



دائرة التعليم والمعرفة  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
AND KNOWLEDGE

# Inspection Report of: Al Ain International School

**Overall Effectiveness: Very Good**

Academic Year 2017 – 2018

*Iqraa*



دائرة التعليم والمعرفة  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
AND KNOWLEDGE

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## School Information

General Information	Inspection date:	from	19 Muharram 1439	to	22 Muharram 1439
		from	09-Oct-17	to	12-Oct-17
	School name	Al Ain International Private School			
	School ID	9214			
	School address	Salmat Street, Naydat District, Al Ain			
	School telephone	+971 (0)3 715 1000			
	School official email	aainternational.pvt@adec.ac.ae			
	School website	www.aldaracademies.com			
	School curriculum	English National Curriculum (ENC),			
	Fee range and category	AED 39,600 – AED 57,330. (Category High-Very High)			
	Number of lessons observed	99			
Number of joint lessons observed	19				
Staff Information	Total number of teachers	71			
	Turnover rate	15%			
	Number of teaching assistants	47			
	Teacher- student ratio	KG: 1:10 Other: 1:15			
Student Information	Total number of students	974			
	% of Emirati Students	56%			
	% of Largest nationality groups	1. British 9%			
		2. American 6%			
		3. Canadian 2%			
	% of SEN students	15%			
	% of students per phase	KG: 20%	Middle: 24%		
Primary: 50%		High: 6%			
Grades/ Year groups	FS2 to Year 12				
Gender	Boys and girls				



## The Performance of the School

<b>Performance Standard 1</b>  Students' Achievement  <b>Very Good</b>	<b>Performance Standard 2</b>  Students' personal and social development, and their innovation skills  <b>Outstanding</b>
<b>Performance Standard 3</b>  Teaching and Assessment  <b>Very Good</b>	<b>Performance Standard 4</b>  Curriculum  <b>Very Good</b>
<b>Performance Standard 5</b>  The protection, care, guidance and support of students  <b>Outstanding</b>	<b>Performance Standard 6</b>  Leadership and management  <b>Very Good</b>



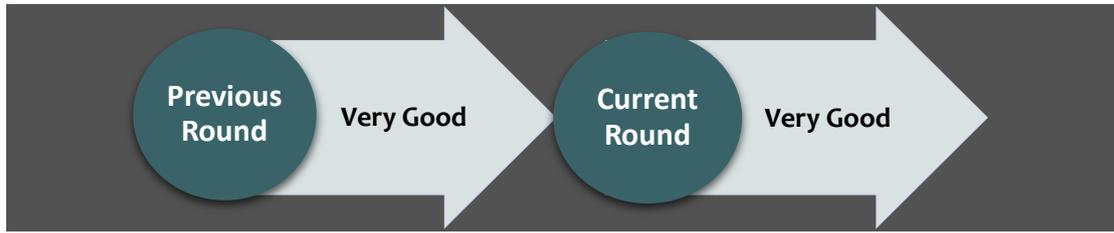
## Evaluation of the school's overall performance

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- The overall performance of the school is very good. The Principal, strongly supported by the school's governance, leadership and staff, has successfully strengthened school improvements since the last inspection. The school has continued to grow rapidly since then.
- Achievement remains very good overall. Achievement in Arabic as a first and second language is acceptable overall. Learning skills are very good overall, and students' English language skills continue to develop well, especially in speaking. The school achieved high standards in its first set of International General Certificate of Education (IGCSE) examinations taken recently.
- Students' personal development is outstanding. Their relationships and attitudes to learning are exemplary. Respect for the heritage and culture of the UAE and Islamic values contributes to students' outstanding behaviour. Attendance and punctuality are very good.
- Teaching and assessment are very good overall. Teachers deliver engaging lessons which stimulate thoughtful enquiry and discussion. They provide their students with well-judged personalised challenge and support. School assessment systems are generally strong.
- The curriculum is very good. It is planned very well and reviewed regularly and systematically. It provides a wide range of choices in extracurricular activities and options for older students. Students are very well prepared for the next phase of their education.
- The quality of protection, care, guidance and support is outstanding overall. The school's work to ensure an excellent level of care and welfare underpins its calm and nurturing environment. Care and support for Special Educational Needs (SEN) students is highly effective.
- The school is led very effectively. Systematic and thoughtful self-evaluation and school improvement planning, strong governance, and arrangements for distributed leadership have resulted in the school maintaining high levels of performance. Leaders are committed to the use of international assessment measures in their continued focus upon achieving high standards.



