



دائرة التعليم والمعرفة
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
AND KNOWLEDGE

Inspection Report of Abu Dhabi International School Branch 1

Overall Effectiveness: Very Good

Academic Year 2017 – 2018

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School Information

General Information	Inspection date:	from	3 Jumada Al-Akhirah 1439	to	6 Jumada Al-Akhirah 1439		
		from	19-Feb-18	to	22-Feb-18		
	School name			Abu Dhabi International School Branch 1			
	School ID			265			
	School address			Street 61, Mohammed Bin Zayed City, Abu Dhabi			
	School telephone			+971 (0)2 205 7999			
	School official email			adinternationmbz.pvt@adec.ac.ae			
	School website			www.aisschools.com			
	School curriculum			American, International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IBDP)			
	School phases			KG - High			
	Fee range and category			AED30,800 – AED46,400 (High)			
	Number of lessons observed			149			
	Number of joint lessons observed			26			
Staff Information	Total number of teachers			179			
	Turnover rate			27%			
	Number of teaching assistants			41			
	Teacher- student ratio			1 : 13			
Student Information	Total number of students			2390			
	% of Emirati Students			28 %			
	% of Largest nationality groups			1. Egypt 17%			
				2. Jordan 12%			
				3. Lebanon 6%			
	% of SEN students			4%			
	% of students per phase			KG: 15%		Middle: 30%	
				Primary: 37%		High: 18%	
Gender			Boys and girls				

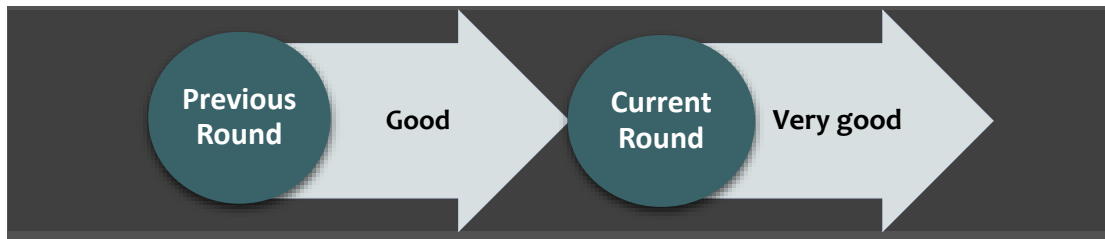
The Performance of the School

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

Evaluation of the school's overall performance

- The school's overall performance is very good. The school was established two and a half years ago. Since the last inspection, the school has appointed a new principal.
- Students' achievement is very good overall. Children make a strong start in kindergarten (KG). Students leave the school in Grade 12 having attained very high grades in external examinations.
- Students' personal and social development is very good. Their positive attitudes have led to improvements in almost all aspects of school life. They show very good awareness of Islamic values and a thorough understanding of UAE culture.
- The effectiveness of teaching and the use of assessment is very good overall. The teaching of science is very effective throughout the school and leads to very good outcomes for students. Students' higher level thinking skills are not always as strongly promoted in the primary and middle phases.
- The curriculum is very well implemented and adapted. It is increasingly individualised, particularly for students who have special educational needs (SEN) and who are gifted and talented (G&T).
- The protection, care, guidance and support of students is very good. The provision for SEN students is an example of best practice. All students receive a very high quality of guidance, particularly in the high phase.
- The new principal, and leaders at all levels, supported by governors and parents, have successfully created and maintained a positive learning community in a short space of time. Leaders have recognised, and are addressing, the shortcomings of their external benchmarking systems, particularly for primary and middle, and the accuracy of their self-evaluation.

Progress made since last inspection and capacity to improve



- School leaders have addressed all the recommendations in the previous inspection report. These have been, or are being, implemented by the school.
- Leaders have maintained and improved the school's performance, which is now very good overall. They have improved the quality of teaching, leading to improved achievement in all subjects, including those taught in Arabic. Teachers now plan and use a wide range of teaching strategies and learning activities.
- Students' very good personal and social development now includes a greater understanding of Emirati culture and traditions. The very good protection, care, guidance and support of all students has been sustained and improved, particularly the support for SEN students.
- The school has further developed its curriculum, offering suitable educational pathways for all students. Learning technologies are now integrated into subjects and activities across the curriculum.
- School leaders have driven improvement very effectively since the last inspection, particularly in KG and high. Overall, school leaders at all levels have demonstrated a very good capacity to innovate and improve over time.

