



**British School  
Overseas**  
Inspected by Penta International

## **Inspection report**

# **Al Mamoura Academy**

**Abu Dhabi  
United Arab Emirates**

Date **2<sup>nd</sup> - 4<sup>th</sup> February 2020**

Inspection number **20200202**

Contents		page
1	Purpose and scope on the inspection	2
2	Compliance with regulatory requirements	2
3	Overall effectiveness of the academy	3
	3. 1 What the academy does well	3
	3. 2 Points for improvement	4
4	The context of the academy	5
	4. 1 The British nature of the academy	7
5	<b>Standard 1</b> The quality of education provided by the academy	8
	5. 1 Curriculum	8
	5. 2 Teaching and assessment	11
	5. 3 Standards achieved by students	15
6	<b>Standard 2</b> The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students	17
7	<b>Standard 3</b> The welfare, health and safety of students	20
8	<b>Standard 4</b> The suitability of the proprietor and staff	21
9	<b>Standard 5</b> The premises and accommodation	23
10	<b>Standard 6</b> The provision of information for parents, carers and others	24
11	<b>Standard 7</b> The academy 's procedures for handling complaints	26
12	<b>Standard 8</b> Leadership and management of the academy	27

## 1. Purpose and scope of the inspection

The Department for Education has put in place a voluntary scheme for the inspection of British schools overseas, whereby schools are inspected against a common set of standards that British Schools overseas can choose to adopt.

The inspection and this report follow the Department for Education (DFE) schedule for the inspection of British schools overseas.

The purpose of the inspection is to provide information to parents, teachers, senior managers and the academy's management on the overall effectiveness of the academy/school, the standard of education it provides and its compatibility with independent schools in the United Kingdom.

The inspection and report will cover the key areas of quality of the curriculum; quality of teaching and learning; the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students; their welfare, health and safety; the suitability of the proprietor and staff; the academy's premises and accommodation (including boarding); and the academy's complaints procedures. An essential part of the inspection is considering the extent to which the British character of the academy is evident in its ethos, curriculum, teaching, care for students and students' achievements.

This inspection was completed by Penta International. Penta International is approved by the British Government for the purpose of inspecting schools overseas. As one of the leading inspection providers, Penta International reports to the English Department for Education (DFE) on the extent to which schools meet the standards for British Schools Overseas.

During the inspection visit, over 70 lesson observations took place, as well as a series of learning walks. Academy documentation and policies were analysed, and data reviewed. Students' workbooks were scrutinised, and discussions were held with the senior staff, the management team, and a range of teachers, parents and groups of students. The inspection team were in the academy for three days.

The lead inspector was Colin Dyson. The team members were Stuart Bradley, Steven Geraghty, Kirsty Sharp and Lydie Gonzales.

## 2. Compliance with regulatory requirements

Al Mamoura Academy meets all the standards for British Schools Overseas.

### 3. Overall effectiveness of the academy

Al Mamoura Academy meets all the requirements for accreditation.

The English National curriculum provides the framework for teaching and learning; enriched by a wide range of extra-curricular activities. Leadership and management are good with appropriate levels of delegation.

The premises provide an outstanding learning environment.

Students are well supported through effective pastoral care as well as the implementation of effective welfare, health and safety policies and procedures.

Nearly all students make progress at least in line with their ability, many better.

#### 3.1 What the academy does well

There are many strengths at the academy, including the following:

- The progress the academy has made in the short space of time that the new leadership teams have been in place.
- The positivity of all staff, both teaching and non-teaching to celebrate student's achievements and well-being.
- The highly effective leadership and the positive impact of appropriate delegation to involve all staff in the academy's improvement.
- The outstanding provision the academy's campus provides, including the inclusive provision for swimming.
- There is high quality pastoral care, which means students are safe, secure, supported and happy.
- The principal and her senior and middle leadership team's drive for the academy's improvement, built around a strong ethos of teamwork and a shared vision.
- The efficiency and effectiveness of all support staff to contribute to the strong community focus of the academy.
- The excellent behaviour of all the students and the care and empathy they demonstrate towards each other.
- The good levels of achievement of the students across the academy.

