



مجلس أبوظبي للتعليم
Abu Dhabi Education Council
Education First أولاً التعليم



Private School Inspection Report

International Private School

Academic Year 2015 – 2016

Iqraa

International Private School

Inspection Date	11 – 14 October, 2015
Date of previous inspection	4 – 7 November, 2013

General Information		Students	
School ID	125	Total number of students	1139
Opening year of school	1988	Number of children in KG	156
Principal	Zaid Haitham (Acting)	Number of students in other phases	Primary 443 Middle 324 High 216
School telephone	+971 (0)3 767 4843	Age range	4 – 18 years
School Address	Al Sarooj, Al Ain	Grades or Year Groups	KG – Grade 12
Official email (ADEC)	International.pvt@adec.ac.ae	Gender	Mixed
School Website	www.ips.ae	% of Emirati Students	7%
Fee ranges (per annum)	AED 4,000 – AED 12,000	Largest nationality groups (%)	1. Syrian 43% 2. Jordanian 20% 3. Egyptian 10.5%
Licensed Curriculum		Staff	
Main Curriculum	Ministry of Education (MoE)	Number of teachers	65
Other Curriculum	-----	Number of teaching assistants (TAs)	3
External Exams/ Standardised tests	Grade 12 MoE	Teacher-student ratio	1:26(KG/ FS) 1:16 (Other phases)
Accreditation	-----	Teacher turnover	17%

Introduction

Inspection activities	
Number of inspectors deployed	5
Number of inspection days	4
Number of lessons observed	97
Number of joint lesson observations	5
Number of parents' questionnaires	129; (response rate: 11.6%)
Details of other inspection activities	The inspection team held meetings with senior staff, subject coordinators, teachers, students and parents. They analysed school documents, data, records and student work.

School	
School Aims	'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.'
School vision and mission	'Our school's main focus will be on achieving effective involvement of students by emphasizing student-centred classroom approach as well as activating the role of parents and the local community. The ultimate goal is to develop the student as a communicator, a thinker and a problem solver.'
Admission Policy	Interviews and diagnostic tests to determine students' suitability for entry to the school.
Leadership structure (ownership, governance and management)	At the time of the inspection, one of the vice-principals was acting as principal whilst a new principal was being appointed. The Senior Leadership Team comprises the acting principal, vice-principal and five section heads (supervisors). The school has one owner. There is no governing body.

SEN Details (Refer to ADEC SEN Policy and Procedures)

SEN Category	Number of students identified	Details
Intellectual disability	0	2
Specific Learning Disability	0	1
Emotional and Behaviour Disorders (ED/ BD)	0	2
Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)	0	0
Speech and Language Disorders	1	0
Physical and health related disabilities	9	0
Visually impaired	1	0
Hearing impaired	5	0
Multiple disabilities	0	0

G&T Details (Refer to ADEC SEN Policy and Procedures)

G&T Category	Number of students identified
Intellectual ability	0
Subject-specific aptitude (e.g. in science, mathematics, languages)	0
Social maturity and leadership	0
Mechanical/ technical/ technological ingenuity	40
Visual and performing arts (e.g. art, theatre, recitation)	18
Psychomotor ability (e.g. dance or sport)	50

The overall performance of the school

Inspectors considered the school in relation to 3 performance categories

Band A	High performing (Outstanding, Very Good or Good)
Band B	Satisfactory (Acceptable)
Band C	In need of significant improvement (Weak or Very Weak)

School was judged to be:	BAND (C)	Weak
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	Band A High Performing			Band B Satisfactory	Band C In need of significant improvement	
Performance Standards	Outstanding	Very Good	Good	Acceptable	Weak	Very Weak
Performance Standard 1: Students' achievement						
Performance Standard 2: Students' personal and social development, and their innovation skills						
Performance Standard 3: Teaching and assessment						
Performance Standard 4: Curriculum						
Performance Standard 5: The protection, care, guidance and support of students						
Performance Standard 6: Leadership and management						

Summary Evaluation: The school's overall performance						
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The Performance of the School

Evaluation of the school's overall performance

The quality of education at the school is weak. The acting principal and senior leaders have made some progress in raising attainment levels across the core subjects but attainment and progress remain weak, apart from in the Kindergarten where children are making good progress. The other exception is in Grade 12, where students are taught well enough to ensure the majority at least pass the Ministry of Education (MOE) examinations. Students are well looked after in a safe and secure environment. Most behave well and have a positive attitude to their studies. Teaching is weak, with most teachers planning and delivering lessons which do not cater for all groups of students. Support for special education needs (SEN) students is very weak and gifted and talented students have insufficient challenge. Extra-curricular activities are minimal. The school is poorly resourced.

