



مجلس أبوظبي للتعليم
Abu Dhabi Education Council
التعليم أولاً Education First



Private School Inspection Report

Scholar American International School

Academic Year 2016 – 2017

iqraa

Scholar American International School

Inspection Date	May 22, 2017	to	May 23, 2017
Date of previous inspection	N/A	to	N/A

General Information	
School ID	278
Opening year of school	2016
Principal	Elham El Abed
School telephone	+971 (0)2 586 1222
School Address	Abu Dhabi – Shakhbout City – Street 25
Official email (ADEC)	scholarsamerican.pvt@ade.c.ac.ae
School website	www.saisabudhabi.com
Fee ranges (per annum)	High category: AED 30,300 – AED 37,800
Licensed Curriculum	
Main Curriculum	American
Other Curriculum (if applicable)	-----
External Exams/ Standardised tests	Measurement of Academic Progress (MAP)
Accreditation	-----

Students		
Total number of students	58	
%of students per curriculum (if applicable)	Main Curriculum	100%
	Other Curriculum	0
Number of students in other phases	KG	25
	Primary:	31
	Middle:	2
	High:	-----
Age range	4 to 12 years	
Grades or Year Groups	KG – Grade 6	
Gender	Boys and Girls	
% of Emirati Students	60%	
Largest nationality groups (%)	1. Yemeni 11%	
	2. Sudanese 6%	
	3. Egyptian 5%	
Staff		
Number of teachers	21	
Number of teaching assistants (TAs)	3	
Teacher-student ratio	KG/ FS	1:5
	Other phases	1:2
Teacher turnover	8%	

Introduction

Inspection activities	
Number of inspectors deployed	2
Number of inspection days	2
Number of lessons observed	36
Number of joint lesson observations	4
Number of parents' questionnaires	N/A
Details of other inspection activities	The team conducted several meetings with senior leaders, teachers, support staff, students and parents. They analysed test and assessment results, scrutinised students' work across the school, and considered many of the school's policies and other documents. The leadership team was involved throughout the process and leaders conducted joint lesson observations with inspectors.

School	
School Aims	N/A
School vision and mission	Vision: Our vision is to create an open, collaborative school community that fosters the growth of responsible, confident, productive, and critical thinkers who are interested in the issues of their local and global communities and able to respond to different challenges. Mission: Our Mission is to provide a Western education within a context that respects local traditions, to encourage academic excellence, to implement an inclusive learning environment that

	accepts students of all ability levels and provide for their needs, and to build responsible personalities that embrace 21 st century learning skills and show interest in the important issues of the global community.
Admission Policy	Student admission procedures for Grade 1 - 6 include formal tests in mathematics, English and Arabic, together with an interview with parents and student. Interviews are held with KG children and parents to identify their needs and all are admitted.
Leadership structure (ownership, governance and management)	The day-to-day school operations are managed by the principal and vice principal. The board of trustees is overseen by a general director and consists of a financial advisor, a parent representative, and a teacher representative.

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 internally
Intellectual disability	1	0
Specific Learning Disability	0	0
Emotional and Behaviour Disorders (ED/ BD)	0	1
Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)	1	0
Speech and Language Disorders	0	0
Physical and health related disabilities	0	0
Visually impaired	0	0
Hearing impaired	0	0
Multiple disabilities	1	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	1
Visual and performing arts (e.g. art, theatre, recitation)	0
Psychomotor ability (e.g. dance or sport)	0

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)

The school was judged to be:	Band B	Acceptable
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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

Scholar American International Private School opened in 2016. It has a very low number of students in each grade. The school provides an acceptable quality of education. Students' achievement is acceptable in the large majority of subjects. Most students behave well, are interested in their learning and show respect to each other and to adults. Parents are supportive of the school; communications and reporting are good. The good care, guidance and support create a safe and happy learning environment for the children and students. Senior leaders provide a clear vision and direction that has enabled the school to become established effectively following its opening at the start of this academic year.

Progress made since last inspection and capacity to improve

The school has not previously been inspected. Acceptable progress has been made in establishing the school. The senior leadership team (SLT) demonstrates acceptable capacity to continue the school's development agenda as it continues to expand.

Development and promotion of innovation skills

Innovation, enterprise and research based learning is underdeveloped. There is inconsistency in providing opportunities for children and students to learn independently, use their initiative and make decisions. In a minority of lessons, teacher directed learning inhibits students' development of skills in evaluation and analysis. The project based learning, now being planned on a termly basis, is beginning to provide students with more opportunities to undertake research, solve problems and utilise their own ideas.

