

INSPECTION REPORT

Adab Iranian Private School

Report published in April 2013

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT Adab Iranian Private School

Location	Al Qusais
Type of school	Private
Website	www.adabschool.com
Telephone	04-2633405
Address	PO Box 23259, Dubai
Principal	Khosro Alimardan Farahmand
Curriculum	Iranian
Gender of students	Boys and Girls
Age / Grades or Year Groups	3-18 / Kindergarten to Grade 12
Attendance	Good
Number of students on roll	460
Largest nationality group of Students	Iranian
Number of Emirati students	0 (0%)
Date of the inspection	19th to 21st November 2012

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The context of the school

The Adab Iranian Private School is situated in Al Qusais, Dubai. Opened in 1989, the school moved to its present site in 1994. At the time of the inspection, the school had a roll of 460 students, aged from three to 18 years. This was a slight decrease in student numbers since the previous inspection. Almost all students were of Iranian nationality and a few were from Afghanistan and Pakistan. The school had identified 13 students as having special educational needs. Students continued to have a high mobility level across the year.

In the Kindergarten 1 class, the curriculum was taught in Farsi. From Kindergarten 2 to Grade 6, students could choose between Farsi and English options and from Grades 7 to 12, the language of instruction was Farsi. Boys and girls were taught in separate classes from Grade 6 onwards. Students prepared for and sat examinations provided by the Iranian Ministry of Education at the end of Grade 11. The school followed the curriculum set by the Iranian Ministry of Education.

There were 31 full-time teachers across the four phases of the school. There were also 2 teaching assistants. Students were grouped into 27 classes. Almost all teachers had appropriate teaching qualifications and were deployed effectively across the school.

Overall school performance 2012-2013

Acceptable

Key strengths

- Students' good and improving attainment in mathematics and in science;
- Students' very good behaviour and their positive attitude to school and to learning;
- The positive relationships between students and their teachers;
- The commitment of the school leaders and teachers to improving students' learning experiences;
- The strong sense of the school as a community and effective links with parents.

Recommendations

- Ensure that the curriculum for Islamic Education and the time allocation to the teaching of Arabic as an additional language meets the UAE Ministry of Education requirements;
- Improve learning and teaching by:
 - using assessment information more effectively to inform teachers' lesson planning;
 - enabling students to understand their next steps in learning;
 - meeting the needs of all students;
 - providing children in Kindergarten with more opportunities to learn through purposeful play;
- Ensure the curriculum develops students' skills, knowledge and understanding systematically and is enriched through visits, visitors and extra-curricular activities;
- Review the products sold by the school canteen in order to promote healthy eating;
- Ensure phase supervisors and subject co-ordinators work effectively together across the school to monitor and evaluate students' learning and to identify and share best practice;
- Continue to enhance resources, particularly students' access to information and communication technology, to support teaching and learning.

Progress since the last inspection

- The school had yet to ensure that the curriculum for Islamic Education and the time allocation for Arabic as an additional language met the UAE Ministry of Education requirements;
- Some steps had been taken to provide students with more opportunities to develop their critical thinking, practical and enquiry skills, but there remained more work to be done to ensure this was consistent practice across all subjects and phases of the school;
- Teachers had yet to make effective use of assessment information to inform lesson planning in order to meet the needs of all students;
- A start had been made to developing the capacity of subject co-ordinators to monitor students' learning more effectively but much remained to be done.

Trend of overall performance



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

	Pre-School	Primary	Middle	High
Islamic Education				
Attainment	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Progress	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Arabic as a first language				
Attainment	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Progress	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Arabic as an additional language				
Attainment	Not Applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Progress	Not Applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
English				
Attainment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Progress	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good
Mathematics				
Attainment	Acceptable	Good	Good	Good
Progress	Acceptable	Good	Good	Good
Science				
Attainment	Acceptable	Good	Good	Good
Progress	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good	Good

[Read paragraph](#)

How good is the students' personal and social development?

	Pre-School	Primary	Middle	High
Attitudes and behaviour	Good	Good	Good	Good
Understanding of Islamic values and local, cultural and global awareness	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good
Community and environmental responsibility	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

[Read paragraph](#)

How good are the teaching, learning and assessment?

	Pre-School	Primary	Middle	High
Teaching for effective learning	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Quality of students' learning	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Assessment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

[Read paragraph](#)

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

	Pre-School	Primary	Middle	High
Curriculum quality	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

[Read paragraph](#)

How well does the school protect and support students?

	Pre-School	Primary	Middle	High
Health and Safety	Good	Good	Good	Good
Quality of Support	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

[Read paragraph](#)

How good are the leadership and management of the school?

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

[Read paragraph](#)

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

In Kindergarten, children's attainment was acceptable in all subjects. They needed many more opportunities to develop their understanding, learning and skills through purposeful play. In primary, middle and high school, students' attainment in Arabic as an additional language was acceptable. They listened and read well but speaking and writing skills were less well developed. In English, students' attainment was acceptable in all grades. Listening skills, vocabulary and grammar were strong. The application of knowledge through independent speaking and writing was less developed. Attainment in mathematics was good across all grades. Students' critical thinking, problem solving and use of mathematical skills in cross-curricular activities needed improvement. Primary students' numeracy skills were particularly strong. In science, attainment was good in primary, middle and high school grades. Primary students' knowledge was good but enquiry skills were weak. In middle and high school, the increased use of practical activities and opportunities for investigation were effective in deepening students' understanding and raising attainment.

