



مجلس أبوظبي للتعليم
Abu Dhabi Education Council

Al Ain Juniors School Inspection Report

Inspection Date: 16 to 18 May 2010
Lead Inspector: Christopher Green

General Information

Inspection Number:	44
Type of School:	Private
Number of Students:	2632
Age Range:	3 to 21
Gender:	Mixed
Curriculum:	CBSE, British & Ministry of Education
Proprietor or Chair of Governors:	Mr Khamis Obaid Hamarain Al Dhahery
Principal:	Mrs Tanveer Arshad
School Address:	Al Ain Juniors School, Site No 1424, Post Box No 80718, Falaj Hazza, Al Ain, UAE.
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Date of Previous Inspection:	None

Inspection Team

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Description of the School

The school was established in 1989 on a site in the Falaj Hazza school zone on the outskirts of Al Ain. It is in the process of registering as a part of the AJ Group of schools. The AJ Group consists of Al Ain Juniors School itself, with its British system of 1232 students and the Indian system with 1416 students including the joint kindergarten. In addition, the group has the Hope Centre, which serves students with special educational needs and works closely with Al Ain Juniors School and Zakher Private School. Provision is managed in this context because of the increased range of services that the group makes available to students across the community.

Students come mainly from India, Pakistan, Egypt, the Philippines and the Sudan, with a small minority from Bangladesh and other countries. About 70% of students are Muslim, 25% Arab and a very small minority is of United Arab Emirates (UAE) heritage. There are 392 children in the kindergarten grades, 1265 students in primary Grades 1 to 5 and 976 students in secondary Grades 6 to 12. The curriculum is based upon the Cambridge Junior Programme, Checkpoint and Cambridge International Examination courses and the Indian Central Board of Secondary Education including the XSEED programme for the primary grades. The British and Indian systems run in parallel, parents opting for the curriculum of their choice mainly on the basis of the intended future educational destination of their child.

Admission is open with preference given to the siblings of students already attending. An annual capital fee of AED 500, plus charges for books and uniform, is payable in addition to tuition fees. Annual tuition fees range from AED 4950 in the kindergarten to AED 9680 in the upper grades. Teacher salaries range from AED 24,000 to AED 63,000 per annum; salary increments range between AED 200 and AED 500.

Key for Inspection Grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Very good
Grade 3	Good
Grade 4	Satisfactory and improving
Grade 5	Satisfactory and stable
Grade 6	Satisfactory but at risk
Grade 7	Unsatisfactory
Grade 8	Very unsatisfactory
Grade 9	Poor

This is an improving school with a number of good features, which serves students from the local Indian, Pakistani, Filipino and Arabic communities well. It is making good progress in meeting its aim 'to imbibe young people to be high achievers with extraordinary determination, to set right goals in areas of education, morality, attitudes, ethics and values'. Teachers' good subject knowledge and commitment to ensuring good examination results accelerate students' progress in the secondary department. By Grades 10 and 12, standards in English, mathematics and science are high, being above those reached internationally by students following similar English and Indian curricula and examinations. Standards in the primary department are broadly in line with age-related expectations. Amongst the strongest features are the above average outcomes brought about by highly effective teaching in the advanced level subjects; very good personal development of students and exceptionally good protection, care, guidance and support. The drive, enthusiasm, visionary leadership and high professional commitment of the principal and the support she receives from senior colleagues and members of staff are key features of the school's success.

Children in kindergarten make satisfactory progress in learning to read, write and use number skills, but there are missed opportunities for them to learn through well-structured play. Lesson content is not well thought out to cater for what happens when children have finished the main objective. This results in more-able children not being sufficiently challenged. Teachers are not yet involved in close observations of how young children learn, so do not use assessment information to plan the next steps of learning. Satisfactory progress continues through Grades 1 to 5 but with similar shortcomings in assessment. Progress in information and communication technology, social studies, Arabic and Islamic studies is similar to that in the other subjects. By the time the students are due to enter the secondary department, they have the necessary basic skills to continue successfully. However, teachers from kindergarten to Grade 5 do not use results from assessments to inform planning and adjust their lessons to match students' different levels of ability and increase their rate of progress. Students' independence in learning is not sufficiently evident. In secondary grades, progress accelerates and is at least good, although it remains at a satisfactory rate in Arabic for those who do not have Arabic as their first language. In English, mathematics and science subjects, particularly effective teaching leads to at least very good outcomes in Grades 10 and 12. These are illustrated by above average examination results, students' highly responsible behaviour and mature personal development.

During their time at the school, students grow in self-confidence and develop a firm sense of responsibility. They enjoy school and are extremely positive about it. Exceptionally good relationships underpin and reflect their strong moral development. Students value each others' opinions and beliefs. Within this supportive environment they develop a thorough understanding of the different cultures represented within the UAE and demonstrate respect of its heritage and culture. Assemblies are highly creative as students lead these events with drama sequences that convey important messages about human character and social situations. Students have good practical understanding of how to live safe and

healthy lives. The school council has a high presence around the school. Individual council members understand the qualities they need to develop if they aspire to one of these positions and be successful. Students are developing skills and qualities that will support them in their future lives. There is a real maturity and growing sense of collective responsibility exhibited by the senior students.

Teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Teaching is satisfactory in most primary classrooms and often very good in the secondary grades. Throughout the school, teachers have good subject knowledge and positive relationships with their students. However, too few opportunities exist for students to develop their skills of independent research and where teaching is only satisfactory, the range of teaching strategies chosen is too narrow. Children make a sound start to their learning in kindergarten because they are helped to settle quickly and receive good care and attention. Teachers are diligent and make sure that their students make steady progress in the basic skills of speaking, listening, reading, writing and arithmetic and their personal development, through Grades 1 to 5. However, learning intentions are not sufficiently well defined for the different groups of learners in kindergarten and primary grades. Nevertheless, teachers' skills are improving and shortcomings are being tackled through in-service training and the feedback teachers receive. In the secondary department, teaching in English, mathematics and the science subjects is often very good. This is because the teachers question and check the students' levels of understanding and adjust the pace of their lessons accordingly. As a result, students make very good progress. Time is found to give individuals and small groups of students focused academic help during and in-between the lessons.

The curriculum is satisfactory and is broad and relevant. However, in kindergarten it is not sufficiently well planned or organised to ensure that children have enough opportunities to practise what they have learnt in play situations. In primary and secondary grades, the curriculum for English, Arabic, Islamic studies, social studies and mathematics is well provided. There is a good balance of subjects, which contributes to the development of students' personal qualities and academic success, although too little time is allocated to social studies in Grades 1 to 3. Through secondary grades, learning intentions are clearly specified. Students gain a generally good command of English and become increasingly confident and fluent in a second language. Challenge is routinely provided by making good use of reliable textbooks which are supported by additional learning materials prepared by teachers. Good and effective use is made of external examination syllabuses in planning teaching. The school supports senior students well in helping them choose courses and qualifications well suited to their needs and relevant to their higher education destinations. The use of assessment in secondary grades supports students well, which is why progress accelerates. Students are rightly proud of their wider successes across the curriculum.

The protection, care, guidance and support provided are very good in the opinion of almost every stakeholder group. Students enjoy school and feel safe. They show trust and respect for the adults who teach and look after them because the adults treat them with dignity and are genuinely concerned about their welfare. There are clear codes of behaviour with rewards and sanctions that are properly understood, resulting in consistent application. Arrangements made for students' medical care are very good. The school assigns a high priority to the welfare of students in policy

and practice. Highly efficient administrative staff ensure that the systems established meet requirements and are effective in meeting the needs of students and staffs. The site is secure and reception arrangements are very well managed.

The school is a safe and pleasant environment. The buildings are satisfactory and improving and are structurally sound. Plans are in place for a range of ambitious developments, but ranking of priorities has not yet been itemised. The air-conditioning is loud in some classrooms and results in listening conditions. The libraries are adequate and pleasant spaces, as are the science laboratories, which contribute well to the high standards attained in science subjects. There is no gymnasium or swimming pool, which limits physical education to the assembly halls and outdoor spaces such as the grassed pitch.

There is a satisfactory range of resources. Teachers are both qualified and competent. Modern technological equipment is used well, but there is not enough of it. Textbooks are adequate and teachers produce a wide range of support materials. Books to promote research and resources such as dictionaries, thesauruses and small mathematical equipment in classrooms are too few. This limits the students' capacity to be independent. There are clear procedures for the safe use of resources. Routines are carefully thought out and good standards are maintained. Prayer room facilities are available for boys and girls.

The principal's insightful leadership and long commitment has brought the school to where it is today. She has the necessary qualities to lead and manage this large all-age school very successfully and this is what she has achieved. As the founder principal she knows the school really well and inspectors broadly agree with the main aspects of the school's own self-evaluation of its performance, including that of the students' high achievements in the secondary grades. These are very good, but achievements in the kindergarten and primary grades are satisfactory and improving, rather than very good at this time. Senior staff in secondary grades use good monitoring and evaluation procedures but have not yet developed these to measure the school's performance against international benchmarks. The focus the principal and her team have brought to meeting the needs of students through high professionalism and hard work shines from the school community. The school is outward looking, has an international philosophy and excellent administrative structures. Fees have been kept to an affordable level. School development planning is ambitious and reflects the principal's vision to provide good education for a broad spectrum of young people. Parents are very supportive of the school. Information about their children's progress is regularly communicated. Open communication has helped build the school's good reputation in the community. As one parent remarked, "The principal and staff have been tireless over many years to improve things here to the highest levels. The work of the school is clearly appreciated by students, parents and staff alike".

