



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



Summary Inspection Report

Al Rabeeh School

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Iqraa

Al Rabeeh School LLC

Inspection Date	22 nd –25 th April, 2012
School ID#	036
Type of School	Private
Curriculum	British
Number of Students	763
Age Range	KG1- Grade 6
Gender	Mixed
Principal	G Thorp
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Introduction

The school was inspected by four inspectors, who observed 54 lessons. In addition inspectors scrutinised the work of students and had several meetings with senior leadership, teachers and a wide range of support staff. Meetings were also held with a representative group of parents and with a cross section of age ranges of students from the school.

Description of the School

Al Rabeeh School opened as a villa school in the Bateen area of Abu Dhabi in 1981 and moved to the Muroor area in 2002. The school is owned by Learn Education which is a management company of the Royal Group. The campus accommodates 225 kindergarten and 538 primary-aged students. The executive principal and headteacher form the leadership team, under the governance of the Learn Education board of directors.

The school aims to provide a broad-based curriculum that encourages the development of confident and independent learners. It also expects to foster pride in the children for their religious and cultural heritage.

The majority (87%) of the students are UAE nationals, the next largest groups being Egyptian (3%) and Jordanian (2%). Nearly all the students are Muslim, and 53% are boys. Less than 1% have diagnosed learning difficulties but 6% are supported in English. School fees range from AED 23050 in KG1 to AED 28450 in Grade 6. Teachers' monthly salaries range from AED 5396 to AED 13077, and average AED 9312.

The Effectiveness of the School

Band A

Grade 3

Inspectors judged Al Rabeeh School to be in Band A; that is a high performing school.

The last inspection in April 2010 also rated the school as a high performing school. The suggestions for development included addressing a compliance issue regarding the joint proprietor/principal, improving security and safety aspects, improving information and communication technology (ICT) opportunities, and raising the level of challenge for more-able students. All of these issues have been resolved. A further recommendation to use international tests to measure students' attainment has not been resolved.

Al Rabeeh is a popular school with clear entry procedures. There is a long waiting list, and the drop-out rate for students is very low. Attainment levels are high in Islamic studies, Arabic, social studies and English. In mathematics, science and other subjects, attainment is broadly average when compared to international

standards. Literacy is promoted very well in English and Arabic lessons, and reading standards are high. Students make good progress, both in academic and personal development, in most core subjects.

In Arabic lessons, students develop strong skills in speaking, reading and writing. They make good progress because of effective teaching. Many lessons throughout the school are motivating and inspiring. A good foundation is laid in the basic skills of Arabic in the early years, and this is built upon effectively as students get older. In the kindergarten children are able to identify Arabic letters, form words and communicate confidently with teachers. In the upper grades students communicate ideas effectively in classical Arabic and read with real understanding, although their writing skills are limited because students are often only expected to write short texts. In social studies and Islamic studies students are able to compare, analyze and come to conclusions about their thoughts, and relate what they study in school to their real-life experiences. They have comparatively few opportunities to work collaboratively in these three subjects, or to enhance their work through technology.

In English lessons the quality of writing is high. It is broadly average across other areas of the curriculum, where support for writing is weaker. This is particularly true in science and humanities subjects, where students' writing is not expressed well enough and contains too many errors. Students engage in some research and independent learning, and in some cases their related skills are very well developed. There is not enough focus on investigative and practical science.

Staff are not yet sufficiently trained in identifying specific special needs, or measuring the impact of support on students' progress. Assessment practices are inconsistent across grades and subjects, although the school does communicate the outcomes of these assessments very well. The students' homework notebooks act as a home/school contact book. This is an effective vehicle for communication with parents, and test results are regularly pasted in so that parents can see how well their children are performing. Formative assessment is good in some classes. Students' written work is well marked with constructive criticism along with suggestions for improvement or extension. The school keeps non-standardised formative assessment records, but some teachers do not sufficiently distinguish the concept of tracking students' progress from accumulating scores for marked work. This results in an underdeveloped target-setting process. Teachers do not predict what students should be capable of achieving, and therefore set no targets to challenge them and provide a focus for the longer term. The school still does not compare its students' performance against benchmarked international assessment data.

Students have many exciting opportunities to help them become confident, articulate, enthusiastic and respectful to their peers and other adults. Sporting, social and cultural activities are limited, but other academic activities, classes and events inspire their widespread and committed participation. This makes learning a fulfilling and fascinating experience for the students. Their visible enjoyment of these activities spills over into learning generally. As result students develop as enthusiastic learners who demonstrate a strong sense of moral and community responsibility. All students, for example, have participated in a charitable event involving the Red Crescent. Students' knowledge of UAE culture is good. They raise the UAE flag in assembly each day, although not all students have learnt to sing the national anthem.

The quality of teaching has a very positive impact on students' learning, and this is a significant contributing factor in the overall success of the school. All teachers demonstrate a caring relationship and a high quality of rapport with students that helps to generate positive attitudes to learning. They have strong subject knowledge, plan appropriately and use very skilled questioning to ensure that students clearly understand tasks and why they are doing them. This includes regularly giving students a few seconds to give feed back to

the teacher before each class task is started - to encourage and allow them to say if they fully understand what they are meant to do. This small moment in a lesson, gives students confidence to speak up, if they are unsure. In a typical example, a student said, 'I am not sure what to do sir,' and the teacher responded, 'that's OK and I'm very glad you told me,' before giving the student individual help.

