دائـرة الـتـعـلـيـم والـمـعـرفـة
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
AND KNOWLEDGE

Inspection Report of
Al Nahda National School for Boys

Overall Effectiveness: Good

Academic Year 2017 – 2018

Contents

School Information

General Information	Inspection date:	from	21 Shaban,1439h	to	24 Shaban,1439h
		from	07-May-18	to	10-May-18
	School name		Al Nahda National School for Boys		
	School ID		9003		
	School address		Al Murror Road, Abu Dhabi		
	School telephone		+971 (0)2 445 4200		
	School official email		alnahdboys.pvt@adec.ac.ae		
	School website		www.nahdaschools.com		
	School curriculum		British and American		
	School phases		Primary to High		
	Fee range and category		AED 17,500 – AED 26,000. (Low to medium).		
	Number of lessons observed		144		
	Number of joint lessons observed		13		
Staff Information	Total number of teachers		147		
	Turnover rate		11%		
	Number of teaching assistants		N/A		
	Teacher- student ratio		1 : 17		
Student Information	Total number of students		2,488		
	% of Emirati Students		29 %		
	% of Largest nationality groups		1. Jordan 16%		
			2. Egypt 15%		
			3. Syria 9%		
	% of SEN students		1 %		
	% of students per phase		KG: N/A	Middle: 32%	
			Primary: 14%	High: 54%	
	Gender		Boys		

The Performance of the School

Performance Standard 1

Students' Achievement

Good

Performance Standard 2

Students' personal and social development and their innovation skills

Good

Performance Standard 3

Teaching and Assessment

Good

Performance Standard 4

Curriculum

Good

Performance Standard 5

The protection, care, guidance and support of students

Good

## Performance Standard 6

Leadership and management

Good

Evaluation of the school's overall performance

- The overall performance of the school is good. Since the last inspection, the number of students has increased and a new leadership team has been appointed, including a new principal and vice-principal.
- Students' achievement is good. Leaders have raised students' overall achievement in social studies, English and the non-core subjects. Students' listening, speaking and reading skills are key strengths in Arabic and English. Students' achievement in Islamic Education, mathematics and PE are acceptable. Students' learning skills are good overall. However, opportunities to develop critical thinking, problem-solving and innovation skills in lessons are not consistently well developed.
- Students' personal and social development is good overall. Most students display positive attitudes to learning. While most students are well behaved, a minority of boys misbehave in lessons. Students have a good understanding of Islamic values and a very good understanding of their own and others' cultures. Students' social responsibility and innovation skills are acceptable. A few students do not arrive to school on time.
- The overall quality of teaching and assessment is good. Teachers impart secure subject knowledge and use questioning effectively. Most plan engaging practical learning opportunities that interest and motivate students to learn well. Teachers effectively assess and monitor students' progress in lessons, but do not always use assessment information effectively to inform future learning.
- The school's curriculum is good. It makes meaningful cross-curricular links with other subjects, Emirati culture and UAE society. The curriculum has been rigorously reviewed and now meets most students' academic and personal needs. It does not yet effectively promote students' innovation skills in lessons.
- The protection, care, guidance and support of students is good. Students with special educational needs (SEN) and those who are gifted and talented (G&T) are accurately identified. There is a good choice of curriculum and subjects, as well as career guidance for students. Students' attendance and punctuality is not effectively promoted. The school responded quickly to inspectors' concerns about some locked fire doors.
- The overall quality of leadership and management is good. The Principal's vision and inclusive ethos is shared by the school community. The governors offer good support to help drive improvement. Heads of Department (HODs) are at the early stages of leading their subjects. They do not yet focus enough on learning when monitoring lessons.

Progress made since last inspection and capacity to improve

| Previous Round | Good | Current Round | Good |
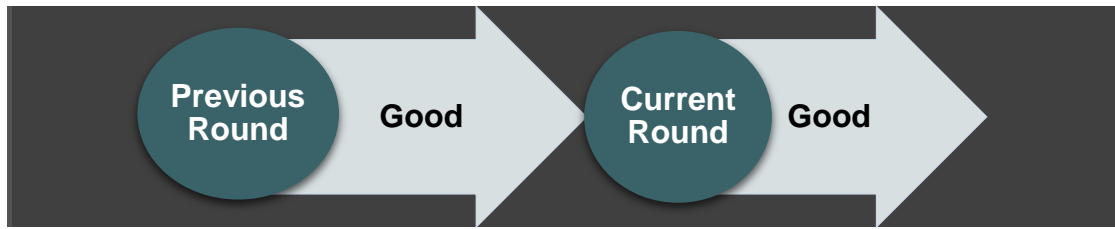
- Senior leaders have made improvements since the previous inspection and have sustained good standards overall.

