



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



Private School Inspection Report

Shining Star International School

Academic Year 2016 – 2017

Iqraa

Shining Star International School

Inspection Date	February 20, 2017	to	February 23, 2017
Date of previous inspection	January 25, 2016	to	January 28, 2016

General Information	
School ID	241
Opening year of school	2014
Principal	Alyas Ali
School telephone	+971 (0)2 559 9080
School Address	Musaffah, Abu Dhabi
Official email (ADEC)	shiningstarint.pvt
School website	www.ssis.ae
Fee ranges (per annum)	Very low to low (AED3,184 to AED15,500)
Licensed Curriculum	
Main Curriculum	Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE)
Other Curriculum (if applicable)	---
External Exams/ Standardised tests	CBSE International Benchmark Test (IBT) Ministry of Education (MoE)
Accreditation	CBSE

Students		
Total number of students	1886	
%of students per curriculum	Main Curriculum	100%
	Other Curriculum	---
Number of students in other phases	KG	751
	Primary:	590
	Middle:	238
	High:	307
Age range	3 to 18	
Grades or Year Groups	KG1 to Grade 12	
Gender	Boys and girls	
% of Emirati Students	0%	
Largest nationality groups (%)	1. Indian: 89%	
	2. Pakistani: 9%	
	3. Bangladeshi: 2%	
Staff		
Number of teachers	143	
Number of teaching assistants (TAs)	41	
Teacher-student ratio	KG/ FS	1:20
	Other phases	1:20
Teacher turnover	16%	

Introduction

Inspection activities	
Number of inspectors deployed	5
Number of inspection days	4
Number of lessons observed	152
Number of joint lesson observations	14
Number of parents' questionnaires	1120; return rate: 50%
Details of other inspection activities	Inspectors held discussions with the owner, principal, senior managers, teachers and other members of staff, students and parents. They reviewed a wide range of school documentation and students' coursework. They observed assemblies, school activities, arrivals, departures and intervals.

School	
School Aims	'We focus on individual care to each student. The student is allowed to explore and innovate through his activities. We also look at parental involvement as an important aspect. We at SSIS have a variety of programs to ensure that the children collaborate with the part of enjoying his/her school life.'
School vision and mission	<p>'To be a school of innovation and creativity, preparing students for global challenges.'</p> <p>'Our mission is through the combined efforts of our staff, parents, students and community to develop future leaders with active and creative minds. Our focus is on the holistic development of the individual, social, moral, intellectual and physical growth, along with a strong sense of heritage and culture.'</p>
Admission Policy	Shining Star is an inclusive school. When enrolling in the Kindergarten, students are interviewed by the special educational needs coordinator (SENCO) and the school's counsellor. Students who enrol from Grades 1 to 12 sit a baseline examination.



Leadership structure (ownership, governance and management)	Leadership comprises the principal, the Dean, two vice principals, three co-ordinators, headmistress, SENCO, counsellor, health and safety officer and the business operations manager. The newly formed board of trustees comprises the owner, the chairman, the Dean, school principal, two parents, one member of staff and two community members.
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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 internally
Intellectual disability	1	0
Specific Learning Disability	4	4
Emotional and Behaviour Disorders (ED/ BD)	0	1
Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)	0	1
Speech and Language Disorders	0	0
Physical and health related disabilities	2	0
Visually impaired	1	0
Hearing impaired	2	1
Multiple disabilities	4	3

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

G&T Category	Number of students identified
Intellectual ability	1
Subject-specific aptitude (e.g. in science, mathematics, languages)	55
Social maturity and leadership	4
Mechanical/ technical/ technological ingenuity	1
Visual and performing arts (e.g. art, theatre, recitation)	141
Psychomotor ability (e.g. dance or sport)	35

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)

The school was judged to be:	Band B	Acceptable
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	Band A High Performing			Band B Satisfactory	Band C In need of significant improvement	
Performance Standards	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						
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The Performance of the School

