



دائرة التعليم والمعرفة
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
AND KNOWLEDGE

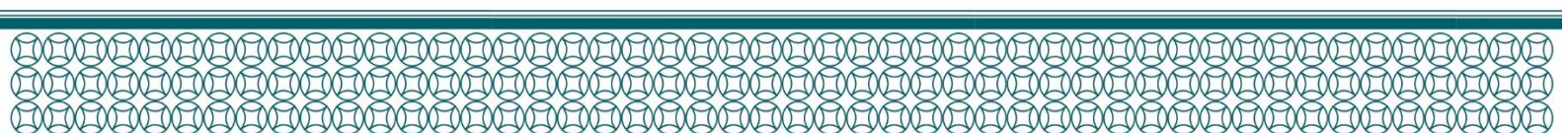
Inspection
Report of

Aspen Heights British School

Overall
Effectiveness

Good

Academic year: 2018-2019





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School Information

School Profile			
School Name:	Aspen Heights British School		
School ID:	9289	School phases:	Foundation Stage (FS) to Year 6
School Council: **	N/A		
School curriculum: *	English National Curriculum	Fee range and category*	AED 35,000 to AED 45,000. High.
Address:	Al Bahya, Abu Dhabi	Email:	Aspenheights.pvt@adec.ac.ae
Telephone:	02 564 2229	Website:	www.ahbs.ae

Staff Information			
Total number of teachers	27	Turnover rate	10%
Number of teaching assistants	13	Teacher- student ratio	1: 11

Students' Information				
Total number of students	293	Gender	Boys and girls	
% of Emirati students	67%	% of SEN students	6%	
% of largest nationality groups	Egyptian (7%)	Omani (4%)	Yemeni (4%)	
% of students per phase	KG	Primary	N/A	N/A
	42%	58%	N/A	N/A

Inspection Details				
Inspection date:	from	<u>29/05/1440</u>	to:	<u>01/06/1440</u>
		04/02/2019		<u>06/02/2019</u>
Number of lessons observed:	67	Number of joint lessons observed:	16	

*Relevant for Private schools only

** Relevant for Government schools only



The overall performance of the school:

- The school opened in September 2017 with 50 students and has grown considerably since then. Students have entered into all year groups since opening, nearly all with low or very low English language skills. Teacher turnover is low at 10%, however a considerable number of new teachers and school leaders have joined the school since it opened. This is the school's first full inspection.
- The overall performance of Aspen Heights British School is good. Students' progress is good in all subjects and they are gaining English language skills quickly. Teachers plan and deliver interesting and engaging lessons. Leaders ensure that the school is a safe and caring community and students' personal development is very well supported.

Performance Standard 1	Students' Achievement		
Judgment	Good	Change from previous inspection	N/A
Justifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students make good progress in all subjects. Attainment in Islamic education, Arabic first language (FL) and UAE social studies is good because a majority of students attain above the curriculum expectations.• Students' learning skills are good. They enjoy their learning and work well together to share ideas. However, they lack confidence in deciding when to work in teams.• Most groups of students make good progress, but the more-able are not always challenged to make the progress they could in lessons.		

Performance Standard 2	Students' personal and social development, and their innovation skills		
Judgment	Very Good	Change from previous inspection	N/A
Justifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students' behaviour and attitudes contribute very well to the harmonious learning environment.• Students' appreciate Islamic values and their awareness of Emirati heritage and culture are well developed.• Students' skills to be innovative and enterprising in lessons are less well developed		

Performance Standard 3	Teaching and Assessment		
Judgment	Good	Change from previous inspection	N/A
Justifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teachers know the curriculum well and plan interesting lessons.• Teachers' use questions to check students' understanding and this ensures their good progress.• Lessons do not always extend high ability students' learning fully.		



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Performance Standard 4	Curriculum		
Judgment	Good	Change from previous inspection	N/A
Justifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The curriculum is implemented well, and it meets all regulatory requirements.• Links within the curriculum support students' learning about the UAE very well.• Children's natural curiosity about the world is not fully exploited outside classrooms.		

