



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



Inspection Report

Japanese Private School

Academic Year 2013 – 14

Iqraa

Japanese Private School

Inspection Date	9 – 11 March 2014
School ID#	115
Licensed Curriculum	Japanese Monbukagakusho
Number of Students	76
Age Range	3 to 15 years
Gender	Mixed
Principal	Masahiro Ogawa
School Address	PO Box 8120, Al Muroor Street, Abu Dhabi
Telephone Number	+971 (2) 444 6104
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Official Email (ADEC)	japanese.pvt@adec.ac.ae
School Website	www.jsad.ae
Date of last inspection	20 - 22 May 2012

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 A;	GRADE 3
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The main strengths of the school are:

- attainment and progress in mathematics, science and Japanese
- attainment and progress by Emirati students in Japanese
- students' positive attitudes and behaviour, their commitment to learning and the responsibility they show towards the environment
- the planned opportunities to develop students' independent learning, problem solving and critical thinking skills
- the caring and nurturing atmosphere that leads to positive relationships between teachers and students
- the curriculum that provides a wide range of subjects, including Japanese cultural and social activities
- the guidance and support provided for students returning to Japan for higher education
- the provision of additional and extended support for Emirati students in Arabic and Japanese to meet the requirements of the curricula.

The main areas for improvement are:

- greater use of attainment data to set accurate targets and ensure that every student makes good progress
- further consistency in teaching so that students in higher grades have more opportunities to learn through activity and discussion
- regular and planned access for students to use information and communication technology (ICT) in lessons for learning across the curriculum
- more accurate and robust system for self evaluation and use this information to set appropriate targets for improvement

Introduction

The school was inspected by a team of 3 inspectors who observed 41 lessons as well as assemblies, break periods and students' arrival and departure. Inspectors met with students, teachers, school leaders, representatives from the school board and parents. They scrutinised students' written work, and analysed performance data and documents provided by the school. In addition, 51 responses from parents to a questionnaire about the school were analysed.

Description of the School

The Japanese Private School opened in 1978 and moved to the current site in Al Muroor Street in 2012. The school was set up to provide children of Japanese embassy staff with access to the Japanese education system. The school's aims are to encourage students to study hard, to promote kindness and tolerance, to encourage physical and mental health and help students develop as global citizens.

Since 2006, the school has been part of a unique programme, based on the vision of HH Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi, who requested permission from the Japanese government for a small group of Emirati students to be enrolled at the school each year, in order for them to develop fluency in Japanese. 18 students are part of the programme, and each year, a further four students are enrolled.

There are 76 students divided into two phases: Kindergarten (KG) and Grades 1 to 9. There are 25 students in KG and 51 students in other classes. Students from Japan make up three quarters of the school, and almost all the remainder are Emirati. There are also two Egyptian students. 25% of students are Muslim and have Arabic as their first language. One student has a speech and language disorder.

The school follows the Monbukagakusho curriculum, set by the Ministry of Education (MoE) in Japan. In addition it offers Arabic and Islamic education for Arabic speakers and Muslims and also offers Arabic for Japanese students. Students have access to social science lessons either in Arabic or in Japanese, according to their background.

The school has 16 teachers, including 3 resource teachers who support non-Japanese speakers in lessons. Other staff include the Principal, 3 coordinators to support non-Japanese students and their families, 2 security staff, a school secretary, a nurse and 2 bus drivers.

Student tuition fees are in the medium to premium category, ranging from AED 17,255 in KG to AED 33,360 for Grades 1 to 9. This includes transport and stationery costs.

The Effectiveness of the School

Students' attainment & progress

Standardised test data shows that almost all students are working above similar schools and above international standards in mathematics, science and Japanese. Emirati students make good progress in Japanese and attain matching levels of fluency in speaking, reading and writing with first language Japanese students. This is due to the effective additional support provided by the school.

Attainment and progress of Emirati students in Arabic and Islamic education are good. Japanese students make good progress in Arabic; their attainment is satisfactory. This is due to the short period of time that many students remain in the UAE. Their attainment and progress in English is limited due to the lack of formal English lessons in KG to Grade 6. Students in Grades 7 to 9 make satisfactory progress in the development of speaking, listening and reading skills.

Students' ICT skills and knowledge are not sufficiently developed in a coherent and progressive way largely as a result of limited regular access. Most students demonstrate well-developed 21st Century skills. They are able to apply their learning to different contexts, work independently and persevere when faced with challenging tasks. They demonstrate good problem solving and investigational skills. Less able students make good progress due to the low numbers in most classes, which allow teachers to work with small groups of students. Small classes, particularly in the upper Grades, also enable teachers to use targeted assessment strategies and support students effectively so that they are academically well prepared to return to high schools in Japan.