## 3.2 Points for improvement

While not required by regulations, the academy might wish to consider the following development points:

- Ensure the quality of learning and teaching throughout the academy is raised to match the quality of the best, providing challenging and memorable lessons for all students.
- Develop a more consistent and manageable approach to the use of data on student outcomes to monitor and track progress effectively, and positively impact on the curriculum provision.
- Ensure newly appointed leaders and managers have the appropriate, high quality development opportunities to help them be successful in their roles.

## 4. The context of the academy

Full name of school/academy	Al Mamoura Academy				
Address	Abu Dhabi, Al Mamoura Academy, Aldar Academies, Opposite Al Nahyan Camp.				
Telephone Number/s	+971 2885 7100				
Fax Number	+971 2881 3212				
Website Address	<a href="http://www.almamouraacademy.sch.ae">www.almamouraacademy.sch.ae</a>				
Key Email Address/s	<a href="mailto:principal@almamouraacademy.sch.ae">principal@almamouraacademy.sch.ae</a>				
Headteacher/Principal	Sarah Jane Weaver				
Chair of Board of Governors/Proprietor	Aldar Academies				
Age Range	3 – 16 years				
Total number of students	1275	Boys	581	Girls	694
Numbers by age	0-2 years	0	12-16 years	121	
	3-5 years	373	17-18 years	0	
	6-11 years	781	18+ years	0	
Total number of part-time children	None				

Al Mamoura Academy is one of eight schools that make up Aldar Academies. Aldar Academies has grown rapidly from a single, 247-student facility in 2007 to become one of the UAE's major providers of private education.

The academy offers a co-educational experience to students in primary and a Girls-only secondary school. 70% of the students are Emirati, followed by Jordanian and British children

who are approximately 8% of the academy population. The academy is located near the Sea Palace off the East Ring Road, in Abu Dhabi.

The academy welcomed its inaugural intake of students in August 2016. The academy states that its Vision is to create “An innovative learning community, where we nurture our learners through Collaboration, Leadership and Creativity”. English is the language of communication throughout the academy, and in lessons. The academy aims to provide a high level of support for students to become effective users of English. Students work towards the IGCSE qualifications before progressing to A-levels.

Parents recognise the rigorous nature of the curriculum and value the reliable and highly regarded examinations available. As a result, the English national curriculum is popular among expatriate families travelling between countries. The academy offers IGCSE and GCSE for years 10 and 11, to be followed by A level. IGCSE subjects include a wide range of options - art, biology, business studies, chemistry, computer science, design technology - graphics, resistant technology and textiles, drama, English, English literature, French, geography, history, mathematics, music, physical education, core physical education, physics and Spanish.

Approximately, 25% of children are within the Foundation Stage (FS) section (just over 300), whilst the majority are in the primary section - 700 - and the balance in the secondary school. A small number of students of determination are supported by the academy.

The academy employs qualified and experienced British teachers to deliver the English National Curriculum, aiming to ensure “uncompromising academic standards are met”. The academy also tailors the curriculum for an international audience, for example, replacing the study of British history with general international history. The staff include specialists in music, PE, art, design technology, food technology, computer aided design and business studies. The campus has been recently built and offers two swimming pools, a range of ‘specialist play areas’, an 850-seater auditorium and a range of specialist teaching rooms.

The academy is inspected on a regular basis (once every 18 months to two years) by the Department of Education and Knowledge (ADEK), following which inspection reports are published on the academy’s website.

In addition to ADEK inspections, the academy recognises the benefit from other external assessment and accreditation evaluations and are currently hold the following:

- British Schools Middle East Accredited
- Examination Centre (Edexcel Examinations Board)
- Microsoft Showcase School.

## 4.1 British nature of the academy

The ethos, nature and appearance of Al Mamoura Academy are recognisably British, mirroring what would be found in the independent sector in the UK. The academy aims to provide an education that has similar characteristics to an education in an independent academy in the UK.

