



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



# New School Inspection Report

Reach British Private School

Academic Year 2014 – 2015

iqraa

Reach British School

|                       |                                                                              |
|-----------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Inspection Date       | 11 – 14 May 2015                                                             |
| School ID#            | 256                                                                          |
| Licensed Curriculum   | British – English National Curriculum                                        |
| Number of Students    | 673                                                                          |
| Age Range             | 4 to 12 years                                                                |
| Gender                | Mixed                                                                        |
| Principal             | Rob Taylor                                                                   |
| School Address        | PO Box 51786, 38 <sup>th</sup> Street, Baniyas East, Abu Dhabi               |
| Telephone Number      | +971 (0)2 582 2030                                                           |
| Fax Number            | _____                                                                        |
| Official Email (ADEC) | <a href="mailto:Reachbritish.pvt@adec.ac.ae">Reachbritish.pvt@adec.ac.ae</a> |
| School Website        | <a href="http://www.rb-school.com">www.rb-school.com</a>                     |
| Date of opening       | September 2014                                                               |

## The overall effectiveness of the school

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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**

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### The main strengths of the school are:

- leadership of the principal, with support from the senior leadership team, particularly in accurately identifying the improvement priorities
- welcoming community ethos and celebration of students' successes
- relationships and mutual respect between teachers and students
- good accommodation and facilities
- information and communication technology facilities in the laboratory and in classes.

### The main areas for improvement are:

- academic achievement, particularly in English, mathematics and science
  - quality and consistency of teaching in matching the needs of students who speak English as an additional language or have special needs
  - use of assessment to measure and track students' progress and plan next steps in learning
  - establishment of a governing body.
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## Introduction

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The school was evaluated by 4 inspectors. They observed 74 lessons, attended assemblies, and conducted meetings with the senior leadership team, social worker, curriculum leaders, students and parents. They analysed tests and assessment results, scrutinised students' work, analysed the 146 responses to the parents' questionnaire and considered many of the school's policies and other documents. The principal and senior leaders were fully involved throughout the process and conducted 5 joint lesson observations with inspectors.

## Description of the School

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Reach British School opened in September 2014 in the Baniyas East district of Abu Dhabi city and delivers the English National Curriculum (ENC). Foundation stage (FS) children follow the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). The aim of the school is: 'to offer a British Education to an international body of students eventually leading to external examinations that will fulfil the entry requirements for universities around the world'. The mission is: 'to prepare students for success in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century'.

There are 673 students; 61% are boys, almost all are Muslim. Majority of the students are of Arabic heritage and the main nationalities are as follows: Emirati (62%), Yemen (3%), Pakistan (6%), Jordan (3%), Indian (3%) and American (1 %). There are 317 children in Foundation Stage (FS), 324 students in primary, and 32 at the middle stage. The school identifies 40 students who have special educational needs (SEN). Most have moderate learning needs, a few have severe, hearing or visual needs. No students are identified as gifted and talented; 50% speak English as an additional language (EAL). Admission arrangements are inclusive and through interview with parents and students. Assessment is against standards for the ENC; no externally validated results are available in this first year.

The school employs 37 teachers, 15 teaching support staff, 12 administrative and 12 security staff. Annual tuition fees are in the medium to high ranges from AED 19,800 (FS1) to AED 28,600 (Year 7).

The principal was appointed in January. He is supported by the vice-principal and leaders of the primary and foundation stages. Turnover of staff has been low since January.

## The Effectiveness of the School

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Reach British School provides an unsatisfactory standard of education. Academic achievement, the quality of teaching, curriculum and resources are unsatisfactory. The introduction of new materials and teaching methods to support the learning of English is beginning to help students access the curriculum more easily. They are starting to make better progress, particularly in FS and the early primary stages.

The principal, vice-principal and new senior leaders work collaboratively and productively. The impact of staffing changes and professional development has led to improvements in curriculum understanding and delivery, student behaviour and relationships with parents. The recent implementation of the changes has not allowed time for them to impact significantly on academic achievement.

