



مجلس أبوظبي للتعليم
Abu Dhabi Education Council
التعليم أولاً Education First



Private School Inspection Report

Islamia English School

Academic Year 2015 – 2016

Iqraa



Islamia English School

Inspection Date	11 – 14 October 2015
Date of previous inspection	26 – 29 January 2014

General Information	
School ID	109
Opening year of school	1978
Principal	Ms Safi V.S.
School telephone	+971 (0)2 641 7773
School Address	Plot Number 330-E, 18/02 Hazza Bin Zayed Street, PO Box 2157, Abu Dhabi
Official email (ADEC)	Islamiaenglish.pvt@adec.ac.ae
School Website	http://islamia.ae
Fee range (per annum)	AED 5,702 – AED 11,642

Students	
Total number of students	2183
Number of children in KG	350
Number of students in other phases	Primary 889 Middle 677 High 268
Age range	3 years 8 months to 18 years 8 months
Grades or Year Groups	KG1 – G12
Gender	Mixed (1125 boys, 1058 girls)
% of Emirati Students	0.27%
Largest nationality groups (%)	1. Pakistani 58.3% 2. Egyptian 10.2% 3. Indian 6.7%

Licensed Curriculum	
Main Curriculum	English National Curriculum
Other curriculum	-----
External Exams/ Standardised tests	IGCSE, AL, TIMMS, PISA, PIRLS
Accreditation	Edexcel

Staff	
Number of teachers	153
Number of teaching assistants (TAs)	12
Teacher-student ratio	1:21 KG/ FS 1:18 Primary; 1:10 other
Teacher turnover	10%



Introduction

Inspection activities	
Number of inspectors deployed	6
Number of inspection days	4
Number of lessons observed	122
Number of joint lesson observations	8
Number of parents' questionnaires	329
Details of other inspection activities	Observations of students' arrivals, departures, assemblies, break times; meetings with students, parents, teachers, staff, leaders, owners; work scrutiny; review of documents; data analysis.

School	
School Aims	To be always and in all respects an Institution of Excellent Students. To be alive means to keep on learning & growing. To cease learning & growing means to cease to be alive.
School vision and mission	'Our mission is to provide value based education for tomorrow's global citizens: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Through an integrated & result oriented set of curricular & co-curricular programmes for achieving EXCELLENCE in academic performance & moral character alike.• By growing as an ever learning, not for profit educational organization with an efficient team of highly qualified people, dedicated to guiding young generations as to how to become self-motivated life-long learners.• By helping students explore their God-gifted talents and utilize them responsibly & creatively with the



	<p>sublime purpose of pleasing their Lord, satisfying themselves and serving the humanity at large.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• By equipping students with spiritual insight along with a scientific outlook that would enable them to work for sustainable development and prosperity of our multi-cultural global society. <p>Honesty of purpose, self-reliance, peaceful co-existence, moral values & academic excellence’.</p>
Admission Policy	The school conducts entry tests and interviews but generally accepts all students seeking admission.
Leadership structure (ownership, governance and management)	The Leadership Team consists of 4 heads of cycles and the Principal and Vice Principal. The school has a Board of Trustees with one permanent member, who was previously a student and a teacher at the school, and is currently parent of a student at the school.



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	0	0
Specific Learning Disability	0	0
Emotional and Behaviour Disorders (ED/ BD)	4	0
Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)	0	0
Speech and Language Disorders	0	0
Physical and health related disabilities	15	0
Visually impaired	5	0
Hearing impaired	1	0
Multiple disabilities	0	0

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

G&T Category	Number of students identified
Intellectual ability	300
Subject-specific aptitude (e.g. in science, mathematics, languages)	200 (science), 250 (mathematics), 300 (English)
Social maturity and leadership	270
Mechanical/ technical/ technological ingenuity	250
Visual and performing arts (e.g. art, theatre, recitation)	240
Psychomotor ability (e.g. dance or sport)	170



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 (B) Acceptable**

Performance Standards	Band A High Performing			Band B Satisfactory	Band C In need of significant improvement	
	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 Islamia English School provides an acceptable quality of education. School leaders and the chair of the governing body have a positive vision of what the school needs to achieve for its students. They have a clear idea of what the school's priorities are and have introduced initiatives to meet these targets. Students make particularly good progress in the Kindergarten and in mathematics and science in the high school because of the quality of teaching. The broader development of students, to include their academic, personal and social skills, is a major focus for the school. Assessment of students' progress is weak and is currently a barrier to the school's continued improvement and student achievement.

