



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



Inspection Report

International Private School

Academic Year 2013 – 14

Iqraa

International Private School

Inspection Date	04 – 07 November 2013
School ID#	125
Licensed Curriculum	Ministry of Education
Number of Students	1,055
Age Range	4 to 18
Gender	Mixed
Chair of Governors	None
School Address	Al Sarooj, Al Ain
Telephone Number	+971 (0)3 767 4844
Fax Number	+971 (0)3 767 4843
Official Email (ADEC)	International.pvt@adec.ac.ae
School Website	----
Date of last inspection	17 March 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:

- almost all students are keen to learn and demonstrate respect for their teachers and each other
- students from diverse backgrounds demonstrate respect for and promote the values and culture of the UAE
- skills in Arabic of students in Grades 11 and 12 are above expectations for their ages.

The main areas for improvement are:

- students' attainment in the six key subjects
 - the quality of teaching and learning so that all lessons are at least satisfactory
 - the need for all staff members, especially those in leadership roles, understand the priorities for improving the school and meet regularly to monitor progress on the improvement plan
 - allocation of sufficient funds to ensure that learning resources are of a high quality and teachers' salaries are paid on time.
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Introduction

The International Private School was inspected by a team of 5 inspectors. They observed over 60 lessons, morning assemblies, and a variety of special events. Inspectors interviewed students of different ages, including boys and girls. They also held meetings with teachers, subject leaders, senior leaders and the owner of the school. Inspectors analyzed a wide variety of school documents and took into consideration the opinions of 79 parents as expressed in a short survey.

Description of the School

Located in the Al Sarooj district of Al Ain, the school's stated purpose is "to create a community of learners in which each child can acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes to achieve his or her unique potential and become a responsible, productive and compassionate member of the expanding global community". It was founded in 1988 and moved to its current site, a former government school building, in 2011. The school has no governing body and is owned by 1 person. At the time of the inspection, the principal was in her second month as the leader of the school. This followed a year in which there was no qualified principal in post.

The students and teachers are from more than 20 Arab countries, most commonly Syria, Egypt, Palestine and Jordan. 8% of students are citizens of the United Arab Emirates. Almost all of the 1,055 students are Muslims. The school admits students with special educational needs (SEN) and has identified 16 students with specific requirements: 6 with hearing difficulties, 2 with visual impairment, and 8 with dyslexia. At the time of inspection, the Kindergarten (KG) had 156 children; Cycle 1 had 411 students; Cycle 2 had 276 students; and, Cycle 3 had 212 students. About 65% of the students are boys. The school day begins at 7:40 am and concludes at 1:25 pm. The Kindergarten finishes at 12 noon.

School annual fees range from the very affordable to low categories of AED 4,000 to AED 12,000. There are extra fees for the bus service, textbooks and school uniforms.

The Effectiveness of the School

Students' attainment & progress

Overall, students' attainment and progress in almost all subjects is unsatisfactory. In English and information and communications technology (ICT), it is very unsatisfactory. A key reason for the low attainment and slow progress is the lack of challenge in lessons. The exception to this is in the Arabic programme, where it is satisfactory. Students' skills in Arabic reading, writing, speaking and listening are in line with the expectations of students for their ages. The older students

demonstrate speaking and creative writing skills above the expectations for their ages. In general, students' acquisition of the basic Arabic skills that allow them to access the full curriculum are satisfactory. In a few lower grades, students' writing skills are below expectations, as is their understanding of some Arabic grammar rules. In Islamic Studies, students' skills in reading the Holy Qur'an are generally weak. They are often not able to discuss current issues or apply the teachings of Islam to real life situations. In social studies, many students do not show an understanding of history and geography as it relates to their lives. They are learning many facts, but not in meaningful ways.

Students are not developing English language skills at the expected levels for learners of an additional language. In English, students' listening and speaking skills are satisfactory, but their reading and writing skills are not. In mathematics, students' knowledge and skills are broadly in line with national averages, but well below international standards. They are mostly unable to solve word problems or apply mathematical knowledge to real life situations. Similarly, in science attainment is in line with national averages. It remains below international standards as students are not developing the practical, investigative and reasoning skills expected of students of similar ages.