The inspection identified the following as key areas of strength:

- students' good behaviour and positive attitudes to learning
- very good attendance
- the quality of teaching and learning in English in Grades 1 to 6
- the interactive use of ICT by teachers and students in classrooms
- the quality of care and guidance that provides a safe, supportive and respectful learning environment

The inspection identified the following as key areas for improvement:

- students' attainment and progress and the quality of learning in all subjects
- the quality of teaching and learning, especially in Arabic
- more effective use of the assessment
- a stronger focus on students' learning outcomes in the monitoring of lessons
- deployment of teaching staff to maximize their effectiveness in accelerating students' progress



Performance Standard 1: Students' Achievement

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



The outcomes from inspection activities, including lesson observations and scrutiny of students' work indicate that the achievement of most students is acceptable in all phases of the school and in the large majority of subjects. In Kindergarten (KG), children's attainment and progress are acceptable in social studies, English, mathematics and science. They are weak in Arabic. In Grades 1 to 6, students' attainment and progress are good in English; acceptable in social studies, mathematics and science; they are weak in Arabic. Attainment is weak and progress acceptable in Islamic education in all phases of the school.

Most children in KG entered the school with little or no English and students entering other grades had very varied educational experiences. All students are learning in their second language. Measurement of Academic Progress (MAP) standardised tests in trimesters 1 and 2 show that a large minority of students in Grades 1 to 6 are meeting their expected progress in mathematics and reading and a minority are meeting their expected progress in language usage. In Grades 4 to 6 science, a large minority are meeting expected progress. The school's internal benchmark tests show acceptable progress in most subjects over the 2 trimesters since the school opened.

In Islamic education, attainment is weak. Progress in lessons and as seen in students' workbooks is acceptable. Internal assessments show that most students joined the school with a narrow range of understanding of the general concepts of Islamic manners and etiquettes. They have limited ability to express their understanding when reciting short verses of Holy Qur'an or narrating Hadith Sharif. In Arabic, attainment and progress are weak in all phases. In KG, the majority of children attain below age expected levels. Most KG1 children can identify some Arabic letters and know the sounds but cannot recognise simple words of 3 to 4 letters. KG2 children can recognise some letters but the majority of children cannot blend letters to form words. They have limited practice in phonics and rarely use vowels to enhance their acquisition of literacy skills. In Grades 1 to 5, only a minority of students can read with comprehension. Most can only answer questions with one word, which does not often reflect their real understanding. In Grades 1 and 2, the majority of students lack confidence to speak in front of a group. In Grades 3 and 4, most students can recognise grammatical rules of joined nouns. A majority are unable to write simple sentences or analyse a simple story. In Grades 5 and 6, are developing confidence in reading aloud but a large minority cannot make simple inferences about the content of stories. Most can write a short, simple letter or report but do not write for any length.

In social studies, attainment and progress are acceptable. In KG, social studies is integrated with Arabic and science lessons. The majority of children can recognize

the colour of UAE flag and enjoy colouring it. In Grades 1 to 5, most students know and understand UAE culture and heritage, which is evident in displays of their work and their response to activities in lessons. They know geographic facts about the UAE. For example, most Grade 1 students have a sound understanding of old and modern features of the UAE. They know the traditional foods linked to UAE heritage and culture. By Grades 4 and 5, most students know facts about natural resources and green energy. In Grade 6, the large majority of students can define the meaning of urbanization and link it to world cultures.

In English, attainment and progress are acceptable in KG and good in the other phases. Most KG1 children are able to add a correct vowel to make the required 3 letter word. Most KG2 children are able to sort words with the same sound. In Grade 1, most students are able to read detailed instructions and follow them to write complex sentences; they are able to use high frequency words in forming sentences. Most Grade 2 students can generate a sentence using given words; create their own recipes and choose words to complete a sentence. Most Grade 3 students are able to choose and use pronouns correctly in a sentence. They are able to choose a topic and write their own details. For example, a more able student was able to design and write his own instructions for making a sandwich. In Grades 4 to 6, most students show good understanding and skills when reading age appropriate texts. Most students in these grades are making good progress in writing meaningful sentences with legible handwriting.

