



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



Summary Inspection Report

Al Nahda National School – Boys

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إقرأ



Al Nahda National School – Boys

Inspection Date	5 th – 8 th November, 2012
School ID#	003
Type of School	Private
Curriculum	American and British
Number of Students	1518
Age Range	9 – 17+ years
Gender	Boys
Principal	Adnan Eissa Abbas
School Address	Al Muroor Road (2nd Street), Abu Dhabi, PO Box 815
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Introduction

The school was inspected by five inspectors. During their time in the school, inspectors considered the school ethos, the quality of students' learning experiences, the standards they achieve, their personal development and the teaching they receive. The inspectors observed 120 lessons and other aspects of school life, such as break-times and assemblies. They held meetings with staff, students, parents and the owner of the school. They also examined school documentation and parental questionnaires.

Description of the School

The school is part of the Al Nahda National School, which was founded in September 1983 as a private international school, where English was the medium of instruction. It made provision for 450 students aged from three to 17+ and was built on the site of the present boys' school, which is located in the Muroor area of Abu Dhabi. In 1993, the girls' school moved to new purpose-built premises. The boys' school site, which is fairly small, includes a swimming pool, gymnasium, specialist science laboratories, and junior and senior libraries. The principal has been in post since 2006. The school is governed by the board of trustees.

There are 1,518 boys between the ages of nine and 17+ on roll and the school has the capacity for 1,500. Approximately 45% of students are from the United Arab Emirates (UAE). The remainder of the students are from 35 other nationalities. Around 85% of students are of Arabic origin and almost all students (98.5%), are Muslim. There are currently 1,154 students in the upper school (Grades 7–12). Very few students have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Students new to the school in Grade 5 are admitted on the basis of their performance in an entrance examination in English, mathematics and Arabic, along with an interview. Those already enrolled in the lower primary school are admitted automatically. Fees range between AED 15,347 a year for students in Grade 5 to 6, AED 16,786 for students in Grades 7 to 8, AED 18,944 for students in Grade 9 (HS), AED 20,383 for students in Grade 9 (GCE) and AED 22,781 for those in Grades 10 to 12. Tuition fees make up 90% of the costs, 4% for Transports, 2.8% for books and uniform and 1.7% towards laboratory and activity fees. Most of the students are from fairly affluent backgrounds. In a small minority of cases, the school provides a discount for parents who already have children in the school but cannot afford the full fees.

The school's statement of philosophy says that 'Al Nahda National School for Boys believes in providing an excellent international education through its American and British programmes to meet the needs, interests and abilities of all students



and inspiring them to become lifelong learners.’ The school stresses academic achievement and believes in ‘fostering the intellectual, physical, personal and social development of students in a supportive and caring multicultural learning environment’.

The Effectiveness of the School

Band B

Grade 4

Inspectors judged Al Nahda National School for Boys to be in Band B; that is a satisfactory school.

There have been some improvements in the overall effectiveness of the school since the last inspection. The principal has acted on the recommendations and ensured that improvements have been made in each area. There have been significant improvements to the buildings and premises. In addition to the sports hall and swimming pool, the school has added artificial turf for students to play a range of sports and enjoy the pleasant shaded areas and seating. Staggered breaks prevent overcrowding. Students appreciate the pleasant environment but they do not take enough responsibility for keeping the areas free from litter. The school has begun to engage the subject co-ordinators in monitoring students’ progress, teaching and learning. The school sets challenging targets in key subjects against which progress is measured. Marking in books is still not consistent and does not always tell the students what they have done well and what they need to do to improve. There have been some improvements in the quality of teaching as a result of planned professional development, which has successfully widened the range of teaching and learning methods that some teachers use. Other teachers have yet to take on the new methods, particularly in using new technology and methods to support high and low achievers. Standards have improved in Arabic, Islamic studies and social studies. These are not yet in line with the improved standards in English, mathematics and science. The school provides good guidance on options for further study and future careers. Academic and social councillors work well together to meet the needs of students.

