

INSPECTION REPORT

Al Ameen Private School

Report published in April, 2014

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT Al Ameen Private School

Location	Al Nahda
Type of school	Private
Website	www.msbdubai.com
Telephone	04-2677100
Address	Al Nahda / 2 P.O. BOX 94550
Principal	Sadia Wajid
Curriculum	UK
Gender of students	Boys and Girls
Age / Grades or Year Groups	3-16 / FS1-Year 11
Attendance	Acceptable
Number of students on roll	574
Largest nationality group of Students	Indian
Number of Emirati students	0 (0%)
Date of the inspection	14th to 16th January

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The context of the school

Al Ameen Private School, situated in Al Nahda, provided education for students aged three to 16 years. It was founded in 1985 and was a member of MSB, a group based mainly in India with 22 branches world-wide. There were 574 students on the school roll at the time of the inspection. The school followed the UK National Curriculum. Students in Years 10 and 11 completed IGCSE examinations.

This academic year, one third of the 42 full-time teachers were new to the school. All teachers were qualified to teach their subjects. Newly appointed teachers without specific teaching qualifications were required to hold a Master's degree and undertake teaching qualifications. Five teaching assistants supported learning in the classrooms with a further two assistants responsible for providing support for students with special educational needs.

Students were grouped in 23 classes with four in Foundation Stage, twelve in primary phase and seven in secondary phase. At the time of the inspection there were no Emirati students on the school roll. Students came from five main nationalities. No students were speakers of Arabic as a first language.

Overall school performance 2013-2014

Good

Key strengths

- Students' outstanding attainment and progress in English, mathematics and science in the secondary phase
- The very effective and extensive assessment in the secondary phase which includes a strong examination focus
- The exceptional curriculum enrichment opportunities available throughout the school
- The school's highly effective, productive and engaging partnership with parents
- The strategic leadership of the governing body, and the collegiate and coherent drive of leaders at all levels to improve the school

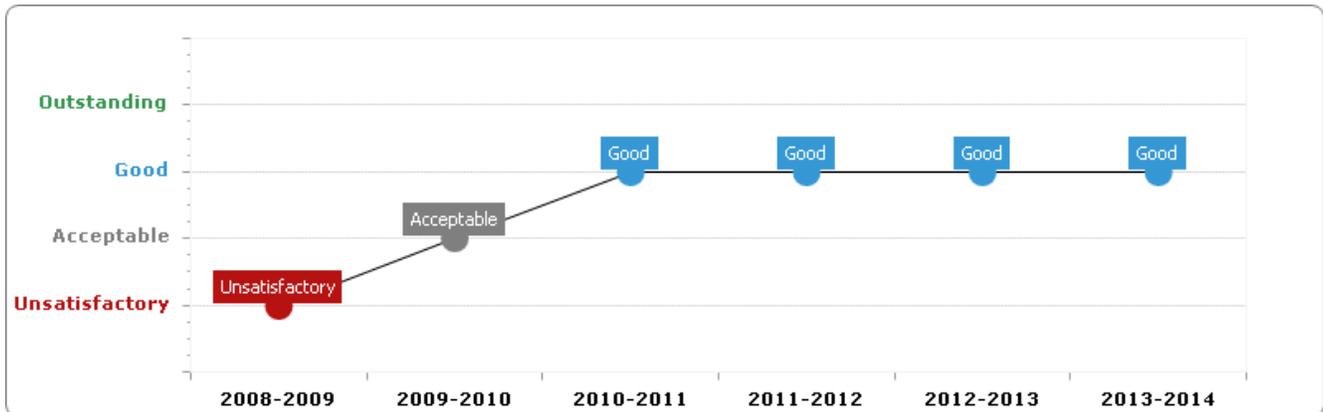
Recommendations

- Develop strategies to extend the outstanding practice to improve further:
 - Teaching and learning so that high quality lessons are more consistently delivered and that the level of challenge is better matched to the individual needs of the students
 - Assessment in Foundation Stage and the primary phase to match the outstanding assessment found in the secondary phase
- Further improve the quality of Islamic Education
- Consolidate the considerable and rapid improvements made in Foundation Stage so that high quality provision is consistently provided

Progress since the last inspection

- Students' progress in Islamic Education in the secondary phase had improved and was now good. As a result, attainment had begun to improve but remained acceptable overall.
- In the Foundation Stage significant improvements had occurred in:
 - planning lessons by including a good focus on learning, through play and investigation;
 - the curriculum by providing opportunities for children to develop independence and make choices. The quality and the design of the curriculum was now good.
- The quality of teaching and of learning skills across the school was now good. Foundation Stage had improved and was now also good.
- Successful strategies had ensured that there was a smooth transition from Foundation Stage into Year 1.