### Students' attainment & progress

Attainment and progress is unsatisfactory. Most students have not studied the ENC before and have not used English as their language of learning. Lack of baseline assessment information on entry, and inappropriate matching of over 30% of Year 2 to 7 students to the correct year group has slowed progress significantly. As a result, attainment in English, mathematics, science and information and communications technology (ICT) is below age-related expectations and progress is unsatisfactory. Attainment and progress in Arabic, Islamic education and social studies is satisfactory.

In the FS, children can recognise and write letters of the alphabet and make 3 letter words. More able children can write the words accurately on their own and form simple sentences. Across year groups, students' limited understanding of English hinders comprehension, especially when using subject specific vocabulary such as in science. They lack confidence in writing for different purposes and in spelling common words accurately.

In Arabic, younger primary students can sound and write letters; older ones develop their understanding of grammatical rules and apply them in writing. In Islamic education, students recite from the Holy Qur'an and memorise 'Suras' (Qur'anic verses) appropriately. By years 6 and 7 they can write the 'Hadith' and know the ethics of Islam. In social studies, they develop their knowledge and skills in line with curriculum expectations, for example their understanding of links between the Emirates and other Arabic countries.

Early number skills develop appropriately and children can count well. Problem solving skills are at a low level for most students. By Year 7, students are able to

apply and solve basic algebraic equations. Their understanding of English terms is confusing and holds back their progress. In science, students can discuss and record simple experiments they have done and have an understanding of plant growth and classification. They lack skills and knowledge in making hypotheses, investigating and carrying out fair tests.

A range of standardised measures of assessment, introduced recently, is providing more accurate measures in English. Other subjects do not have similar external benchmark assessments. Not all teachers use the assessment data to plan for students' next steps in learning. Students who have additional learning needs and those who speak EAL make unsatisfactory progress due to insufficient specialist support and limited differentiated learning.

Student's development and use of 21<sup>st</sup> century skills are unsatisfactory. They lack experience in thinking critically, and in working independently and collaboratively for a purpose. Attainment and progress in ICT are unsatisfactory due to the slow start on developing computer skills and lack of appropriate individual support to match development needs. Children in FS develop skills more quickly in using computers and programmable toys.

### **Students' personal development**

Students' personal development is satisfactory. The school has successfully focused on establishing expectations and routines of student behaviour; it is satisfactory across the school. Students conduct themselves with courtesy and respect. Rewards and celebration of successes are regular features of school life. Students are happy to engage in conversation about their work and are proud of their achievements. Respect and appreciation for the culture and values of the UAE are developed well through activities, displays and assemblies.

The introduction of leadership roles, including head boy and girl, the setting up of a house system with house captains, is encouraging some students to take responsibility. Opportunities outside of these roles to develop leadership skills and experience are limited. Extra-curricular activities provide students with a satisfactory range of experiences after school, and are well attended. Visitors to the school, such as the community and traffic police, enhance students understanding of the wider community.

Students gain a positive understanding of healthy lifestyles through assemblies, theme weeks, advice from the nurse and the generally nutritious foods served in the canteen. Attendance and punctuality are encouraged through rewards. Attendance is average at 93%.

### **The quality of teaching and learning**

The quality of teaching and learning is unsatisfactory. Variability in the quality and effectiveness of teaching was observed during the inspection. Lessons ranged from very unsatisfactory to satisfactory and improving; with just over half deemed to be unsatisfactory. More effective teaching was seen mainly in Arabic, Islamic education and social studies; less effective lessons were generally in science, mathematics and ‘theme’.

Teachers are caring and encourage respectful relationships. Students respond positively and are polite and generally well behaved. Most teachers are appropriately qualified but many do not have experience in teaching the ENC. Teaching strategies and approaches are not always sufficiently adapted to meet students’ needs and differentiated learning is limited, especially for students who speak EAL. As a result, students cannot understand many aspects of the lessons taught in English and become passive or disinterested and make slower progress. Development of higher level skills, such as critical thinking and independence, is limited. Most lessons are teacher dominated, including in the FS, with too little time for children to be actively engaged. Where teaching is better, teachers encourage students to think, work cooperatively, and take more responsibility for their learning.