- Senior leaders have raised students' achievement in social studies, English and non-core subjects. These are now good overall. The curriculum has been reviewed and is now streamlined, ensuring work is well matched to most students' learning needs and age. SEN and G&T students are now accurately identified.

- Assessment procedures are now more effective and provide realiable information about students' achievements. Data is still not systemically benchmarked by all leaders.

- Most teachers ensure that lessons promote group work as well as independent learning. However, lessons still do not effectively promote students' critical thinking, problem-solving and innovation skills in lessons.

- Overall, the progress made in raising and sustaining good standards demonstrates that leaders have good capacity to further improve the school.

Key areas of strength and areas for improvement

Key areas of strength

- Students' listening, speaking and reading skills in Arabic and English.
- Cross-curricular links between areas of learning.
- Students' appreciation and understanding of Islamic values, and their respect for Emirati heritage and culture.
- The identification of SEN and G&T students.
- Leaders' vision and direction for an inclusive and welcoming school.

Key areas for improvement

1. Raise students' achievement in all subjects, particularly in Islamic Education and mathematics, by providing:
    i. work that is always engaging and challenging
    ii. activities which develop students' critical thinking, problem-solving and innovation skills in all lessons.
2. Improve the quality of teaching, particularly in the primary phase, by:
    i. positively managing students' behaviour using an agreed behaviour management system
    ii. providing greater opportunities for students to write in Arabic and English
    iii. using assessment data more effectively to inform future learning
    iv. ensuring teachers mark work to help students correct mistakes and improve their learning.
3. Develop leadership and management further by:
    i. improving students' attendance and punctuality
    ii. developing middle leadership so that HODs observe lessons focusing on students' learning.

Provision for Reading

- The school has two libraries with a good selection of books in Arabic and English. There is a wide range of fiction and non-fiction texts to support learning across the curriculum. Students can choose from a range of age-appropriate books. Students use the library for personal study and enjoyment.
- Leaders effectively track students' progress in Arabic and English reading. Data shows that students make good progress, particularly in the development of comprehension, inererence and deduction skills. Comprehension practice is well embedded across all subjects. This enriches students' vocabulary and generates in-depth discussions, particularly amongst older students.
- Leaders have plans to develop reading provision. These are not yet synthesised into a reading development plan.
- To promote children's enjoyment of reading, students are encouraged to read both at school and home. Reading is a regular feature of almost all language lessons in Arabic and English. This is because the school have placed an emphasis on reading and have provided high quality Professional Development (PD) for all teaching staff, including librarians.

Performance Standard 1: Students' Achievement

Students' achievement Indicators		KG	Primary	Middle	High
Islamic Education	**Attainment**		Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
	Progress		Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Arabic (as a First Language)	**Attainment**		Good	Good	Good
	Progress		Good	Good	Good
Arabic (as additional Language)	**Attainment**		Good	Good	Good
	Progress		Good	Good	Good
Social Studies	**Attainment**		Good	Good	N/A
	Progress		Good	Good	N/A
English	**Attainment**		Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
	Progress		Acceptable	Good	Good
Mathematics	**Attainment**		Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
	Progress		Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Science	**Attainment**		Good	Good	Good
	Progress		Good	Good	Good
Other subjects (Art, Music, PE)	**Attainment**		Good	Good	Good
	Progress		Good	Good	Good
Learning Skills			Acceptable	Good	Good

Overall achievement

- The overall quality of students' achievement is good. Students typically join the school with skills expected for their age. Almost all students speak limited English when they enrol. Students' achievement in Islamic Education and mathematics is acceptable in all phases. Students' achievement in the primary phase is acceptable because their learning skills are less well developed.

- 2017 External Measure of Achievement (EMSA) data for Arabic reading is good in Grade 5, acceptable in Grades 9 and 11, and weak in Grade 7. Arabic writing is good in Grade 5 and weak in Grades 7, 9, and 11. Grade 12 Ministry of Education (MoE) exam results were outstanding in Islamic Education and Arabic in 2018. This data does not concur with inspection evidence and findings.

- Programme for International Students' Assessments (PISA) mock results for 2018 were above Abu Dhabi national averages for students studying the British curriculum. For those studying the American curriculum, students were above average in mathematics and science but below in reading.

- 2017 international General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) results show good attainment in Arabic, weak in English and very good attainment in mathematics and science. Attainment was weak in mathematics and science at Advanced Subsidiary (AS) levels. Students studying Advanced (A) levels attained good results in mathematics and chemistry, very good in biology but weak results in physics.

- School's internal continuous assessment data indicates that students' progress is good in almost all subjects, including over time and in all phases. This does not wholly concur with inspection evidence and findings.

- In lessons and coursework, students with SEN and those who are G&T achieve at a good level. There is no significant difference between the achievement of Emirati and non-Emirati students.