Students' personal development

Students' personal development is very good. Students demonstrate high levels of respect for others in the community and show a strong commitment to their learning. They demonstrate good motivation levels and diligence in lessons. Most are sensitive and aware of the needs and views of others. This is exemplified by a communal display board which is dedicated to students' recognition of achievements such as applauding a friend's first successful attempt at riding a unicycle or showing gratitude for the support given by a friend.

Staff have high expectations of students' behaviour and students rise to meet this challenge. This leads to a very positive, ordered and calm learning environment. Students take responsibility for themselves and they demonstrate good

understanding of how to develop healthy lifestyles through post lunch routines which consist of brushing teeth and keeping the classrooms clean. These routines are well established and require minimal supervision.

Students show a good awareness of the UAE's culture, heritage and the diversity of its people. They demonstrate appropriate respect for both the UAE and the Japanese national anthems and sing these with enthusiasm each morning. Students are provided with a range of opportunities to develop their leadership skills. Attendance is very good at 97%.

The quality of teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning across the school is good. Student behaviour is exemplary and there are strongly supportive relationships and mutual respect demonstrated in all lessons. This leads to a quiet and task focused environment in most lessons. Students listen well, ask questions to clarify their learning and are able to work independently to solve problems.

Teachers know their subjects and the requirements of the curriculum well. Use of practical, collaborative and interactive activities is more prominent in the younger grades where classes are big enough for students to work in groups. In upper grades, where classes have only one or two students, discussions are limited, lessons are more textbook focused and levels of challenge are less appropriate, particularly for more able learners.

Most teachers use good questioning skills to help students acquire a deeper understanding of their learning. A number of summative assessments are carried out in accordance with curriculum requirements to identify students' knowledge and understanding; limited use is made of these to determine individual targets for students.

In most lessons, students are supported in developing 21st Century skills through opportunities to work independently, think critically and explain their understanding to others. This is particularly evident in mathematics and science where students are routinely expected to apply their knowledge and understanding to problem solving and investigative activities. There are limited opportunities for students to enhance their learning through ICT in lessons.

Three dedicated resource teachers provide effective and well-focussed support for Emirati students in mathematics and science lessons and ensure that they are not held back through a lack of appropriate Japanese vocabulary. Students who are more able are not always provided with appropriate levels of challenge or supported through opportunities to take leadership of their learning.

Meeting students' needs through the curriculum

The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum. The school day is extended in order to achieve appropriate coverage of all curricula requirements. Emirati students arriving to join the programme in KG are given language lessons each morning before the formal school day, in order to support their acquisition of Japanese. The impact of this is evident in students' well developed fluency by the end of KG3. Curriculum planning is less well defined to meet the needs and accelerate the progress of high ability students.

The curriculum is extended to include subjects such as music, art, physical education (PE) and social sciences. In addition, there are a number of lessons dedicated to promoting an understanding of Japanese cultural and social activities, such as the tea ceremony. Students are also introduced to traditional Japanese sports such as stilt walking and bamboo dragonfly spinning. In accordance with the Japanese curriculum there are no discrete ICT lessons. Students do not have regular access to ICT resources in most lessons to ensure development of ICT skills through an integrated, cross-curricular approach.

There is a wide range of extracurricular activities available to develop students' personal and social skills including an extensive desert survival programme and an exchange programme with another international school in Abu Dhabi. These activities support the school's aim of creating global citizens who have an understanding of the wider world as well as the communities that live and work in the UAE.

Most students leave the school before Grade 9 and there are good systems that ensure they are well supported, both academically and emotionally, for their return to the Japanese education system.

The protection, care, guidance and support of students

There is a strong family atmosphere in the school and good systems are in place for the protection, care, guidance and support of students. The manner in which the whole staff greets students as they arrive at school, exemplifies the positive and caring environment. Staff model appropriate conduct during break times when they share meals with students, brush their teeth alongside the students and help tidy up with the students. A team of resource teachers, funded by a Japanese non-profit organisation, provide high quality, in-class support for Emirati students who require academic or language support. Upper grade teachers' provide additional academic support for students who are returning to Japan. Senior staff also provide careful guidance for parents of Emirati students who decide to continue their education in Japan.

There is an effective behaviour management system in place with clear rewards and sanctions which are applied consistently. There are few opportunities to use the sanctions agreed with students, as behaviour is very good throughout the school. Good systems are in place for maintaining the high attendance and punctuality, including prompt communication with parents. The school does not have a written child protection policy; most staff are clear about the actions they need to take. The clinic is well resourced and has effective record keeping systems in place. A prayer room is available for students.