Lesson objectives are often too broad and teachers do not evaluate how well individuals and groups have achieved. Next steps in learning are not identified clearly, and limited teacher marking of students’ work does not help them know how they can improve their own learning. Most teachers are unfamiliar with the content and levels of expected achievement against the ENC. Professional development in school is beginning to help staff to match the age and grade level more accurately when assessing class standards. Standardised tests for English have provided more accurate levels in literacy. Classes within year groups are set for different ability levels to meet their needs more effectively. Regular assessment reports are shared with parents. Students who have additional learning needs, including those who are gifted and talented, speak EAL or have SEN are not sufficiently supported and make slow progress. No student has an individualised educational programme (IEP).

### **Meeting students’ needs through the curriculum**

The delivery of the curriculum is unsatisfactory in meeting students’ needs. It is not well adapted to support the large number of students whose first language is not English. This impacts negatively on the understanding and engagement of students and on their attainment and progress. The implementation of the

curriculum is broad and generally balanced. The wide range of extracurricular activities offered across Years 2 to 7, have a positive uptake.

The implementation of standard planning formats across all year groups ensures the broad curriculum content is matched appropriately. Weekly forward planning sheets are helpfully shared with parents. Students take part in cross-curricular learning through themes. This positive approach helps to link other subjects, such as history, geography and knowledge of the world. The introduction of new curriculum resources and the daily focus on English reading is beginning to make a difference, especially for students who speak EAL, in accessing the curriculum more effectively.

### **The protection, care, guidance and support of students**

The protection, care, guidance and support of students are satisfactory. Students receive sensitive pastoral care and protection from staff; the social worker offers effective additional help to individual students identified by teachers. Attendance has improved due to the focus on its importance. The full-time nurse has effective systems in place to provide high level medical care to all students.

There is no special educational needs coordinator (SENCO) and no systematic support for those students who are identified with SEN. Significant numbers of students, particularly those with SEN and who speak EAL do not have the support they need to access their learning successfully. Teachers understand the child protection procedures; training has not been given to all staff.

The school is very secure with security guards deployed full time at entrances and to patrol the premises. Closed-circuit television (CCTV) cameras are in operation and support the monitoring of student movement around the school. Car parking and bus drop off procedures are very safely organised and expertly supervised. Bus supervisors are diligent in their duties to ensure students sit when the bus is leaving and seat belts are used in the front seats.

### **The quality of the school's buildings and premises**

The quality of the school's buildings and premises is good. They offer high quality facilities and an attractive learning environment. The premises are very well maintained and clean. The accommodation has spacious classrooms, especially in the early years' building, and dedicated rooms for science and ICT. There is appropriate access to the upper floors of the building, which are easily accessible by students needing extra support with mobility. Corridors and the entrance area are enhanced by colourful displays of students' work, which adds to the ethos of celebration for success.

Science and ICT laboratories are well equipped. The assembly hall, library and additional classrooms, provide further learning and community areas. Separate prayer rooms are available for boys and girls. The games hall and swimming pool are not yet in operation. This restricts the quality and range of physical activity that can be offered. Students have access to an appropriately shaded courtyard for breaks, physical education (PE) and games. Outside play areas for the early years are shaded, offering opportunities for more energetic activities.

Security is very effective at main entrances and around the buildings. There is a dedicated member of staff with responsibility for health and safety. He ensures that all equipment is regularly checked and maintained and appropriate records kept. Bus and car parking arrangements are very well organised. Fire drills and evacuation practices are conducted regularly and logged appropriately. Students and staff are fully familiar with the procedures.