Progress made since last inspection and capacity to improve

The school was inspected in January 2014 and has made some progress towards meeting the recommendations from that report. The School Development Plan (SDP) is largely based upon the recommendations from the previous inspection report and the plan has been delegated to heads of school sections and subject co-ordinators. Each subject area has its own devolved plan to contribute to the whole school SDP. Most teachers now plan their lessons to a whole school format to ensure consistency about stated lesson objectives, planning for the needs of different groups, and a common format for the delivery of the lesson. Professional development has been provided on questioning skills, the identification of gifted and talented students (G&T), and teaching methodology to improve the consistency of teaching quality.

The school has invested in new technology with the majority of classrooms having data show projectors, since September 2015. All classrooms have been hard-wired for teacher access to the internet.

Leaders have not yet sufficiently identified the impact of teaching upon students' achievement or more rigorously applied their performance management procedures which are needed to achieve consistency and improved outcomes for students. Structures and systems are in place but implementation is not yet effective.

Development and promotion of innovation skills

The school is committed to the ADEC 'Journey of discovery' initiative in order to promote innovation skills. Students have developed displays for corridor areas and are encouraged to change displays to reflect events and activities taking place across the phases. All teachers have organised their classrooms to facilitate group work and collaborative learning. Students are not consistently given enough



opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning and develop their critical thinking and problem solving skills. Examples of reflective learning, research, and use of technology are to be found particularly in the upper school. Senior students organise their own assemblies and have achieved recognition with the award of a trophy for enterprise and entrepreneurship in competition with other schools across Abu Dhabi.

The inspection identified the following as key areas of strength:

- attainment over time in English, mathematics and science is above curriculum and international standards by the end of Grade 10
- progress made by children in the Kindergarten
- students have positive attitudes with constructive relationships. They work well together, collaborate with their teachers and are keen to learn
- students' positive behaviour in classes and generally around the school means the school is typically calm and orderly. They respond well to correction when necessary
- teachers know their subjects well and use this knowledge to answer students' questions
- parents are supportive of the school with positive communication to keep them informed about their child's progress
- leaders have a positive vision for the school that is shared by staff and students.

The inspection identified the following as key areas for improvement:

- progress of all groups of students, especially across the primary phase
- students' writing skills in English and Arabic to match their speaking and reading skills
- consistent opportunities for students to take responsibility for their own learning and develop their critical thinking and problem solving skills
- setting consistently high expectations of what students can achieve
- regular marking of students' work with feedback from teachers to show how to improve their work further
- consistency in practice to assess students' learning in lessons and adapt tasks to meet the needs of different groups of students.



Performance Standard 1: Students' Achievement

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



The proportion of students obtaining A*-A in 5 or more IGCSEs has continued to increase. Most students that entered for the 'A' Level exam in 2015 obtained a 'B' grade or above and most gained admission to university. Attainment was high in science and mathematics at 'A' Level. Most students in grade 10 attain above benchmarking standards in science and mathematics. In Islamic education and social studies, most students attain in line with curriculum standards. In art and physical education (PE), the majority of students make expected progress in their acquisition of skills. In 2015, students in grade 10 did not meet minimum standards in Arabic, English, ICT and Pakistan studies. Only half of students in grade 10 entered for Classic Arabic met minimum standards in 2015.

School records of attainment show that the majority of students perform better in grades 5 to 7 than in grades 8 to 10, particularly in the core subjects of mathematics, science, Arabic and English. This is because of the transition in grade 8 to a focus on IGCSE syllabi where students are assessed against international standards. There is a consistent gap in attainment between girls and boys in English and Arabic and, in addition, internal data shows that historically girls obtain better grades than boys in almost all subjects in primary and middle school. The drop-out rate of students after IGCSE and AS level is high. Students' written work, especially across the primary phase and in the boys' section shows attainment in writing is not as high as that reached in speaking, listening and reading. Children start Kindergarten with low-levels of attainment in English. As a result of good teaching in the early years, students leave Kindergarten with skills above expected standards in English, mathematics, science and personal and social development.

Students in the high school typically make good progress in mathematics and science. In English, students in some lessons and especially in grades 6, 7 and 8 in the girls' section, make good progress in developing their speaking and listening skills. This is because they are given practical opportunities to role-play, discuss topics and listen to other students. Over time, girls generally make better progress in English than boys, especially in the middle and upper phases. Evidence from lessons and students' work shows the progress of a large minority of students, especially the gifted and talented, slows in the primary phase. Overall, different groups of students, including those with special educational needs (SEN), make acceptable progress across the whole school given their starting points in the Kindergarten.

Students have positive attitudes toward learning. They usually work productively in groups, and co-operate and communicate adequately. Students make few connections between areas of learning. They use learning technologies in limited ways to support their learning. Students typically display strong learning skills in



mathematics. They collaborate well together, share ideas and resources and, as a result, are keen to learn. In science, students' communication and listening skills are well developed. In the majority of lessons, students were rarely observed thinking independently or developing innovative approaches to their learning.

