



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



Private School Inspection Report

Saint Joseph's School

Academic Year 2015 – 2016

Iqraa

Saint Joseph's School

Inspection Date	April 18, 2016	to	April 21, 2016
Date of previous inspection	November 19, 2012	to	November 22, 2012
General Information		Students	
School ID	115	Total number of students	1436
Opening year of school	1967	Number of children in KG	0
Principal	Sister Carmen	Number of students in other phases	Primary: 882 Middle: 326 High: 228
School telephone	+971 (0)2 446 3646	Age range	5 to 18 years
School Address	PO Box 3361, Abu Dhabi	Grades or Year Groups	Grades 1 – 12
Official email (ADEC)	stjosephs.pvt@adec.ac.ae	Gender	Grades 1 – 6: Mixed Grades 7 – 12: Girls only
School website	www.stjosephsschool.ae	% of Emirati Students	0%
Fee ranges (per annum)	Very low: (AED 4,800 – AED 8,300)	Largest nationality groups (%)	1. Indian– 99% 2. British – 0.35% 3. Sri Lankan – 0.28%
Licensed Curriculum		Staff	
Main Curriculum	Indian - Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE)	Number of teachers	80
Other Curriculum	-----	Number of teaching assistants (TAs)	0
External Exams/ Standardised tests	CBSE Examinations for Grades 10 and 12, ACER	Teacher-student ratio	KG/ FS: N/A Other phases: 1:9
Accreditation	-----	Teacher turnover	10%

Introduction

Inspection activities	
Number of inspectors deployed	5
Number of inspection days	4
Number of lessons observed	115
Number of joint lesson observations	7
Number of parents' questionnaires	368; (return rate: 27%)
Details of other inspection activities	The inspection team held meetings with the chairman of the governing body, the principal, senior staff, subject coordinators, teachers, students and parents. They observed lessons, assemblies and other activities and analysed school documents, data, records and students' work.

School	
School Aims	The aims of the school are 'to provide a holistic education to impart character traits, trust and honesty, to instill positive attitudes to learning and to guide each child in the development of interpersonal relationships.'
School vision and mission	Vision: 'To educate, innovate, empower to become global citizens.' Mission: 'To equip students with skills and values to face the challenges of the 21st Century. To enable students to achieve their highest potentials by developing their social and emotional personality through active learning. To create in students an awareness of global environmental issues.'
Admission Policy	Students sit an entrance examination comprising tests in English and mathematics.



Leadership structure (ownership, governance and management)	The school has a board of governors that is accountable to the management board, chaired by the Bishop of Apostolic Vicarate of Southern Arabia. The school is led and managed by the Carmelite Sisters. The senior leadership team comprises the principal, vice principal, assistant vice principal, teaching supervisor, learning supervisor, and two section leaders.
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SEN Details (Refer to ADEC SEN Policy and Procedures)

SEN Category	Number of students identified through external assessments	Number of other students identified by the school
Intellectual disability	4	0
Specific Learning Disability	0	0
Emotional and Behaviour Disorders (ED/ BD)	1	0
Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)	1	0
Speech and Language Disorders	0	0
Physical and health related disabilities	0	0
Visually impaired	2	0
Hearing impaired	0	0
Multiple disabilities	0	0

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

G&T Category	Number of students identified
Intellectual ability	2
Subject-specific aptitude (e.g. in science, mathematics, languages)	0
Social maturity and leadership	0
Mechanical/ technical/ technological ingenuity	0
Visual and performing arts (e.g. art, theatre, recitation)	6
Psychomotor ability (e.g. dance or sport)	2

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 (A)	Good
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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						

The Performance of the School

Evaluation of the school's overall performance

The overall quality of education is good, with a few very good features. Students' behaviour in lessons and around the school is exemplary and they have a positive attitude to their studies. They leave the school as articulate, confident young people who are well prepared for the next stage of their education. Their understanding of environmental issues is profound and they make regular contributions to their community. External examination results are mostly above national for Arabic, Islamic education and social studies subjects, and international and curricular benchmarks for other subjects. Teaching is effective, particularly when it is student-centred, activities are collaborative and questions are challenging. The school provides a safe and caring environment with a focus on promoting individual students' academic and personal development. The principal's well-planned devolvement of responsibilities ensures that all staff are fully involved in the school's improvement agenda.

