



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



Summary Inspection Report

The Gulf International Private Academy

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Iqraa

The Gulf International Private Academy

Inspection Date	14 th – 17 th April, 2013
School ID#	159
Type of School	Private
Curriculum	American
Number of Students	797
Age Range	3 – 19 years
Gender	Mixed
Principal	Dalia Kamel
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Introduction

The school was inspected by four inspectors. The inspectors observed 79 lessons and other student activities, scrutinised students' written work, analysed student and school performance data, parent questionnaires, studied school documents and talked with the owner, staff, students and parents.

Description of the School

The school opened in September 2001 and offers an American curriculum. There are 797 students on roll, 438 boys and 359 girls. In Kindergarten (KG) there are 119 students, 67 boys and 52 girls. In Grades 1-5 there are 382 students, in Grades 6-9 there are 205 students and in Grades 10-12 there are 91 students, 42 boys and 49 girls. There is a mixed heritage of students within the school: 34% are UAE nationals, 13% from Jordan, 13% from Egypt, 12% from USA and smaller numbers from other countries. Approximately 85% of students have English as an additional language. Only one student has been identified with special educational needs. Attendance for this academic year is very good at 97%. Students take entry tests before joining the school which are not validated against international standards. The fees range from AED 10,200 to AED 22,000 per year, which are in the low to medium band range. Salaries range from AED 2,600 to AED 17,000 per month.

The Effectiveness of the School

Band C

Grade 6

Inspectors judged the Gulf International Private Academy to be in Band C; that is a school in need of significant improvement.

Overall standards throughout the school are well below international standards for all subjects. Students' progress is unsatisfactory, especially in the primary and middle grades, because they do not have the level of English skills needed to access the US curriculum subjects. Gifted and talented students and those with special educational needs do not make the progress they should because the level of challenge in lessons is inappropriate. Students' study skills are weak as the school provides few opportunities for students to develop their skills as independent learners.

In Arabic, standards attained by students are not in line with the Ministry of Education (MoE) expectations. In all grades, students are not provided with sufficient opportunities to develop their speaking and writing skills. In Islamic and social studies, the main focus is on gaining knowledge and students rarely apply what they learn to real life which limits the progress they can make.

Standards and progress in Kindergarten (KG) are below expectations. The introduction of phonics in English is beginning to help students recognise the letters of the English alphabet and to relate them to their sounds. In mathematics students recognise numerals up to 10. There are limited opportunities for students to take responsibility for their own learning.

In English, students' speaking, listening and reading skills are stronger than their writing. There are too few opportunities across the school for students to develop their creative writing skills. Speaking skills are stronger in higher grades, but in the lower grades many students lack confidence in speaking English. In mathematics and science, their progress is restricted because the level of challenge is too low for most students. In both subjects there are too few opportunities provided to develop problem solving skills. In science, progress is slow because students do not have sufficient opportunities to develop practical and investigative skills. In ICT, progress is often unsatisfactory because the level of challenge in the tasks does not match the needs of students. In art, some students produce high quality work but opportunities are missed to develop their creative skills.

Behaviour in the school is satisfactory. Girls' behaviour is better than boys, especially in Grades 1-6. Most students are keen to learn and respond well when they are set challenging work. Unsatisfactory behaviour occurs when teachers are not consistent with class management strategies. Different nationalities work well together and students have a satisfactory understanding of the UAE culture and heritage. There is a strong commitment from the owner, management, staff and students to promote the priorities and aspirations of the people of the UAE. Attendance has improved since the last inspection and is currently at 97% which is very good. Students show respect to teachers and the quality of relationships within the school is positive. Students are welcoming and courteous to visitors. They have opportunities to take responsibility in the school assemblies. There are some opportunities to take responsibility in lessons, such as when students shadow teachers and teach parts of the lesson. Not all students develop the social and personal skills they will need to face the challenges of the 21st Century.