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

Students are positive and take a pride in their school. They have responsible attitudes to learning and respond well to critical feedback. The school promotes a safe and healthy lifestyle and offers sound advice, which the majority of students follow. A large minority of students bring food from home, which does not constitute a balanced diet. Students are respectful and courteous to adults. Students are sensitive to the needs of others, for example in the way in which a 'buddy' system operates to support a student with mobility issues. Students participate enthusiastically in physical education lessons and sports. Attendance is acceptable at 92%; almost all students are punctual to school and lessons.

Students demonstrate respect and appreciation of the heritage and culture of the UAE with a clear understanding of Islamic values. An example of this was observed during the inspection week when senior girls performed a playlet about UAE culture during an assembly, which was well received by their peers. Students stand respectfully for the anthem and the UAE flag at assembly. They have a clear understanding and appreciation of their own culture and are aware of differences when compared to other cultures. They take opportunities to interact with students from other cultures in the school.

Students take pride in carrying out their responsibilities, with diligence and respect for their peers. Prefects are assigned by school staff to assist in supervising other



students. Students' involvement in the local community is limited. The school recognises and celebrates students' achievements during assemblies. Students demonstrate positive attitudes to work and enjoy contributing to the success of the Eco club. This club has a positive effect on students' thinking about the environment and how they might protect it. Students have limited influence upon decisions about school organisation and their own learning.

Performance Standard 3: Teaching and Assessment

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

Examples of good teaching were typically seen in the Kindergarten. These lessons were well planned, demonstrating teachers' knowledge of their subjects and how students learn. Across the school, teachers plan lessons at three different levels, to broadly address the needs of the students in their class. Although there is a consistent approach to delivering lessons with a clear learning intention, teachers do not have consistently high expectations of what students can achieve. Lessons are planned in some detail ahead of the session taking place; they are not always adapted to meet the emerging needs of the students. As a result, gifted and talented students and those with special educational needs (SEN) are not effectively supported in lessons. Work is often not challenging enough for the higher attaining students and too challenging for the lower attaining students. Teachers have a limited range of teaching strategies. Critical thinking and reasoning are not yet fully embedded features of learning, particularly in art, and in the boys' mathematics and science lessons in the primary phase. Teaching in the girls' section is typically more effective than in the boys'. Work is largely differentiated effectively in the girls' high school. Here, time in lessons is used effectively. Some critical thinking is developed and learning opportunities at home are promoted to consolidate understanding. In the primary section, particularly, time is not always used effectively to facilitate learning and students are not encouraged to develop independent, innovative or critical thinking skills.

The school successfully benchmarks key assessments against external, national and international expectations at the end of grades 10, 11 and 12. Although consistent



internal assessment processes are in place, data produced is not reliable. Internal data is not standardised. Data presented by key leaders typically measures attainment, and not progress. Data presented does not consistently look at starting points or what students can achieve. Consequently, it is not used to plan future learning and, therefore, lessons often do not meet the needs of all learners. Work, particularly in the high school, is not consistently marked. As a result, teachers do not always know how well their students have done. Students are rarely aware of how to improve or be involved in their own assessment.

Performance Standard 4: Curriculum

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

The curriculum is based on the English National Curriculum (ENC) and covers a wide range of subjects. The framework and content is designed to match the ENC levels for different aged students. This helps to ensure students have continuity and progression in the content of the subjects they study. There are occasional links made between subjects such as students studying geography in English lessons. These links to make learning more meaningful for students are not consistently planned across the curriculum. The curriculum is broad and balanced with a wide range of extra-curricular activities such as: a science club; inter-house sporting competitions; a mathematics Olympiad; an innovation club and a design technology club. These provide students with choice and have a positive impact on students' personal development. Senior leaders regularly review the curriculum. For example, a relatively new English scheme of work has been introduced across the primary phase. There is still an over-reliance by teachers on students simply working through topics from a textbook. This limits the breadth of the curriculum and does not fully challenge different groups.

The curriculum is not consistently adapted to meet different groups of students' needs in classes. There are times when tasks are too easy or not relevant enough to students' experiences and backgrounds to make learning meaningful. Assemblies promote students' understanding and appreciation of UAE values and culture. For example, during an assembly, girls dressed in national costume performed a traditional local dance. There is also an extra-curricular club set up to foster students'



understanding of UAE culture. For example, students study about the vegetation and flowers found in the UAE. Information and communication technology (ICT) is taught as a discrete subject. Students do not normally use ICT in classrooms to support their learning in other subjects.