Students' personal development

The personal development of students is unsatisfactory. This is mainly because they are not developing the thinking skills that will enable them to be successful in the 21st century, specifically, the skills of inquiry, problem solving and independent learning. Students are not developing a wide range of interests because there are very few extra-curricular activities available to stimulate them. Students are not developing as confident learners. Leadership skills are not developing as they should, again due to the lack of opportunities provided by the school.

Students demonstrate strong respect for the values of Islam and the heritage and culture of the UAE, as well as the other nationalities represented in the school community. Students also demonstrate respect for their teachers and other adults, and behavior is satisfactory. Almost all students are respectful of their classmates and cooperate with them, but opportunities to cooperate while learning are very infrequent. Students' attendance rates are good, but too many arrive late to the morning assemblies each day. Almost all students choose healthy food to eat during the break times.

The quality of teaching and learning

The quality of teaching is unsatisfactory. Almost all teachers demonstrate secure knowledge of their subjects and have positive relations with their students and colleagues. A majority of teachers are able to plan lessons properly. Very few teachers deliver lessons of at least satisfactory quality every day. In general, the quality of teaching is better in the higher grades. Across the subjects, inspectors observed both satisfactory and unsatisfactory lessons, the best teaching being observed in Arabic lessons. A few lessons were delivered skillfully by teachers who understood what their students had learnt and what they were ready to learn next. In the majority of lessons, teachers aim too low and pace their lessons too slowly. A significant number of teachers talk for entire lessons, leaving their students disengaged and often bored. Most teachers are not able to accommodate students with SEN effectively. The more able students are not challenged enough to keep them interested and making good progress.

The quality of students' learning skills is also unsatisfactory. Students are respectful of their teachers and keen to learn, but are too dependent upon their teachers and thus are not becoming self-directed learners. Students are very good at memorizing information and supplying it to the teacher when asked. They are not good at thinking through problems carefully, applying concepts to new situations, investigating or thinking critically. Students are not developing skills for independent research, especially while using computers.

The use of assessment information on the progress of students by teachers is weak. Only a few teachers use the information from tests and assignments to plan their lessons and challenge students at the right levels. Most of the assessment of learning has little effect on the curriculum and lesson planning. Assessment information is not harnessed to improve the learning outcomes across the different subjects and grades.

Meeting students' needs through the curriculum

The implementation of the curriculum does not meet the needs of most students and is unsatisfactory. It follows the Ministry of Education syllabus closely, but is not modified or enriched sufficiently. Provision for students with SEN, those learning English as an additional language, and for the more able is very unsatisfactory. In KG, the curriculum does not include enough interactive or independent learning opportunities for small children. They spend too much time listening, chanting and singing and not enough time doing things that will allow them to acquire basic literacy and numeracy skills. In the higher grades, the curriculum is too narrow and thus limits the development of students' artistic and

kinesthetic abilities. The lack of a programme of extra-curricular activities severely limits the experiences of all students in all grades.

The protection, care, guidance and support of students

The protection, care, guidance and support of students is satisfactory. The school provides a caring and supportive environment for students, and relationships are positive almost all of the time. The regulations regarding staffing and background checks are followed, and incidents of inappropriate conduct are dealt with effectively. The procedures for investigating allegations of corporal punishment require improvement.

The school's efforts to promote good attendance are effective. The behaviour policy, including consequences for infractions, is understood by all members of the school community and implemented daily. In a few classes, teachers resort to shouting to gain control of their classrooms. There are satisfactory facilities for prayer available to the students and staff members.

The pastoral support provided to students is well received and students know who to ask for help. The school clinic is clean, well equipped, professionally staffed and available to all. The school buses are safe and well managed; students are supervised at all times before, during and after bus rides. Regular safety checks are made of equipment, including fire extinguishers. The canteen is clean and provides students with healthy eating options. The guidance provided to students during their studies and in preparation for higher education is unsatisfactory. The marking of students work by teachers is of varied quality; not all teachers do this in ways that helps students improve.