Subjects

- Students' achievement in **Islamic education** is acceptable. Most students attain age-appropriate curriculum standards. Students demonstrate an acceptable understanding of Islamic concepts. They make some links between the teachings of the Holy Qur'an and the Prophet Mohammad. Students' recitation skills are good.

- Students' achievement in **Arabic** as a first and second language is good. The majority of students speak confidently in Arabic, but many do not always use standard Arabic when communicating. Students read fluently. They demonstrate good comprehension skills. Students' writing skills are less well developed.

- Students' achievement in **social studies** is good and the majority attain levels that are above curriculum expectations. Students demonstrate a good understanding of UAE history, geography and its economy. Students relate this to their understanding of UAE culture and heritage.
- Students' attainment in **English** is acceptable and their progress is good overall. Students' achievement in the primary phase is acceptable because students' learning skills are less well developed. Most students listen and speak well in English, confidently holding conversations. Students read with understanding and demonstrate good comprehension skills. Their writing skills are less well-developed. Students do not always have enough opportunities to develop their writing at length.
- Students' achievement in **mathematics** is acceptable overall. Most students in the primary phase can calculate the area of shapes. Their mental mathematics skills are less secure. In the middle phase most students can use the rules of trigonometry to calculate angles. Older students in the high phase show understanding of the steps when solving rational equations but a large minority have difficulty in applying the rules when working independently.
- Students' achievement in **science** is good. The majority of students are demonstrating knowledge, skills and understanding above curriculum standards in science. The promotion of investigative work in well-resourced laboratories contributes to students' sustained achievement.
- Students' achievement in **other subjects** is good overall. The majority of students achieve above age-expected curriculum standards, particularly in IT, art, music, business studies, and French. In IT, students can confidently programme and code. In art, students can use a range of mediums to accurately draw and paint. Students' achievement is acceptable in PE where students are not sufficiently challenged to develop their skills and work collaboratively as a team.

Learning skills

- Students' learning skills are good overall. They are acceptable in the primary phase. Most students enjoy learning and are responsible learners. They work and collaborate effectively. In most subjects, students make clear connections between areas of learning. When encouraged to do so, they use enquiry, research skills and ICT to problem solve and develop critical thinking skills. However, these are underdeveloped features of learning in most lessons.

Areas of Relative Strength:

- Raised achievement in social studies, English and non-core subjects overall.
- Students' speaking, listening and reading skills.
- Links made between areas of learning.

Areas for Improvement:

- Students' achievement in the primary phase, Islamic Education and mathematics.
- Students' writing skills in Arabic and English.
- Innovation, critical thinking and problem-solving skills in lessons.

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

- Students' personal and social development is good overall. Most students demonstrate positive attitudes to learning. However, the small minority of students do not always take enough personal responsibility for their learning in the primary phase.
- Students' behaviour is good overall. Good relationships promote a positive climate for learning. When work is not engaging, the minority of primary students can misbehave.
- Students demonstrate a good understanding of safe and healthy living. Students are aware of how to keep themselves and others safe, including when online.
- Students attendance is acceptable at 93%. A few students do not arrive at school on time.
- Students demonstrate a good understanding of Islamic values and their role in UAE society. Students show strong respect and appreciation for Emirati culture and heritage. They demonstrate a very good understanding of their own and other cultures.
- Students are responsible members of the school community. They make regular contributions to global, local and national communities. A small minority of students do not always show care for their school.
- Most students are innovative learners. Students have designed and made robots. They have helped to set up an eco-friendly garden using water from air-conditioning units to irrigate trees. However, skills of critical thinking, and problem-solving and innovation skills are not consistently developed in lessons.

Areas of Relative Strength:

- Good relationships and a positive climate for learning.
- Students' understanding of Islamic values, heritage and culture.
- Students' understanding of their own and other world cultures.

Areas for Improvement:

- Behaviour of a minority of students in the primary phase.
- Students' attendance and punctuality.
- Students' critical thinking, problem-solving and innovation skills in lessons.

Performance Standard 3: Teaching and Assessment

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

- The overall quality of teaching and assessment is good overall. It is acceptable in the primary phase. Teachers impart good subject knowledge and engage students in a range of practical learning experiences.
- Teachers plan purposeful lessons effectively and use time and resources well to support students' learning.
- Teachers ask effective questions to assess, secure and challenge students' understanding. This is less well developed in the primary phase.
- Teachers' are aware that students have different learning needs and plan to meet these effectively. Sometimes however work is not always engaging or challenging enough.
- Students are not always given enough opportunities to develop their critical thinking, problem-solving, innovation and independent learning skills in lessons.
- The school's internal assessment processes are good overall. The school compares itself against international and national standards. Teachers assess students' regularly in class, particularly in the middle and high phase. Not all teachers use assessment information effectively to plan future learning.
- Teachers effectively monitor students' progress. A few inconsistencies remain in how effectively teachers mark work.
- Teachers demonstrate good knowledge of students' capabilities. In lessons, students assess their own learning and review their progress.