Key areas of strength and area for improvement

Key areas of strength

- The school's promotion of students' personal and social development.
- The effectiveness of teaching in raising students' achievement.
- The protection, care, guidance and support of students.
- Best practice identified in the support for those who have special educational needs.
- School leaders' impact in creating a highly positive learning environment in partnership with parents.

Key areas for improvement

1. The further improvement of teaching and assessment to raise students' achievement in all subjects, by:
 - i. developing students' higher-level thinking and problem-solving skills, particularly in the primary and middle phases, through open questioning that promotes inquiry and debate
 - ii. sharing of best practice to ensure all teachers have the same consistently very high expectations
 - iii. consistently adapting lessons in response to students' level of understanding, to move forward swiftly or re-teach as required.
2. The continuing development of the school's processes for self-evaluation and external international benchmarking, by:
 - i. adopting throughout the school the newly piloted system of rigorous and precise assessments that align with national and international benchmarks
 - ii. ensuring the school's self-evaluation is more accurately linked to students' achievement in lessons.

Provision for Reading

- The school has a large library with a good stock of English and Arabic books. Each class visits the library regularly. Teachers are trained to evaluate the reading needs of students and to help them choose appropriate books.
- Literacy development in English and Arabic is prioritised. There are posters to encourage reading and students choose from graded readers in a book corner in each grade area. Reading competitions between classes motivate students to read more at home. Each morning, the school operates a Drop Everything and Read (DEAR) policy for pupils in primary.
- A reading log is sent home for parents to sign in primary, for both English and Arabic books, and students complete book reviews.
- The English and Arabic departments set baseline reading tests in September and test again in January. The data shows improvement for most students.
- Support is given in primary for students who have below age-related reading skills. A library in each class, in KG and primary, includes levelled reading books in both English and Arabic. SEN students are very well supported in their reading, with one to one support.
- KG have devised their own innovative phonics system and provide workshops for parents to help them support early reading development at home.
- Students across the school talk enthusiastically about books and are eager to share their favourite authors. Older students develop sophisticated skills in digital and print literacy.

Performance Standard 1: Students' Achievement

Students' achievement Indicators		KG	Primary	Middle	High
Islamic Education	Attainment	N/A	Good	Good	Good
	Progress	N/A	Good	Good	Good
Arabic (as a First Language)	Attainment	Good	Very Good	Good	Very Good
	Progress	Good	Very Good	Good	Very Good
Arabic (as additional Language)	Attainment	N/A	Acceptable	Good	Good
	Progress	N/A	Acceptable	Good	Good
Social Studies	Attainment	N/A	Good	Good	N/A
	Progress	N/A	Good	Good	N/A
English	Attainment	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
	Progress	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
Mathematics	Attainment	Very Good	Good	Good	Very Good
	Progress	Very Good	Good	Good	Very Good
Science	Attainment	Very Good	Very 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. It is very good in KG and the high phase and is particularly strong in science and other subjects.
- In 2017, attainment in the high phase for the few students in the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IBDP) was outstanding overall. Students' attainment in recent Grade 12 Ministry of Education (MOE) examinations, in Arabic and in Islamic education, was outstanding. It was very good for the large majority of students who took the High School Diploma (HSD) and the International English Language Testing System (IELTS). In 2015, attainment in Arabic in the middle and primary phases in External Measure of Student Achievement (EMSA) tests was weak.
- Students' attainment in a recent trial examination for the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) was well above the average for Abu Dhabi schools.
- The school's own internal assessment information shows that students across almost all subjects consistently attain above curriculum standards. This was confirmed by the attainment seen in the majority of lessons and in the scrutiny of students' work.
- Overall, the large majority of students make very good progress and most consistently so in the high phase. The progress of different groups of students from their starting points, including SEN and G&T, is similar to that of other students. Their learning skills are very good overall.

Subjects

- Students' achievement in **Islamic Education** is good overall. Most students in primary and middle develop a secure understanding of Islamic concepts and values. Their recitation skills are sound, although they do not always follow 'Tajweed' rules. In the high phase, a majority of students demonstrate good understanding of issues from an Islamic perspective and debate on issues such as the significance of the family in Muslim society.
- Students' achievement in **Arabic as a first language** is very good overall. It is good in middle and in KG, and very good in primary and high. The majority of children start practising letter formation and strokes in KG and their handwriting is generally good. Students in primary and middle speak confidently. Students' writing skills in middle are less strong. The large majority of students in high read aloud with good understanding and expression. Their attainment is very good overall in Grade 12 examinations.