Progress made since last inspection and capacity to improve

There has been some progress made since the last inspection with the beginnings of improvement in students' attainment levels. Grade 12 students are relatively well prepared for their Ministry of Education examinations. Achievement in the core subjects throughout the school remains weak. The quality of education provided in the Kindergarten has improved and, as a consequence, these children make relatively better progress. Teaching remains weak. Teachers still talk too much at the expense of student-centred activities, tasks are not challenging enough and expectations are low. Senior leaders do not yet have an effective grasp of what constitutes effective teaching. The curriculum has not yet been adapted to meet the needs of students with special educational needs. Some teachers stated that they are still not always paid on time. The owner does not always give senior leaders the independence and support needed to make key educational judgements to improve the quality of education at the school. The school does not have the capacity to provide the necessary strategic direction to improve and tackle the recommendations detailed in this report without external support and the appointment of a principal.

Development and promotion of innovation skills

The school has not yet promoted or embedded the development of innovation skills in either its curriculum or lesson planning. The development of students' learning skills is generally weak, with teachers focusing on subject content rather than promoting generic skills such as self-directed learning and critical thinking. Opportunities for promoting innovation skills through extra-curricular activities are also limited due to the lack of these activities at the school. Some examples of

developing innovation skills were evident in the Grade 12 mathematics lessons where students were presented with a range of problems requiring calculations using calculus.

The inspection identified the following as key areas of strength:

- the quality of education provided for children in the Kindergarten
- the ethos of the school and the relationships between staff and students and among students
- the management of the school on a day-to-day basis
- the good attendance of students.

The inspection identified the following as key areas for improvement:

- students' attainment and progress across all subjects
- the provision and support for students with special educational needs (SEN)
- the accountability of senior and middle leaders for improving the quality of teaching and learning
- teaching to meet the needs of different groups of students
- the use of assessment data to plan lessons, monitor the progress of individuals and groups of students and to inform school evaluation
- the development of students' learning skills, particularly as self-directed learners
- the planning and enrichment of the curriculum to meet the needs of different groups of students
- procedures to improve students' punctuality to school.

Performance Standard 1: Students' Achievement

Students' achievement Indicators		KG	Primary	Middle	High
Islamic Education	Attainment	Acceptable	Weak	Weak	Acceptable
	Progress	Good	Weak	Weak	Weak
Arabic (as a First Language)	Attainment	Acceptable	Weak	Weak	Weak
	Progress	Good	Weak	Weak	Weak
Arabic (as a Second Language)	Attainment	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Progress	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Social Studies	Attainment	Acceptable	Weak	Weak	Weak
	Progress	Good	Weak	Weak	Weak
English	Attainment	Acceptable	Weak	Weak	Weak
	Progress	Good	Weak	Weak	Weak
Mathematics	Attainment	Acceptable	Weak	Weak	Weak
	Progress	Good	Weak	Weak	Weak
Science	Attainment	Acceptable	Weak	Weak	Weak
	Progress	Good	Weak	Weak	Weak
Language of instruction (if other than English and Arabic as First Language)	Attainment	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Progress	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Other subjects (Art, Music, PE)	Attainment	Good	Weak	Weak	Weak
	Progress	Acceptable	Weak	Weak	Weak
Learning Skills (including innovation, creativity, critical thinking, communication, problem-solving and collaboration)		Acceptable	Very Weak	Very Weak	Very Weak

Attainment in the core subjects of Arabic, Islamic Education, social studies, English, mathematics and science is generally below age-related expectations. Attainment in high school, as measured by Grade 12 student's performance in the Ministry of Education (MoE) examination, is acceptable as a result of teaching targeted at meeting the requirements of the examination content. Attainment is acceptable in Kindergarten as a result of the quality of teaching, the use of a range of stimulating resources and effective support for children's learning. Progress is weak in both the core and non-core subjects apart from in Kindergarten and in Grade 12. International comparisons in mathematics and science, for a small group of selected girls in Grades 10 and 11, show them achieving above average scores in the recent Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) test.