Trend of overall performance



How good are the students' attainment progress and learning skills?

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Islamic Education			
Attainment	Not Applicable	Good	Acceptable
Progress	Not Applicable	Good	Good
Arabic as a first language			
Attainment	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Progress	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Arabic as an additional language			
Attainment	Not Applicable	Good	Good
Progress	Not Applicable	Good	Good
English			
Attainment	Good	Good	Outstanding
Progress	Good	Good	Outstanding
Mathematics			
Attainment	Good	Good	Outstanding
Progress	Good	Good	Outstanding
Science			
Attainment	Good	Good	Outstanding
Progress	Good	Good	Outstanding

[Read paragraph](#)

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Quality of students' learning skills	Good	Good	Good

[Read paragraph](#)

How good is the students' personal and social development?

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Personal responsibility	Good	Good	Good
Students' understanding of Islamic values and their local, cultural and global awareness	Good	Good	Good
Community and environmental responsibility	Good	Good	Good

[Read paragraph](#)

How good are teaching and assessment?

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Teaching for effective learning	Good	Good	Good
Assessment	Good	Good	Outstanding

[Read paragraph](#)

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

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Curriculum quality	Good	Good	Good
Curriculum design to meet the individual needs of students	Good	Good	Good

[Read paragraph](#)

How well does the school protect and support students?

	Foundation Stage	Primary	Secondary
Health and Safety	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Quality of Support	Good	Good	Good

[Read paragraph](#)

How good are the leadership and management of the school?

	Whole school
Quality of leadership	Good
Self-evaluation and improvement planning	Good
Parents and the community	Outstanding
Governance	Good
Management, including staffing, facilities and resources	Good

[Read paragraph](#)

How good are the students' attainment and progress?

In English, mathematics and science, both attainment and progress were good in foundation Stage and Primary and outstanding in Secondary. Across the school in Islamic Education, the majority of students understood that Islamic pillars and principles were applicable to all phases of their lives. In upper grades, Quran recitation and students' deeper understanding of the significance of Islamic rulings and concepts was acceptable. In Arabic as an additional language, most students showed strong listening and reading skills, especially in upper primary and secondary. They demonstrated appropriate speaking skills in rehearsed conversations and had good knowledge of basic grammar. However, independent and extended writing skills were not sufficiently developed. In English, at the Foundation stage, children's language skills were well-developed. Most primary and secondary students' reading and comprehension skills were good. Secondary students prepared very well for extended writing through discussion and debate. These skills contributed significantly to their very high attainment. In mathematics, most children in Foundation Stage were able to count accurately up to 20 and recognise basic shapes. Primary students showed a good competence with number and older primary students demonstrated good skills with fractions. Secondary students could use data accurately to solve problems involving time and speed. In science in the Foundation Stage, most children had a good level of knowledge; they knew that chocolate would melt, and they could name different animals and insects. Older students had a good understanding of real life applications of science, while secondary students recognised the need for objectivity and precision when involved in scientific enquiry.

In Islamic Education, a majority of students in both primary and secondary phases made good progress in understanding Islamic values and morals. In Arabic as an additional language, most primary and secondary students made steady progress in reading, and were able to use the new words they learned in meaningful sentences. They also made good progress in understanding grammatical rules. However, the development of their independent writing skills was slower. In English, most children in Foundation Stage understood phonics well. Primary students' use of language for creative and practical tasks was good. There was outstanding progress in the secondary phases and students developed confidence and were articulate in public speaking. In mathematics, children in the Foundation Stage quickly acquired the basic skills for their future learning. Students performed well against national and international benchmarks, and outcomes in the IGCSE indicated outstanding performance compared to international figures. In science, children in Foundation Stage made good progress because they were stimulated and could follow their interests. Primary phase students developed their scientific understanding well. Progress accelerated throughout the secondary phase resulting in strong performance against international benchmarks for these students.

