



مجلس أبوظبي للتعليم  
Abu Dhabi Education Council  
التعليم أولاً Education First



# Inspection Report

Madar International School

Academic Year 2013 – 14

iqraa



Madar International School

|                                |  |
|--------------------------------|--|
| <b>Inspection Date</b>         | 11 – 14 November 2013  |
| <b>School ID#</b>              | 164  |
| <b>Licensed Curriculum</b>     | American   |
| <b>Number of Students</b>      | 1503   |
| <b>Age Range</b>               | 3 to 18 years (KG1 – Grade 12)                                       |
| <b>Gender</b>                  | Mixed  |
| <b>Principal</b>               | Mohammad Al Adwan  |
| <b>School Address</b>          | Madi Street, Towayya, Al Ain   |
| <b>Telephone Number</b>        | +971 (0)3 761 1330   |
| <b>Fax Number</b>              | +971 (0)3 761 1511   |
| <b>Official Email (ADEC)</b>   | <a href="mailto:madarint.pvt@adec.ac.ae">madarint.pvt@adec.ac.ae</a> |
| <b>School Website</b>          | <a href="http://www.madarschool.ae">www.madarschool.ae</a>           |
| <b>Date of last inspection</b> | 29 April – 2 May 2012  |



## The overall effectiveness of the school

---

Inspectors considered the school in relation to 3 performance categories

**Band A** High performing (overall effectiveness grade 1, 2 or 3)

**Band B** Satisfactory (overall effectiveness grade 4 or 5)

**Band C** In need of significant improvement (overall effectiveness grade 6, 7 or 8)

**The School was judged to be: BAND C; GRADE 6**

---

### The main strengths of the school are:

- the strong leadership and its increasing impact in developing the school
- students' loyalty to, and their good understanding of, the culture, values and heritage of the UAE
- the provision of a safe and secure environment in which students develop good social and interpersonal skills.

### The main areas for improvement are:

- continued focus on raising the quality of teaching in all grades and subjects
  - implementation of strategies to improve the pace and quality of language acquisition and literacy skills
  - further strengthening of leadership by appointing an additional academic assistant director to support school improvement
  - all areas of the school require adequate resourcing to meet the learning needs of all students.
-



## Introduction

---

The school was inspected by a team of 5 inspectors. The inspectors observed 82 lessons, conducted several discussions with senior staff, the heads of faculty, coordinators, teachers, support staff, students and parents. They analysed test and assessment results, scrutinised students' work across the school, analysed the 586 responses to the parents' questionnaire about the school and considered many of the school's policy and other documents. The director of the school was involved throughout the process and engaged in a joint observation with the lead inspector.

## Description of the School

---

Madar International School opened in 2002. It is situated in the residential area of Al Towayya, Al Ain. The school aims to provide an education that will:

‘Sustain our position as a leading educational institution at both national and international levels’.

The diverse school population comprises 1503 students (819 boys and 684 girls) from 23 nationalities. The number has grown by over 500 since the last inspection. There are 313 children in Kindergarten (KG) with 161 boys and 152 girls; 773 students in primary (grades 1 to 5) with 446 boys and 327 girls. In the middle school (grades 6 to 9) there are 316 students of which 164 are boys and 152 girls. In the upper school (grades 10 to 12) there are 101 students, 48 boys and 53 girls. 99% of the students are Muslim and Arab. 87% percent of students are Emirati, 3% Omani, 2% Jordanian, 2% Syrian and 1% Lebanese. The remainder come from other Arab nations and Gulf States. 19 students are identified as having special education needs (SEN). These are: specific learning difficulties 10, moderate learning difficulties 7, severe learning problems 1 and behaviour 1. The school operates an inclusive policy. It withdraws these students for up to 3 hours support each week. No gifted and talented students are identified.

The school uses an American curriculum. Students are tested prior to admission. The majority of teachers are from western countries. Teacher turnover is high. Fees range from AED 17,160 in KG to AED 27,830 in grade 12. Additional fees are charged for books and uniform. For most students these range from AED 985 in KG to AED 3,915 in grade 10. There are further transport fees for around 18% of students who take the bus to school. The principal, whose title is Director, has been in post since 2010. The newly appointed assistant director and the academic quality auditors (AQA's) make up the senior leadership team.