The school lacks accurate measures of students' progress over time because cohorts, groups and individuals are not tracked from grade to grade. Inspection evidence shows that as they move through the lower grades, boys' progress in particular slows down. In the final grades, boys are able to attain similar scores to the girls but their learning lacks depth and is narrowly focused on examination success. A large minority of these students rely on additional private tuition. Students who have SEN are not always clearly identified and they lack the support to make acceptable progress. Most students are not developing the skills and personal qualities needed for the next stage of education as self-directed learners. In Kindergarten, children learn to stick at a task or a play activity and this prepares them well for more formal education.

In Arabic, students can only speak standard Arabic in short sentences and sometimes single words. The majority of students can recognize the basic elements of a short story. Students' skills in extended writing are limited as they are rarely required to write at length. The majority of middle school boys can recognize basic punctuation and read simple short sentences. Students in Grade 1 can write their first name correctly; however, few of them can spell a four-letter word. In Islamic Education and social studies, most students gain an acceptable understanding of Islamic values and UAE culture and heritage from lessons, morning assembly when they recite verses from holy Quran, from their homes and the wider community they live in.

In mathematics, children in the Kindergarten make good progress and have a sound grasp of numbers. In the primary and middle phases of the school, students do not make the progress expected of them, mainly as a result of low expectations and work that is too simple. In a Grade 6 lesson, only a few students were able to solve multiplication sums involving two digits. The curriculum content in the secondary section is more challenging and in Grade 12 is effective in preparing these students for the MoE examinations.



In English, children get off to an acceptable start in the Kindergarten, where they are taught well. Teachers in the rest of the school do not use assessment in the subject to help students identify what they need to do to improve. There is too much reliance on worksheets and as a result students are not developing their reading and writing skills. In a Grade 6 lesson, students' limited opportunities to write extended prose did not extend their reading and writing skills.

In science, the majority of students make very weak progress in practical experimentation. The large majority of learning is book-based, using too few practical resources to enable students to apply learning to the real world. They have a weak understanding of key scientific principles such as prediction and hypothesis setting. The three science laboratories are seldom used except by older high school students. Students have little opportunity to link theory and practice.

The provision for boys in physical education (PE) is very weak. No attempt is made to provide boys with any sort of learning and acquisition of sports skills. Girls are provided with better PE provision as the teacher makes a good attempt at developing their skills, for example, Grade 7 girls performed a traditional dance with coordination, rhythm and enthusiasm. Music lessons have an over reliance on choral chanting and student progress is hampered by a lack of resources. Music in assembly is performed well by a small group of musicians. In spite of some acceptable teaching in art in the lower grades and some good teaching in Kindergarten (KG), standards in the rest of the school are well below age-related expectations. There is little or no integration of information communication and technology (ICT) in lessons and there is no planned usage of the one working ICT laboratory. As a consequence, students are not acquiring the necessary ICT skills to use in their work across the subjects.

Performance Standard 2: Students' personal and social development, and their innovation skills

Students' personal and social development, and their innovation skills Indicators	KG	Primary	Middle	High
Personal development	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Acceptable	Weak	Weak	Weak

Students' personal and social development is acceptable. The school promotes a positive ethos among the students and staff members. Students' attitude to learning is generally positive; more pronounced in the KG section and among the older girls. Relationships between staff and students, and among students, are also positive. In Kindergarten, the children enjoy the many varied and stimulating activities organised by the teachers. Boys' behaviour in some lessons is unacceptable, invariably as a result of teaching and activities which fail to engage and motivate them. A high number of students arrive late to school, which creates an unacceptable movement during the assembly activities. Attendance is good at over 94%.

Assemblies provide opportunities for students to demonstrate knowledge and celebration of Islamic occasions. The students show appropriate respect for the UAE national anthem and flag during the morning assembly. Students also show respect for different nationalities in and outside of lessons. There are few displays around the school and in classrooms to celebrate UAE heritage and promote students' cultural development. Students' work is also not evident around communal areas and in most of the classrooms. Students have an acceptable understanding of how to live healthy lifestyles through various health-related topics taught in science and through advice given by the school nurse.