What the school should do to improve further:

Raise standards and the rates of children's and students' progress in kindergarten and Grades 1 to 5 by:

- implementing a range of consistent assessment procedures and evaluating their impact on standards and progress
- establishing a baseline of students' performance on entry to Grade 1
- ensuring assessment results are used consistently in the planning of lessons so that the needs of different groups of students are met precisely
- comparing the performance of students at the end of Grades 2 and 5 with international data available from the Cambridge Junior Programme and standards in the British and Indian curricula, including those using the XSEED programme

Improve the quality of learning and teaching in the kindergarten and Grades 1 to 5 by:

- sharing best practice so there is more good teaching and more-able students are more effectively challenged
- creating more opportunities for students to develop their skills of independent learning and take initiative through a range of extension activities including the use of information and communication technology
- providing more opportunities for kindergarten children to learn through structured play making the curriculum more exciting, practical and technological

Sharpen the existing good quality monitoring and evaluation in the secondary department by:

- analysing statistical data about the aggregated performance of results in CBSE for Grades 10 and 12 in comparison with other schools in Abu Dhabi, the UAE, the Gulf States and India
- refining similar comparisons to those for CBSE for results in IGCSE, GCE O level, AS and A level with examination results in Abu Dhabi, the UAE, the Gulf States and England

Accelerate planned developments by ranking priorities to improve buildings, premises and resources over a specific and realistic timescale, for example in making improvements to computer technology, library learning resources, air-conditioning units and physical education facilities.

Students make satisfactory and improving progress overall in their academic and personal skills. The standards attained by the time students leave the school are well above average and these standards are maintained year-on-year. Very good teaching leads to some outstanding outcomes in Grades 10 and 12, illustrated by well above average examination results and students' highly responsible behaviour.

Children's progress is satisfactory through the kindergarten and continues through Grades 1 to 5, but there are some missed opportunities to challenge more-able students. Teachers are not yet involved in close observations of how these children and young students learn and as a result do not use assessment information to plan the next steps of learning precisely enough. Standards are broadly average in most subjects, because students reach age-related expectations by the end of Grade 5.

Students learn to socialise, show respect for teachers and kindness to each other. Learning opportunities ensure students make at least average gains in the basic skills of speaking and listening, reading, writing and mathematics. Reading skills are stronger in decoding letters into sounds and words than in levels of understanding. Similar progress is made in mathematics, where basic arithmetic is the strongest element and in information and communication technology. When students enter secondary grades, they secure the necessary basic skills. The reason for slower rates of progress in kindergarten and the primary school is that achievement is not monitored to show comparisons against international expectations. Currently teachers do not use assessment results effectively in planning and delivering lessons and increasing students' independence in their learning.

Throughout the school, Arab students do well in learning Arabic and Islamic studies; other groups make only satisfactory progress in learning Arabic because teaching is not as good. In Islamic studies, examination results are good as is progress within lessons. Their knowledge of Islamic beliefs and practices increase because in the primary department, students can say short Qu'ranic verses and the pillars of Islam and chant songs on different Islamic topics well. As they move to higher grades, their understanding of a model Muslim's behaviours and actions develop as they learn about well-known Muslim leaders and scholars. Lessons help students recite the Holy Quran and many students can recite accurately and with appropriate intonation.

In social studies, examination results are good. Progress within lessons is only satisfactory, but is improving. Students' knowledge of the UAE and their roles as part of this society is increasing. They are aware of the services provided by the government and learn to appreciate them. In higher grades, students develop a secure understanding of Islamic and UAE culture as they study Muslim countries, the Gulf States and discuss their leaders and elements of the region's success.

In the secondary department, progress accelerates in all other subjects, particularly in mathematics and sciences, where standards are high. Progress is good and above average standards in English and information and communication technology. By Grade 10 and 12, standards in English, mathematics and science exceed those achieved by students following similar British and Indian curricula in other countries.

Students' personal development is very good. During their time at the school, students grow in self-confidence and demonstrate increasingly positive attitudes to their work and community. By the time they reach the secondary department, most demonstrate high levels of commitment, diligence and resilience in their learning. They enjoy school and participate enthusiastically in the opportunities offered.

Throughout the school, students are extremely respectful and supportive of each other in lessons and around the school and clearly enjoy good relationships with staff. They are warm and welcoming to visitors. Positive behaviour and conduct reflects their strong moral development. Students value each other's opinions and beliefs. They are proud of the wide range of nationalities represented within the school's community, many referring to how well everyone from different backgrounds mix well together as a family. As one student in Grade 9 described it, "A sense of unity". Within this rich environment, students develop a real understanding of the different cultures represented within the UAE and demonstrate very good levels of respect for its heritage and culture in discussion, through assemblies and social studies sessions. Students have a practical understanding of how to live safe and healthy lives.