## The Effectiveness of the School

---

### Students' attainment & progress

Attainment and progress are satisfactory in Arabic and Islamic education. They are unsatisfactory in all other subjects. Attainment is below best international standards. The school does not have effective systems to check students' progress. Portfolios of work provide a record of what students have done. They are not used to set targets for future work. Children in KG seldom have opportunities to develop their curiosity or independent skills. They make unsatisfactory progress. Whole class teaching limits the acquisition of English literacy skills in KG and the primary sections. Progress increases in the senior school. This reflects students' greater command of English and smaller class sizes. The number of senior students is small. The school collects destination data for its leavers. The majority of students who graduate enter local universities. In grade 10, students are able to write detailed paragraphs in Arabic. Students in grade 11, recite passages from the Holy Qur'an accurately and with understanding. They develop a sound knowledge of the concepts and values of Islam. Attainment in social studies is unsatisfactory. In English, students are required to learn words in isolation. There are few reading books to promote language acquisition. Students get insufficient opportunities to engage in extended writing. Sentence construction is unsatisfactory. Students have limited understanding of basic grammatical conventions. There are insufficient opportunities to practice speaking. English is the medium of instruction for mathematics and science. A weak command of the language hinders access and understanding. Little investigative and problem solving activities occur. Students have few opportunities to apply their knowledge or use higher order thinking skills in mathematics and science. In a lesson focusing on the 'water cycle', students were unable to use scientific terminology. Progress in Information and communication technology (ICT) is hindered by a failure to challenge and extend students' technological skills in most subjects. There is insufficient access to technology across the school to extend students' thinking.

### Students' personal development

Students enjoy school and like their teachers. They greet visitors politely and with respect. Students are developing moral viewpoints. Their behaviour is good during break and at transition times. They report that there is no bullying. Disengaged students in some primary classes resort to low level disruption as their interest and consequently, their behavior, deteriorates. Older students display more maturity and have the confidence to contribute in lessons. Senior students demonstrate particular pride in their heritage. They talk about loyalty to



the UAE and understand its values, history and heritage. There are a number of opportunities for students to take part in sports and arts activities. Participation is low as yet but increasing. Most students demonstrate confidence and have satisfactory or better social and interpersonal skills. Their experiences of investigation, curiosity and persistence are less well developed.

### **The quality of teaching and learning**

The quality of teaching is unsatisfactory in many classes. This impacts adversely on students' progress. Teachers demonstrate adequate subject knowledge. Objectives are posted in some lessons. This practice is inconsistent. Unsatisfactory time management frequently results in lessons finishing abruptly. Plenary or debriefing sessions do not take place. There is little ongoing assessment to gauge students' learning. Some teachers have started to employ a range of teaching strategies. Given opportunities, students work in groups, engage in discussions and cooperate well. Work is provided at different levels to more adequately address learning needs. Students are engaged, demonstrate positive attitudes to learning and make progress. This practice is developing but inconsistent across the school. Too many lessons are text book driven. Little account is taken of students' prior knowledge. Able students receive insufficient challenge. Those with specific learning needs lack adequate support. Teachers talk for extended periods. This results in students who are passive recipients of knowledge rather than active participants in their learning. Teachers turnover is very high, especially in KG and grade 1. This significantly hampers the school's efforts to raise the quality of teachers' expertise. Professional development is provided on a regular basis. It is of mixed quality. Staff are eager to learn and welcome this support when it has a relevant focus.

### **Meeting students' needs through the curriculum**

The school has adopted a series of American text books from a variety of publishers. The units of study identify standards. These fall below age related international expectations. The curriculum is content led and workbook driven. There are too few opportunities for students to engage in investigations and think for themselves. They do not develop the skills necessary to become independent learners. Delivery is by scope and sequence, aligned to a pacing chart. This ensures coverage of the curriculum but limits wider experiences. It provides insufficient challenge. The curriculum is not effectively adapted to meet the different needs of students. This is particularly the case in the acquisition of English literacy skills. The KG curriculum does not address the learning needs of young students. Tasks are narrow and frequently teacher led. Progress is unsatisfactory. The range of electives and advanced placement (AP) courses



available to the small number of senior students is restricted. The curriculum supports good student understanding of the heritage and culture of the UAE. A range of extracurricular activities broadens the opportunities for students. Good links exist with the American University in Sharjah. Senior students have the social and interpersonal skills necessary for their roles as future citizens. Academic skills of enquiry and investigation are less well developed. Senior students receive limited guidance about career choices and future employment options.

### **The protection, care, guidance and support of students**

Care for students is a high priority for the school. It reflects the positive ethos towards and between students. There are extremely thorough child protection procedures in place. There is regular training for staff. They are well aware of the cultural issues that may impact on student welfare. Female students say they are unsure who they can trust to share confidences with. There is limited support for students in making subject or career choices. When teachers mark students' work, their comments are rarely evaluative. This means that students have little understanding of what they need to do to improve. Attendance is effectively promoted by the school. The 96% attendance rate reflects this. Facilities for first aid are good. The school is compliant with all ADEC personnel regulations. Students have facilities and time for prayer.

### **The quality of the school's buildings and premises**

The well maintained building is enhanced by good displays, pictures and artefacts in transition areas. These enrich the educational environment. Some rooms are small but sufficient for use by older students. The facilities are adequate with the exception of ICT provision. A building project to provide a new KG and other facilities, is well advanced. Construction work is well fenced and presents no danger to the student population. Play spaces are shaded and have safety surfaces. There is no outdoor provision for sports activities but a good sized sports hall is well used. A swimming pool for KG to grade 4 ensures students learn to swim. Risk assessments are carried out regularly. The school complies with all safety regulations. It provides a healthy environment for the community. The campus is surrounded by a high wall which deters intruders. Entrance gates are constantly manned. Security is high. Close circuit cameras monitor the building.