Teachers work hard and are enthusiastic but there are some weaknesses. Too many lessons are dominated by knowledge acquisition at the expense of developing students' skills and understanding. There is an over-reliance on teaching to the textbook. Lesson objectives, which are displayed in every lesson, rarely identify the learning outcomes for students. Students' work is regularly marked by teachers, but this assessment data is not being used to ensure that the work set in lessons meets the needs of individual students. The lack of standardised testing results in teachers having low expectations for their students. Too often teachers prevent students from thinking for themselves or

developing any deeper understanding. There is a strong commitment by the school to the professional development needs of staff. Much of the training has concentrated on teaching so that, for example, all teachers write lesson objectives. Little professional development has been given on how students learn. Students and teachers receive satisfactory assistance from well-deployed support staff. There is not an excessive turnover of teachers and neither is there an excessive reliance on private tuition.

The allocation of time to individual subjects provides for a broadly balanced curriculum. Not all grades receive art and there is currently no music provision within the school. The impact of the curriculum is not motivating students. Despite the availability of differentiated resources within the school, the curriculum documents do not identify provision for differentiation. There is a standard curriculum planning format for all subjects, that includes reference to timings, topics, standards, resources and assessment, and which ensures consistency across the school. The curriculum plans are reviewed at the end of each term. Subject coordinators review lesson plans weekly to further ensure consistency. Provision for non-Arabic speakers does not meet their needs. The curriculum promotes an understanding of UAE and community values. Extra-curricular activities are narrow in scope and few students participate. The weaknesses in the curriculum are a major reason why students' learning skills and academic progress are unsatisfactory.

Students feel safe and secure. The school is vigilant in safeguarding students' welfare including when students arrive and depart from school on a daily basis. Bullying in the school is not accepted and many posters and activities around the school ensure this. The child protection policy and associated procedures are clear and effective and are known to all staff. There is no corporal punishment. Recruitment of teaching staff is not sufficiently rigorous. The central register lacks some of the required information and 22 of the current staff have not received approval from ADEC for the jobs they do in school. The girls' site does not have an appropriate, fully equipped first aid room.

There has been significant improvement since the last inspection in upgrading the quality of accommodation. A new building for girls has been opened which is clean and light and provides satisfactory accommodation for the delivery of the curriculum. There have been improvements to the outdoor facilities. All the issues identified in the last inspection report with regard to accommodation have been effectively resolved. The school has not ensured that girls are able to leave the building quickly in the event of an evacuation.

The school has made a substantial investment in technology so that all classrooms are fitted with projectors and smart boards. Many students do not have access to ICT to support their learning in some areas of the curriculum. The school is piloting the use of e-books for all grades 1-12 students who receive their texts on compact discs. Resources are kept in a safe and usable condition and do not affect students' health and safety. Teachers are adequate in number but some teachers are not qualified well enough for the subjects and ages they teach. The resources in the libraries have increased but they are still not adequate.

The leadership of the school is clear about the school's strengths. They are proud of the significant improvements that have been made since the last inspection. The school has reviewed its leadership structure and is currently developing the role of middle leaders so that they can be more effective in supporting their colleagues. The school runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis. Finances are soundly managed. Staff reported that they are treated fairly. The school has developed some links with organisations, ensuring some appropriate support for staff and students. Evaluation of teaching and learning and other aspects of the life of the school lack sufficient rigour and focus in order to raise students' attainment and progress, and the quality of provision.

There have been improvements in every one of the eight standards since the last inspection. The school does not ensure that the overall standards are on a par with the best international standards. Fees broadly reflect the quality of what the school offers. The school has the capacity for sustained improvement.

What the school should do to improve further:

1. Introduce more rigorous strategies in order to:
 - i. ensure higher expectations for teaching and learning; and
 - ii. evaluate and monitor the work of the school and focus prioritised improvement.
2. Raise students' attainment and progress by increasing the use of assessment data.
3. Introduce standardised testing to ensure that all students are fully challenged in lessons, including the gifted and talented and those students with special educational needs.
4. Improve the quality of teaching and learning by providing more opportunities for practical approaches to learning, and for students to develop critical thinking and problem solving skills.
5. Ensure all staff receive approval from ADEC for the jobs they do in school.