Students make a significant contribution to the smooth running of the school. The school council meets as an impressive and formal body to discuss school matters and individual councillors have a high profile around the school. They help students at transition times, in classes and corridors, during assembly and in calmly dispersing the large number of students who use school transport. Students understand very well the qualities they need to develop if they aspire to one of these positions, by winning elections based on nominations by teaching staff. Head boys and girls, house captains, vice-captains and class captains are just some of the further roles and responsibilities undertaken by willing and capable students. They enhance the lively, uplifting and interactive assemblies, which contribute significantly to the development of their personal qualities. Extracurricular competitive, sporting, academic and cultural opportunities are popular with students and they join in well with these when opportunities arise. They participate in many community events and make charitable contributions to the Red Crescent and international relief appeals.

Very good progress is made by students in developing vital skills and qualities that will support them in their future lives. This is due to a combination of their strong personal development and the high level of challenge in many lessons as students reach senior grades. They are confident, articulate and present themselves well. There is a real sense of maturity and collective responsibility amongst older students, which prepares them very well for their next stages of learning.

81% of the lessons observed were at least satisfactory and of these 38% were good. 19% of lessons were at risk, but none was unsatisfactory. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, especially so when judged with the many very good examples in the secondary school. Although it is variable, teaching shows a clear trend of improvement from primary to secondary grades, where a considerable proportion is very good. Instances of unsatisfactory teaching are rare, but examples of satisfactory teaching are present in the kindergarten, primary and secondary departments. Despite good subject knowledge amongst the teaching team and the positive relationships teachers have with students, too few opportunities exist for students to develop their skills of independence. The lack of computers in classrooms restricts students from developing these skills through the information and communication technology. Teaching generally does not encourage students to show enough initiative, particularly in the primary grades.

In Arabic, relationships between teachers and students are good. Teachers use good questioning to engage students. Most lessons are instructional and students learn through questions and answers. Some students' progress, however, is slow as teaching is directed at the same level to all students and teachers do not take enough account of their different abilities. For students learning Arabic as an additional language, teachers' subject knowledge is not as good as that of their colleagues teaching Arabic speaking students. Translation sometimes does not provide students with a sufficiently clear understanding of the Arabic language. There are few opportunities for collaborative or independent learning. In primary grades, students do not learn through stimulating activities and in some lessons their behaviour deteriorates because they do not enjoy the tasks provided.

In Islamic and social studies, teachers have good relationships with their students. They use repetition to make sure students learn and limited resources do encourage a wider range of learning methods. Not enough opportunities are created for collaborative and independent learning. In these lessons teaching is satisfactory but there is evidence of improvement. Some teachers' teaching styles, for example, raise students' interest by giving opportunities for students to talk about what they are learning. In other lessons, teachers rely too much on students having to listen, rather than taking an active role; this is less effective.

Examples of very good teaching were seen in the secondary department in English, mathematics and science. In these lessons, students make very good progress because of teachers' good questioning skills, consistent checking of understanding and well-pitched planning, which lead to a brisk pace adjusted to students' needs. Teachers find time to give individual students and small groups specific help. Work recorded in students' books is neat, shows progress and is marked frequently, which encourages students to maintain their efforts. There are good features in the teaching of other subjects including information and communication technology. Teaching for examinations in information and communication technology is sharply focused on improving progress of individual students.

Teaching of English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology, Arabic, Islamic and social studies is satisfactory in the primary department and generally improving. The quality of teaching in the kindergarten is satisfactory in the basic skills of speaking and listening, reading, writing and arithmetic, however enabling children to learn through structured play, exploration, creativity and by using all their senses is weaker. Too often children listen to teachers' instructions and are not given sufficient opportunity to find things out for themselves, because there is a lack of well planned extension activities to enable them to practise what they have previously learnt.

Students interviewed said that the best part of school was not only seeing their friends, but also working with their teachers who, they say, are very kind. Assessment, whilst broadly satisfactory, is not yet highly developed, especially in the primary grades. Teachers mark students' work regularly by checking and dating it, but do not yet analyse information from assessments sufficiently well to match the next steps of learning to students' needs. Private tuition to sustain or improve students' progress is not provided directly by the school. The school adopts an ethical position of recommending tutors if parents request this information, but does not supply them.

The curriculum is satisfactory with some good features. It is broad, balanced, relevant and meets the needs of children and students. It provides for the development of their personal qualities and academic success. Learning outcomes are mostly clearly specified, except in kindergarten and some primary classes.

The school uses the UAE Ministry of Education curriculum for Arabic, Islamic studies and social studies, in addition to XSEED and the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) and the Cambridge Junior Programme and the Cambridge International Examinations (CIE) syllabus for most subjects. The curriculum ensures that students gain a good command of English and become increasingly confident and fluent in a second language. Opportunities for students to understand the diversity of the UAE and its traditions, customs and values are integrated well into the mainstream curriculum. Skills in Arabic and Islamic studies are developed in a carefully organized programme for students who speak Arabic as their first language and for those for whom it is a second language. The school is compliant with requirements for Arabic, Islamic and social studies and these are satisfactory. There are some extracurricular activities for Islamic studies, but few to support Arabic.