### **The school's resources to support its aims**

There are insufficient classroom resources for use by students. This leads to an over reliance on workbooks and worksheets which reduces lesson quality. Children in KG lack essential apparatus to learn through investigation or develop fine and gross motor skills. Resources to promote language acquisition are limited. The school has introduced a skills based programme to address this. It is



too early to identify significant impact on student attainment. The library has sufficient books and provides an adequate resource. There are insufficient reading materials in classrooms. Students are not provided with graduated schemes of reading books necessary to develop their early reading skills in a sequential manner. Insufficient practical apparatus for student use in mathematics impacts adversely on students' progress, understanding and enjoyment. The computer suites are well resourced. There is limited access to and use of technology in all grades. This reduces opportunities for students to engage in personal research projects. Science laboratories are well stocked. They are used too infrequently to promote investigation skills.

### **The effectiveness of leadership and management**

The director provides strong leadership and direction. He is respected by the staff for his commitment to school improvement, kindness and sensitivity to their needs. The senior leadership has been empowered to take an active role in raising attainment. They are beginning to function effectively but require continued support. Currently there is only one assistant director in this large school. His role encompasses finance and student support among other responsibilities. An assistant director with responsibility for academic matters is required to provide the in depth support and direction required by senior and middle leaders. The self evaluation form (SEF) is overlong and not yet an effective instrument for identifying development needs. The school improvement plan identifies key priorities. The school has successfully addressed several issues raised in the previous inspection report. Parents now receive information about student progress. The recently activated 'parent e-portal' has enhanced this. Parents are less involved in school decision making. Many initiatives have not been in place for sufficient time to demonstrate impact. The Board fulfils its role in objectively monitoring the progress of the school. There is no doubt that this school is in the UAE: artefacts, models and displays celebrate the heritage and values of the Emirates. The school has developed good links with partners, specifically the American University of Sharjah. Due diligence is taken to ensure there is compliance with regulations. Fees charged are in line with similar schools. This is an improving school which demonstrates the capacity for continued improvement.

### **Progress since the last inspection**

---

The school has worked hard to address issues raised in the previous report. It has met with some success. A system of home room teachers has been introduced. Students' personal development is more secure as a result. The underlying problem of high teacher turn over and too much unsatisfactory teaching remains.





Adherence to delivering the content driven curriculum rather than addressing student need is still apparent. The school has commissioned a report to identify the reasons for high teacher turnover. Teachers consider it is the relatively low pay they receive. A system of lesson observation has been introduced to enable professional development to be accurately targeted. A procurement plan is in place to purchase required resources. This includes additional ICT equipment and graded text books.

All subjects now have a head of department. Parents are more actively involved in the school. They are kept well informed. The response rate to the parental questionnaire was high and the views expressed were overwhelmingly positive. As yet it is too early to evaluate the impact of key initiatives that focus on teaching, progress and attainment.

### **What the school should do to improve further:**

---

1. Further Improve the effectiveness of leadership by appointing an assistant academic director with responsibility for:
  - i. the support and training of AQAs' and Heads of Faculty
  - ii. monitoring their impact in raising student attainment
  - iii. monitoring their impact in raising the quality of teaching
  - iv. holding them to account for the impact they have.
2. Improve the quality of teaching and learning across the school by:
  - i. adapting the curriculum to match student learning needs
  - ii. increasing the range of teaching strategies employed by staff
  - iii. enabling students to be actively involved in their learning, including opportunities for group work and independent research
  - iv. analysing assessments data to track student progress.
3. Improve the pace and quality of language acquisition especially in KG and the primary grades to enable students to access other curriculum areas effectively.
4. Ensure students and teachers have adequate resources to support learning and teaching.



## Inspection Grades

| Performance Standard   | Band A<br>High performing |           |      | Band B<br>Satisfactory   |              | Band C<br>In need of significant improvement |                     |      |
|--|---------------------------|-----------|------|--------------------------|--------------|--|---------------------|------|
|  | Outstanding               | Very Good | Good | Satisfactory & Improving | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory                               | Very unsatisfactory | Poor |
|  | 1                         | 2         | 3    | 4                        | 5            | 6  | 7                   | 8    |
| Standard 1: Students' attainment and progress                      |                           |           |      |                          |              |  |                     |      |
| Standard 2: Students' personal development                         |                           |           |      |                          |              |  |                     |      |
| Standard 3: The quality of teaching and learning                   |                           |           |      |                          |              |  |                     |      |
| Standard 4: The meeting of students' needs through the curriculum  |                           |           |      |                          |              |  |                     |      |
| Standard 5: The protection, care, guidance and support of students |                           |           |      |                          |              |  |                     |      |
| Standard 6: The quality of the school's buildings and premises     |                           |           |      |                          |              |  |                     |      |
| Standard 7: The school's resources to support its aims             |                           |           |      |                          |              |  |                     |      |
| Standard 8: The effectiveness of leadership and management         |                           |           |      |                          |              |  |                     |      |
| Summary Evaluation: The school's overall effectiveness             |                           |           |      |                          |              |  |                     |      |