Evaluation of the school's overall performance

The overall performance of the school is acceptable. The recently restructured leadership team is effectively led by a new principal who has quickly established systems to improve teaching and learning. Senior leaders have a clear strategic vision and direction. This is shared by the school community. Lessons now actively engage students in their learning in most subjects. Teachers use a range of resources to deliver lessons and support learning. Most students communicate confidently in English. Students' behaviour is good because of the positive relationships developed, despite the high turnover of staff and students. Students show respect for UAE culture and Islamic values. The school does yet not fully comply with timetabling and staff approval requirements. Teaching is acceptable and with scope for further improvement, particularly in developing strategies to support students with special educational needs (SEN). Teachers and middle leaders have yet to make sufficiently effective use of assessment to challenge students consistently.

Progress made since last inspection and capacity to improve

The school has made acceptable progress since its last inspection. Senior leaders have successfully addressed most recommendations in the previous inspection report. Students in most subjects now make acceptable progress in lessons. This is because teaching and lesson planning have improved, particularly in kindergarten (KG) and English. Assessment systems are now in place to track student progress and to set targets. Senior leaders effectively evaluate the school and know key strengths and areas for improvement. Teachers are now provided with regular professional development. Most teachers effectively implement the strategies they are taught. Senior leaders now monitor the quality of teaching in lessons. Overall, school leaders' capacity to improve the school is acceptable.

Development and promotion of innovation skills

The school promotes innovation generally well. For example, attendance at events such as Science Quest provides older students with opportunities to build their own innovations such as smartphone applications. In Robotics lessons, students work collaboratively and often have to think imaginatively. Students also demonstrate imaginative learning and creativity through homework projects. In other lessons, students are not always given enough opportunities to discover things for themselves. They do not yet draw on their learning across the curriculum in order to solve problems. Overall, the school is making acceptable progress to develop and teach effectively the skills that underpin innovation.

The inspection identified the following as key areas of strength:

- students' behaviour, relationships and understanding of UAE culture and Islamic values
- improved opportunities for active learning in most subjects and lessons
- students' confidence and ability to read, write and speak English
- senior leaders strategic vision and direction.

The inspection identified the following as key areas for improvement:

- teaching strategies which meet the needs of all learners, particularly those who require additional support
- effective use of assessment to plan lessons and support next steps in learning
- middle leaders to be accountable for their subjects across the curriculum
- compliance with licensing requirements on school timetabling and teacher approvals.

Performance Standard 1: Students' Achievement

Students' achievement Indicators		KG	Primary	Middle	High
Islamic Education	Attainment	N/A	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
	Progress	N/A	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Arabic (as a First Language)	Attainment	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Progress	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
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	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
	Progress	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Mathematics	Attainment	Weak	Weak	Acceptable	Acceptable
	Progress	Weak	Weak	Acceptable	Acceptable
Science	Attainment	Weak	Weak	Acceptable	Acceptable
	Progress	Weak	Weak	Acceptable	Acceptable
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	Acceptable	Acceptable	Weak	Acceptable
	Progress	Acceptable	Acceptable	Weak	Acceptable
Learning Skills (including innovation, creativity, critical thinking, communication, problem-solving and collaboration)		Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

The overall quality of students' achievement is acceptable. Most attainment levels are in line with curriculum standards. Progress in lessons and phases is acceptable. Most children start school with skills typical for their age. When they leave, the majority of students attain age-related expectations in their subjects. They exceed curriculum expectations in CBSE examinations, particularly in Grade 10 Arabic, Grades 10 and 12 English and Grade 12 science. IBT data shows that students do not attain in line with international standards in English and mathematics from Grades 1 to 12 and in science from Grades 3 to 12. Students make acceptable progress in the high phase, so that by Grade 12 their attainment in CBSE examinations is broadly in line with expectations in English, mathematics and science. Internal examination and continuous assessment data show improvement in achievement in all subjects since the school's last inspection. Students with SEN are not making acceptable progress. More-able students achieve in line with curriculum expectations.