The curriculum in kindergarten is satisfactory. It covers all areas of learning, but does not place enough emphasis on independent learning, creative play and practical activities. The primary curriculum supports students soundly in their academic development and their skills and understanding are progressively developed through Grades 1 to 5. It does not, however, build rapidly enough on students' prior learning. At kindergarten and primary levels, teachers do not expand the curriculum to exploit students' potential through extended activities and learning challenges.

The secondary curriculum is good and well designed to ensure students learn quickly and progressively. From Grade 6 onwards students take a suitable range of subjects and are well guided in making option choices suited to their likely higher education destinations. Close attention to external examination syllabuses in both the British and Indian systems guides the curriculum appropriately to meet the needs of students. The use of assessment in the secondary grades supports senior students, by guiding them in choosing and succeeding in their examination courses. The school also supports senior students well in helping them choose courses and qualifications suited to their needs and relevant to higher education options.

The curriculum is good overall because the content in most subjects is based on reliable textbooks, which provide sufficient challenge for students, particularly those in secondary grades. Teachers extend and develop the curriculum in individual lessons to help promote breadth, interest and stimulation, for example in a chemistry lesson, students learned much about everyday household products and how chemistry makes them effective in the home. Features of health and safety are woven effectively into the curriculum and valued by students, which avoids teachers delivering cautionary and boring lectures on these issues as students understand their relevance. Students who find learning English challenging are well supported in lessons and sometimes in extra sessions.

Resources in computer suites support the curriculum well, but students do not have access to computers to carry out research or to support their learning when they are in classrooms. This is a constraint on developing a modern curriculum, particularly for senior students. Although more-able students are sometimes provided with extension activities, the curriculum in primary grades is not consistently modified to ensure younger students have challenging work to accelerate their progress.

Students are proud of their successes in inter-school activities, which provide good enrichment to classroom learning. The curriculum and good extracurricular activities help prepare students to play a full and active part in their future schooling.

The school has a very positive ethos of care, which ensures that students have very good personal development and make good academic progress. The safe and secure environment enables students to grow and learn. Well-developed policies are consistently implemented to ensure that all young people are well cared for. This includes protection of students from bullying, which is rare and effectively dealt with. Pastoral care is very good because of the importance assigned to this role by all staff. Academic guidance is strong in the secondary school because teachers consistently cater for the needs of different abilities of students.

Good behaviour and effort is rewarded and students realise their responsibilities to themselves and each other in aspects of care, guidance and support. Corporal punishment is forbidden. Health and safety is very well managed by the senior teachers and administrative and technical staff. There are clear and efficient evacuation procedures. The safe arrival and departure of students by bus or family cars is very efficiently and effectively organised and supervised. The clinic is clean and well set-up. Very good records are kept and procedures established for the dispensing of medicines and care of students who are unwell.

The backgrounds of all members of staff are thoroughly checked and recorded by the school. Detailed checklists form part of a robust system which is quality assured. A single central record is maintained of all staff and is currently being updated which is part of ongoing processes to meet requirements. There is a child protection policy and clear guidelines for staff are in place where any issue might arise. Admission and attendance registers are carefully maintained and procedures for monitoring attendance are well managed. Attendance is consistently above 90%. Students express confidence in the caring staff and recognise that they receive sensitive care and support. The school has two clinics; they are clean and well maintained and stocked with first aid equipment. Detailed records are kept on every student's health issues and dates of their vaccinations. The role of the new student counsellor builds on the good work and traditions of the school in relation to care and support.

Teachers provide very good guidance for students' choice of courses and careers in relation to intended post-school destinations and aspirations. A prayer room is provided for Muslim students.

The buildings and premises are satisfactory, but there are limitations of which the school is aware and form part of the development plan. The buildings are structurally sound, clean and well maintained. Regular health and safety checks are undertaken and these are carefully documented. The premises are welcoming and conducive to learning. Students' work is celebrated in well-presented displays in both corridors and classrooms.

Premises for the kindergarten are adequate; the outdoor play area is appropriately equipped with climbing frames that contribute well to children's physical development. Classrooms are small but teachers make good use of the shared areas to compensate, for example when developing role-play. Temperatures in classrooms throughout the school are comfortable, but the air-conditioning is loud in some. This raises background noise, limits the development of students' speaking and listening and makes it difficult for them to hear what the teacher and other students are saying clearly. The school is aware of this and plans are in place to address the problem through servicing and renewal.

The libraries are adequate for both quiet and reflective study. The number of books to support learning is adequate for individual students to carry out research. The school has had difficulty in obtaining a good wireless internet connection, but this is expected to be overcome in the near future. The proportions of expenditure on the different sorts of multimedia resources available are being considered. There is a good range of careers pamphlets and advice available in the libraries for those students who are leaving and going into higher education or work-related activities.

The school has three science laboratories in each of the British and Indian systems. These are appropriately resourced and contribute well to the high standards students attain in the senior classes. Chemicals are carefully stored and students are aware of the code of conduct expected of them in science laboratories. There are two art rooms in each system with one of them is equipped for woodwork and design. There is no gymnasium or swimming pool and this limits physical education activities. Students undertake physical education in the assembly halls. There is a lack of shade over the basketball, netball and the popular grassed football pitch. Quotations have been sought to have some of these areas covered.