In Kindergarten, children's progress was restricted by a lack of tasks that encouraged them to become more independent learners through inquiry and investigation. In Arabic as an additional language, students' progress was acceptable at all grades. The restricted number of planned tasks well-matched to students' different levels of ability limited the progress of most students. In English, students' progress was acceptable at all grades except in high school where progress was good. The absence of differentiated and active use of English as a means of communication limited progress, especially for students of higher ability. Students made good progress in mathematics at all grades. Middle and high school students could make links between statistics, algebra and geometry and apply the skills learned in previous lessons. Progress in science in primary was acceptable. Students learned facts without being able to make connections to previous learning or the world around them. There were too few opportunities for investigation and discussion. Progress at middle and high school was now good due to effective action taken to improve practical investigations and students' critical thinking skills.

[View judgements](#)

How good is the students' personal and social development?

Attitudes and behaviour were good across the school. Students were almost always well-behaved and considerate. They were confident and friendly towards visitors. Older students had especially warm relationships with their teachers. Most students were well aware of the features of a healthy lifestyle, yet a significant number did not make wise choices from the selection in the canteen. While boys enjoyed active recreation at breaks, girls had less opportunity to do so. Attendance was good. Understanding of

Islamic values and their local cultural and global awareness was acceptable in Kindergarten, primary and middle school and good in high school. Most students demonstrated tolerance, friendship and respect for all people. They recounted Islamic features in Dubai and had a basic knowledge of the local traditions and heritage of the UAE. High school students described their own cultures, proudly providing good details and examples. However, their awareness of other cultures around the world was limited. Students appreciated living in the multi-cultural society of Dubai. They liked and enjoyed their school and demonstrated very positive attitudes and work ethic but the opportunities for developing independence and responsibility were limited. Systems to enable them to demonstrate initiative and develop their ideas were restricted. Few projects involved the whole school in charitable or environmental issues inside or outside the school.

[View judgements](#)

How good are the teaching, learning and assessment?

Teaching was acceptable throughout the school. It was stronger in middle and high school. Teachers' subject knowledge was good and most understood how students learn. This was less well developed in Kindergarten and primary where teachers often spent too long giving instructions and information. In Kindergarten, learning through purposeful play was rarely an integral part of the curriculum. In all grades, teachers generally made good use of time and the limited teaching resources available. Their relationships with students were strong. A minority of teachers were very skilled at using questions to encourage students to think more deeply. In less successful lessons, teachers asked general questions and accepted choral responses which were not helpful in assessing understanding. Teachers had received training on promoting independent learning through discussion and critical thinking skills. They were beginning to plan effective group work where students were involved in their own learning through research, debate and presenting their work to the rest of the class. This new method of learning was not yet embedded consistently across all classes.

Learning was acceptable throughout the school. Students had very positive attitudes to learning. They sustained concentration and were eager to answer questions and this had a positive impact on their learning. In group work, they confidently explained their ideas and demonstrated their understanding when giving presentations on their work. They knew what they had learned but were not given enough guidance on how to improve their work. Older students used previous knowledge to make connections in their learning, for example in problem solving or comparing texts. Younger students and children sometimes were unable to relate the knowledge they had learned by rote to the real world. Students were beginning to develop their skills in critical thinking and investigation and particularly enjoyed learning through practical tasks.

Assessment was acceptable across the school. Teachers frequently recorded students' attainment and this information was shared with parents and students. The school had yet to develop an effective whole-school system to track and analyse students' progress. Teachers knew their students' strengths and weaknesses and the school planned extra classes for those requiring more support. However, in lessons, teachers rarely used assessment information effectively to plan a range of activities which challenged the most able or supported those who found learning difficult. Students had few opportunities to assess their own work and they did not receive enough effective feedback on their next steps in learning, either in lessons or through correction of their written work.

[View judgements](#)

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

The curriculum was acceptable. The school did not comply with the UAE Ministry of Education curriculum requirements for Islamic Education nor in the time allocated to the teaching of Arabic as an additional language. The curriculum was well planned and regularly reviewed but not always well balanced between the subjects. Science had been enriched through more practical activities both in the laboratory and in the classroom. Plans for investigations and problem solving provided good opportunities for students to develop independent learning skills. The mathematics curriculum was rich and broad. English was beginning to benefit from recently introduced innovations. However, teachers needed to make much more effective use of assessment data to modify the curriculum to meet the needs of low and high attainers. Most students' needs were met in terms of their academic outcomes and personal development but there were limited opportunities for students to become independent learners and to work collaboratively. Extra-curricular activities, sport and art needed to be enriched. The programmes of study, for example in art and in physical education, needed to give greater attention to the development of students' skills as they moved from grade to grade. Opportunities were not always taken to make useful connections between subjects.