Students' achievement in Islamic education is acceptable. In Grade 1, most students can recite memorised short Surah from the Holy Qur'an in line with curriculum expectations. By Grade 5, most students recite 'Hadeeth' from memory and explain the concept of 'brotherhood' in Islam with acceptable levels of understanding. By the end of middle phase, students can make links to real-life situations. By Grade 11, most explain Islamic rules appropriate to their age level, and reflect on the impact these have upon individuals and society, in line with curriculum expectations.

Students' achievement in Arabic as a second language is acceptable. By the end of Grade 1, most can read simple sentences from a book confidently. In Grade 5, most demonstrate listening, speaking, reading and comprehension skills appropriate to their age level. They read short text and answer questions correctly and communicate using simple sentences when speaking and writing. By Grade 12, most can read a story, answer comprehension question correctly, and work collaboratively to identify the key features of a story. They are able to identify and differentiate between masculine and feminine plurals in line with age-related expectations.

Students' achievement in social studies is acceptable. Most achieve in line with curriculum standards across the primary and middle phases. By the end of Grade 5 most can discuss Islamic and national holidays, and other events celebrated in UAE in acceptable detail. By Grade 9, most discuss topics in citizenship and UAE history, at an age-appropriate level, for example writing accurately about the history of different Arab countries.

Students' achievement in English is acceptable. Most children start school with limited language skills. By the end of KG most can communicate using simple sentences. They know letters of the alphabet and their sounds. They can write

simple sentences, spelling words such as ‘happy’ and ‘slow’ accurately. By the end of primary and middle phases, most students organise their ideas when speaking and writing, in line with age-related expectations. They read widely and comprehend simple texts in English. Most continue to make acceptable progress from Grades 10 to 12. Students communicate effectively when talking and writing about issues related to advertising and the environment, at age-appropriate levels.

Students’ achievement in mathematics is weak in KG and primary phase and acceptable in middle and high phases. In KG, the majority of children attain below curriculum expectations in naming colours and 2D shapes, and writing numbers to 20. In Grade 5, students attain below age-related expectations; they are able to measure area and perimeter, but cannot estimate distance. In Grade 9, students demonstrate acceptable achievement, applying their understanding of algorithms effectively to different problems. Grade 12 students solve equations using more than one method, in line with age-related expectations.

Students’ achievement in science is weak in KG and primary phase and acceptable in middle and high phases. Children make weak progress in KG. For example, in KG1, activities are insufficiently challenging to adequately develop children’s knowledge about sea creatures. Progress accelerates across middle phase, and by Grade 9 students can name the stages of the nitrogen cycle in line with age-related expectations. By Grade 12, most master investigative skills in line with curriculum expectations by carrying out experiments with pendulums in physics. In biology, they explain how blood donations are used to save lives. In chemistry, students can draw chemical models in line with age-related expectations.

Students’ achievement in other subjects is acceptable overall. In physical education, Information and Communications Technology (ICT), music and art, most achieve in line with curriculum standards. In Grade 3 art, students model fruit and vegetables out of clay to a standard in line with age-related expectations. Students’ achievement in other languages is broadly acceptable. Their progress is good in Malayalam, but weak in Urdu and Hindi, where work is not appropriately pitched. By Grade 9 these students attain below curriculum standards, particularly in writing.

Students’ learning skills are acceptable. They have positive attitudes to learning and collaborate effectively together. When opportunities are given to discuss and present work, they display acceptable communication skills, particularly in English. Students make some connections between areas of learning in different subjects and relate these to their understanding of the world. Students’ research, problem-solving, and critical-thinking skills require further development, as do their innovation and enterprise skills.

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	Good	Good	Good	Good

Students' personal and social development is good. Most demonstrate self-discipline and responsible attitudes towards others and their work. Their behaviour is positive throughout the school. Bullying is rare. Students across grades accept responsibility and confidently lead assemblies. They are courteous and respectful towards others. Most demonstrate understanding of how to maintain a safe and healthy lifestyle. Occasionally students bring unhealthy food choices from home. Attendance, at 92%, is acceptable. A few students arrive late to school.