There are sufficient toilets which are kept clean, disinfected and in good condition. Facilities for play are adequate but there are too few quiet places for those students who do not want to be involved in active play at break-times. The school's canteen is very clean and staff follow health and safety procedures relating to food preparation, storage and consumption very strictly.

There are computer suites in both the primary and secondary departments, which are connected to the Internet. These are used well, but there are insufficient computers in classrooms to help develop students' independent learning and skills of research.

The school premises provide a safe environment and close attention is paid to outdoor security which is good and prevents intruders. The fleet of clean and well-maintained buses have appropriate parking and access facilities and careful attention is paid to the students' welfare and safety during their journeys.

The school has a satisfactory range of resources. Teachers are sufficient in number. They are qualified and competent to ensure that students reach high standards by the time they leave school and are well prepared for their next stages of life and learning. The stock of modern technological equipment is satisfactory and the school makes good use of its resources. Textbooks are adequate and teachers produce a wide range of support materials and visual aids to supplement their content. Some classrooms have mobile projectors, but there are not enough of these for every class so access to the Internet and electronic resources restricts students from developing their skills of independent research.

There are fiction libraries in most classes and these contribute to the development of good reading skills in the primary school. Books to promote research into whole-class projects, especially those relating to non-fiction, are adequate in quality but few in number. There are also too few resources for students in the classrooms, such as dictionaries, thesauruses, atlases, globes and small mathematical equipment. This limits students' capacity to undertake research and be resourceful in organising their resources for learning.

Resources in the kindergarten are satisfactory and support the main teaching objectives in lessons adequately. When children work in groups there are insufficient resources to support their creative and technological areas of learning. There is a lack of programmable toys, listening stations and cameras for children to take photographs and then write about what they have seen.

Facilities conform to health, safety and other requirements and are regularly checked. Electrical equipment is tested and maintained in safe working condition. There are clear procedures for the safe use of the internet and students are aware of health and safety issues in the science laboratories, art rooms and around the school. There are clear procedures to which staff and students adhere for the safe use and storage of potentially dangerous substances and equipment.

Staff with responsibility for school transport carry out their duties well. Routines are carefully thought out and good standards of safety and reliability are maintained.

The principal's inspirational and insightful leadership has brought the school to where it is today. Her aspiration, ambition and vision for the school community are wisely rooted in an understanding of learning theory and the practical circumstances to be faced. She has the necessary qualities and skills to meet the challenges of educating children and young people in the 21st century with huge optimism and success, whilst grappling with the facts and reality of leading and managing a large all-age school. As the founder principal, she knows the school very well. Inspectors agree with the school's own self-evaluation of many aspects of its performance, including that of the students' achievements in secondary grades. These are very good and confirmed by the impressive examination results, but inspectors judge the kindergarten and primary grades in the British and Indian systems to be satisfactory and improving respectively, rather than very good at this time.

The principal's high level of professional expertise and the owner's commitment to continuous improvement, coupled with the determination of the administrative and teaching team are the driving forces in the school. Staff are united in their ambition to continue to develop and improve all aspects of the school. The chairman and principal have a close and highly supportive view of the school. Commitment to the students and the pursuit of the highest standards shine from the chairman, principal, the senior leaders and the staff.

Lines of responsibility are clearly identified and explained in job descriptions. Leaders work highly effectively in maintaining standards, the smooth operation of the school and analysing results in order to plan improvements. However, strategies to intervene in lessons and improve teaching, to make more of it as good as the best, do not happen routinely enough in the kindergarten and primary school grades. The school development plan is well defined includes the ambition to install new and extra resources, but it lacks clear emphasis on improving learning and teaching in the kindergarten and Grades 1 to 5. Lesson planning is monitored well, although the template used does not include prompts to highlight strategies for differentiating teaching content and increasing opportunities for assessment. Senior and middle managers monitor their departments regularly including checking planning very carefully and improving it. However, insufficient management time in the primary department is given to directly intervening in classrooms to bring about improvements in pedagogy and assessment.

The senior staff in secondary grades use good monitoring and evaluation procedures but have not refined these to include comparisons with other schools. School data lacks sufficient analysis of the aggregated performance of students year-on-year for comparison with national, regional and international performance by similar groups of students. Without this the school lacks the ability to raise their standards by using sharp benchmarks for comparison with schools following similar curricula in the Abu Dhabi, the UAE, the Gulf states and internationally, particularly in England and India. Staff members are provided with opportunities to benefit from professional development activities and the practices learned in these sessions are often, but not consistently applied, across all classes, as monitoring and evaluation of improvement strategies at these levels lacks the necessary benchmarks.