## Progress made since last inspection and capacity to improve



- The school has made progress in addressing the recommendations of the previous inspection report.
- The specific learning needs of individuals and groups of students are now clearly identified in short term planning. Through a wider sharing of practice, teachers have started to undertake more accurate analysis of students' achievement and match provision more precisely to students' learning needs. Lesson plans are precisely differentiated. Tasks are clearly identified, and teachers' planned questions are matched to differing student abilities.
- Middle leaders' capacity has been strengthened by extending accountability to include all aspects of the quality of provision in their areas of responsibility. Strong quality assurance procedures ensure that they are accountable for their performance and the work of those they lead. These include rigorous collaborative reviews and regular meetings with senior leaders. English medium middle leaders, who are responsible for strong mentoring and collaboration with Arabic medium middle leaders, are very effective in contributing to the maintenance of high standards and a purposeful learning culture.
- Overall, school leaders' capacity to improve the school remains very good.



## Key areas of strength and area for improvement

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### Key areas for improvement

1. Raise standards in reading and writing in Arabic by:
  - i. continuing to improve assessment for learning practices and raising students' expectations of what they can achieve
  - ii. matching teacher assessment and summative testing more closely by improving moderation of standards
  - iii. developing the successful collaborative work between English and Arabic medium staff to further promote standards in literacy.
2. Share outstanding teaching practice further across the school by:
  - i. extending peer observations, coaching and mentoring in the lead teacher programme to enable more staff to embed best practice in their teaching
  - ii. improving networking arrangements to share and benefit from best practice.
3. Develop the use of assessment information by:
  - i. accurately benchmarking student achievement against a comprehensive range of international assessment data
  - ii. using the results of this benchmarking to enable teachers to plan even more effectively to enhance students' progress
  - iii. increasing the rigour with which students' progress is monitored and used to inform teaching



## Key areas of strength

- Achievement in most English-medium subjects
- Children's progress in English literacy in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)
- Students' high levels of enthusiasm for learning and their exemplary behaviour around the school.
- The extensive and popular extra-curricular programme
- The school's attention to all aspects students' development and well-being in a safe and caring environment
- The highly effective care and support for students with special education needs (SEN)
- The effectiveness of the school's distributed leadership arrangements
- The school's warm ethos and highly productive relationships with parents and the community.



## Provision for Reading

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- The school provides a wide range of opportunities for students to read, although these are more extensive for reading in English than in Arabic.
- Encouraging interest in reading in English, through the provision of a range of materials appropriate to different groups of students, is targeted in the school development plan (SDP).
- A school reading policy promotes reading across all subjects, and the continuing professional development (CPD) programme supports all staff to develop their understanding of the teaching of reading.
- A love of reading by all is encouraged by a timetabled dedicated reading time and high-quality activities. These include an annual visit by an author, Roald Dahl Day when students come to school dressed as favourite characters, Book Fairs, and 'Book Swop' days.
- Access to the very high-quality school library of 18,000 books in both English and Arabic is encouraged by open access outside lessons. Reading facilities have been extended to include classroom reading corners stocked with Arabic and English books.



## Performance Standard 1: Students' Achievement

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



### -Overall achievement

- The overall quality of students' achievement is very good. Most children join Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) with little or no English. The significant growth of the school involves new students with low starting points joining across year groups. This, together with the high percentage of students whose first language is not English, has a significant impact upon attainment levels. Strong teaching and intervention mean that students overall make very good progress over time, supported by very good learning skills.
- Inspection evidence indicates that achievement in Arabic as a first language is acceptable across the school. Achievement in Arabic as a second language is good in primary and middle phases, and acceptable in other phases.
- In the recent IGCSE examinations, performance of the few students in Year 11 was outstanding in chemistry, biology,, geography, food technology, French and statistics. Standards were very good in mathematics, good in history and information and communication technology (ICT), and acceptable in English literature. They were weak in art, Arabic, English language, business studies, and physics. Standards in the GCSE PE examinations were outstanding.
- SEN students and those who are gifted and talented (G&T) make similar progress to others from their starting points.