Progress made since last inspection and capacity to improve

The school has made good progress in tackling most of the recommendations from the last inspection. Assessment data is now used comprehensively to monitor students' progress. Students with special educational needs and those who are gifted and talented are identified effectively and. Lesson monitoring and carefully-targeted professional development have improved the quality of teaching. The school still does not have sufficient high-quality resources although each classroom now has a mobile library, and the provision of laptops is in the process of being enhanced. The school has good capacity to make further improvements.

Development and promotion of innovation skills

The school includes innovation in the curriculum. It was chosen to pilot the ADEC Student Competency Framework and this has become a key feature of learning. The innovative use of a mobile phone application to monitor buses ensures parents are kept informed about their children's travel arrangements. The highly successful innovation week saw students making robotic devices to carry items around the house. In social studies lessons, students developed highly-imaginative solutions to the earth's water shortages. These included desalination devices using charcoal, which were expertly demonstrated by students.

The inspection identified the following as key areas of strength:

- the effective leadership of the principal and her well-planned devolvement of responsibilities
- students' CBSE examination results which are consistently curricular benchmarks
- students' exemplary behaviour, their relationship with their peers and adults and their positive attitude to their studies
- students' high levels of environmental awareness and their contributions to the wider community
- the school's caring and supportive learning environment which has a clear focus on promoting individual students' academic and personal development
- the planning and implementation of the values and generic learning skills embedded in the Student Competency Framework across all subjects and grades.

The inspection identified the following as key areas for improvement:

- the quality of teaching and learning, particularly in more effective questioning of students and extended writing activities
- students' use of ICT in lessons to plan, research and present their work
- the planning and delivery of the physical education (PE) and Hindi curricula to provide a more stimulating experience for students
- more consistent and regular planning and implementation of cross-curricular themes and activities.



Performance Standard 1: Students' Achievement

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

The overall achievement of students is good with particular strengths in a few core subjects. Most students' performance is well in subjects measured against authorised curriculum, national and international standards. In MoE examined subjects, results are acceptable in Arabic and very strong in Islamic education. Results in CBSE examined subjects are mostly well above average with particularly impressive performance in English by Grade 12. ACER results in 2015 showed that Grades 3 to 10 students were attaining above other schools in the Middle East and above the international average, with particular strengths in English. Most students' progress in the knowledge, understanding and skills required in most of these subjects is generally good overall. Good progress is made by different groups of students against age, ability and gender and those with special educational needs or those identified as gifted and talented. Attainment has improved over time, although mathematics has seen a relative decline in performance.

The quality of achievement in Islamic education is good in middle and high school phases and acceptable in phase 1. For example, Grade 5 students know and understand the story of Prophet Younes. Grade 10 students can recite 'Sura Al Hujjrat' correctly following the correct 'Tajweed' rules. Students relate their learning to real-life scenarios. For example, in an effective Grade 10 lesson, students were engaged in a role-play activity about a Muslim family's activities during Ramadan.

The quality of students' achievement in Arabic as a second language is acceptable in all three phases of the school. Students are making better than expected progress in reading and listening and are developing an appropriate awareness of UAE values and culture through the planned Arabic activities. For example, Grade 5 students understood and accurately used their new vocabulary in a lesson about traffic regulations. Grade 7 students read Arabic text correctly and accurately answered comprehension questions from the text.

The quality of students' achievement in social studies improves from acceptable to very good across the grades. For example, in an effective Grade 1 lesson, students were able to name the colours of the UAE flag and what they represent. In an effective Grade 6 lesson, students prepared and presented a slideshow presentation about the natural geography of the UAE. Grade 10 students undertook an experiment to demonstrate how approaches to desalination in the UAE might be used as a solution to water crises in the world.

The overall quality of students' attainment and progress in English is good. It is very good by the time they leave the school in Grade 12 when they have highly-developed skills in communication, reading and writing. The school places a strong emphasis on the development of oral communication and reading. As a result, most students are

confident and articulate speakers. For example, students in Grade 5 gave a balanced opinion of a piece of text using examples to emphasise their points. Opportunities for students to write at length for a sustained period are sometimes limited.

The quality of students' achievement in mathematics is good in the high school phase, Grades 11 and 12 in particular, and acceptable in the earlier phases. In the early grades, the work is often not challenging enough for the most able. By Grade 4, students can measure a line segment using different units and fractions of units. In Grade 8, students can calculate the area and the perimeter of different 2-D shapes using formulae. This is representative of good levels of achievement. In an effective Grade 12 lesson, a student took the lead and explained the properties of trigonometric functions.