Attainment and progress are acceptable in mathematics. In KG2, most children are able to perform simple additions of 1 digit numbers adding to 5 or 7. A minority find the activity easy and are insufficiently challenged. In Grade 1, most students are able to identify and name 2D and 3D shapes. All students undertake the same task and higher ability students finish the task quickly. Most Grade 3 students demonstrate a basic understanding of different ways to calculate time intervals using digital and analogue clocks. In Grades 4 to 6, most students are making acceptable progress in understanding fractions and solving problems involving more than two steps.

Attainment and progress are acceptable in science. In KG2, most children are able to identify the differences in the four seasons of the year by drawing pictures of features related to a particular season. Most Grade 4 students can understand the concept of inherited characteristics in plants and animals. They are able to discuss the topic in reference to their own personal characteristics they have inherited. Most Grade 5 students are able to discuss the different orbits of planets in the solar system and carry out a practical experiment to simulate different orbital movements. Most students in Grades 1 to 6 are developing acceptable scientific skills in observation and recording of experiments led by the teacher. Their skills in suggesting hypotheses and in setting up their own experiments are



underdeveloped.

Attainment and progress in other subjects are acceptable. In Grade 5, most students studying French can select a word and are able to find the word or picture representing the word from displays around the room. Most students can link their learning in French to everyday life. For example, one student was learning to say 'I want to be a soldier' in French when discussing careers. In Grade 6 music, most students are able to follow a correct rhythm when playing the UAE National Anthem on two different musical instruments. In KG2, most children enthusiastically develop their physical skills in balancing, running and jumping and the techniques for playing simple games.

The development of learning skills is acceptable overall. Most children and students have positive attitudes to learning. Students' interactions and collaboration skills are acceptable in most subjects. The small number of students inhibits the effective development of collaborative skills in a minority of classes. In a majority of lessons, most students are reliant on their teacher to guide them through the learning. In the more successful lessons, students show good ability to work independently and take more responsibility for their own learning. A majority of students show a growing confidence in their English communication skills and are able to express their own ideas. A majority of teachers link learning activities to everyday examples. The practice is inconsistent in other lessons. The development of innovation, problem solving and critical thinking skills is inconsistent in lessons across the school. Project based learning is beginning to provide more opportunities for students to develop their research and problem solving skills.

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
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Personal development	Good	Good	Good	
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	

Students' personal development is good. Their attitudes are positive in lessons and around the school. Their behaviour is good. Relationships between students are good and they are highly respectful towards adults and guests. A majority of students have a good understanding of healthy life styles and applying it in their school and social life. For example, they recognise the types of food and liquids that they need to eat to stay healthy. Students have good opportunities to engage in activities during break times and on Thursday afternoons. For example, the school runs sports, art and handicraft, music and English clubs. Students' attendance rate is very good at 96%.

Most students demonstrate an acceptable understanding of Islamic values, as demonstrated in the way they act and behave around the school. They show respect to the nature of pluralistic cultures in the UAE. Assemblies focus well on celebrating Arabic culture and UAE values. The school provides sufficient opportunities for girls and boys to pray. Most students demonstrate an acceptable understanding of UAE values and heritage. They express pride in their identity when they speak about their country and its inspiring leaders. For example, they show knowledge of late Sheikh Zayed's character and can compare him to other Islamic leaders.

Most students participate in environmental and other activities, for example; recycling, sports, art and music clubs. They have opportunities to work on science or social studies projects and participate in extra-curricular activities. They are able to play an active part in events such as the school science fair, spelling bee in English, National Day and Flag Day celebrations. There are limited opportunities for students to be involved in innovation, enterprise or to develop their own initiative in lessons.

Performance Standard 3: Teaching and Assessment

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

Teaching and assessment is acceptable overall. During the inspection, the teaching in most lessons in all phases was deemed acceptable or better. It was weak in a minority of them. The large majority of teaching in Arabic is weak. It is good in all English lessons in Grades 1 to 5.

Most teachers have acceptable knowledge of their subjects and a majority understand how students learn best. The majority of Arabic teachers have limited content pedagogical knowledge. Lesson plans are mostly consistent, align to common core curriculum standards and clearly identify appropriately challenging and differentiated learning activities. A minority of plans lack sufficient detail in the targeted activities to match the learning needs of different groups of students.