Performance Standard 5	The protection, care, guidance and support of students		
Judgment	Very Good	Change from previous inspection	N/A
Justifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The premises are modern and support students' academic and personal development very well.• Care, guidance and support processes ensure students are kept safe and develop productive attitudes towards learning.• Students are provided with helpful guidance, but not always helped to take responsibility for making decisions about their own learning.		

Performance Standard 6	Leadership and management		
Judgment	Good	Change from previous inspection	N/A
Justifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Leaders are committed to Emirate and UAE priorities. The school provides an inclusive learning environment and parents are enabled to be partners in their children's learning.• The day-to-day management of the school enables learning to proceed smoothly.• Middle leaders are less secure about how to promote the quality of teaching further.		



Provision for Reading



- The provision for reading is good. The school library is well-stocked with Arabic and English reading material. The school makes the development of students' reading skills a priority.
- Students are encouraged to read through shared reading plans and continuous support from adults. Reading initiatives support and encourage students to read regularly. All classrooms have suitable, attractive and well-used reading corners.
- The school's reading team sets priorities in termly and yearly action plans to ensure students have many chances to use the library in the daily schedule. A suitable emphasis in lessons is placed on students' mastering the comprehension of text in all subjects. Teachers encourage students to read at home and to record their thoughts about what they read.
- Teachers have had specific training to support their skills in teaching and encouraging students to read particularly in relation to teaching phonics.
- Opportunities for individual reading and class reading are suitably embedded within the curriculum across the school including opportunities to read at breaktimes. Teachers provide an appropriate focus in lessons on teaching reading in both English and Arabic.
- Teachers maintain clear and detailed on-going records to track the progress of all students in reading.



Key areas of strength and areas for improvements:

Key areas of strength

- Students' attainment in Islamic education, Arabic FL and UAE social studies.
- Students' very respectful relationships with others and their appreciation of Islamic values.
- Teachers' skills to plan interesting and engaging lessons which support students' progress.
- Arrangements to keep students safe and the well-resourced premises.
- School leaders' establishment of an inclusive school and their commitment to the UAE national and Emirate priorities.

Key areas for improvement

- Raise students' attainment in Arabic second language, English, mathematics and science by:
 - promoting students' listening, speaking, reading and writing using standard Arabic
 - developing students' English language skills further, especially their extended writing skills
 - improving students' mathematical skills, especially skills to solve mathematical problems using efficient mental mathematical skills
 - supporting students' science skills and knowledge, particularly skills to devise and conduct investigations.
- Further improve teachers' planning to accelerate students' progress and to help students take more responsibility for their learning by:
 - making more use of robust external benchmarked attainment data to identify individual students' strengths and areas for improvement
 - adapting lesson plans to more closely meet the needs of individual students, particularly high ability students
 - planning more opportunities in lessons for students to respond to feedback and to make improvements.
- Further adapt the taught curriculum to enable children and students to be independent, innovative and enterprising learners by:
 - providing more opportunities in lessons for students to review their own learning against objectives
 - supporting students to plan their own next steps in their learning and carry these plans out independently
 - encouraging students to be innovative and enterprising in how they carry out their learning, for example through the wider use of learning technologies.



Performance Standard 1: Students' Achievement

Indicators:		KG	Primary	Middle	High
Islamic Education	Attainment	N/A	Good		
	Progress	N/A	Good		
Arabic (as a First Language)	Attainment	Good	Good		
	Progress	Good	Good		
Arabic (as additional Language) *	Attainment	N/A	Acceptable		
	Progress	N/A	Good		
Social Studies	Attainment	N/A	Good		
	Progress	N/A	Good		
English	Attainment	Weak	Acceptable		
	Progress	Acceptable	Good		
Mathematics	Attainment	Acceptable	Acceptable		
	Progress	Good	Good		
Science	Attainment	Acceptable	Acceptable		
	Progress	Good	Good		
Other subjects (Art, Music, PE)	Attainment	Acceptable	Acceptable		
	Progress	Good	Good		
Learning Skills		Good	Good		