- The language of instruction in the academy is English. There are bright, creative displays around the academy, celebrating students' achievement. There are regular whole academy community events, a range of interest days, class assemblies and other celebrations.
- Al Mamoura Academy has successfully blended its Britishness with an evident respect and awareness of the host countries cultural beliefs and norms.
- Texts, materials, educational equipment, software and the academy's management information system are UK sourced. Parental interviews highlighted the value of the British nature of the curriculum with it being broad and balanced.
- The academy is organised according to the structures used in English schools. Classroom management displays of work, three term year and age-related year groups contribute to a British feel of the academy.
- Academy leaders effectively promote equality of opportunity and diversity exceptionally well, for students and staff, so that the ethos and culture of the whole academy prevent any discriminatory behaviour.
- The academy is implementing a rigorous approach to how it assesses the progress of the students based on the English assessment system. There is a clear commitment to a broad and balanced curriculum. Extracurricular provision including clubs and school trips are valued. Parents are supportive of this provision being extended to provide an even greater range of creative activities.
- The highly visible academy ethos is based on promoting values that are aligned to British expectations and is reinforced by mission statement and the promotion of the academy's values and learning habits.
- Teachers working at Al Mamoura Academy have recognised UK qualifications. Parents value this and cite this as a reason for choosing the academy.



- Policies and procedures within the academy support a clear definition of child protection, these are fully understood and followed by board members, governors, staff, students, parents and volunteers.
- Students receive well-judged advice and effective support to make important choices, to prepare them well for the next stage in their lives.
- The broad curriculum support students to become well rounded individuals who are knowledgeable about a wide range of issues and are able to develop and pursue new interests to a high level.
- The academy encourages all students to adopt a healthy lifestyle and confidently adopt practices that ensure their own safety.
- Al Mamoura Academy is an inclusive community in which students report they feel safe and valued. The academy deals very effectively with the very rare instances of bullying behaviour and the use of any derogatory or aggressive language.

## 5. *Standard 1*

### The quality of education provided by the academy

The quality of education provided at Al Mamoura Academy fully meets the standards for BSO and there are aspects which are good or better.

#### 5.1 Curriculum

There is full-time supervised education for all students of compulsory school age. Al Mamoura Academy offers a broad and balanced curriculum based on the English National curriculum. Appropriate policies are in place, supported by long, medium- and short-term planning. The policies and practices are implemented effectively, enabling students to acquire skills in speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy. The curriculum gives all students experience in a wide range of areas of learning, including linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical, and aesthetic and creative education. Throughout the curriculum the academy also ensures all host country requirements are fully met.

The academy has a thematic approach to curriculum provision. The curriculum framework is regularly and diligently reviewed. Recent curriculum audits led by the senior leadership team have enabled staff to identify any gaps in the curriculum and subsequently implement changes to ensure the needs of all students are being met. Middle managers are given an appropriate delegated role in this process that has enabled a whole academy awareness of curriculum alignment.

The curriculum in EYFS is well planned and resourced. The youngest students follow an adapted Early Years/Foundation Stage (EYFS) curriculum, working towards the early learning goals. Implementation is clearly articulated and as a result, teachers have a thorough understanding of how students' needs can be met and challenged. Detailed planning and high-quality support from teaching assistants in EYFS ensures that students, with a range of learning needs can fully access the curriculum. In EYFS, good features include how phonics and reading are developed and the regular topic themes that are carefully planned to ensure progression.

The learning environments both inside and outside are well-designed and thought out so that all resources can be accessed by the students. The curriculum provides students with engaging activities and opportunities to develop their learning further and ensures all aspects of the EYFS are taught.

The curriculum in the primary school provides well for the academic, moral, physical, creative and social development of students.

Appropriate links are made between subjects to give relevant context. The curriculum is supported by a good range of extracurricular activities and local visits. Enrichment days and longer events make a significant contribution towards expanding the curriculum further and students have opportunities to take part in a range of cultural experiences. Students have opportunities to build their confidence by performing in assemblies, productions and team events.