Al Nahda National Boys School is a satisfactory and improving school with many strengths. It provides a caring and supportive learning environment and operates in an atmosphere of calm, warmth and understanding. It is a harmonious community where students are well cared for and their contribution valued. A large majority of parents and carers who returned the questionnaires and those who were interviewed are positive about the school. Attendance is above average. Students behave well. They play an active role in the school and the wider community, for example, in the school council, the eco-committee, and partnerships with local, national and international organisations.



Standards have maintained since the last inspection. They continue to compare well to schools following the same curriculum. Pass rates are high in the International General Certificate of Secondary Education (I-GCSE), GCSE/Advanced level (GCSE-A), English as a foreign language (EFL) and the American High School Diploma. Teaching of mathematics and science, particularly in Grades 9-12, presents students with a good level of challenge and students achieve highly.

Standards in Arabic are satisfactory and improving slowly. In Grades 5 and 6, students make satisfactory progress in listening, speaking, reading and writing. By Grades 11 and 12, most students speak fluently with understanding and expression. They write accurate, detailed and well-structured accounts. Standards in Islamic studies and social studies are satisfactory. Students make satisfactory progress in their understanding of Islamic values, recitation skills and in their understanding of the Arab world.

In English, insufficient differentiation to meet the different needs of students and inconsistency in promoting independent learning leads to poorer progress than in maths and science. Standards and progress in music, physical education (PE) and French are satisfactory. In Information and Communications Technology (ICT), standards are satisfactory and improving. The range of physical activities in PE is too narrow, with an over-concentration on football. Sociology standards are good. There are no significant differences in standards achieved between different nationalities or between those whose first language is not the one used for teaching. Students with special educational needs, and the more able receive insufficient support to reach their full potential. Students' basic skills are improving. ICT skills are not sufficiently used across the curriculum.

Students are well prepared for the next stage of their education. They have a well-developed sense of right and wrong. They contribute impressively to the wider community with a keen sense of moral responsibility. For example, they readily organise fund-raising events throughout the year, responding particularly well to any natural disasters. They have a good understanding of other people's needs, including those from other faiths and cultures. They have good social and interpersonal skills and can learn collaboratively and harmoniously. They are proud of their school and talk confidently to visitors. Students feel safe in school and recognise they can readily approach any member of staff if they have any concerns. As one student put it, 'We are like a big family. I enjoy coming to school and being with my friends'.

There is some good teaching in each subject. The best teaching is seen in the older classes, where teaching engages students more actively and gives them more responsibility for their own learning. In poorer lessons, teachers make insufficient



use of strategies that engage students in discussions and independent working. Teaching for younger students relies too much on rote learning and working through textbooks. Teachers are highly qualified and have good subject knowledge. Teachers' questioning techniques are inconsistent. Teaching is ineffective in promoting higher order thinking skills, particularly in the more able students. Most teachers supplement textbooks with worksheets and students' own contributions. They do not always make the best use of available ICT resources. In the better lessons, tasks and activities are motivating and relevant to the learning objectives. In a minority of lessons, teachers spend too much time talking to students and do not allow sufficient time for students to complete tasks to a high standard nor to conclude their learning for that lesson. There are also missed opportunities to provide constructive advice to students on how to improve their work in lessons. As a result, students are not challenged sufficiently to enable them to do their best. Although the teachers know their students well they do not always support their specific learning needs, particularly those with special educational needs (SEN) or those that are more able.