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Islamic Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students' achievement in Islamic education is good. The majority of students attain levels above curriculum standards.• School internal examinations indicate acceptable attainment.• In lessons and in their recent work students' attainment is good. Students' demonstrate developed knowledge and understanding of the Islamic creed. For example, younger students can name the pillars of Islam and the pillars of faith. Older students know key Islamic values and principles and understand the meanings in the Noble Hadeeth above curriculum expectations. For example, they can memorize prayers and recite Al Hadeeth accurately. Students can describe how Islamic teachings influence their daily lives and the lives of others. However, their Holy Qur'an recitation skills are less well developed.• All groups of students make good progress in lessons towards achieving lesson objectives.
Arabic	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students' achievement in Arabic FL and second language (SL) is good overall. The majority of students attain levels above curriculum standards in Arabic FL. In Arabic SL, attainment is acceptable.• School internal examination results indicate acceptable attainment in both subjects.• In lessons, and in their recent work, Arabic FL students demonstrate good listening, comprehension, reading and speaking skills. They can answer questions confidently using well-structured standard Arabic sentences. Children in FS can read words and explain the meaning of sentences well. In primary student can read texts fluently and infer meanings from unfamiliar texts. Students' skills to write extensively for a purpose and audience are relatively less well developed.• In Arabic SL, students' attainment is acceptable. Students can listen, speak, read and write in line with curriculum expectations. Students' skills to write using accurate spelling, punctuation and grammar are less well developed than other skills.• All groups of students make the same good progress in lessons.



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Social Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students' achievement in UAE social studies is good overall. The majority of students attain levels above curriculum standards.• School internal examination results show acceptable attainment.• In lessons, and in their recent work, students' attainment is good. Students are knowledgeable about the UAE's geography, history and national traditions. For example, they can describe the tools used in the past for fishing and compare the efficiency of these to new tools. Students demonstrate good understanding of the roles of UAE leaders in building the nation and can describe their contributions. Students' skills in using maps to locate different countries in the world are relatively less well developed.• All groups of students' make good progress in lessons overall.
English	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students' achievement is good in English. FS children's attainment is weak because only a majority attain levels in line with curriculum expectations. Primary students' attainment is acceptable because most students attain in line with expectations.• Internal testing indicates that children's attainment is weak, and primary students' attainment is acceptable.• In lessons and in students' work, attainment is weak in FS and acceptable in primary. Children and students enter the school in all year groups with English language skills well below curriculum expectations. By the end of FS children can listen and respond to English statements accurately and have emerging speaking, reading and writing skills. Students in primary show competency in listening, speaking and reading, but their skills in extended writing are not as well developed. English language skills improve quickly as students progress through the school. Older students can express themselves adequately when speaking and writing and can read for comprehension accurately.• Overall, different groups of students make the same progress in lessons.
Mathematics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Overall, achievement in mathematics is good. The majority of students make better than expected progress across the school.• Internal assessment indicates acceptable attainment in FS and weak attainment in primary.• In lessons and in students' work, attainment is acceptable. Most children in FS have adequate basic number skills and students in primary acquire age appropriate skills and knowledge about number, space, shape and measurement and gain a secure understanding of mathematical vocabulary and concepts. Students' abilities with mental mathematics and problem solving are the less well-developed aspects of their work.• All groups of students make the same good progress.