Areas of Relative Strength:

- Teachers' good subject knowledge.
- The use of questioning to assess, secure and challenge.
- Teachers' knowledge of students' capabilities.
- Students' assessment of their own learning.

Areas for Improvement:

- Innovation, critical thinking and problem-solving skills in lessons.
- The quality of marking and use of assessment information to inform future learning.

Performance Standard 4: Curriculum

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

- Overall, the curriculum is good. It closely follows the UAE national vision and the National Curriculum for England (NCfE) from Grades 4 to 12. Almost all subjects are now aligned to the Virginia State Standards for students choosing to follow the American curriculum from Grade 8. At all grades students follow at least age appropriate curricula.
- The well-planned curricula are effective in developing a balance of knowledge, skills and understanding that meets the needs of almost all students. The range of curricular options provides students with varied pathways. Older students, for example, can specialise in scientific, technical or humanities subjects.
- The school has strong cross-curricular links in almost all subjects. Links to real life help to motivate students.
- Since the previous inspection, the school has implemented a continuous and rigorous review of its curricula. It now meets the academic and personal needs of most students.
- Opportunities for innovation and creativity are provided in events and projects beyond the classroom. These are not yet embedded in lessons. A range of extracurricular and entrepreneurial activities enhance students' experience of school. The promotion of students' appreciation and understanding of their own and other world cultures is particularly strong.
- Almost all aspects of the curricula enable students to develop a very good understanding of UAE culture and society.
- Moral values are embedded in the curricula and addressed in specific moral education lessons. The school promotes values of responsibility, honesty, respect and resilience.

Areas of Relative Strength:

- Cross curricular links and links to real life.
- Curricular choices provide access for higher education.
- Very effective links with Emirati culture and UAE society.

Areas for Improvement:

- The promotion and impact of innovation skills in the taught curriculum.

Performance Standard 5: The protection, care, guidance and support of students

The protection, care, guidance and support of students Indicators	KG	Primary	Middle	High
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection/ safeguarding		Good	Good	Good
Care and support		Good	Good	Good

- The overall quality of protection, care, guidance and support for students is good. There are clear procedures in place to safeguard students. Parents, students and staff adhere to the school's child protection policy.
- The school building is well-maintained and regular checks are carried out. Fire drills are conducted regularly. Some fire exits were found not to be unlocked but leaders took prompt action to rectify this.
- Supervision of students is effective around the school and on school buses.
- The school's promotion of safe and healthy living is good. Students learn about healthy living and lifestyles during lessons and assemblies and from the school nurse.
- Relationships between staff and most students are courteous and respectful. Students' behaviour is not always effectively managed, particularly in the primary phase.
- Attendance is adequately promoted across the school, but few students still do not arrive on time.
- Students with SEN and G&T are accurately identified. The school supports students with SEN by providing additional support against specific targets. Parents are kept well informed of students' progress. Additional enrichment activities are in place for G&T.
- Students' well-being is effectively monitored by the school. Older students receive good advice about which subjects to study and career guidance.

Areas of Relative Strength:

- The school's promotion of safe and healthy living.
- The identification of students with SEN and G&T.
- Subject choice and careers guidance.

Areas for Improvement:

- The unlocking of all fire exit doors.
- The promotion of attendance and punctuality.

Performance Standard 6: Leadership and management

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

- The quality of leadership and management is good. Most staff embrace the vision of the school and are committed to promoting the leaders' welcoming and inclusive ethos.
- The school's approach to self-evaluation is good. Leaders use a range of sources to evaluate the school, including data. They know the main strengths and areas for improvement.
- Leaders effectively manage the school. Staff receive regular PD in order to improve the quality of teaching and learning.
- The principal and vice-principal regularly monitor learning in lessons. They focus well on students' achievements. Middle leaders are at the early stage of monitoring lessons in this way.
- Partnerships with parents is good. Parents support school events. Most meet regularly with teachers to discuss students' progress and are kept well informed about their learning.
- The governance of the school is good. The board of directors and trustees considers the views of stakeholders when planning. They monitor the work of the school and challenge leaders about data.
- The management of the school is good. The school is well resourced and includes a range of specialist facilities including science and IT laboratories, music and art rooms.
- The school effectively promotes international assessments. The school implement the 'question a day' initiative. PISA mock results are analysed, and targets set to raise achievement. Leaders compare data against national and international averages.

Areas of Relative Strength:

- Leaders' vision, direction and inclusive ethos.
- The impact of governance

Areas for Improvement:

- The effectiveness of middle leadership.