

## INSPECTION REPORT

# Al Worood Academy Private School

Report published in May 2012

Knowledge and Human Development Authority

P.O. Box 500008, Dubai, UAE, Tel: +971-4-3640000, Fax: +971-4-3640001, [info@khda.gov.ae](mailto:info@khda.gov.ae), [www.khda.gov.ae](http://www.khda.gov.ae)

## GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT Al Worood Academy Private School

Location	Dubai Investment Park
Type of school	Private
Website	www.alworood.sch.ae
Telephone	04-8859750
Address	PO Box 123426, Dubai
Principal	Dr. Judy Flatt
Curriculum	UK
Gender of students	Boys and Girls
Ages / Grades or Year Groups	3-10 / Foundation Stage to Grade 5
Attendance	Acceptable
Number of students on roll	199
Number of Emirati students	4 (2%)
Date of the inspection	Sunday 27th to Monday 28th November 2011

## Contents

The context of the school.....	3
Overall school performance 2011-2012.....	3
How has the school progressed since the last inspection?.....	3
Key strengths .....	4
Recommendations .....	4
How good are the students' attainment and progress in key subjects?.....	5
How good is the students' personal and social development? .....	7
How good are the teaching, learning and assessment? .....	8
How well does the curriculum meet the educational needs of students? .....	9
How well does the school protect and support students?.....	10
How good are the leadership and management of the school? .....	11
What are the views of parents, teachers and students?.....	13
What happens next? .....	14
How to contact us .....	14
Our work with schools.....	15

## The context of the school

Al Worood Academy Private School is situated in Dubai Investment Park. It is a private school providing education for boys and girls from the Foundation Stage to Grade 5, aged three to ten years. Enrolment at the time of the inspection was 199 students. The majority of students were in the FS. The school delivered the UK National Curriculum including the UK Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum. More than half the students were non-GCC Arabs, with the next largest groups being from the United Kingdom and India. There were four Emirati students in the school.

There were 20 teachers on staff, 11 of whom had teaching qualifications. Two teachers had UK National Curriculum experience. There were no qualified early years teachers for the Foundation Stage classes. There were six teaching assistants in the Foundation Stage., There was a school nurse. The school did not identify any of the students as having special educational needs (SEN) and, consequently, there was no SEN co-ordinator. The school did not have a librarian and did not have an instructor for its swimming programme. The physical education teacher was also a Grade 1 class teacher.

The Principal had been at the school only since it was notified of the forthcoming inspection and had been assigned to the school by the school owners to support it through the inspection. The management team was comprised of the Foundation Stage supervisor and the primary school supervisor. Three of the five teachers in the Foundation Stage were new to the school at the beginning of the academic year, as were the two Grade 1 teachers, the art teacher and the French teacher.

## Overall school performance 2011-2012

**Unsatisfactory**

## How has the school progressed since the last inspection?

Al Worood Academy provided an unsatisfactory quality of education. There were significant weaknesses in the school's arrangements for the Foundation Stage children. The school had not responded effectively to most of the recommendations from the previous inspection report. Attainment by children in Foundation Stage science had improved, but attainment and progress had not improved in the other key subjects. Attainment had deteriorated in Arabic as a first language and as an additional language. Similarly, progress in English, at Foundation Stage, had deteriorated since the previous inspection. Most teachers were not

conversant with the school's advertised English National Curriculum. The majority of teachers did not employ a variety of appropriate strategies in their lessons.

Teaching was unsatisfactory in the Foundation Stage and acceptable in the primary years. Teaching had not shown improvement since the last inspection. The majority of teachers, particularly in the Foundation stage, did not provide appropriate tasks and did not meet the needs of all students. Students with additional needs received acceptable support. Learning was unsatisfactory in the Foundation Stage but acceptable in the primary phase. Students were largely dependent upon their teachers and the textbooks for learning. The assessment of learning had not improved since the last inspection and was still unsatisfactory. Procedures for assessing and tracking students' progress were not in place. The quality of leadership and management was unsatisfactory. An effective and supportive management team was not in place.

## Key strengths

- The positive attitudes and behaviour of the students.