The school maintains an outward-looking, international philosophy and has well developed administrative structures to support the school very effectively. These ensure that the management and administration of the school is very efficient and well organised. They facilitate a culture of high aspiration. All accounts are meticulously maintained and externally audited. As a result the school is confident, aims high and runs smoothly and safely. The school fulfils its obligations to employees diligently and honours its responsibility to them.

The school attempts to hold fees at an affordable level for students who come mainly from the moderate earning groups of the community. The school faces some budget challenges due to late payment of fees and defaulters. Ideas to provide value for money facilities include seeking efficient investments for the school zone by establishing shared community resources, such as a talent pool of professional personnel, centralised training facility and provision of major capital plant for communal use, such as covered pitches, a swimming pool and gymnasium. These proposals have merit and like the school's establishment of the Hope Centre for special education students, reflect the principal's vision to provide good education for a broad spectrum of young people in Al Ain, possibly through public-private partnership.

Parents are consulted frequently and the partnership with parents is very good. They are very supportive of the school and 477 responded to the ADEC survey. Over 90% of responses to all questions were positive; 8% felt students were not well prepared for the next stage of their education and that teachers do not always provide sufficient help when their children find learning difficult. Their views are taken seriously and, as a result almost all parents feel involved in the life of the school and contribute to the school's success. Information on their children's progress and the results of continuous assessment are regularly communicated to them and this has helped build the school's good reputation in the community.

Summary of Inspection Judgements

Key to judgements:

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Very good
Grade 3	Good
Grade 4	Satisfactory and improving
Grade 5	Satisfactory and stable
Grade 6	Satisfactory but at risk
Grade 7	Unsatisfactory
Grade 8	Very unsatisfactory
Grade 9	Poor

The school's overall effectiveness	Grade 5
The school meets its aims and in so doing ensures all students make good or better progress, especially in Arabic, English, mathematics, Islamic studies, social studies and science, so that the overall standards reached are on a par with the best international standards	5
The school promotes students' personal development so that they become confident and capable people who understand themselves and who are sensitive to and respectful of others	2
The school provides good or better teaching that underpins the academic progress, acquisition of learning skills and personal qualities of all students	5
The school provides a rich and diverse curriculum that covers key subjects, meets individual needs, gives students an understanding of UAE values, culture and society and prepares students for the next stages of their lives	5
The school provides all students with the high quality protection and care that enables them to be safe, valued, supported when they need help, and guided when they have to make choices	3
The school provides well-maintained buildings and premises that ensure the health and safety of the students, and support their education effectively	5
The school recruits and retains a highly qualified and competent teaching force, and acquires an adequate stock of modern technological equipment and other material resources that are maintained and stored safely	5
The school is well led and managed at all levels, to secure high outcomes for students, provide a good or better quality of education, deploy resources efficiently, maintain students' health and safety, and honour the school's obligations to its employees	4
The school charges fees that are fair and justified in relation to the quality of education provided	4
The school has the capacity for sustained improvement	3

The standards reached by students and the progress they make in school	Grade 4
The standards that students in different year groups have been working at over the past three years in speaking, listening, reading, writing, mathematical competence, logical and independent thought and use of ICT	4
The standards achieved and the progress made by students of different year groups over the past three years in Arabic, English, mathematics, Islamic studies, social studies and science	4
The standards achieved and progress made by students in different year groups over the past three years in subjects other than those mentioned above	4
Based on performance over the last three years, how well do students do in national tests, public examinations and standardised measures of progress?	3
The extent to which there are differences in the standards achieved and the progress made between girls and boys or students from different nationalities or other groups. These include those whose first language is not the one used for teaching, students with special educational needs, and students who are gifted and talented	5
The extent to which students are developing the skills to a sufficiently high standard so that they become successful independent learners and have the ability to work cooperatively with others	4
The school employs the following:	
High quality standardised tests	Y
High quality outcomes-based descriptions of what students should know and be able to do in order to establish levels of student achievement	Y
Assessment practices (testing or criteria) that are so poor that results do not accurately measure student achievement or progress	N

Students' personal development	Grade 2
How well students are developing in self-confidence, have positive attitudes to learning and other activities, and enjoy school life	2
How well students are developing moral viewpoints broadly in tune with their own cultural backgrounds, while understanding that others often hold different views	2
How well students respect the values of the UAE and have an understanding of different cultures represented in the UAE	3
How sensitive students are to others and treat fellow students and adults with respect	2
The extent to which students join in a range of social, cultural, scientific, sporting and other activities and make a positive contribution in class and to their community.	3
The extent to which students have a practical understanding of how to live safe and healthy lives.	2
How well students are developing the skills and personal qualities that will support them in the next stages of education and employment	2

The quality of teaching	Grade 4
The quality of teachers' knowledge and understanding of their subjects	3
The impact that teaching has on students' progress, engagement and personal development.	2
How well students learn, through listening to teachers, interacting with each other, thinking for themselves, asking questions and working independently	5
How well teachers make clear the purpose of lessons so that students know what they need to learn	5
How well the teaching ensures that all students are challenged and supported so that all can benefit from it	5
The quality of classroom relationships and the effectiveness of managing bad behaviour when this is necessary	2
The quality of support staff and how well they are used	4
How well assessment, including self-assessment by students, is used, so that students know how well they are progressing and their targets for improvement	5
Whether there is an excessive reliance on private tuition to sustain students' progress	N