### **The school's resources to support its aims**

The school resources are of insufficient quality to deliver the taught curriculum. There are not enough teachers or qualified staff to implement the curriculum effectively. A significant minority of teachers do not have the appropriate teaching experience and knowledge of the ENC. There are no specialist art or music teachers, and no librarian or SENCO.

Classroom resources are insufficient in science, mathematics, art and music. Lack of practical equipment in FS and the lower grades hinders learning. The quality of the school's library facilities and resources are unsatisfactory; there are insufficient numbers of books and no computers that would support students' reading and research skills. New materials and programmes of study effectively support English language learning.

ICT resources allow timetabled lessons for each class to access the suite of computers in the laboratory. Children in FS and Year 1, have access to a computer in each classroom, which enables them to develop skills across the curriculum. All classrooms have data projectors which teachers use effectively to enhance lessons. All computers are linked to the internet supporting access to teacher materials and student study.

### **The effectiveness of leadership and management**

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The new senior leadership team (SLT), with the existing vice-principal, has forged close and productive working relationships and agreed management approaches. The owner devolves management responsibilities appropriately to the principal, including staff recruitment and finance. There is no governing body.

The principal has a close and accurate understanding of the strengths of the school and the improvements needed. He has demonstrated effective strategic leadership in quickly putting systems in place to overcome key deficiencies, including parental communication and quality of learning. Recruitment is well planned to increase the number of qualified and experienced teachers to the required level. Recruitment of new staff is beginning to impact on leadership capacity with an enhanced SLT with good experience to take forward improvements in learning. There has not been enough time for these management decisions and actions to demonstrate significant impact across the school.

The revised self-evaluation form (SEF) is an accurate analysis of the school's position. It presents a reasoned set of judgments underpinned by an appropriate range of evidence. It correctly identifies the improvements needed in the key priorities of attainment and progress, teaching and learning, curriculum and leadership. The school development plan (SDP) aligns appropriately; the priorities clearly inform a rigorous agenda for the next year and identify suitable mechanisms for monitoring progress and evaluating impact.

Partnership with parents has been an important focus. The open-door ethos and development of a range of communication with parents is appreciated and is building trust in the community. The school takes good account of parents' views. There are appropriate policies and procedures in place for dealing with parental complaints. Responses to the questionnaire show parents are supportive and are positive about the quality of care their children receive. In the parent meetings, they said they very much appreciated the recent improvements. They like the information they receive about their children's progress and the shared planning sheets from class teachers. A parent council has been established and regular meetings help to share information on current and planned events. The school has useful links with other schools, and the community.

### **Capacity for further development**

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The new principal has demonstrated effective leadership in identifying key improvements needed to raise standards and in quickly implementing important changes, which are beginning to impact on the quality of education. The school has demonstrated it has satisfactory capacity to bring about further improvements.

### What the school should do to improve further:

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1. Improve attainment and progress, particularly in English, mathematics and science by:
  - i. providing students whose first language is not English with targeted support
  - ii. ensuring students have opportunities to develop and practise their skills in using English across different contexts and subject areas
  - iii. adapting learning to meet the needs and interests of all students, including those who are gifted and talented and have SENs
2. Raise the quality and consistency of teaching by:
  - i. matching the taught curriculum to the needs of students who speak EAL
  - ii. ensuring teachers make more effective use of questions to probe students' thinking and extend their understanding
  - iii. providing professional development to staff in teaching EAL.
3. Improve the use of assessment by:
  - i. ensuring teachers understand the expected age-appropriate curriculum levels
  - ii. measuring and tracking students' progress accurately
  - iii. planning next steps in their learning
  - iv. using feedback effectively so that students know precisely what they need to do to improve their work.
4. Establish a governing body to hold the senior leadership to account for the quality of education provided by the school.

## Inspection Grades

|                                                                    | Band A<br>High performing |           |      | Band B<br>Satisfactory   |              | Band C<br>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: <b>The school's overall effectiveness</b>      |                           |           |      |                          |              |                                              |                     |      |