Teachers show high-quality class management skills, including the regular use of 'positive behaviour' techniques. They sometimes ignore any small aspects of misbehaviour by praising the others in the class who are behaving well. Another key feature of the successful teaching centres on the quality of display in the classroom and corridors. This celebrates students' achievements and gives younger students opportunities to see work in higher years that they can aspire to. The displays in class are also used as a teaching resource during lessons. The teachers have created a very stimulating visual environment that contributes to the students' enjoyment of learning.

Good teaching in the kindergarten provides a very secure foundation for the younger students. Teachers plan a wide range of learning experiences that contribute to students' positive progress and engagement. They work closely with classroom assistants to support children in their learning. Teachers in Islamic studies, Arabic and social studies use a wide range of strategies to develop students' knowledge and abilities. They ensure students have the skills that are

needed for the next stage of their learning. In social studies and Islamic studies teachers encourage students to make comparisons, to analyse and to think things through to conclusions rather just memorising facts. Group work is less evident, and although all teachers use data projectors in class to aid the students' learning, the overall use of technology across these three subjects is not as good as in other subjects.

The high-quality curriculum is broad and balanced. In the kindergarten there is an effective expert blend of academic, creative and 'special' classes in music and particularly art. Students are withdrawn from their regular classes in small groups to work on an art activity that relates directly to the lesson's topic. For instance, when they are taught about the letter 'f' they have the opportunity to do a picture of fire to accompany their letter. Many extra-curricular activities are provided, with a high take-up. A healthy vibrancy in the after-school club activities allows students to work and build relationships with teachers other than their daytime teacher. Music is not yet fully developed across the school. There are some music clubs, but there is no specialist music room and there are few instruments to accompany students' singing.

The class teachers and executive principal provide very effective pastoral care. The school is a safe environment. The vetting of all staff at recruitment is of high quality. The child protection policy is adequate. It is written in accessible language in both English and Arabic, and is distributed to all staff to keep with their class files. The policy includes guidance on the reporting and handling of suspected cases of abuse, but the procedures for specific referrals to outside agencies, such as the police, are not fully clear. The school does not allow students to access the Internet on the premises, as it does not have the facility to filter websites and cannot guarantee their online safety. However, they are given e-safety guidelines in appropriate language and format.

An atmosphere of trust and respect throughout the school helps to ensure students are protected from bullying and harassment. No incidents of misbehaviour were seen during the inspection, indeed quite the opposite. Students' attendance and punctuality are satisfactory, although in the very rare cases of unauthorised absence the school does not make a phone call until far too late - the third day of absence.

The school's reward culture is effective in encouraging very good behaviour. There is little need for sanctions and no student has ever been suspended. Those who occasionally miss playtime as a minor sanction are not always supervised in the class, and are given no specific task to complete during this time. The school prayer room is used for teaching Islamic studies. The timetable does not include

regular opportunities for students to use it outside break and lunch periods, as the school says it is unable to provide adequate supervision.

First aid facilities and arrangements are comprehensive. The clinic room is very clean and tidy, with medicines and equipment stored appropriately. The licensed, competent nurse is employed on a full-time basis. Grade 6 students and their parents receive appropriately impartial advice on selecting the next stage in their education. Parents are encouraged to consider the culture, academic standards and entry restrictions of the various secondary schools they are considering at the end of the year. Detailed information about all aspects of studying at the most popular schools is available, but students do not have sufficient opportunity for direct contact with the secondary school or its staff prior to moving there.

The premises include adequate space for play, although not enough for team games like cricket, hockey and football. The three halls on each floor are suitable for indoor games and sports. The school building is safe, with good lighting and ventilation and effective air-conditioning. It is clean and hygienic, and this contributes to students' enjoyment. The curriculum is also supported by a good range of high-quality, age-appropriate resources and a student to teacher ratio of 12:1. There is no full-time librarian, but the library is used well and students develop responsibility by using a bar-code system to check their own books in and out.

There is no specific science laboratory, and the classroom resources are not enough to support students' investigative and practical skills. The school keeps pace with the developments in modern technology. All classrooms have computers and data projectors to enhance students' learning. The two ICT labs have an adequate number of computers. Older students use these facilities regularly to develop their independent learning skills, but the kindergarten children do not have access. There is no canteen. As a result students bring their own food from home, and the school encourages them to bring only healthy food. The buses are in good working order but students do not consistently use seat belts.

The school leaders have an appropriate understanding of self-evaluation and strategies for school improvement. Their open style of leadership ensures that staff are very well motivated, and a sense of professional fulfilment pervades the school. The eight grade leaders are an effective part of the senior leadership team. The school has good, productive links with the board of directors of the owning company. All its financial and human resource processes conform to guidance and legislation, both of the owners and the UAE. The school provides good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further:

1. Develop the use of standardised tests to assess students' attainment against international standards, and set targets for their progress through the school.
2. Ensure that any absences are followed up with phone calls to parents on the first day of absence.
3. Enhance teaching in Islamic studies, Arabic and social studies by providing better opportunities for collaborative group working and using modern technology more effectively to support learning.
4. Improve students' English writing skills by introducing techniques such as structuring and redrafting of writing, particularly in science and the humanities subjects.
5. Provide greater opportunities for practical and investigative science activities and provide safe internet access in school.
6. Ensure that students have constant access to the prayer room which should remain open throughout the day.