### Subjects

- Students' achievement in **Islamic education** is good. Students make good progress across the school in understanding how to apply Islamic values in daily life and how to reflect upon their behaviour. Their skills in recitation of Holy Qur'an are acceptable.
- Students' achievement in **Arabic** as a first language is acceptable overall. Their skills in speaking and listening are more developed than those in reading and writing. Students' achievement in **Arabic** as a second language is acceptable overall. Progress is good in the primary and middle phases. Overall, students' skills in reading, writing, speaking and listening develop in line with curriculum expectations as they move through the school.
- Students' achievement in **Social Studies** is good. They make good progress across the grades in their understanding of national identity and citizenship.
- Students' achievement in **English** is very good. Their speaking and listening skills develop quickly and effectively from low starting points when they enter FS. Reading and writing progress has accelerated recently and is now very good



across the school.

- Students' achievement in **mathematics** is very good overall. Progress is good in EYFS and very good in all other phases. Students make very good progress in developing a wide range of mathematical skills.
- Students' achievement in **science** is very good. Progress is very good as students move between phases and develop very good practical, investigative, and scientific thinking skills.
- Students' achievement in **other subjects** is very good. Progress is very good across phases. In PE students develop very strong team skills. In Art and the humanities, their creative, critical thinking and problem-solving skills are very well developed.

#### **Learning skills**

- Students' learning skills are very good, and develop quickly because they are keen to learn and take responsibility for their progress from an early age. Their skills of independent and cooperative working are very strong, and they regularly make meaningful connections between what they learn in different subjects and relate these to their understanding of the world. They use enquiry, critical thinking and ICT skills effectively.

#### **Areas of Relative Strength:**

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- Achievement in the English-medium subjects
- Overall standards in IGCSE examinations
- Children's progress in English literacy in the EYFS
- Students' learning skills, and the positive impact these are having on their progress and attainment across phases

#### **Areas for Improvement:**

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- Achievement in Arabic as a first language.



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

- Students' personal and social development and their innovation skills are outstanding overall. Their attitudes to learning and behaviour are exemplary. They are consistently self-disciplined and respond with empathy to others.
- Students' enjoyment of school is shown in very good attendance of 96% and they almost always arrive at school on time. Bullying is very rare. Students demonstrate excellent understanding of healthy and safe living.
- Students have a very good understanding of Islamic values and show strong respect for the culture and heritage of the UAE. They have a deep appreciation of their own and other world cultures.
- Students have an excellent work ethic . They are responsible and volunteer readily to contribute to the life of the school and wider communities.
- Students show insight in discussing important environmental issues. They take excellent care of their school and actively seek ways to improve its environment. They participate in a range of activities which develop their understanding of sustainability and conservation.
- Students manage their own projects very well enhancing their creative and innovative skills.

### Areas of Relative Strength:

- Students' high levels of enthusiasm for learning and their exemplary behaviour around the school.

### Areas for Improvement:

- Punctuality to assembly at the start of the day.



### Performance Standard 3: Teaching and Assessment

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

- The quality of teaching and assessment is very good overall, with particular strengths in English, mathematics, science and other subjects.
- Most teachers apply their subject and pedagogical knowledge effectively to plan engaging lessons that include thoughtful discussion and reflection. They use a range of highly- effective activities to engage and challenge students. As a result, the large majority make better than expected progress. In the most effective lessons, problem-solving and innovative skills are intrinsic features of learning.
- Internal assessment processes involve detailed analysis of achievement. This information is used effectively to review the quality of teaching within departments and meet the learning needs of individuals and groups of students.
- The school does not yet benchmark students' achievement rigorously against a comprehensive range of international expectations. Consequently, teachers are not yet able to plan to enhance students' progress using robust international comparisons.
- Teachers use their very good knowledge of individual students to provide well-focused challenge and support. Feedback to students is constructive and they are regularly involved in assessing their own learning.