## Recommendations

- Apply appropriate curriculum standards to determine the attainment and progress of students, including those with special educational needs;
- Ensure that the best teaching is identified, shared and professionally developed to improve student learning across the school;
- Monitor students' attainment and progress systematically and provide teachers with accurate information;
- Ensure that all teachers understand the English National Curriculum, so that each lesson has appropriate levels of challenge for students;
- Appoint a qualified school leader who will give clear direction to the school, with a management team to implement changes and an effective governing body to monitor their performance.

## How good are the students' attainment and progress in key subjects?

	Foundation Stage	Primary
<b>Islamic Education</b>		
Attainment	Not Applicable	Acceptable
Progress	Not Applicable	Acceptable
<b>Arabic as a first language</b>		
Attainment	Not Applicable	Acceptable
Progress	Not Applicable	Acceptable
<b>Arabic as an additional language</b>		
Attainment	Not Applicable	Unsatisfactory
Progress	Not Applicable	Unsatisfactory
<b>English</b>		
Attainment	Acceptable	Acceptable
Progress	Unsatisfactory	Acceptable
<b>Mathematics</b>		
Attainment	Acceptable	Acceptable
Progress	Acceptable	Acceptable
<b>Science</b>		
Attainment	Acceptable	Acceptable
Progress	Unsatisfactory	Acceptable

Attainment was acceptable in all subjects in both phases, with the exception of Arabic as an additional language, where it was unsatisfactory. In Islamic Education, the majority of students could recite short

verses from The Holy Qur'an, but not always accurately. In Arabic as a first language, most students could follow instructions and explain their ideas. Reading was accurate, but writing was unsatisfactory as it was limited to copying. In Arabic as an additional language, students' attainment was unsatisfactory. In the upper primary years, students needed instructions in English; and answers were often only single words. Few students could write Arabic by themselves. Attainment in English in the Foundation Stage was acceptable, but a majority of children in lessons simply repeated their teachers' speech and writing. Students in the primary phase English lessons showed attainment at expected levels. In mathematics, children in the Foundation Stage could count from one to ten, recognise shapes and recount the days of the week and months of the year. At the primary level, students could apply the basic rules of mathematics. In science, students knew a few scientific terms but, in activities, only a few students could make predictions, analyse results or reach conclusions.

Progress was mostly acceptable, but it was unsatisfactory in Foundation Stage in English and science and primary Arabic as an additional language. In Islamic Education, students made progress but showed less than expected development in their recitation skills. In Arabic as a first language, students' progress in reading, writing and grammar was acceptable but somewhat less in listening and speaking. In Arabic as an additional language, students' progress was unsatisfactory, with speaking limited to repetition and single-word responses. Children's progress in English, at Foundation Stage, was unsatisfactory as the repetition and copying did not allow independent language development. In the primary school, there was expected development in all key language skills. In mathematics, students were developing acceptable knowledge and skills. Progress in science was unsatisfactory in the Foundation Stage due to mostly repeated work. Progress was acceptable in the primary phase but with limited development of enquiry and investigative skills.

## How good is the students' personal and social development?

	Foundation Stage	Primary
Attitudes and behaviour	Good	Good
Understanding of Islam and appreciation of local traditions and culture	Acceptable	Acceptable
Civic, economic and environmental understanding	Acceptable	Acceptable

Students showed good attitudes and behaviour in both the Foundation Stage and the primary phase. They had positive relations with adults and with each other. Most exercised self-control and completed all expected work in lessons. They chose mostly healthy snacks. Students' understanding of Islam and appreciation of local culture and traditions were acceptable. They had an adequate understanding of Islam, but older children were not able to link its teachings to their lives or to the rest of the world. They respected local culture and traditions and appreciated the multi-culturalism of Dubai. They were aware of their roles in classrooms but were not aware of their roles as effective members of the school or the community. Young students understood the concept of work and the importance of keeping the surrounding environment clean. Older students had basic knowledge of the economic development of Dubai. They could explain environmental issues in limited ways and their role in protecting the environment. Attendance over the last full term was acceptable.