The quality of the school's buildings and premises

The school's buildings and premises are of satisfactory quality and are well-maintained and clean. There are no hazards to students and the site is secure. Classrooms are well lit and ventilated. Classrooms in the boys' section lack appropriate displays of their work or helpful learning aids. A few classes are too small for the numbers of students in them. The accommodation provided for science learning is satisfactory, but not for physical education. Accommodation for using computers and learning music is satisfactory. Some improvements have been made to the buildings and premises since the last full inspection.

The school's resources to support its aims

Resources are very unsatisfactory, as they do not effectively support the school's aims. Generally, the materials needed for learning across the full range of subjects are limited and do not support the curriculum. The library remains poorly equipped to support literacy development in Arabic and English, or research in

other subjects. There are two computer labs available to students. They are not used adequately to support the full curriculum. The lack of resources in languages, mathematics and science are a major reason why students are not meeting the curriculum's expectations.

The school has sufficient numbers of qualified teachers. Not all of them are skilled enough to deliver satisfactory lessons every day. Although a programme of professional development was started earlier in the school year, it has not resulted in observable improvements to the quality of teaching. When teachers are absent, substitute teachers do not have plans that allow students to continue learning. There are no classroom assistants in the lower grades, which is another reason why many students do not make good progress. The equipment needed for a variety of sports is not available to students of all ages.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

The school has a new principal who joined in September 2013. She has an accurate understanding of the school's strengths, and the areas in which it needs to improve. At the time of the inspection, the impact of her leadership was not evident. The school runs smoothly on a daily basis, and management concerns have taken precedence over a strategic response to the priorities for improvement.

The written evaluation of the school's performance, although accurate, is not comprehensive. The school has a detailed improvement plan with priorities clearly identified; most subject leaders do not understand their roles in it. Similarly, subject leaders demonstrate weak understanding of the school's performance and the attainment levels of students in their subjects. There is a clear lack of distributed leadership, whereby all leaders share common goals and understand the school's purposes. Communication with parents is a concern, as few responded to the inspection questionnaire and of those who did, many were critical of the quality of communication with the school. Finances are not properly allocated to improving the school. Specifically, there is not enough money spent to provide the resources necessary for learning and to pay teachers regularly.

The overall weaknesses in leadership and management are the main reason why the school remains at an unsatisfactory level of performance. Senior and middle leadership, including the owner, do not demonstrate sufficient capacity to bring about the much needed improvements. Consequently, the school is only partly successful in achieving its stated purposes. The school will require significant external support to improve rapidly.

Progress since the last inspection

Progress since the last inspection has been limited. The appointment of a new principal has taken far too long. Students' achievement is generally the same as it was at the time of the previous inspection. Too many students do not have challenging targets for learning, and older students are not monitoring their own progress. Despite some recent professional development work, teachers' language skills are not significantly better than a year ago. Only a few teachers have expanded their repertoire of teaching styles as was planned. Learning opportunities for the strongest students are rarely identified; consequently, these students do not make the progress of which they are capable.

What the school should do to improve further:

1. Raise students' attainment, particularly in English, by using accurate assessment information to:
 - i. raise teachers' expectations of what their students can achieve
 - ii. adapt the curriculum to meet the learning needs of students, particularly those with SEN and the more able.
2. Improve the quality of teaching and learning so that all lessons are at least satisfactory by:
 - i. providing more challenging tasks and activities for students that encourage them to talk, think and work together
 - ii. reducing teacher talk-time so that students have opportunities to participate actively in lessons
 - iii. capturing and spreading the better practice seen in Arabic lessons, and allowing teachers to observe their colleagues in the Arabic department.
3. Ensure that senior leaders demonstrate an understanding of the priorities for improvement and in particular:
 - i. institute an effective system for evaluating the quality of teaching that identifies and disseminates best practice and eradicates weaker teaching
 - ii. develop a programme that develops teachers' language skills, particularly in English

- iii. hold regular meetings with middle leaders and the owner to develop a shared commitment to the required improvements and monitor progress against an agreed development plan.
- 4. Allocate funds more efficiently so that there are sufficient high quality resources for learning and teachers' salaries are paid on time.



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 accommodation 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								