#### Areas of Relative Strength:

- The quality of teaching in English-medium subjects.

#### Areas for Improvement:

- The availability of comprehensively benchmarked assessment data to enable teachers to plan more effectively to enhance students' progress.
- Teaching Arabic medium subjects, particularly Arabic language.



## Performance Standard 4: Curriculum

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

- The overall quality of the curriculum is very good. It effectively develops skills, knowledge and understanding in all subjects and promotes enjoyment and challenge for almost all students.
- Continuity and progression is effective overall and is strongest within phases. Students are very well-prepared for the next phase of their education. Broadened subject choices for older students are very well-matched to their aims and aspirations.
- Effective and regular review of the curriculum has resulted in very good provision across subjects. Links between subjects are planned carefully and managed well, including the 'Academy of Excellence' arrangements.
- The curriculum is imaginative and offers a wide range of opportunities for innovation, creativity and extracurricular activities which motivate almost all students. Opportunities to develop understanding of UAE culture and society are available across subjects.
- The new Moral Education programme from Grades 1 to 9 is delivered effectively by class teachers and form tutors who plan together well to ensure students' learning is consistent and relevant.

### Areas of Relative Strength:

- The extensive and popular extracurricular programme
- The effective review and constant adaptation of the curriculum.

### Areas for Improvement:

- Further developing transition arrangements between phases.



## 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	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Care and support	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding

- The quality of care, guidance and support of students is outstanding. Staff, students and parents are fully aware of the school's rigorous child protection and related procedures.
- The school environment is safe, secure, hygienic and inclusive. Supervision is exceptionally effective and safety checks are frequent and rigorous.
- Procedures for promoting attendance and punctuality are successful. Safe and healthy living is systematically built into, and promoted in, all aspects of school life.
- The school identifies SEN and G&T students accurately and promptly using rigorous systems. It provides highly effective intervention and support for SEN students through highly skilled teachers and teaching assistants. G&T students are supported and challenged effectively to develop their skills and abilities both in lessons and in extracurricular activities.
- Staff provide very good personal and academic guidance to support students, based upon effective monitoring of their well-being and development.

### Areas of Relative Strength:

- Promotion of students' development and well-being in a safe and caring environment
- The highly effective care and support for SEN students.

### Areas for Improvement:

- Further strengthening procedures to promote punctuality to school assembly.



## Performance Standard 6: Leadership and management

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

- The overall quality of leadership and management is very good. The principal has distributed leadership very effectively to ensure accountability for improvement outcomes. Leaders at all levels set a very clear strategic direction and are highly committed to UAE priorities. They ensure a warm and inclusive school ethos.
- Very good self-evaluation and improvement planning involves staff systematically in developing the self-evaluation form (SEF) and SDP. Leaders focus strongly on data analysis. They do not yet benchmark fully against international assessment data. Systematic monitoring of the quality of teaching, including by English and Arabic medium middle leaders, has helped teachers improve their practice.
- Partnerships with parents and the community are very good. School leaders' effective communications with parents, including comprehensive reports on their child's progress, ensure high levels of parental involvement in school life.
- Governance is very good. Governance at a school and academy chain level, representing a range of stakeholders, acts as a very effective constructive critic, and influences the school's leadership and direction very positively. It does not yet hold senior leaders fully accountable using a full range of international assessment data.
- Day-to-day management of the school is very well-organised. Well-qualified staff, who benefit from focused professional development, and high-quality facilities and resources have a very positive impact on students' achievements. The school has not yet implemented expansion plans to improve premises and resources to the highest quality.
- The school has plans in its SEF documentation to further promote international assessment through activities such as involvement in the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA).



### **Areas of Relative Strength:**

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- The effectiveness of the school's distributed leadership arrangements.
- The school's warm, inclusive ethos and productive partnerships.

### **Areas for Improvement:**

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- Accurately benchmarking student achievement against a comprehensive range of international assessment data.