The school offers limited opportunities for students to be innovative or creative. Few students are provided with activities so that they can use learning technologies or develop their critical thinking in problem solving. There is an over-reliance on worksheets in the majority of lessons. This means that students are not given sufficient time to develop their communication and innovation skills in meaningful contexts that relate to the real world. There is a lack of leadership opportunities for students to demonstrate initiative and creativity in lessons and around the school. Children in Kindergarten learn to take turns and to share through frequent pair and

group work, both in the classroom and outside. There are many opportunities, for example through role play, for children in Kindergarten to learn about and delight in the world around them.

Performance Standard 3: Teaching and Assessment

Teaching and Assessment Indicators	KG	Primary	Middle	High
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Teaching for effective learning	Good	Weak	Weak	Weak
Assessment	Acceptable	Weak	Weak	Weak

Teaching and assessment are weak. Teachers do not know how to plan and deliver lessons that meet the needs of different groups of students. Planning does not include explicit reference to support for the less able and challenge for the more able. As a result, the majority of students are not able to make the progress that they are capable of. Planning also does not include specific reference to developing important learning skills such as critical thinking, problem solving or self-directed learning, which limits students' personal development. Teaching in Grade 12, which focuses on preparation for the MoE external tests, is more effective. In a Grade 12 mathematics lesson, targeted teacher support and the development of critical thinking through advanced problem solving provided effective challenge to student learning. In the Kindergarten, enthusiastic and motivating delivery and the use of a range of stimulating resources ensures that these children make good progress.

Some form of lesson objectives are invariably displayed at the beginning of lessons; they are not expressed in terms of what students need to learn. Too much teaching is focused on exposition by the teacher rather than student-centred activities, limiting their development as self-directed learners. Opportunities and encouragement for students to be innovative are rare. Students are often arranged in groups but there are few group work activities which encourage collaboration and innovative problem solving. Where teaching does not engage or challenge students, particularly boys, a minority become restless, disengaged and often misbehave. Teachers' questioning strategies are limited, and they do not routinely check if students understand the lesson content. As a consequence, teachers are unable to adjust their teaching to accommodate the needs of different ability groups in the class. Assessment of students' progress in lessons and over time is ineffective, particularly in comparing their progress from year to year. Feedback on students' work is cursory or non-

existent so students do not know how to improve their work. The use of assessment data to inform the transition between school phases is not developed. As a consequence, work is often pitched at too low a level or repeats content from previous years.

Performance Standard 4: Curriculum

Curriculum Indicators	KG	Primary	Middle	High
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Curriculum design and implementation	Good	Weak	Weak	Weak
Curriculum adaptation	Good	Weak	Weak	Weak

The implementation and delivery of the curriculum are weak. The curriculum is not planned or enriched to meet the educational needs of all groups of students, particularly those with SEN and those who are gifted and talented. There are few opportunities for students to engage in extra-curricular activities. The curriculum is broad and balanced in terms of the Ministry of Education requirements. The school's timetable complies with the minimum number of teaching hours and curriculum requirements for Arabic, Social Studies and Islamic Education and other core and non-core subjects. Few opportunities are provided for students to develop the skills needed for the next phase of their education. The curriculum is too reliant on textbooks as the main resource for delivery and does not promote innovation and creativity. There are few links between subjects to develop cross-curricular themes and activities. The curriculum options for students are narrow. Students only have the option of joining a scientific stream when entering the high school phase. The curriculum provides opportunities for students to develop their understanding of the heritage and culture of the UAE, for example through assemblies, the Heritage Centre and National Day celebrations. The school does not engage in a systematic and effective review of its curriculum implementation, delivery and enrichment to more effectively meet the academic and personal and social needs of all groups of students.

Performance Standard 5: The protection, care, guidance and support of students

The protection, care, guidance and support of students Indicators	KG	Primary	Middle	High
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Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection/ safeguarding	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Care and support	Good	Weak	Weak	Weak

The protection, care, guidance and support for students is acceptable overall. The school provides a supportive and caring environment for students, who say that they feel safe and well protected in school. Parents agree that their children are secure, happy and well looked-after. Students are effectively supervised at break and when moving around the school. The school's child protection policy has been disseminated to staff and they are aware of its content.