## How good are the teaching, learning and assessment?

	Foundation Stage	Primary
Teaching for effective learning	Unsatisfactory	Acceptable
Quality of students' learning	Unsatisfactory	Acceptable
Assessment	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory

Most teaching relied almost exclusively on the textbook, with content coverage the main objective of lessons rather than the needs of the learners. Teachers knew their subjects, but few understood how students learned. Teachers used closed questioning to elicit predictable answers requiring little thinking or problem-solving by learners. Lesson planning was descriptive, with learning objectives presented as tasks to be completed rather than as outcomes to be realised. In the Foundation Stage teachers did not plan meaningful learning experiences for young children. There was little challenge for the more able and limited support for slower learners across both phases. A few teachers supplemented textbooks with practical activities and worksheets. A few tasks in lessons were related to real life, but there were insufficient opportunities for students to make connections to the real world. Critical thinking and independent learning were not incorporated into student learning. The needs of most learners were not met.

Learning was unsatisfactory in the Foundation Stage but acceptable in the primary years. Most students were motivated and enthusiastic learners. They were co-operative and collaborative, and confident in sharing their learning with others, but were given few opportunities to do so. Students could re-tell lesson objectives from the board, but could not clearly explain their meaning or the expected learning outcomes. In most lessons, they were not sufficiently challenged. They were often passive learners who responded to their teachers' questions and comments with answers from a textbook, but few had thoughts of their own. There were low expectations for the development of critical and higher order thinking skills. Most learning was about repeating knowledge from the textbooks rather than problem-solving and analysing. There was little evidence of students undertaking any independent research or enquiry. A few students could explain their learning in limited ways.

The assessment of learning across both phases was unsatisfactory. Assessment data was gathered from internal examinations and from portfolios of marked work in the Foundation Stage. However, it was not

analysed or used constructively to plan lessons well and thus support learning. Assessments were mostly summative. Trends in attainment were not accurately identified and tracked. Teachers did not have a clear understanding of curriculum standards and the related assessment levels. School leaders and teachers had only a limited range of information about students' strengths and weaknesses. Students' homework and class work was marked by teachers, but constructive comments on attainment and next steps in learning were often missing. Teachers had not identified those students requiring support and guidance or those needing greater challenge. Assessment was not used to involve students in reviewing their own learning. Most students were not sufficiently informed about how they could improve their work.

### How well does the curriculum meet the educational needs of students?

	Foundation Stage	Primary
Curriculum quality	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory

The curriculum was unsatisfactory across the school. The rationale was unclear. The English national Curriculum had been officially adopted but not effectively implemented. The curriculum standards were not fully met in both phases. Curriculum outcomes were dictated by textbooks. The school had not added to the time allocation for Arabic as an additional language to meet the requirements of the Ministry of Education. Transition arrangements for students starting school and moving between phases did not ensure that they were well-prepared. This was especially the case for the least and most able students and for English and Arabic as additional language learners. In the Foundation Stage, the curriculum provided too few opportunities for independent learning. It did not allow children to explore, play or discover. Investigative opportunities in science and mathematics were not fully developed in either phase. There was little cross-curricular linking, such as reinforcing English language skills in other subjects. Enrichment of the curriculum by such means as field trips and sports was inadequate. There were very few links to other schools or with the local community.

## How well does the school protect and support students?

	Foundation Stage	Primary
Health and safety	Acceptable	Acceptable
Quality of support	Acceptable	Acceptable

Health and safety arrangements throughout the school were acceptable. Students were supervised at all times. Bus transport arrangements were efficient and well-managed. The school building and facilities were suitable and safe. There were regular maintenance checks and regular fire drills which were recorded and updated. The school nurse kept medical records and managed all health-related procedures and arrangements. She followed up on students' health issues. The school ensured that students brought healthy snacks to school. However, programmes to increase students' understanding of a healthy life style were lacking. There were established procedures to follow in case of health emergency issues, but there was no child protection policy.

The quality of support for students in the school was acceptable. Teachers cared for students, but not all teachers knew their students well. Overall, support arrangements and procedures for identifying students with special educational needs were lacking. In the Foundation Stage, a few students received classroom support while learning English. Generally, teachers were not aware of their roles in supporting students or the type of support some students needed. Behaviour management was acceptable. The school had adequate arrangements for managing attendance and punctuality, but a significant number of children in the Foundation Stage arrived late for school regularly.