The academy has implemented a range of innovative curriculum approaches based on the internal audit of students learning, these are having a positive impact on student progress and include Talk for Writing and White Rose Mathematics. There is a programme of moral education which supports student development. This is backed up in assemblies and supported by activities led by the pastoral team. The planning observed offered progression across the age range but the implementation of this was not always consistent. For example, in many lesson plans, there was evidence of differentiation, but this was not consistently applied in practice with a more whole-class approach being adopted. As such, the needs of the lower and higher ability students are not always met as fully as they could be. Appropriate levels of challenge were evident in the best lessons, with strong learning objectives and significant support for the direction of those lessons.

The overall number of students identified as English as an additional language (EAL) is over 85%. The support frameworks around special educational needs are robust but the explicit needs of second language learners, particularly new starters could be enhanced. There are a wide range of Extra Curricular Activities available from year 2 upwards. Students take the opportunities to partake in a range of activities from swimming to creative subjects and many of the activities are well attended. The learning environments throughout the academy are outstanding with age appropriate displays across the academy.

The secondary school curriculum at Al Mamoura Academy is good.

The academy offers a broad and balanced curriculum, which meets the needs of the English national curriculum as well as the requirements of the local Ministry of Education. It is adapted to meet the needs of the students, in terms of relevance of topics (related to the local context), the appropriateness of topics selected is assured by the Compliance Group. The curriculum follows a written policy supported by schemes of work and individual lesson plans when appropriate. The curriculum fully supports the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. It provides students with experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical, and aesthetic and creative education. The Key Stage 3 and 4 curriculum follows the national curriculum of England.

At Key Stage 3, all the students take part in lessons in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, as well as non-core subjects: history, geography, French (or

Spanish starting next year), Arabic, technology, information technology, drama, art and design, music, physical education and moral education, Islamic studies and UAE social studies. In the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, the students are grouped in sets, enabling the teachers to tailor lesson planning and delivery to the specific needs of the learners, although there was a wide range of abilities within each set. The grouping is reviewed by the heads of department after each data point and communicated to parents. In the non-core subjects, the students are taught in Form Groups of mixed abilities.

All the students at Key Stage 4 follow IGCSE lessons in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, as well as Arabic (as Second language or First if desired). The students have a choice of IGCSE options, depending on their current achievement and post-secondary orientation. Next year's year 10 students can choose their IGCSE options from a wide range of subjects, such as psychology, business studies, economics or art and design. None of the IGCSE options are blocked, allowing free choice for the students. To support the students with their choices, there is a dedicated person from the Aldar Academies overseeing career guidance in each of the individual academies. The head of Key Stage 4 is currently in charge of career guidance at the academy, helping students review their achievement and identify their ambitions through interviews, Guidance Portfolios and allocation of Learning Mentors, and organisation of foreign university fairs. Pearson Edexcel is the main examination board used and the academy introduced Cambridge Assessment International Education recently. The KS4 pathways for September 2020 fully support the equivalency in the UAE.

There is currently no Key Stage 5, but the academy is preparing to open the two-year course in September 2020.

The academy recognises the need to personalise the learning through pastoral support. There is a pastoral programme in place, fully documented and supported by a form tutor pastoral handbook for both key stages. The parents were particularly vocal about the robust emotional support provided to them and their children.

There is an awareness among the staff that EAL, due to the student demographic, is a key element to all subject lessons. The senior leadership team has identified the need to explore strategies to support acquisition of language skills across the year groups.

In order to support the opportunities to learn and make progress, the academy has set up a core action group and is progressively moving towards a middle-school approach, through which year 5 to year 8 form the middle school while year 9 sets the foundations for the IGCSE curriculum. The objective is to enrich the curriculum by focusing on skills and offering lessons taught by specialist teachers to upper primary learners and to facilitate the transition between the key stages and ultimately increasing the attainment for students. The secondary academy team demonstrated a good awareness of the needs of the students.

An extra-curricular programme provides an extensive enrichment to the curriculum. The activities are organised into focus areas and target specific year groups. There is a wide range of activities on offer, varying from Sudoku Club to Arabic Reading, Board Game to Choir, Spelling Bee to Cosmic Yoga, football to Dabka, academic support to scuba diving. The broad range of Educational trip opportunities were themed around curriculum areas and planned for all year groups.