The quality of the school's buildings and premises

The building is large for the number of students using it. Many classrooms have traditional features such as 'Tatami' mats and there are several specialist rooms for core subjects as well as traditional Japanese activities.

Most rooms are well lit and ventilated. Only a few rooms have data projectors. The ICT suite contains several computers; it is not timetabled for class use. There is a large gymnasium that is used for team games. The grounds are attractive and contain plants and flowers that are well looked after by students. There is a large playground that has no shade, and this prevents students from using it during hot weather. There are no outdoor spaces for KG students to use large play equipment and only a small un-shaded sand area.

The school has adequate procedures for ensuring that systematic maintenance checks are made on all major equipment. Procedures to ensure safe storage of cleaning materials are not rigorous enough. Evacuation procedures are well established. Students are encouraged to remember the acronym 'O-Ha-Shi-Mo' at a time of emergency, which relates to Japanese words for: don't push, don't run, don't talk and don't return. Displays in corridors and communal areas are limited and do not reflect the high quality work produced by students. Security is tight and a uniformed security officer is visible at the main entrance throughout the school day.

The school's resources to support its aims

The school has sufficient teachers, who are adequately qualified and have a good knowledge of the Japanese curriculum and its requirements. All teachers, including the Principal, have a substantial teaching commitment due to the requirement of the curriculum. The school has built productive links with a non-profit organisation in Japan which provides additional teachers to support Emirati students who are learning Japanese for the first time.

The limited range of classroom resources, consisting mainly of textbooks, does not fully support delivery of the curriculum. There are no ICT resources for use by

students apart from the ICT suite. The library has a large stock of books in Japanese, both fiction and non-fiction; the range of books in Arabic or English is limited.

There is an extensive range of specialist equipment to extend students' learning of Japanese arts and crafts. This includes calligraphy and art materials that provide opportunities to explore a wide range of media. Equipment for students' use at break times is also plentiful and includes unicycles, stilts and traditional spinning wheels. School transport is maintained in a safe and reliable condition.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Leadership and management are satisfactory and improving. The school has effective management systems that are determined by the Embassy of Japan. The Board is actively involved in all aspects of school life. It holds weekly meetings with the Principal to discuss current issues, provides valuable professional support and gives constructive advice. The Board also oversees finances and ensures that there are appropriate financial checks and planning procedures in place.

The leadership and school staff share a clear sense of direction: high expectations of students so that their transition back to education in Japan is seamless and achievement of high levels of fluency in Japanese by Emirati students. The Principal, with his focus on teaching and learning, ensures success in both these aims.

The school functions well on a day-to-day basis. There are not enough improvement plans and systems in place. There is no school self-evaluation form, and the result is a more limited understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. This leads to a school development plan that is limited in both scope and challenge and has unclear priorities and monitoring procedures.

Procedures for monitoring and evaluating the quality and impact of teaching are in place. These are mostly focused on curriculum content and do not sufficiently support or inform the provision of internal professional development training to target teaching needs.

Parents are supportive of the school and appreciate the guidance and support their children receive from the school when they first arrive and when they are ready to return to Japan. Parents receive regular reports about their children's academic progress and personal development.

Progress since the last inspection

The leadership team is new in post and there has only been partial progress towards the recommendations from the previous inspection due to the lack of continuity in senior staff. The school has made some progress towards the recommendations from the previous inspection. One of the main areas of focus has been to ensure that students from Japan and the UAE are well integrated into the school's community and that all students have a clear understanding of the values of the UAE. This has been successfully achieved through educational visits to museums and heritage areas and through social interactions and excursions such as the three-day desert programme.

The school has purchased additional computers and these are used by some classes for research purposes but they are not yet routinely used to support student learning in all areas of the curriculum. Most of the health and safety concerns have been dealt with satisfactorily. The school has not yet identified ways of ensuring that older students receive the same level of interactive teaching as younger students.

With the current drive and determination of the leadership, the school demonstrates good capacity for sustained improvement.

What the school should do to improve further:

1. Further strengthen the quality of teaching and learning by:
 - i. ensuring that teachers in upper grades provide greater opportunities for students to learn through activity and discussion
 - ii. analysing all assessment data robustly in order to identify students' needs and use this information to provide additional challenge, especially for more able students.
2. Develop students' ICT skills by providing regular opportunities for students to use ICT for learning in all subjects.
3. Ensure that school self-evaluation is accurate and rigorous and use the information to develop a comprehensive school development plan which identifies clear priorities for improvement.
4. Ensure the school has a written child protection policy in place and staff receive necessary training for effective implementation.
5. As a matter of urgency, address health and safety concerns.

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								