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Science	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students' achievement in science is good overall. Their attainment is acceptable.• School attainment data indicates that attainment in science is broadly acceptable.• In lessons and their recent work, attainment is acceptable. Children show curiosity and appropriate levels of knowledge about the world, for example they can describe different fruits and name the plants they grow on. In primary, students' knowledge about the earth, living things and space is adequately developed, for example students in Year 6 can explain how to maintain a healthy cardiac system. In both phases children's and students' skills to devise and conduct science enquiries are less well developed.• All groups of students make the same good progress in classes.
Other subjects	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students' achievement in other subjects is good overall. Their attainment is acceptable, and their progress is good in FS and primary.• School attainment data indicates that students' attainment is acceptable.• In lessons and their recent work, children in the FS can control their bodies appropriately in PE, for example when they swim, run and throw. Children can be creative in art when they design models of traditional cakes. In primary, students use computers independently to research and read. In PE students develop skills to take part in team games. Across the wide range of other subjects, students' attainment is in line with curriculum expectations.• All groups of students make the same good progress in lessons.
Learning Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students' enjoy learning and they readily take on new tasks. They are willing to answer questions and concentrate well.• Students can work together to share ideas and thoughts. However, they lack confidence to decide when to work in teams.• Teachers ensure students make regular links between their learning and the world. Students make particularly effective links between their learning and the UAE's context, and this supports their deeper knowledge of Emirati and UAE culture.• Extracurricular provision supports students' skills to be innovative, enterprising and creative. Within lessons, students have fewer chances to develop and apply these skills.



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Subjects	Relative Strengths	Areas of Improvements
Islamic Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students' understanding of Islamic creed, values and principles. Students' understanding of the Noble Hadeeth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students' recitation skills.
Arabic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students' listening, speaking and reading skills. Students' skills to interpret and comprehend Arabic texts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arabic FL students' extended and creative writing skills. Arabic SL students' skills to write accurately.
Social Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students' knowledge and understanding of the UAE's history and national traditions. Students' knowledge of past leaders and their role in building in the nation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students' skills to use maps to locate different countries in the world.
English	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Older students' speaking and listening skills. Students' reading skills. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students' attainment in English, especially in the FS. Students' extended writing skills.
Mathematics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children's understanding of basic number skills. Students' understanding of number, shape, space and measurement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students' attainment in mathematics. Students' mental mathematic skills and problem-solving skills.
Science	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FS children's curiosity and their developing knowledge of the world. Primary students' knowledge of life, earth and space sciences. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students' attainment in science. Skills to independently plan and conduct science enquiries and investigations.
Other subjects:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children's and students' progress in other subjects. Children and students' skills to use computers to support their attainment in other subjects. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students' attainment in other subjects.
Learning skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students' attitudes towards their learning and their skills to communicate ideas. The links students make between their learning and the UAE's context. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students' skills to make decisions about how to learn and their confidence to be innovative and enterprising learners.



Performance Standard 2: Students' personal and social development and their innovation skills

Indicators:	KG	Primary	Middle	High
Personal development	Very Good	Very Good		
Understanding of Islamic values and awareness of Emirati and world cultures	Very Good	Very Good		
Social responsibility and innovation skills	Very Good	Very Good		

- Overall, students' personal and social development is very good, and their innovation skills are good.
- Students' responsible attitudes to their work and their positive behaviour ensures learning proceeds smoothly in lessons. Students have very well-developed relationships with others, they help each other and respect their teachers. Students are self-reliant and they respond very well to feedback from their peers and teachers.
- Students have a well-developed understanding of safe and healthy living and nearly all make consistently healthy choices about what they eat and how they exercise. Attendance to school is good, at 94% and nearly all students are punctual.
- Students' understanding of Islamic values are very well developed and they apply these consistently well in their everyday life. They know about the heritage and culture of the UAE and can describe in detail how the national has developed over time. Their knowledge of other world cultures is developing well.
- Students enjoy taking leadership roles at school. The students' council is active in organising events and supporting national celebration days at school. For example, students lead fund raising activities to raise money for charities.
- Students work consistently well in lessons on activities provided to them by their teachers. They can solve problems when directed to and extracurricular activities help build their innovation and entrepreneurial skills. Students' skills to initiate their own learning and plan how to complete tasks in innovative and enterprising ways are less well developed.
- Students participate in a wide range of activities that support sustainability and conservation in their local environment.
- Students' skills to be innovative are well supported in extracurricular opportunities and special events. The school has been successful in winning in competitions and students devise ways to look after animals and support charities.