Students demonstrate good appreciation of Islamic values. Almost all are polite and welcoming to visitors. Displays around the school demonstrate students' clear understanding of tolerance, compassion and respect. Students confidently recite from the Holy Qur'an and Hadeeth in assembly. They demonstrate appreciation of Emirati heritage and culture, singing the national anthem and celebrating events such as National Day and Flag Day. Students show acceptable understanding of other world cultures in displays around the school and in events involving parents such as a celebration of foods from different countries.

Students are aware of their social responsibilities. The school has an active student council. Older students supervise recreation times during the school day. Students enjoy attending events outside school which promote innovation, enterprise and entrepreneurship but lack initiative in developing their own projects. They take care of their school and value supporting their local environment in the few opportunities available. A minority of students have helped clean a local beach and donate unwanted clothes to charities such as The Red Crescent. Students are aware of wider environmental issues, including the importance of recycling.

Performance Standard 3: Teaching and Assessment

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

The overall quality of teaching is acceptable and assessment is weak. Most teachers demonstrate secure knowledge of their subjects and how students learn. Teaching in most subjects actively engages students through group work and use of practical resources. Lessons no longer rely only on textbooks. Teachers plan lessons consistently across the school which result in acceptable student outcomes. Although planning attempts to adapt work to provide appropriate challenge and support to students of differing ability, work is not yet sufficiently personalised to meet individual needs, especially for SEN students. Teachers do not always ask questions which promote purposeful dialogue or deepen understanding, or ensure all lessons are challenging. In a minority of lessons, teachers have low-expectations. For example, in one Grade 5 lesson, students were asked to write only four sentences about a picture they had analysed. Lessons do not always sufficiently develop students' problem-solving, critical-thinking and innovation skills.

Assessment is weak across the school. Students' attainment is regularly assessed against curriculum standards and benchmarked against national expectations. Analysis of data by senior leaders does not yet yield accurate monitoring of the progress of individuals and groups or effectively influence teaching and the curriculum. Teachers do not always know how well students achieve to give them focused challenge and support them in their next steps in learning. Marking, for example, is often insufficiently precise to help students know how to improve. Students themselves are not sufficiently involved in the assessment process. For example, they do not evaluate or assess their own work systematically or that of their peers.

Performance Standard 4: Curriculum

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

The overall quality of the curriculum is acceptable. It is broad and balanced and follows the requirements of the licensed CBSE curriculum. Continuity and progression across most subjects is acceptable with the exception of Hindi, where students do not always access work at a level suitable for their age. The school teaches students five different languages and ensures that older students have the opportunity to learn physics, biology, chemistry, commerce and informatics practices. Cross-curricular links are not always effectively planned. Opportunities to link students' learning in ways which would enable them to consolidate skills learned in one subject by applying them elsewhere are not yet planned in a systematic way. The curriculum is not systematically reviewed or developed to ensure good provision in all subjects.

The school makes few modifications to the curriculum. Lessons are not sufficiently adapted to meet the needs of all groups of learners, particularly those with SEN or those who are gifted and talented. The school enriches learning with competitions and extra-curricular activities. It provides for students to develop their skills in enterprise, enquiry and innovation skills outside of school but such opportunities have not yet been routinely embedded in the planning and delivery of all subjects. Community links require further development. Appropriate opportunities for students to develop understanding, appreciation and respect for UAE culture, heritage and Islamic values are provided within the curriculum. In social studies and Islamic education, for example, students are taught clearly about the importance of cleanliness, self-care and the importance of respecting others, particularly their parents.

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 overall quality of protection, care, guidance and support for students is acceptable. The school's effective child protection procedures are known and understood by staff, parents and students. Lessons educate students well about cyber safety, bullying and how to stay safe. The school is clean and mostly well maintained with secure records and effective arrangements to ensure security and health and safety, including the supervision of students' use of transport. The school is fully accessible for those with mobility issues in KG and the primary phase. There is no access to classrooms on the first floor for those unable to use stairs in Grades 5 to 12. The school teaches students about the importance of healthy lifestyles but promoting safe and healthy living does not yet permeate all aspects of school life.