[View judgements](#)

Quality of students' learning skills

Across the school, almost all children and students were enthusiastic learners and responsible learners, with a growing awareness of their strengths and areas where they needed to improve. In all phases most students learned together well. There were frequent instances of confident and effective group discussion in Arabic, English and science. In many lessons, students applied their learning to everyday life and real contexts. Foundation Stage children linked their understanding of moral stories to their own behaviour. Elsewhere, students seriously debated topical life and lifestyle issues such as, nature conservancy, the pros and cons of technology, and medical advancements. Students increasingly used ICT constructively for a range of purposes in classes.

[View judgements](#)

How good is the students' personal and social development?

Students showed good positive attitudes towards their studies. They were well behaved and had cordial and respectful relationships with each other and with staff. The Student Council was very active through the work of its three committees and its involvement in the life of the school. Students adopted healthy eating and took regular exercise. Punctuality was good and attendance was acceptable, with recent improvement.

Students showed good levels of awareness of the UAE culture and heritage. They also showed good understanding of Islamic values and appreciated the relevance and impact of these values on everyday life in Dubai. They reflected upon key messages in relation to their own lives and experiences. Where appropriate, students regularly put into practice what they learnt about Islamic values.

Students' community and environmental responsibility was good throughout the school. They understood their responsibilities as members of a school community well and took on key roles. Their contributions to the local community were constructive and they enjoyed developing their own projects. They took care of their own trees that they planted on school grounds. Students had a positive work ethic.

[View judgements](#)

How good are teaching and assessment?

Almost all teachers demonstrated good subject knowledge. Most teachers planned lessons that clearly engaged and motivated students to learn, often using attractive and stimulating resources including modern technology such as iPads. In the best lessons, teachers' detailed planning focused on students' active learning. Across the school, mutual intellectual respect led to productive dialogue between teachers and

students that supported learning well. Effective questioning featured across almost all subjects at all phases. In the majority of lessons teaching met the needs of groups and individuals well. In the best lessons observed, particularly in the upper years of Secondary, differentiated approaches suitably challenged or supported all learners. A minority of lessons, in other Phases, lacked sufficient planning for particular groups of students. Only in a minority of lessons was critical thinking and independent learning consistently promoted. The most effective of these lessons turned all learning into enquiry or investigation.

The school gathered and thoroughly analysed, comprehensive data on student progress and attainment. It shared this information electronically among teachers. Senior staff carefully measured assessment results against international standards. Teachers shared their understanding of these standards to ensure their own assessments were accurate. As a result of these thorough processes, teachers across the school knew their students' strengths and development needs in detail. Teachers in most lessons used assessment evidence to design learning that closely matched the ways students learned best. There was particularly effective practice in secondary Phase to prepare students to attain well in external examinations. For these students, teachers exhaustively analysed students' performance to identify and address barriers to high attainment. In particular subjects such as English, teachers provided regular and helpful written comment and verbal advice to students, to help them improve their work. This was not yet consistent across Phases and subjects.

[View judgements](#)

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

In the Foundation stage, the curriculum provided opportunities for children to develop independence and make choices, including through indoor and outside play and investigation. Children were particularly actively engaged at these times and very much enjoyed their learning. Transition was managed well and students were supported well. For example, modifications to teaching and curriculum in Year 1 helped students settle and learn better, and older students had extensive careers assessment and support that also engaged their parents. The extensive extra-curricular activities and enrichment included environmental drives and charity work that benefitted the community. There were good examples of cross curricular planning but not all subjects ensured that skills were interlinked across a range of subjects. The taught curriculum was generally broad and balanced, but lacked some areas such as the arts and technology.

The good curriculum design was responsive to the students' needs, including those with special educational needs. Teachers consistently and regularly reviewed the effectiveness of the curriculum, and quickly took remedial action when they found a gap in learning. For example, it was recognised that for some students, key skills in mathematics were not sufficiently strong, so booster groups were established that had successfully helped these students to improve. The school has increased its subject choices. Students from

Year 4 onwards could choose between special Arabic and Hindi. History and English as a first language were added to the secondary options, and collaboration with other schools extended the A- levels being offered.

[View judgements](#)

How well does the school protect and support students?