## 5.2 Teaching and assessment

The quality of teaching across EYFS is good or better and ensures many students make rapid progress.

The teachers and learning assistants have a detailed understanding of each student. This understanding is underpinned by a culture of high-quality care and respect that enables students to flourish and grow. The staff are able to use the continuous provision to great effect. They plan a range of engaging activities which ensure that students enjoy their learning, and this contributes to the rich educational experience of the youngest students in the academy. In nearly all lessons, learning was active and the provision of plentiful and high-quality resources enabled the teaching and learning to reach a high standard. There was a good balance of teacher directed activities and child-initiated activities. The children's academic, social and emotional and physical needs were well met and well supported.

The provision of care ensure that the children felt safe in their environments and were able to take appropriate risks with their learning. Behaviour was exemplary, with any issues being dealt with as they arose. The children were confident to try new things and engaged in a variety of appropriate activities. Language was modelled well, enabling the children opportunities to demonstrate their skills. Teachers understood how to teach effective lessons and review and assess outcomes. In the best lessons, teachers inspire a sense of awe and wonder and encourage students to apply intellectual and creative effort. Children happily discussed the contents of their lunchboxes and displayed an excellent understanding of why some foods were considered healthier than others.

The provision for students with identified SEND is outstanding. The learning environment is inclusive, and all children receive individualised learning plans to meet their needs. Staff work successfully with outside agencies to provide additional learning support.

Teaching observed across Key Stage 1 was good or better, enabling students, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities, to develop well.

Themes are well organised, incorporating a wide range of opportunities for students to express themselves verbally and increasingly through writing, although the level of challenge was not consistent in all lessons. Many students in years 1 and 2 displayed confidence in English communication skills. In the best lessons, activities were well planned and inspired students to engage actively in their learning. This, combined with the strong subject knowledge of the teachers, helps engage students and engenders an enthusiasm which was evident in nearly all classrooms. Many teachers created opportunities to extend students' understanding and apply their new knowledge. For example, in one year 1 lesson the teacher used detailed questioning highly effectively to draw out from students' words they knew with the target sound, and similarly, in an

Arabic lesson, the teacher consolidated the understanding of new vocabulary through highly effective questioning. Very good classroom management and high expectations of behaviour add to the purposeful environment evident in lessons. Teachers have created a secure and safe environment where there is no fear of failure and children are resilient and persevere in their learning. Excellent classroom displays in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 either enhance the learning or celebrate students' work.

Across Key Stage 2 all teaching was satisfactory, and some good features were observed.

In Key Stage 2 teachers have a developing awareness of the aptitude, cultural backgrounds and needs of individual students. This insight has led to a higher level of support in class for EAL learners that is aimed to support sustained progress. In some lessons lack of sufficient challenge, due to teachers use of poorly defined learning objectives meant that content coverage was the main driver in the lesson. As such, pace and challenge become an issue and the opportunity for planning around skills objectives involving higher order thinking was missed.

Teachers in Key Stage 2 use a range of teaching strategies to support learning. In the most successful lessons, they were well paced, with some practical, hands on activities capturing student's interest. Expectations for behaviour and learning were clearly demonstrated by nearly all students. This was evident in lessons across the academy where regular praise was given to those following instructions, thus providing positive feedback and at the same time, reinforcing expectations.

Management of class time is good. Necessary classroom resources are readily available and used well, and the equipment and learning environments are pleasant and well-planned and extremely conducive to learning in a light, airy and comfortable environment.

A marking and assessment policy have been put in place and when it is fully aligned to the academies needs of all students it is aimed to provide informative feedback with targets and next steps for development. Through the scrutiny of students' work, there was at times little evidence of any acknowledgement of formative feedback or improvement targets. Evidence at times demonstrated that higher ability students are not always sufficiently challenged, and some lower ability students lack full support in terms of feedback strategies.

Teaching and assessment fully meet the standard in the secondary school.