In KG, most activities are closely directed by the teacher and common for all children. This leads to a few children undertaking work they already know and lacks the challenge needed to move them to the next stage of learning. Children have few opportunities to experience constructive play and to make choices in their activities. In Grades 1 to 6, teachers are able to provide good attention to individuals because of the small number of students in most classes. Most students work enthusiastically and successfully in paired or individual activities. They are able to discuss their learning and give everyday examples to illustrate their understanding. In Arabic lessons, teachers dominate the instruction, with few opportunities for students' active participation in learning. This is leading to weak attainment and progress in most lessons. Limited use is made of drill and practice. Teachers do not model good linguistic practices.

Most teachers share lesson outcomes with students and have keywords written on the board. They encourage students to use technical language relevant to the subject content. A majority of teachers use questioning well to engage students in dialogue. In the more effective lessons, teachers provide opportunity for students to ask questions and share their ideas with other students. In a minority of lessons, opportunities are often missed for students to have paired discussions to share their ideas and report them to the class. There is inconsistency in the planning and

implementation of learning activities matched to the needs of different groups of students. The school is in the early stages of developing strategies for increasing students' opportunities for improving their innovation, problem solving and critical thinking skills. The use of projects, which link the content of different subjects provides a positive opportunity for enhancing these areas of learning each term.

The school has acceptable practices for assessing students' progress. The use of internal baseline, diagnostic tests is providing valuable information on students' progress. Continuous assessments and end of unit tests are used well to check specific skills and to plan interventions. The MAP testing is used well to check the schools' progress monitoring against external standardised information. With the small number of students in each grade, the senior team is able to regularly review the data to check outcomes for each child and student. There is inconsistency in the use of assessment by a minority of teachers to plan activities aligned to students' learning needs. With the small numbers, teachers know the students well and the majority are aware of their strengths and weaknesses across the areas of learning.

Performance Standard 4: Curriculum

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

The schools' curriculum is aligned to the American Common Core Curriculum Standards (CCCS), providing clear outcomes for students' attainment and progress. The school uses specialist mathematics and science curriculum that is also fully aligned to the CCCS. The curriculum is well balanced and is enhanced by additions to the core subjects of art, music, PE, ICT, together with French in Grades 5 and 6. In addition, social studies is taught in Arabic and English. There is presently very little choice for students. The school develops links between subjects through projects. Students choose to undertake projects with a combination of subjects from mathematics; English; science; and social studies. ICT is integrated into the curriculum, with smart boards and computers in each classroom. The annual curriculum plans are broken down systematically into termly and weekly plans. From these, the majority of teachers develop effectively detailed lesson plans. Curriculum

reviews are undertaken every term. Informal reviews are ongoing, with teachers adapting their lesson plans based on the effectiveness of learning in the previous lesson.

The curriculum is provided by the parent company to which the school belongs. It is adapted well to meet the specific needs of the students in the school. Because of the small number of students in each class, the curriculum is modified well by a majority of teachers to meet the needs of individual students. Students undertake project-based learning every term. The themes they choose enable most students to undertake research and determine their own ideas across different areas of learning. For example, Grade 4 students link social studies and English to research 'Ramadan'. Linked to the project, they are undertaking two acts of charity outside the school. In a science innovation project, students are using recycled materials to create working musical instruments. On completion, students make a presentation about their projects.

The curriculum fully embraces the development of a clear understanding of UAE values, culture and society. It is fully integrated into the social studies regionally based curriculum and other subjects often link the learning effectively with aspects of UAE culture.

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	Good	Good	
Care and support	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	

The school has good provision and active procedures for care, welfare and safeguarding of students. A child protection policy is in place and understood by staff. Not all staff have received training, but most are aware of their responsibilities. The caring and respectful ethos is evident in the warm relationships shared between students and staff. Security is thorough, with the guard at the main entrance diligently checking identification, registering all visitors and providing visitors' badges. CCTV cameras provide an extra effective level of security. The school rents two buses to meet the transportation needs for students travelling from local areas. The buses meet all safety requirements. The school has a certified



nurse, with two very well-equipped clinics. The school building is new. It is extremely clean and well maintained. The school provides an attractive learning environment to stimulate students' learning. Classrooms are spacious, equipped with ICT tools, and enable teachers to provide a variety of educational experiences for students. Specialist facilities for art, music, science, PE, library and ICT further enhance students' learning opportunities. There are well equipped and shaded play areas for KG and primary. There are prayer rooms in each section. Appropriate arrangements are in place with a variety of suppliers and contractors to monitor any urgent maintenance and repairs. All equipment checks are regularly updated and recorded. The school nurse has a proactive role in working with the health and safety committee to increase awareness across the school of the importance of healthy life styles. They raise awareness of health and fitness for students and regularly monitor their weight. Useful advice is provided to students and parents to increase their awareness of healthy-life styles. The canteen is supporting the initiative by providing healthy products.