- Students' achievement in **Arabic as a second language** is good. It is acceptable in primary, where most students can introduce themselves in Arabic. In middle, students can, for example, list items to buy from a shop. The majority of students in high develop good skills in writing and reading.
- Students' achievement in **social studies** is good. The majority attain levels that are above curriculum standards. They make better than expected progress, including SEN students, and show a good understanding of UAE society. In early primary they can identify modes of transport by air, sea and land. In middle they learn to take increasing responsibility for their own learning.
- Students' achievement in **English** is very good across all phases. The large majority of students attain levels above age-related curriculum expectations in reading, writing, speaking and listening. In KG the large majority of children exceed expectations from their starting points. In primary, the large majority of students learn grammatical rules well and apply them accurately in classroom tasks. In middle and high, most students can analyse texts and identify literary devices effectively.
- Students' achievement in **mathematics** is good, and very good in KG and high. The majority of students demonstrate knowledge, skills and understanding that are above curriculum standards. In KG, the large majority of children can count objects up to ten and begin comparing their shapes and sizes. In primary, students add and subtract tens up to 100 and multiply fractions. In middle they can compute integers using absolute values. The higher grades can illustrate exponential growth and decay underpinned by a very good mathematical skill base.
- Students' achievement in **science** is very good in all phases. A large majority of students demonstrate knowledge, skills and understanding well above curriculum standards. Investigative work is a main focus from KG upwards, but is less so in the primary phase. Students in primary nonetheless show very good familiarity with the scientific method. In middle and high students continually use the excellent laboratory facilities. Students, including SEN students, make good use of learning technologies to research, record and share their findings.
- Students' achievement in **other subjects** is very good. The large majority of students, including G&T students, achieve standards above curriculum expectations, for example in the creative arts, humanities, physical education (PE) and information and communication technology (ICT). Students make particularly good progress in these subjects when they are challenged to be creative and innovative in practical activities and project work.



Learning skills

- Learning skills are very good overall. In KG, children enthusiastically engage in activities to extend their mathematical and language skills. In the primary grades, students work collaboratively in pairs or in groups to complete tasks with sustained concentration, particularly when tasks involve technology. Students' higher-level thinking and problem-solving skills are less strongly developed in the primary and middle phases. The large majority of students in the high phase can debate sophisticated and well-reasoned opinions with their peers and teachers.

Areas of Relative Strength:

- Students' strong attainment in national and international assessments in the high phase.
- Students' strong progress and learning skills in science throughout the school.
- The very strong progress that SEN students make from their starting points.

Areas for Improvement:

- The further development of students critical thinking and problem-solving skills in primary and middle phases.
- The fluency of students writing in Arabic and their understanding of the rules of recitation in Islamic education.

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	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students' attitudes to all aspects of school life are highly positive. They respond very well to critical feedback and show independence and initiative. Behaviour is very good throughout the school. Students treat each other with respect. Relationships with teachers are courteous and productive. Students understand the need for safe and healthy lifestyles and are careful to exercise and eat appropriately. Attendance, at 97%, is very good, and almost all students are punctual to school and to lessons. Students demonstrate appreciation of Islamic values in their positive and caring interactions throughout the school. They complete projects that give them a very good understanding of their own culture, the culture of the UAE and of other world cultures. Students exercise responsibility in lessons and around the school and volunteer for activities in the local community. They are innovative in the regular problem-solving activities posed, particularly in KG and high. Students look after their school and have a very good awareness of sustainability in the UAE. They take part in environmental projects. <p>Areas of Relative Strength:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The very positive attitudes and good behaviour of students. Students' strong appreciation of UAE culture and heritage. The attendance and punctuality of students. <p>Areas for Improvement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The further development of students' understanding of Islam through activities linked to the Islamic education curriculum. 				