The curriculum is well structured particularly for those students in Grades 9 to 12, where it is creative, tailored to meet individual students' needs, and increasingly motivating and inspiring. The curriculum is unsuccessful in enabling students in Grades 5 and 6 to attain above-average standards in reading and other aspects of literacy. The quality of handwriting, spelling, punctuation and presentation of work of some students in these grades is not well developed. The two curricular programmes, UK- and US-based, exist side by side in the school and are regularly updated to meet the challenges of international benchmarks and standards. Curriculum planning uses a range of textbooks across the different Grades and subjects. Some teachers who stick closely to the programmes do not always motivate all students to develop the personal qualities needed to achieve the higher order independent thinking skills. The curriculum contributes positively to students' needs, aspirations and interests. There are some very good aspects to curriculum enhancement. These include the wide range of very popular extra-curricular opportunities and the very good local and international links to extend learning and prepare students effectively for the future. Evidence of the impact of these can be seen in the vibrant, high-quality work in the project folders and school records. This work is not always celebrated around the school or in the classrooms. Through the weekly assessment, students receive clear and regular guidance on how to progress to the next level of their learning. These are shared with parents at their regular meetings with staff.

All staff care deeply about the students and know them very well. Parents are equally positive about the school's care for their children. There is a very positive



ethos in the school. Students say that they feel safe in school and that their teachers and supervisors are approachable if they have any concerns. The school provides a suitable place for prayer. There are very effective procedures to monitor attendance, which ensure that attendance is consistently above 98%. The students are well supervised on their arrival and departure from school. The few coaches which did not have seat belts did so by the end of the inspection.

Building and premises are well maintained and provide a safe and hygienic learning environment. Classrooms are generally appropriate in range and size to allow teaching and movement to take place. Effective health and safety measures are fully in place. The school has a dedicated, staffed clinic with the most recent equipment to treat those who are ill or injured. The accommodation provides specialist facilities, which are benefiting students' learning, particularly in science. Students appreciate the artificial grass, seating and shading around the play area. The toilet facilities are adequate and regularly checked.

Most aspects of resources are good and support students in their learning. Teachers are well qualified and most are well matched to the courses and ages they teach. Professional development is given a high priority and is well planned to meet the needs of teachers. Resources for ICT are improving significantly with interactive boards planned for each room. These are not yet fully operational; those that are available are well used. There are two libraries, which are well stocked and provide good quality books.

The school has satisfactory and improving capacity to improve standards even further. The principal, ably supported by his deputy director, provides strong leadership and clear strategic direction. He has the full support of the leadership team and the parents. Leaders, at all levels, are deeply committed to the school and its improvements. The principal is highly visible around the school. He has high expectations of staff and is a good role model for staff and students. The owner has a good understanding of his duties as proprietor and enables the leadership team to function effectively. The role of the co-ordinators is beginning to be strengthened to ensure that they undertake more rigorous monitoring and evaluation of teaching by focusing on the extent of students' learning and progress in lessons. Training is being provided to enable them to be more accountable for improving teaching and learning. Links with parents are strong. There are thorough systems in place, which ensure that financial and administrative aspects of the school are managed effectively. The improving standards, good resourcing, well qualified teachers and effective leadership mean that the school offers good value for money.



What the school should do to improve further:

1. Accelerate the rate of students' progress throughout the school, particularly in Grades 5 and 6 by:
 - i. ensuring teachers make better use of assessment information to accurately match work to the needs of students of different abilities;
 - ii. focusing on a broader range of learning skills to engage students fully in lessons;
 - iii. improving ongoing assessment, ensuring students' work is marked regularly and they receive feedback on what they have done well and what it is that they need to do further; and
 - iv. fully meeting the needs of those with special educational needs and those who are more able throughout the curriculum.
2. Enhance the quality of teaching by:
 - i. giving students the confidence and the opportunity to take a more active part in their lessons to discuss and debate issue of interest;
 - ii. adapting activities and raising expectations during lessons so that students can move more quickly onto the next step in their learning, particularly the more able; and
 - iii. making the best use of ICT across the curriculum to enhance students' learning.
3. Strengthen the leadership and management by:
 - i. building on the leadership training provided for subject co-ordinators to undertake more rigorous monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning thereby enabling them to be more accountable for improving teaching and learning and progress.