The meeting of students' needs through the curriculum	Grade 5
The impact of the curriculum in motivating students and promoting their academic progress, especially in Arabic, English, mathematics, Islamic studies, social studies and science, and in developing their independent learning skills and personal qualities	4
How well the school provides a broad and balanced curriculum and promotes an understanding of UAE family and community values, culture, and the pluralistic society of Abu Dhabi and the UAE	5
How well the curriculum addresses the academic, personal and social needs of all students, including those with special educational needs, those who need help with the working language of the school, and those who are gifted and talented	5
How well the formal school curriculum is expanded by approved extra-curricular and other activities	4
How well the curriculum prepares students for the next stages of their education, their working lives and their roles as future citizens	2
How well links with the school's official external partners are used to boost students' learning	4
<p>The school complies with the minimum number of instructional hours and correct curriculum for the following subjects.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arabic • UAE History • Islamic Studies 	<p>Y Y Y</p>

The protection, care, guidance and support of students	Grade 3
The extent to which your school has a positive ethos towards the care of its students and that there is an effective pastoral system for providing support which sustains students' academic progress and personal development	3
The extent to which the school provides a safe environment for its students – for example, by making reasonable, recorded checks on the moral character of all those involved in a school – proprietor, headteacher, governors, visitors to the school and staff on appointment and at regular times thereafter and providing clear guidance on what to do if there is evidence of suspected or actual abuse	3
Whether the school maintains a central register listing all adults involved in a school which records names, addresses, qualifications, medical fitness, right to teach in the UAE and confirmation that moral fitness checks have been carried out. Grade to reflect quality	3
Whether the school is diligent in protecting students from bullying, intimidation, violence and threats from any source and has an appropriate procedure if there is evidence of any of these or any are suspected	Y
How well the school maintains an admissions register and register of daily attendance which notes any absence and the reasons for them, and follows up unexplained absences	3
The extent to which rewards and sanctions, including exclusions, are fair and based upon clear principles and practices that are followed by staff	3
Whether corporal punishment is forbidden	Y
The quality of first aid facilities and arrangements for the storage and dispensing of medicines	2
The quality of guidance to students when they make choices about the courses they will study and their post-school destinations	3
There is a prayer room for Muslim students	Y

The quality of the school's buildings and premises	Grade 5
The extent to which premises and buildings reflect good health and safety practice therefore ensuring that the school is safe and fit for purpose	5
The extent to which there is good security to prevent intruders gaining access	2
The extent to which rooms and other parts of the accommodation are of sufficient size and quality to permit a good standard of education	5

The school's resources to support its aims	Grade 5
The extent to which the quality, quantity and range of resources generally support the curriculum offered by the school	5
The extent to which the teaching and other staff are sufficient in number, qualifications and competence to run the courses for which the school is licensed	3
The adequacy of the school's stock of modern technological equipment and other material resources	5
Whether supplies and facilities conform to specifications, including health and safety considerations, and are regularly checked	Y
Whether all electrical and other equipment is regularly tested and maintained in safe working condition	Y
Whether clear procedures exist for the safe use and storage of potentially dangerous substances and equipment	Y
Whether all school transport is maintained to the highest standards of safety and reliability	Y
Whether processes for storage, preparation and consumption of food are hygienic and healthy	Y
Whether key staff are designated to hold responsibility for all health and safety matters in relation to facilities	Y

The effectiveness of leadership and management	Grade 4
The extent to which governors, the proprietor or other relevant persons have an independent, supportive view of the school, and have clearly defined roles and fulfil them well	2
The extent to which the school's leadership evaluates the school's performance, provides clear strategic direction, motivates staff and students, and has the support of parents	3
The extent to which the school knows its strengths and weaknesses from its procedures for evaluating how all groups of students perform, and then uses this information to influence priorities for improvement	4
The extent to which leaders and managers at all levels function well	4
How well the school's financial resources are managed and aligned with the school's strategic priorities	3
Whether there is a sound financial statement which is audited	Y
Whether salaries for teachers and other staff are fair and adequate and paid weekly or monthly on a regular basis	Y
Whether the school honours employees' contracts in other ways and ensures good working conditions	Y
Whether accommodation is maintained in good condition and there is a capacity to improve further including the construction of new buildings	Y
Whether due regard is paid to all matters concerning students' health, safety and well-being	Y
The effectiveness of the school's links with outside organisations, both national and international	4
The effectiveness of links with parents and how well it keeps parents informed about their children's academic and personal development	3
Whether it has effective procedures for dealing with parents' complaints	Y
The extent to which school staff is provided with the opportunity to benefit from professional development activities	4