The school promotes students' healthy lifestyles through health-related science topics. Grade 12 students are acquainted with university life through organised visits to Abu Dhabi University. General guidance on career choices is very limited. The school's procedures to ensure safety on school transport are appropriate and maintenance records are up to date. The school nurse is well organised. The quality of first-aid facilities and arrangements for the storage and dispensing of medicines are good. A number of SEN and gifted and talented students have been identified by the school. Neither group is supported well enough through the curriculum or in individual lessons to make the progress they are capable of.

Performance Standard 6: Leadership and management

Leadership and management Indicators	
The effectiveness of leadership	Weak
Self-evaluation and improvement planning	Weak
Partnerships with parents and the community	Acceptable
Governance	Weak
Management, staffing, facilities and resources	Very Weak

Leadership and management is weak. The school lacks the capacity to drive through improvements, mainly as a result of not having a principal to provide the strategic direction the school needs. The school does not have a governing body to provide guidance and ensure accountability by senior and middle leaders. The owner does not always provide senior leaders with the necessary independence to make educational decisions which will impact on improving the quality of education at the school. The slight improvements in students' attainment over the last 18 months are a result of the acting principal devolving leadership responsibilities. There is a lack of formal liaison among the five supervisors to ensure the consistent implementation of whole school policy. The transition procedures among the phases are ineffective, often resulting in a repetition of taught curriculum content. Leadership in the Kindergarten is effective in enacting improvements including in raising the quality of teaching, children's' achievement and their personal and social development.

The processes for school self-evaluation are disjointed. There is no formal mechanism in place to ensure accurate, effective and consistent self-evaluation. The school improvement plan is comprehensive but is yet to be effectively reviewed. The use of internal and external data to inform school development is inconsistent. There is a lack of understanding of what constitutes effective teaching. There has been limited progress in tackling the recommendations from the last inspection report. The Parents Council has not met this year and consequently has not been involved in school decision-making. Parental involvement in the work of the school has had little or no impact, although there have been significant contributions in the Kindergarten. The school communicates adequately with parents through regular reports. The school has developed a number of effective external links, including links with Abu Dhabi University and other universities who provide orientation visits for Grade 12 students. The school also hosts internships for trainee teachers from Abu Dhabi University.



The premises are large enough to support the numbers on roll. Classrooms are cramped and dreary with little student work on display. Classrooms have no resources other than data projectors. The three science laboratories are poorly furnished and resourced and seldom used. The school's single working ICT laboratory is rarely used. A second ICT laboratory is under development. As a consequence, students are not developing their ICT skills to an acceptable level and they do not use ICT as a tool for being innovative in problem solving activities. The Kindergarten is an oasis of colour and celebration of student work in a desert of dull and uninspiring learning environments in the rest of the school. The school has a full complement of teaching staff. The school employed an external organisation to provide continuing professional development for teachers but the impact of this has been minimal. The school functions well enough on a day to day basis. Teachers do not always receive their salary on time.

What the school should do to improve further:

1. Improve students' attainment and progress across all subjects by:
 - i. ensuring senior and middle leaders are fully accountable for improving the quality of teaching and learning
 - ii. setting specific academic targets for individual students and subjects
 - iii. ensuring that all groups of students are fully supported in their studies and are given effective guidance on how to improve their work.
2. Improve the quality of teaching and learning by:
 - i. planning and delivering teaching which is student-centred and meets the needs of different groups of students, particularly those that have SEN or those who are gifted and talented
 - ii. planning and delivering teaching which develops students' learning skills, particularly to become self-directed learners
 - iii. ensuring that learning outcomes for every lesson are clear, shared with students and assessed
 - iv. making use of a wider range of resources and learning technologies.
3. Using assessment data more effectively by:
 - i. using it to inform lesson planning that meets the needs of individuals and groups of students
 - ii. using it to monitor the progress of individuals and groups of students
 - iii. using it to inform school evaluation.
4. Planning and enriching the curriculum to meet the needs of different groups of students by:
 - i. providing activities and clubs which meet the needs of all students, including those with SEN and the more able and gifted and talented
 - ii. providing opportunities for students to be innovative
 - iii. developing more integrated cross-curricular themes and activities.
5. Enhancing procedures to improve students' punctuality to school by:
 - i. monitoring the reasons for students' lateness
 - ii. providing more effective follow up with parents.