The quality of students' achievement in science is good across all phases. Most students are enthusiastic about their learning. For example, by Grade 6 they have learned the difference between reversible and irreversible changes such as how Indian bread could not be reversed to dough. From Grade 9, students visit laboratories and follow procedures to verify scientific principles. They acquire effective scientific research skills and make real-life links to their daily lives.

In external examinations for the high school commerce stream, the majority of Grade 12 students perform above curriculum standards and international averages in economics, psychology, business studies and accounting. Students in the higher grades are competent users of presentation software and produce interesting and well-researched slides. In economics, students can apply their knowledge and understanding of economic systems to the Indian economy. In a Grade 12 psychology lesson, students gave a fascinating and well-researched presentation on types of psychological disorders. Students in computer science are able to write basic code sequences. In business studies and accounting, students have a good grasp of appropriate terminology. The art work produced by students is impressive and is regularly exhibited outside the school. Students are enthusiastic singers in music lessons. In physical education (PE) lessons, too much time is spent by students watching and listening rather than participating.

Students' thinking and learning skills are good. Teachers use group work effectively to develop their collaboration skills. Students work well in pairs to evaluate each other's work. Students' higher-order skills such as critical thinking, creativity and problem solving are developing well within the ADEC Student Competency Framework. Students are often given opportunities to relate their learning to real-world situations and their personal experiences.

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		Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures		Good	Good	Good
Social responsibility and innovation skills		Good	Very Good	Very Good
Students' personal and social development and their innovation skills are very good overall. Students' behaviour in lessons and around the school is exemplary. They have a positive attitude to their studies. Students leave the school as articulate, confident young people who are well prepared for the next stage of their education. Their understanding of environmental issues is profound and they make regular contributions to the wider community, particularly to the disadvantaged. Relationships among students and with adults are respectful and harmonious. Students' attendance is very good at around 96%. Students are punctual to school and lessons. Students are developing strong leadership skills in lessons and around the school. They organise and lead school assemblies, invariably with a focus on environmental issues and caring for the disadvantaged. Students ensure the school is litter-free. They understand how to lead healthy lifestyles and stay safe, including when using the internet. Students have a good understanding of UAE culture and history and its multicultural nature. They show respect in assemblies for the UAE flag and sing the national anthem in Arabic. They have a good overall understanding and appreciation of the Islamic religion and its values. Students' positive attitudes, respect for their peers and adults and their exemplary behaviour creates a positive and harmonious learning environment throughout the school.				

Performance Standard 3: Teaching and Assessment

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

The overall quality of teaching and assessment is good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and know how to deliver this to students. They plan their lessons well with clear learning outcomes and success criteria that are shared with students. Cross-curricular links are planned but not always delivered in a way that enables students to apply their understanding across subjects. Most teaching is student-centred with many collaborative activities. For example, in a Grade 4 social studies lesson, students developed their creativity and communication skills by working collaboratively to design posters and symbols to represent their class. In a well-prepared Grade 9 economics lesson, the teacher gave the groups sufficient time to reflect, discuss and present their work. This approach is not always used in all lessons. Lessons in Hindi do not provide students with a sufficiently motivating experience that promotes their learning. Students speak clearly and confidently when answering subject-specific questions. For example, in a very effective Grade 9 English lesson on the Tennyson poem 'The Brook', students spoke authoritatively when questioned by the teacher about the meaning and imagery of the poem.

Teachers know their students' strengths well and plan for different abilities in lessons. They provide effective support for students who are struggling with tasks and encourage peer support. Teachers plan to develop students' higher-order skills such as critical thinking, problem solving and creativity in lessons but time for these is often too short when teachers rush to cover over-ambitious lesson objectives.

Teachers regularly use a suitable range of assessment methods to measure students' attainment levels and progress. Student work is marked comprehensively and feedback given on how to improve. The recently-introduced student passport for self-evaluation and target setting is an innovative and constructive method for teachers and students to work together to monitor and support learning.

Performance Standard 4: Curriculum

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

The curriculum is good and offers students a range of relevant learning experiences that prepare them very well for the next stage of their education and future careers. Students in Grades 11 and 12 opt for either a science or commerce stream of subjects. Art and music are offered to students in the lower grades and all students have physical education (PE). The school also offers Hindi and French. All students have timetabled sessions in the IT laboratory.

The school was chosen to pilot the ADEC Student Competency Framework, an initiative that it has implemented fully across the school. The values and generic learning skills in the framework have been mapped and embedded in teachers' planning across all subjects.