Areas of Relative Strength:

- Students' behaviour and their relationships with others.
- Students' knowledge and appreciation of Islamic values and their awareness and understanding of the culture and traditions of the UAE.

Areas for Improvement:

- Students' attendance.
- Students' skills to be innovative and enterprising with their learning especially during lesson times.



Performance Standard 3: Teaching and assessment

Indicators:	KG	Primary	Middle	High
Teaching for effective learning	Good	Good		
Assessment	Good	Good		

- Overall, the quality of teaching and assessment are good. Teachers have good knowledge of the curriculum and can explain new learning well. They understand how students learn and provide students with interesting and engaging tasks to do.
- Baseline testing, conducted when children and students enter the school, provides accurate information. Teachers use this to plan lessons that take account of students' skills and knowledge when they enter the school, and this supports students' good progress towards curriculum objectives.
- Teachers make good use of resources, such as interactive whiteboards. They ask questions that check students' knowledge and understanding of the tasks they are required to do, and this ensures that students are confident learners. Teachers are not yet fully extending the learning of high ability students by providing tasks that are well-matched to these students' individual needs.
- Teachers often ask students to work together to complete tasks and this encourages students' collaboration and communication skills. Teachers are not yet consistently helping students to review their own learning and plan their own next steps. As a result, students' skills to be innovative and enterprising learners are less well developed.
- Assessment processes are well aligned with the taught curriculum. Teachers and school leaders are beginning to use a range of external benchmarking. For example, the school supports the question-per-day initiative for the introduction of TIMMS and external tests provide some useful information.
- Teachers' questions and their regular marking of students' work ensures they know their students' strengths and areas for improvement. Teachers provide helpful 'pink marking' but do not always ensure that students respond to this.

Areas of Relative Strength:

- Teachers' knowledge of the curriculum and how students learn.
- Teachers' use of questions to check students' understanding.

Areas for Improvement:

- Teaching that fully extends the learning of high ability students.
- Teaching that supports students' skills to review their own learning and be innovative and enterprising learners.



Performance Standard 4: Curriculum

Indicators:	KG	Primary	Middle	High
Curriculum design and implementation	Good	Good		
Curriculum adaptation	Good	Good		

- Overall, the curriculum is good. The curriculum is carefully aligned to the English National Curriculum and provides students with a broad range of subjects to learn. The curriculum meets all compliance regulations. Planning ensures the full curriculum is delivered, and students' knowledge and skills build upon previous learning efficiently.
- Children in the FS can choose activities during 'free-flow' and older students can choose when to use computers. However, this does not always support learning through play and exploration in outdoor areas in FS, and older students' have relatively few opportunities to make choices about their own learning.
- Links between subjects are developed and these support students' acquisition of English language skills. Topics and themes help students link their learning in meaningful ways across subjects.
- The curriculum is reviewed regularly. Baseline and termly assessments are used to adapt curriculum content to match students' learning needs. High ability students are not yet fully supported through individualised adaptations to the taught curriculum.
- The curriculum is enhanced through a range of extracurricular opportunities which support students' enterprise and innovation skills, and their personal development. Within classrooms, students have fewer opportunities to be innovative and enterprising. The curriculum is successful in supporting students' learning about Emirati culture and UAE society.
- Moral education is delivered through lessons, assemblies and circle time. The 'my identity' initiative promotes students' appreciation of Islamic values. Students are assessed at six points during the year and the school actively involves parents in their children's moral development. Students' moral development supports their very good behaviour and relationships.

Areas of Relative Strength:

- Links the curriculum makes to Emirati culture and UAE society.
- Enhancements to the curriculum available in extracurricular time.

Areas for Improvement:

- Adaptations to the curriculum to extend high ability students' progress.
- Adaptations to the taught curriculum to support children's learning through play and exploration and develop students' skills to be innovative and enterprising.