The school provide effective encouragement for students to behave well through the implementation of the positive behaviour support policy. Behaviour is well managed. There are effective procedures for promoting good attendance that are leading to very good attendance. The school has identified three SEN students who have reasonable support in meeting their needs. The procedures for the identification of SEN and G&T from within the school are in the early stages of development.

Performance Standard 6: Leadership and management

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

Leadership and management are acceptable. Senior leaders provide a clear vision and direction that has enabled the school to successfully become established following its opening at the start of this academic year. The SLT consists of the principal and vice-principal. There are no middle managers due the low number of students. A high priority has been the establishment and implementation of policies and procedures for the opening of the school. This has resulted in acceptable communications and positive relationships. Regular planning time, staff meetings and professional development sessions provide useful opportunities for teachers to discuss students' progress and share ideas. Those attending cascade their newly acquired knowledge and skills to appropriate colleagues.

The Self Evaluation Form (SEF) is reasonably well detailed in the evidence provided for each of the performance standards. All staff were involved in giving their thoughts and ideas for each of the performance standards. MAP data and internal assessments are used to inform the school's judgements. Its overall evaluation of students' attainment in the SEF is significantly higher than that indicated by the external MAP data and attainment levels observed during the inspection. All strategic development plans are appropriately focused on the smooth opening of the school. The development and implementation of policies and procedures taking a high priority. The school operates a well-structured performance management system for all staff. The principal and vice-principal undertake all formal observations, walkthroughs and learning walks. Strengths and areas for improvement are discussed with teachers and appropriate training organised where needed. Lesson observations are heavily focussed on teacher compliance, with only limited reference to the impact of teaching on students' learning. In Arabic observations, there is insufficient monitoring of the curriculum standards being taught. All plans are presently associated with the opening, operation and expansion of the new school.



The school has positive relations with parents. There is an established Parents Advisory Council and the school takes notice of their suggestions and ideas in representing the parent voice. There are good communications with parents. They are regular and include emails, SMS messaging and information. The school's internet portal enables with parents to access their child's information, with all assessments posted within 2 days. There are good reporting systems in place. Reports are issued each semester, followed by a parent and teacher conference. The school has developed links with Zayed High Care Organisation, with the heritage village and have participated in the (Yasalam) walk in connection with healthy living. Students have opportunities to visit to the Sheikh Zayed Mosque and the Civil Defence give talks to students on bus and road safety.

The school is governed by a board of trustees. The principal attends all meetings and reports on the progress of the school. The owner is in regular contact with the school and the Board are making effective preparations for the next stage of the expansion of the school.

The school runs well on a day-to-day basis. It is extremely well staffed for the small number of students in the school. Not all the teaching staff are efficiently deployed to maximize their effectiveness in accelerating students' progress and significantly raise attainment levels. The building is very high quality. It is clean and well-maintained. Rooms are a very good size to allow for flexible learning arrangements. The school is reasonably well resourced. There are two large gyms; a large swimming pool and a small pool; two shaded outdoor play areas for KG and elementary students.

What the school should do to improve further:

1. Raise achievement in all subjects by:
 - i. improving the quality of teaching and learning with more effective use of assessment to identify the starting point of learning for each student
 - ii. creating activities to match the identified needs of all groups of students
 - iii. maximising the opportunities for children and students to be active learners throughout each lesson
 - iv. creating a greater focus on developing students' higher order learning skills
2. Improve teaching and learning in Arabic to raise achievement to at least match that in other subjects by;
 - i. fully aligning learning to the required standards for each grade level
 - ii. engaging students as active learners in independent and collaborative activities matched to their assessed needs
 - iii. creating a learning partnership with the teachers of English to share good practice in order to improve pedagogy in Arabic
3. Improve leadership and create greater accountability by:
 - i. ensuring that all lesson observations are fully focused on the effectiveness of students' learning
 - ii. regularly monitoring Arabic lessons to ensure they are aligned to the required standards
 - iii. deploying all teaching staff to maximize their effectiveness in accelerating students' progress and in significantly raising attainment levels