Relationships between staff and students contribute to an effective whole school approach to behaviour management. Students respond well to the recently introduced 'Dojo' system and its rewards for good behaviour and learning in lessons. The school ensures absence is recorded and followed up, but little is done to actively promote punctuality and maintain high levels of attendance. The school has appropriate systems in place to identify students with SEN. It works with outside specialists, teachers and parents to identify these students' needs. Gifted and talented (G&T) students are identified internally through assessments. Support for SEN students is weak. Their needs are not specifically planned for during lessons and, as a result, they make weak progress. G&T students make acceptable progress overall, but are not always challenged to achieve their full potential in lessons. The school provides acceptable academic guidance and advice to students in Grades 10 to 12 and prepares them adequately for the next stage in their learning.

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	Good
Governance	Acceptable
Management, staffing, facilities and resources	Acceptable

The overall quality of leadership and management is acceptable. The principal, appointed in September 2016, has restructured senior leadership roles to form an effective team with a shared vision and commitment to improving all aspects of the school's provision. The role of subject coordinators is being strengthened by a focus on leadership skills, effective analysis of data, and accurate monitoring of teaching quality. Morale is positive and relationships and communication professional. Under their current leadership, the school has improved steadily since the last inspection.

Self-evaluation and improvement planning are acceptable. The school's self-evaluation form (SEF) uses data to provide a realistic view of the school's performance. The school development plan (SDP) is closely matched to the SEF and appropriately is focused on raising students' achievement using achievable goals and clear actions, timescales and responsibilities. Monitoring of teaching quality has yet to focus sufficiently on its impact on students' learning.

Partnerships with parents and the community are good. Leaders have established an active parent council which organises events, publishes its own newsletter and contributes its views about how well it feels the school is performing. Communication is good. Parents are well informed about their child's achievements through online updates, monthly newsletters and opportunities to discuss their academic performance. Local community links have been established. They require further development to raise standards.

The school's arrangements for governance are acceptable. The governing body responds supportively to the resource needs of the school. It holds the school to account by monitoring student performance but does not do this independently of senior leader support. The board of trustees has failed to ensure that the school meets all statutory requirements. The school runs smoothly on a daily basis. The majority of staff are suitably qualified and receive regular professional development.



The school building has a range of specialist facilities including a computer room, drama studio and science laboratories. The school has an acceptable range of resources to support learning, including ICT.

What the school should do to improve further:

1. Improve the overall quality of students' achievement by:
 - i. carrying out a systematic review of each subject to identify the weakest elements of students' attainment, and devising an action plan to address the weaknesses
 - ii. making effective use of assessment data to shape the learning plans for individuals and groups of students according to their strengths and weaknesses
 - iii. raising teachers' expectations about the standards of attainment that all students are capable of achieving, and set ambitious targets to reach them.
2. Improve the quality of teaching and assessment by:
 - i. addressing weakness in teaching, particularly in mathematics, science, Urdu and Hindi, particularly in KG and the primary phase
 - ii. having higher expectations of students' engagement in their own learning to promote good outcomes in all lessons
 - iii. providing more opportunities to develop critical-thinking, problem-solving and innovation skills in lessons
 - iv. developing marking and feedback systems so that students know how to improve their work.
3. Improve leadership and management by:
 - i. ensuring all teachers have been approved by ADEC
 - ii. complying with licensing regulations regarding the timetabling of the school day
 - iii. ensuring teachers are provided with the skills and strategies to encourage critical-thinking, problem-solving and innovation skills in lessons
 - iv. developing subject coordinators' capacity to take greater ownership of their subjects and monitor the impact of teaching on students' learning
 - v. developing additional links with the local community to further improve the curriculum and raise standards.