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	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The overall quality of teaching and assessment is very good. Teachers apply their knowledge and skills very well to advance students' learning. Lessons are planned collaboratively, ensuring consistency in the curriculum. Teachers engage in an effective programme of professional development. Relationships between teachers and students are very positive. A range of highly effective teaching strategies are implemented to cater for the needs of all, including SEN and G&T students. Teachers engage students in innovative activities. Teachers do not always adapt their teaching in response to students' understanding. In science and in KG and the high phase, they develop students' higher-level thinking skills very well. This is less strong in primary and middle. Assessment data is well analysed to identify trends in attainment. Teachers use of Measured Progress (MP) to benchmark students' achievement, however, is not always accurate. Teachers' piloted use of Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) is precise and rigorous. While assessment is an integral aspect of teaching and learning, best practice is not always shared across all subjects. 				
Areas of Relative Strength: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A well-organised, stimulating learning environment. Teaching and assessment are particularly effective in science, KG and high. Provision for all groups of students, particularly SEN students. 				
Areas for Improvement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sharing of best practice to raise achievement in all subjects. The development of students' problem solving and higher-level thinking skills, particularly in primary and middle. 				

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
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The quality of the curriculum is very good. The curriculum offers students in high appropriate alternative pathways through the HSD, the IBDP and the AP. Courses are grouped around potential career paths, such as architecture, medicine and business. The curriculum provides students in all phases with a balance of knowledge, skills and understanding and is well adapted for G&T and, in particular, SEN students. It enables students to earn credits that are recognized by colleges and countries around the world. The curriculum has a clear rationale and is reviewed regularly, being modified as needed. The curriculum provides rigour and challenge for students, particularly in KG and high, preparing them for life-long learning. The school offers a wide range of curricular choices that include innovative courses in the creative arts, for example, musical theatre and textiles. The curriculum provides opportunities for enterprise, innovation and entrepreneurship with strong cross-curricular links to UAE society. Moral values are both embedded in the curriculum and addressed in specific moral education lessons. The school is highly innovative in creating resources such as board games and jigsaws that prompt investigation of moral issues. The school is helping to pilot summative assessment in the national programme. 				
Areas of Relative Strength: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The range of curricular choices and pathways available to students. The curriculum opportunities for enterprise, innovation and entrepreneurship. The promotion of cross-curricular themes that celebrate the culture and heritage of the UAE. 				
Areas for Improvement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To extend to the primary and middle phases, the rigour and challenge of the curriculum in the high phase. 				

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	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
Care and support	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The overall quality of protection, care, guidance and support of students is very good. The school has rigorous safeguarding procedures and all the school community, including parents, are fully aware of them. The school is very well maintained, all records are in place and the building is well equipped to suit the needs of all students, particularly SEN students. This includes the specialized performing arts, sports and science facilities. The school's successful promotion of healthy living extends from lessons to the school canteen, clubs and tournaments. The quality of care and support is very good. Staff have very positive relationships with students and manage their behaviour effectively. The school has very effective systems to manage attendance and punctuality. The school's procedures to identify and to cater for SEN students are an example of best practice and are very good for G&T. The school ensures that students' well-being and personal development are efficiently monitored. The academic and career guidance offered to senior students leads to further education in prestigious, international institutions. <p>Areas of Relative Strength:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The support the school provides for the well-being and safety of all students. Best practice in the identification and support of SEN students. Highly effective personal and academic guidance for students in high phase. <p>Areas for Improvement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to improve the impact of the management of students' attendance and punctuality. 				

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
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The quality of leadership and management is very good. School leaders' vision in creating a new, inclusive school is shared by all stakeholders. Highly effective academic leadership at all levels has led to improvement in teaching and achievement. The leadership of KG, the high phase and science is particularly strong. The school's self-evaluation form (SEF) and school development plan (SDP) have helped drive improvement. They are not consistently accurate because the school is yet to benchmark students' achievement effectively in all phases. Partnerships with parents are highly positive, impacting strongly on students' achievement. The school provides regular communication and detailed reporting. National and international partnerships are equally strong. Knowledgeable and highly experienced school governors act as critical friends, providing very good accountability and support for school leaders. The management of the facilities and day to day life of the school is very good, including the deployment of teachers and the use of resources. The school has made a positive contribution to the promotion of the UAE in international assessment. Grades 3 and 7 follow the 'Question a Day' initiative. Students are currently preparing for Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) examinations. The school is now developing more accurate systems for international benchmarking. <p>Areas of Relative Strength:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The creation and development of a positive learning culture in a new school. The impact of school leaders in improving performance across the curriculum. The school's inclusive partnership with parents of all students including SEN. <p>Areas for Improvement:</p>	



- The development of processes for self-evaluation and benchmarking.
- Further development of educational leadership in the upper primary and middle phases.