Performance Standard 5: The Protection, care, guidance and support of students

Indicators:	KG	Primary	Middle	High
Health and safety, including arrangements for child protection/ safeguarding	Very Good	Very Good		
Care and support	Very Good	Very Good		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">The overall quality of protection, care, guidance and support for students is very good. The school has rigorous procedures to safeguard students from abuse, including on the internet. These procedures are effectively shared with the school community.Effective and regular safety checks ensure that the school premises are kept safe and hygienic. The premises are attractive and spacious and maintained to a high standard. They provide a stimulating learning environment for students.Staff involve students in a wide range of activities that promote healthy living. The promotion of safe and healthy lifestyles is successful in promoting students' participation in physical fitness activities and eating healthily.Successful behaviour management processes promote high levels of respect between students and teachers. Students are helped to understand their personal responsibilities, and this ensures their positive attitudes towards learning.The school is successful in promoting students' attendance which has improved recently. Students' attendance and punctuality are supported well through assemblies where prizes are awarded.Systems to identify students with special educational needs (SEN) and those who are gifted and talented (G&T) are well developed. Specialist teachers develop thorough individual education plans and the school's inclusion team support students in classes and in specialist rooms. Teachers know their students' individual special needs and provide additional support where needed.Students receive regular and helpful guidance in pupil progress meetings, and this supports students' understanding of how well they are progressing. Processes to help students set and monitor their own challenging learning targets are less well developed, including for high ability students.				
Areas of Relative Strength:				
<ul style="list-style-type: none">The quality of the premises, its maintenance and arrangements to keep students safe.Systems for managing students' behaviour and encouraging them to develop strong relationships with each other and staff.				
Areas for Improvement:				
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Support and guidance for students to become independent and responsible learners, particularly for high ability students.				



Performance Standard 6: Leadership and management

Indicators:

The effectiveness of leadership	Good
Self-evaluation and improvement planning	Good
Partnerships with parents and the community	Very Good
Governance*	Good
Management, staffing, facilities and resources	Very Good

- The overall quality of leadership and management is good. Leaders promote a vision which is aligned well to Emirate and UAE priorities. They have established a fully inclusive school. Within the school relationships between staff are developed well and this contributes to the willingness leaders at all levels show to taking responsibilities for delivering improvements. School leaders have quickly established effective provision which results in good standards of achievement for students.
- Self-evaluation processes are inclusive of all stakeholders. Middle leaders' involvement in evaluating and supporting improvements to teaching are developing. They are not yet fully effective in raising the quality of teaching and learning further. School improvement plans are thorough, and responsibilities are clearly described and delegated. Detailed actions are leading to progressive improvements in all aspects of the school's work.
- The successful 'Friends of Aspen' and parents' association, allied with regular surveys of parents' views, provide an effective means for parents to communicate with the school. Innovative online communications and the school's portal enable parents to receive detailed information about their children's education and academic progress. The school is part of a group of schools and this supports professional development for teachers. Wider international partnerships are less well developed.
- Governors know the school well through regular visits, which include education specialists within the governing body observing lessons and monitoring achievement. Formal performance management processes ensure leaders are held accountable for the quality of school provision. Governors have a positive impact on supporting school improvements.
- Well-developed relationships ensure that the school day, and lessons, proceed undisturbed and this supports students' good progress. Teachers are experienced in delivering the school's chosen curriculum. Teachers and students benefit from a broad range of resources which support teaching and learning. A large covered area outside supports children's learning in the FS, however facilities here are not always used well to support learning through play and exploration.
- The school applies a range of international assessments. The question-a-day initiative is leading to the implementation of TIMSS assessment and the school makes use of GL assessments to assess students' progress against international norms.

Areas of Relative Strength:

- Leaders' commitment to Emirate and UAE priorities and the partnerships they have established with parents.
- The quality of the premises and day-to-day management of the school.

Areas for Improvement:

- Middle leaders' understanding of how to develop teachers' skills to promote innovation and entrepreneurship in lessons.
- The use of outside facilities in FS to support learning through play and exploration.

*Relevant for Private schools only