## How good are the leadership and management of the school?

	Whole school
Quality of leadership	Unsatisfactory
Self-evaluation and improvement planning	Unsatisfactory
Partnerships with parents and the community	Acceptable
Governance	Unsatisfactory
Management, including staffing, facilities and resources	Acceptable

The quality of school leadership was unsatisfactory. There was no clear vision shared by the school community of how to enhance the education and personal development of children. School improvements had not been formulated or implemented. The school did not have a properly constituted management team with clear roles and responsibilities to instigate change. Teachers were not involved in the decision-making processes. Leaders had had little impact on the life of the school.

Self-evaluation and improvement planning were unsatisfactory. The school had not clearly identified its strengths and weaknesses or constructed an action plan with achievable goals. It did not consult or gather evidence from a range of sources regarding its performance. It did not have a systematic approach to monitor the quality of its work. There were no reviews of teachers' performance. Managers did not regularly monitor teachers' work or the attainment and progress of students. The school had not addressed all of the recommendations of the previous inspection report.

Partnerships with parents and the community were acceptable. A number of parents were a strong presence in the school. However, a few parents felt they were not always apprised of the school's approach to educating their children. Informal contacts between teachers and parents provided effective communication. Twice yearly, parent-teacher meetings and written reports informed parents of their children's progress. A few parents expressed concern that they knew little of their children's progress in between those reports. There was also concern about the lack of after-school activities. There were insufficient links with the local community to broaden learning.

Governance of the school was unsatisfactory. The board of governors did not exert a positive influence on the school. It did not take a strategic view of the development of the school and advise it accordingly. The board had not held school leaders to account for the performance of the school. Members of the board included community representatives but did not include parents, staff members or an objective community

representative. Systematic surveys had not been carried out and the views of stakeholders had not been gathered.

Management, including staffing, facilities and resources, was acceptable. The school was managed well and operated effectively. A few teachers had teaching qualifications and experience in the English national Curriculum. There were no qualified Foundation Stage teachers. The physical education teacher was also a classroom teacher. There was provision for a swimming programme but not a specialist instructor. There was a library but no librarian. A classroom for science was not set up for science investigation and experiments. The premises were acceptable and learning resources were sufficient for learning to a limited degree.

## What are the views of parents, teachers and students?

Before the inspection, the views of parents, teachers and senior secondary students were surveyed. Key messages from each group were considered during the inspection and these helped to form judgements. A summary of the survey statistics and comments from those who responded to the survey follows;

Responses to the surveys			
Responses received from	Number		Percentage
Parents	This year	22	15%
	Last year	38	42%
Teachers	12		60%
Students	There are no upper secondary-aged students in the school		

\*The percentage of responses from parents is based on the number of families.

Very few parents responded to the survey, at a much lower rate than last year. A majority of teachers responded to their survey. Parents held mixed views about their level of satisfaction with the school and the progress of their children in the key subjects. Most believed that behaviour at the school was good and that their children were happy and safe. On other aspects of provision, parents' views were divided. Similarly, the views of teachers were mixed across the different aspects of school provision.

## What happens next?

The school has been asked to prepare and submit an updated action plan to DSIB within two months of receiving the most recent report. This plan should address:

- Recommendations from DSIB;
- Areas identified by the school as requiring improvement;
- Other external reports or sources of information that comment on the work of the school;
- Priorities arising from the school's unique characteristics.

The next inspection will report on the progress made by the school.

## Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau

## Knowledge and Human Development Authority

## How to contact us

If you have a concern or wish to comment on any aspect of this report, you should contact:  
[inspection@khda.gov.ae](mailto:inspection@khda.gov.ae)

## Our work with schools

Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau (DSIB) inspects schools to inform parents, students and the wider community of the quality of education provided. Inspectors also give guidance to staff about how to improve the standard of education.

At the beginning of the inspection, we ask the principal and staff about the strengths of the school, what needs to improve and how they know. We use the information they give us to help us plan our time in school. During the inspection, we go into classes and join other activities in which students are involved. We also gather the views of students, parents and staff. We find their views very helpful and use them, together with the other information we have collected, to arrive at our view regarding the quality of education.

This report tells you what we found during the inspection and the quality of education in the school. We describe how well students are doing, how good the school is at helping them to learn and how well it cares for them. We comment on how well staff, parents and children work together and how they go about improving the school. Finally, we focus on how well the school is led and how staff help the school achieve its aims.

## Copyright © 2012

This report is for internal use only and for the self-evaluation purposes of the school.

It should not be used for commercial purposes or in connection with a prospectus or advertisement.