Very effective policies and procedures were in place to ensure that students were safe. Staff fully understood their responsibility for the safety of students and security guards helped those crossing adjacent streets. Transportation arrangements on arrival and departure to the school was secure and regulations were appropriately adhered to. Facilities and equipment were safe and in excellent condition. The school kept a comprehensive record of regular fire drills and the clinic had detailed records of health checks and kept medication locked away. The nurse carried out regular checks to promote healthy lifestyles and the canteen provided healthy meals. Students were regularly offered good advice on food choices and on physical fitness. The school fully implemented the child protection policy; it conducted training of all staff, and collaborated with child protection agencies.

In lessons and around the school, there was strong mutual respect between students and staff, and relationships between them were good. The school was aware, after the previous inspection, that attendance and punctuality needed to be improved. Since new systems have been in place, student attendance has improved and parents have appreciated the benefits of ensuring regular attendance. Students were provided with good advice and guidance that included the university fair and careers events that helped them to make well-informed choices about the next stages of their lives. Parents also valued work experience for the older students. All students had individuals they could turn to for advice and guidance.

[View judgements](#)

How good are the leadership and management of the school?

Dedicated, collegiate and coherent leadership across the school was strongly focused on school improvement. The school made good use of reports following international assessments in English, mathematics and science and made modifications to the curriculum and teaching. High standards have continued to be maintained, with additional significant improvements being made. There was very good communication within and across most teams, and regular sharing of good practice across the school. The Principal and her team have shown the capacity to devise effective strategies to bring about further improvement, though there was some variation between leaders in this respect.

Leaders effectively involved all the teachers and the governing body in the school's self-evaluation with other stakeholders being involved to differing degrees. Self-evaluation incorporated extensive analysis of students' performance and the frequent evaluations of teaching. These also enabled the school to identify some important priorities, plan for a wide range of improvements and identify professional development needs of staff. Although processes used were mainly rigorous and there was evidence of some improvement in teaching, some criteria used to evaluate teaching and learning did not fully match best international standards and evaluations were too positive. Effective school improvement planning was implemented through regularly reviewed action plans and had led to good progress in addressing the recommendations of the previous inspection report.

Parents were involved in decisions, valued, and fully informed by the school. They were informed about what their child should do to improve. Links with universities and businesses supported the students' choice of careers and personal development and the school also benefited from links with its own community, Alumni and global education partners.

The governing body provided ambitious strategic direction and priorities that included planning for the school's growth and attracting high quality teachers. Through regular monitoring of school outcomes, it effectively held the school to account and contributed to its development. Parents were members of the governing body.

Teachers and assistants were effectively deployed. Specialist facilities were used well, except the recitation room. Displays of students' high quality work provided a stimulating learning environment. Learning resources were sufficient and generally used well. The school portal, with its various links, also supported parents' involvement with their children's education.

[View judgements](#)

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

The progress of students across the key subjects was acceptable. There was a good system for the identification of students with special educational needs (SEN) but the proportion identified with SEN was low. The school was thorough when identifying students who required additional support and the identified students covered a range of needs, such as, medical, behavioural, emotional and learning-related. However, there was a reluctance to progress quickly through the process as the special educational needs coordinator was very aware of the sensitivities around identification, particularly for the student and their families.

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Where parents agreed and supported the school in any diagnosis, they were fully informed and involved in the process of producing an appropriate support programme. The quality of provision in lessons was good. Teachers were well aware of the needs of those identified and had access to comprehensive individual education plans. The curriculum was modified to meet individual needs where required, and either the teacher or learning support assistant provided additional support. The school had invested in resources specifically to meet the needs of students with SEN. There was good monitoring and tracking of progress. The school had a wealth of information on the students that enabled it to track progress accurately and review its evaluations if required.

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 survey			
Responses received	Number		Percentage
Parents	This year	191	33%
	Last year	123	37%
Teachers	38		91%
Students	38		100%

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

More parents than in the previous year, all students and almost all teachers, responded to the survey. Almost all parents, students and teachers who responded were very pleased with the quality of education provided by the school. They agreed it was well led and ensured good communication, that they were involved appropriately in school decision-making and that students were progressing well in all of their subjects. All students responded very positively. They all enjoyed coming to school, felt safe and well looked after, thought students behaved well and believed they were learning to become a productive member of the community. They also believed the curriculum was modified to suit their learning needs and that the school continually upgraded its facilities to support their learning. Most thought that there was a wide choice of options. Most teachers' felt a part of the school and almost all responded very positively. Their responses also indicated the high demands the school made on their time.

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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