[View judgements](#)

How well does the school protect and support students?

The provision for students' health and safety was good across the school. The school buildings were kept clean and secure. Many students travelled to and from school in well-maintained buses, accompanied by a supervisor. The school nurse and visiting doctor provided good medical care. Student files and medication were securely stored. Treatments and the administration of medicine were carefully recorded. Fire drills were regular and effective. Students were given good advice on health education by clinic staff and

visiting speakers. A 'Health Week' promoted healthy living. The school canteen did not serve healthy food options and did not support the school's promotion of a healthy lifestyle. Staff received annual training in child protection procedures but a policy now required to be drawn up and appointed co-ordinators known by all staff.

The quality of support for students was acceptable overall. Relationships between school staff, students and their families were supportive and caring. Students were respectful and mature in their behaviour towards adults and each other. The monitoring of attendance and punctuality of students was effective and followed up by rapid feedback to parents. Additional support was provided for underachievers through supplementary classes. Aptitude testing and guidance provided support for students in their choice of courses and options for further education. Too many students, however, were not supported effectively in their learning development and their progress across most subjects was limited as a result.

[View judgements](#)

How well does the school provide for students with special educational needs?

Across the school, students with special educational needs made expected progress overall, with better progress where they were able to learn in an active manner and in cooperation with fellow students. Although advances had been made in awareness of the scope of special needs, only a few teachers adapted their teaching to meet the specific needs of students. The most able students did not have sufficient opportunities to extend and apply their learning.

How good are the leadership and management of the school?

The Principal and other senior promoted staff provided the school community with an acceptable quality of leadership. They were highly committed to the school and to improving students' learning experiences. School leaders had worked hard with teachers to address some of the recommendations arising from the previous inspection. Successes had included raising primary students' attainment in mathematics and the progress made by those in middle and high school in science and in English at high school. Much remained to be done, particularly in improving teaching and learning in Kindergarten. In the primary grades, attainment in Arabic as an additional language and in English needed stronger leadership of learning. All subject co-ordinators, year group leaders and supervisors now needed to work closely together to identify best practice, share this across the school and develop consistency in delivering high quality learning experiences for students. The school has shown the capacity to develop its practice further.

Self-evaluation and improvement planning were acceptable. The school had yet to make accurate judgments about the quality of much of its work. Classroom observation of teaching and learning by managers was at an early stage but provided evidence of a readiness to seek improvement. Assessment data was gathered but was not used to maximum effect by identifying trends, reflecting on differences in outcomes for learners across subjects and identifying next steps in learning to support improvement. Student self- and peer-assessment were not used consistently to help learners take greater responsibility for aspects of their own learning. An action plan had been drawn up to address several priorities for improvement. All staff needed to own this plan and share in delivering intended outcomes.

Good efforts were made to engage with parents and to seek their support. Parents made very positive comments about the welcome they received from all staff when visiting the school. A parents' association contributed to their feeling of belonging and sense of community. Well-established communication systems included regular newsletters, monthly student progress reports, parent-teacher meetings and, more recently, the development of a school website. There was scope to improve the engagement by students with the local and wider Dubai communities and to develop greater inter-school links.

Governance had improved and was now good. Membership of the Board was suitably wide and included the chairman of the parents' association, the owner's representative, business interests and the Principal. The Board met regularly and its proceedings and actions were recorded carefully. The Board was highly supportive of the school and had made several improvements in order to help address action points identified in the last inspection. The Board held the school to account and sought reports from the Principal on progress made with agreed developments. The Board had effective links with the parents' association. Members now needed to ensure that points for action remaining to be delivered fully from the last inspection and those arising from this inspection report were pursued with determination to a satisfactory conclusion and in an agreed time scale.

The management of staffing, resources and facilities was acceptable. Good administrative procedures meant that the school ran smoothly. Staff members were suitably qualified and provided a good balance of experience. Teachers and managers met regularly in various groupings but outcomes did not always impact on practices to ensure consistently high learning experiences for students of differing abilities across phases, departments and grades. The premises were clean and well maintained. Students' ready access to information technology remained limited as did resources to support teaching and learning in several subjects.

[View judgements](#)

What are the views of parents, teachers and students?

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

Responses to the surveys			
Responses received	Number		Percentage
Parents	This year	37	21%
	Last year	16	9%
Teachers	22		41%
Students	42		44%

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

The parents, students and teachers who responded to the survey felt the behaviour of students in the school was good. All students thought they were making good progress in their learning. Many said that they were not involved in community projects in Dubai and that they were not provided with good career and future education guidance. Almost two-fifths of students felt that leaders did not listen to their opinions about the school and a third said they were not sufficiently involved in the decision-making process. A large number of students, parents and teachers thought that students did not use a wide range of technology to support their learning and that there was a limited choice in the range of subjects and extra-curricular activities.

What happens next?

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

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

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

Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau

Knowledge and Human Development Authority

How to contact us

If you have a concern or wish to comment on any aspect of this report you should contact:

inspection@khda.gov.ae

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