriculum, often at the expense of meeting the differing needs of individual students. As a result, progress is limited by such lack of differentiation. Students spend too much time in lessons going through exercises from textbooks with

occasional worksheets. These tasks do not offer sufficient challenge and often require little more than a simple response. Occasionally, students are encouraged to work in groups but little collaboration is demanded. For example, they are asked to stick shapes or beads on to paper, as was observed in a KG class and a mathematics lesson. These, and other similar activities, do not encourage students to think through problems in order to arrive at solutions and do not develop independent learning skills. Teachers lack the basic skills to teach ICT or to enable students to use it as a tool for learning. The leadership recognises the shortcomings in teaching and intends to initiate urgent professional development to address the problems. While most teachers demonstrate a desire to improve their performance, they have not yet begun to change their classroom practice.

The curriculum is primarily delivered through workbooks. It is narrow, lacks breadth, balance and depth and does not enable teachers to help students acquire basic number and language skills. There is a narrow diet of core subjects plus art, music, ICT and physical education. However, not all these subjects are available to all students. The school has limited involvement with the wider community and there are no extra-curricular activities.

There are well-documented procedures for the care and guidance for students. Teachers understand what procedures to follow if they suspect any form of neglect or abuse. There is no formal Child Protection Policy in place. All MoE regulations relating to staff authorisation and moral checks are in place and adhered to. Attendance is good. Students understand the difference between right and wrong and the behaviour policy of rewards and sanctions is fully implemented and understood. There is no corporal punishment. In a few classes teachers shout to gain control but this is not the norm. Facilities for prayer are now much improved.

Pastoral support is good. Students are well cared for and know who to go to if they need any help. Guidance in learning and preparation for later life is unsatisfactory. Teachers' marking in books is unhelpful, as it does not tell students what they have done well and what is required of them to further improve their work. Discussions with students revealed that they do not always get the support they need to make informed decisions about what is possible when they leave school. The clinic is well managed and provides effective treatment and care. School transport is adequately maintained and first aid kits and fire extinguishers are accessible. Students do not always wear seat belts and staff do not enforce this requirement robustly. The canteen is small but provides hygienic, healthy food.

The buildings and premises are much improved and provide an adequate environment for effective learning. New science laboratories and an outdoor play area for KG are beneficial additions and are beginning to increase learning opportunities. The school provides a safe environment for staff and students. Security is satisfactory, hazardous materials are safely stored. Evacuation procedures are clearly disseminated, understood and rehearsed. Most classrooms are adequate in size to support learning but some rooms are in need of repair.

There are enough qualified teachers but a small minority do not have sufficient competence to be effective. The library has insufficient books to support independent research and study. There are additional staff who support learning in each class in the KG. These staff are not always effective because they do not have the knowledge, skills and understanding of how best to support the students. Other classes receive no support and students are hindered in their progress. For example, in an ICT lesson the teacher was not able to support the students in their learning because most of her time was spent trying to get the machines to function. The computer room houses enough computers for a whole class but insufficient use is made of them outside set periods. Classroom materials are limited and not sufficient for the present curriculum. Sports facilities are limited and students do not have adequate sports equipment.

The principal took up her post in September 2012 after having been away from the school for two years. She has identified the key development needs of the school and has itemised these in a school improvement plan. It is too early to measure any impact as this plan has yet to be shared with the staff. The plan is detailed but it does not provide precise information on how some of the actions will be funded and how the impact of these and other actions will be monitored.

The principal is familiar with the school since it was first established and, despite a considerable staff turnover, with eighteen teachers appointed for September 2012, she has won the confidence of the whole school community and the parents. Middle leaders for core subjects are in place and are effective in implementing processes and practices that ensure the school runs smoothly. However, whilst the principal is determined to improve standards, there is a recognition that some of the leadership team lack the knowledge, skills and understanding to drive improvements forward. For example, lesson observations undertaken by the senior management team do not rigorously evaluate teaching that focuses on students' learning and progress. All this means that the school, which has recently increased its fees, is not providing value for money. The school's capacity for sustained improvement is currently unsatisfactory.

What the school should do to improve further:

1. As a matter of urgency, respond fully to the issues raised in the previous inspection report.
2. Improve the leadership and management by:
 - i. increasing the capacity of the senior leadership team, including subject leaders, to drive improvements;
 - ii. ensuring that senior leaders undertake more rigorous evaluation of teaching by focusing on the extent of students' learning and progress in lessons;
 - iii. providing leadership training for subject co-ordinators so that they are able to improve the quality of teaching within their own subjects and hold teachers to account; and
 - iv. providing more precise information on actions listed in the school improvement plan, showing how they will be funded and how the impact will be monitored and evaluated.
3. Raise achievement by:
 - i. improving assessment in all subjects, ensuring that students' work is marked regularly and they receive regular feedback on what they are doing well and how to improve their work;
 - ii. Setting challenging targets for all students; and
 - iii. enable older students to accurately monitor their own progress towards meeting their targets.
4. Improve teachers' skills to enable them to meet the full range of students' learning needs by:
 - i. developing teachers' speaking, listening, writing and comprehension skills in the English language and Arabic in order to best meet the needs of all students;
 - ii. extending the repertoire of teaching styles to enable all students to be fully engaged and appropriately challenged in their learning; and
 - iii. identifying and providing learning opportunities for more able students to further extend their thinking.