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	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Care and support	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

The school has formal procedures in place for the safeguarding of students including child protection. Most staff are aware of these through training workshops. The school has identified the issue of cyber safety and has implemented appropriate procedures. Students say that bullying is rare and dealt with effectively. Policies are not reviewed regularly to ensure their efficient implementation. Supervision of students is effective, including on the outsourced school transport. The school has expressed concerns about its lack of control over private cars and private buses. Medical records are current and kept securely by the school nurse. Any follow up action is efficiently implemented. Medication is kept in locked cupboards and only dispensed by the nurse or trained teacher. The school premises and equipment are suitable and ensure a safe physical environment. At break times, there are insufficient shaded areas for students to sit comfortably whilst eating and talking to each other. The school promotes safe and healthy living but this does not have an impact upon the diet of a large minority of students.

Teachers know most of their students well and are aware of their social, physical and emotional needs. Almost all have a good rapport with students and respond positively to them. The school has an effective approach to managing students' behaviour. School attendance management is generally effective. Leaders do not analyse attendance data to identify patterns of absence or to promote good attendance by celebrating it. School leaders have recently cascaded training in how to identify gifted and talented students and those with special educational needs. These have yet to have impact. The school provides limited support in the classroom for students with



special educational needs, so inhibiting their progress. The well-being and personal development of students is routinely monitored. Adequate support and careers guidance is offered to senior students.

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

The wider leadership team sets a clear strategic direction and promotes a vision that is shared by staff and students. Leaders are committed to the UAE national and Abu Dhabi priorities. This is evident within the school's vision. They also demonstrate a commitment to inclusion. Relationships and communication are professional and effective. The school has delegated leadership effectively to heads of section and subject co-ordinators. Leaders at all levels demonstrate awareness that further improvements could be made. Some are inconsistent in addressing potential barriers but most demonstrate sufficient capacity to make required improvements.

Self-evaluation is increasingly used in the school's strategic improvement planning but is inconsistently implemented by teachers in the classroom. The school has a realistic view of the majority of its key priorities. Plans are not sufficiently or regularly monitored and reviewed, with modifications made. School development plans are largely based upon the recommendations of the previous inspection report. They contain appropriate actions and achievable goals, which address the school's and the UAE's priorities. Some progress has been made in addressing the recommendations from the previous inspection report. The school has invested significant effort in the professional development of teachers to tackle the recommendations. Improvements have been inconsistent due, in part, to teacher turnover in the past two years, which has been over 70% in the primary phase. Leaders do not measure the progress students make from starting points in a systematic way. There are no records of baseline data. As a result, the progress of students with special educational needs or who are gifted and talented is neither tracked nor monitored rigorously.



The school ensures that parents are informed about their children's learning and development. The school engages parents as partners, particularly those who have children with SEN. Parents who attended the meeting with inspectors said their children received a 'good education compared to the fee levels'. They added that they believed their children were safe in an environment that promotes Islamic values and self-reliance. In the parental survey, most parents thought that the school had a good reputation in the community. They were least satisfied with the fact that the school does not have an active parent council. Around two thirds of parents feel that the school deals promptly with bullying issues and that the principal ensures high standards of behaviour.

The managing director regularly monitors the school's actions and holds the principal and vice principal accountable for the quality of the school's performance. He particularly focuses upon the personal development of students, the central theme of the school's vision. He is aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses in terms of academic performance and has a keen understanding of his strategic role and ensures that the operational management of the school lies with school leaders.

Most aspects of the school's day-to-day management are well organised, which has a positive impact on students' achievements. The school's procedures and routines are effective and efficient. An example of this is the implementation of the procedure for checking latecomers and ensuring reasons for lateness are followed up. The school is adequately staffed. Most staff members are suitably qualified and have benefitted from regular professional development that is matched to the school's priorities. The school has had some difficulty in both recruiting and retaining high quality teachers because of the low salaries offered.



What the school should do to improve further:

1. Improve the quality of teaching and learning so that all students make the progress they are capable of, particularly in the primary phase, by ensuring teachers:
 - i. raise their expectations of what students can achieve and avoid giving students low level tasks
 - ii. consistently check on students learning in lessons and adapt tasks to challenge different groups
 - iii. adapt the curriculum and planning of lessons, particularly in English and Arabic, to meet the abilities of different groups, especially those with SEN and those who are gifted and talented
 - iv. provide more opportunities for students to take responsibility for their own learning and develop their critical thinking and problem solving skills.

2. Improve the systems for checking students' progress across the school by:
 - i. ensuring there is a consistent approach to the marking of students work that assesses their levels in the curriculum and provides feedback to them on how to improve further
 - ii. using the different levels in the curriculum, track and record students' progress using teachers' assessments from lessons and students' work
 - iii. checking the accuracy of assessments with other similar schools when possible
 - iv. more regularly identifying any students who may be falling behind and provide the appropriate support to help them catch up with their peers.

3. Improve the quality of students' writing in Arabic and English to match their speaking and reading skills by ensuring students are:
 - i. taught how to write in different ways for different purposes
 - ii. given more opportunities to write independently and at length
 - iii. given more opportunities to use their writing skills in other subjects where appropriate.