The curriculum has an explicit emphasis on students relating their learning to the local and global environments. Cross-curricular links are developing but are not yet fully embedded in the planning and delivery of all subjects.

The school offers a good range of extracurricular activities. Despite a lack of appropriate sports areas and resources, students still participate in inter-school competitions in basketball, badminton, football and swimming. The curriculum promotes and celebrates students' contribution to the wider community and their understanding of environmental issues. The curriculum is regularly reviewed by the school and this includes taking account of the views of parents.

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		Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
Care and support		Very Good	Very Good	Very Good

The protection, care, guidance and support for students are very good overall. The school's caring and supportive learning environment has a clear focus on promoting individual students' academic and personal development. Procedures for safeguarding are rigorous. The child protection procedures are comprehensive, reviewed regularly and shared with parents and staff. Frequent sessions are held to teach students about keeping safe and anti-bullying, including cyber bullying. These sessions are often led by students themselves. Supervision on the school buses is robust. All buses have a supervisor and parents are informed through a mobile phone application when their child enters or leaves a bus. The buildings are relatively old but safe and well maintained. There is limited provision for students with a physical disability with no lift to access the upper floors. There is currently no appropriate, safe surface or dedicated area for PE and games.

The clinic is clean and well resourced. The nurse keeps very accurate and detailed records of any incidents that may occur. Parents are kept fully informed of any ongoing issues. Healthy lifestyles are an integral part of school life. For example, students know which foods are unhealthy and recognise the importance of regular exercise.

Rigorous and comprehensive systems are in place to ensure students with special educational needs are identified and supported. Individual education plans (IEPs) are in place for these students. The school also provides IEPs for lower-attaining students and advanced learning plans (ALPs) for gifted and talented students to propose more advanced, challenging work for them. These plans are not yet being used sufficiently in practice to shape the work higher-attaining students are doing in lessons. As a result, this group of students is not being stretched as fully as it might be. The guidance given to senior students on career and university choices is impressive. Sixteen universities from around the world attended the school's careers fair. Guidance for students about their learning and future education is very beneficial.

Performance Standard 6: Leadership and management

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

Leadership and management are good overall. The effective leadership of the principal and her well-planned devolvement of responsibilities ensures that all staff feel involved in the school's improvement agenda. All school leaders are committed to providing a caring and supportive learning environment with a clear focus on promoting individual students' academic and personal development. The school's vision to educate, innovate and empower students to become global citizens is being met. The quality of education and care provided by the school is highly regarded by parents. It functions very efficiently on a daily basis, particularly given the large numbers of students relative to the size of the school premises.

The school's self-evaluation is generally accurate. The evidence presented for the judgments is extensive and focused. The inspection framework standards are led by school teams and these have contributed expertly to the school improvement plan. This has an appropriate focus on making teaching quality more consistent with the best practice at the school. Parents are regularly surveyed and their opinions acted upon. Communications with parents are regular and immediate. The electronic system for checking students on and off the buses is an excellent example of the high priority the school places on students' safety and well-being. Community links are effective and based on developing students' awareness and contributions to those in need.

The school's governing board acts as both a critical friend and enabler of the schools' aim to provide a high-quality education at an affordable price. The school is fully staffed with appropriately qualified teachers. The science laboratories have an appropriate range of basic equipment but the school often relies on students bringing their own items for science experiments. The library has an appropriate range of texts. Classrooms have a mobile library, funded by one of the students who won the prestigious Hamdan Award. Sports facilities are very limited with a hardcore playground the only area for PE lessons.

What the school should do to improve further:

1. Improve the quality of teaching and learning further by:
 - ii. developing more effective questioning techniques
 - iii. providing students with more regular tasks involving extended writing
 - iv. providing longer periods of time for students to discuss, reflect and present their work.
2. Develop students' use of ICT in lessons to plan, research and present their work by:
 - i. providing students with regular use of classroom computers
 - ii. providing projects and activities that specifically involve the use of classroom ICT facilities.
3. Plan and deliver the PE and Hindi curricula to provide a more stimulating experience for students by:
 - i. planning activities in PE lessons which ensure that all students are participating for longer periods of time
 - ii. planning activities in Hindi lessons that are student-centred, motivating and targeted to meet the needs of all groups of students.
4. Plan for and implement more consistent and regular cross-curricular themes and activities by:
 - i. holding more regular meetings of subject leaders to develop these themes and activities
 - ii. planning lesson activities that specifically utilise students' learning from other subject areas.