In most lessons across the year groups and the subject areas, the teachers' knowledge of their subject is strong. The quality of the teaching is inconsistent across the year groups and the subject areas. All teaching was satisfactory, and some was good. High expectations were the key factor of lessons that were rated as good as they are directly linked to student motivation. These lessons offered a range of learning experiences, including scaffolding, focus on language-specific vocabulary, differentiation at least at

both ends, questioning that promoted the learners' independence and critical thinking skills, pertinent/individual/immediate feedback, student-led review of the learning objectives, and tasks designed with the students' ability in mind, allowing most students to make above the expected progress. In addition, a range of assessment for learning strategies were effectively implemented and responded to by the teacher with additional support or extension opportunities. In these lessons, the students spoken to were able to explain why they were learning as opposed to what they were doing. The best features of these lessons are not yet consistently embedded across all lessons.

Some excellent examples of role modelling from the teacher were observed for example in the creative subjects (drama), which inspired the students to complete the task in groups to the best of their ability and encouraged them to support one another. The students explained that the climate created in that lesson was supportive and that techniques for constructive peer assessment had been embedded. A purposeful focus on building subject-specific vocabulary was observed in humanities subjects in both key stages.

Independence and leadership skills are developed in some subjects. In year 9 mathematics, the students are not afraid to come to the front and demonstrate their understanding of how to calculate the surface area of a prism to their peers, including using the interactive technology. In year 7 English, the students stand in front of their class and make an interpretation of an excerpt from *The Tempest*. Problem-solving and deductive skills were particularly evident in a year 8 science lessons where students were exploring forces and gravity in groups. A Key Stage 4 English Language lesson showed effective use of differentiation techniques, allowing students to build on their current knowledge, strengthen and/or extend it independently, and to respond effectively to further challenges.

In the most effective lessons, constructive relationship between the teacher and the students was evident, and was demonstrated by the ability of students to be resourceful in looking for support (textbook, dictionary, displays, peers, teacher).

The lessons that were less successful, there were limited questioning and differentiation techniques used. In a few lessons, the inconsistent pace of learning and unimpactful assessment of learning, prevented students from being fully engaged. Some lessons did not allow time for students to think and produce their answer to their teacher's question. In most lessons, differentiation by outcome is the norm, with personalised support from the teacher. This tended to slow down the pace of the lesson, giving idle moments to some due to lack of challenge or support, this resulted in some instances of low-level disruption or time off task. The behaviour for learning of the girls is generally good but recurring pockets of challenging attitudes towards learning are identified, yet not consistently challenged.

Marking and feedback are mainly consistent across the year groups and the subject areas. The best examples of practice offer a range of appropriate comments, but in a



few instances, there is more limited impact on the students' learning. The academy leaders contextualised the observations with the information that the marking and feedback policy had been introduced three weeks before. Plans to monitor the implementation and its impact, paired with opportunities to customise it to the subject-specific requirements are in place.

Homework expectations, completion and opportunities are unclear across the year groups and the subject areas. Lesson observations, discussions with students and book scrutiny suggest a few inconsistencies in the setting of homework.

In all classes, an atmosphere of mutual support within the student population is evident. Staffing provision is generous and class sizes are relatively small, with 17 being the highest number of students observed in one class. The emotional needs of individual students are well met, with a general feeling among the student population that their teachers know them well and know how to help them progress. Resources to support curriculum delivery are plentiful, in terms of subject specialist classrooms, technology, equipment. Students commented on the fact that they cannot take their textbooks home; the academy might consider exploring this further. Displays are mostly attractive to the eye and nearly always subject-related. Most displays contain success criteria, excellent work, challenge opportunities and scaffolding were observed.

## 5.3 Standards achieved by students

Standards achieved at Al Mamoura Academy are broadly in line with UK expectations. External examination results for small cohorts of GCSE students suggest results exceed UK national expectations.

The progress of students joining the academy in EYFS is rapid. Prior to students joining the academy the EYFS team meet with parents and students and they attend play dates at the academy, so parents, staff and students have a secure starting point. Care and attention are paid to routines and establishing expected behaviours. Students are regularly assessed, and their progress mapped against the EYFS curriculum.

On entry, nearly all students are speakers of English as a second language. Students make very good progress especially in phonics knowledge and early reading skills. Early Years students are happy, secure and enthusiastic about their learning.

Overall, the standards of attainment and progress by students in the primary years are broadly in line with UK expectations.

Based on the current evidence available, attainment can be seen as satisfactory, particularly as there is little prior attainment data available to benchmark progress and attainment against. Academy data suggest that the majority of students in the primary academy are making the expected progress and attaining in line with age-related expectations.

The data on prior attainment and progress is used increasingly more often and the system now has dedicated members of the leadership team to coordinate and analyse this data. As more trend analysis becomes available, the reliability of data and a focus on how it will be most effectively used, will be a key focus for senior staff. Where students are identified by teacher-generated data to be working below expected levels of attainment, the academy has systems in place to identify such students and offer interventions and support. In cases where physical interventions are offered out of mainstream class time, teacher assistants offer good support but sometimes their intervention guidance framework lacks a coherent oversight of expectations

In all instances, teachers utilise effective strategies for managing student behaviour, encouraging them to act responsibly. The new behaviour system to manage low level disruption appears to be working well, with some perceived areas of inconsistency by some students. Students are compliant and courteous, but in lessons which lack pace and challenge, students become easily disengaged and low-level disruption can negatively impact the learning process in some cases. Overall however, student responsibility levels register as commendable.

In the secondary section, the standards achieved by the students are good. More robust use of data is beginning to have impact. The academy uses a variety of assessment data:

CAT4 in years 7, 9 and 10; PT tests in English and mathematics in year 7, and in English, mathematics and science in years 8, 9 and 10. The secondary school recognises the need to build and document a consistent and robust data approach, supported by effective CPD for staff. The academy collects data half-termly. The data is used to create Identification for Achievement sheets, on which student needs and relevant strategies are highlighted. Reports are shared with parents three times a year. At the end of Term 1 and Term 2, achievement data and pastoral comments are shared, and Parent-Teacher Conferences are held. The end-of-year report is a written report on attainment and targets.

The academy has implemented a range of strategies and procedures to raise attendance figures and student punctuality. These procedures are having a highly positive impact and attendance is usually good, During the inspection academy data highlighted that attendance levels averaged 94%. The academy is actively engaging with the students and parents to raise attendance further.

## 6. *Standard 2* Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development of students

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students is good with elements of outstanding, the best practice is a key strength of Al Mamoura Academy.

The academy enables students to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence. Celebration of self-worth is encouraged, and many students display pride in their work and achievements. The academy has a warm, relaxed atmosphere that is focused on learning. Students enjoy being in school, as is evidenced by their positive attitudes, overwhelmingly good behaviour and the courtesy they show for others, including staff and visitors.

Students have the confidence and self-esteem to share their opinions and answer questions in class. Many of them are highly articulate and it is clear that they have a good understanding of right and wrong. Primary students engage well with the rewards points system, although senior students commented that they would like more rewards for positive behaviours. When interviewed, they freely expressed their points of view on many aspects of the academy, its curriculum, the extra-curricular provision, the discipline processes and their feelings regarding the teachers. The academy correctly recognises that there is further potential to raise the opportunities for student voice to be expressed and influence academy life.

The broader aims of the academy are clearly understood, as one child wrote, "The Academy doesn't only help us in learning, but it helps build our character". In the primary assembly observed, behavioural expectations were reinforced effectively, and the success of classes and individuals celebrated. The final "Price is Right" activity caused much excitement and encouraged the enthusiastic involvement of all students. In lessons teachers gave fair arguments for both sides of a debate and encouraged students to express their own views. Students listened to the opinions of others and learned readily from each other.

British values are reinforced in a number of ways. These include the broad range of books in the academy library which promote understanding of the wider world, history, culture, diversity and philosophy. The newly revived House system with the values of "we are responsible", "we are respectful", "we are learners" and "we are safe" aims to embed the key values of the academy. Through it, opportunities are being provided for different age groups across the school to lead, work and play together. "Drop down days" each term enables students and staff to come off timetable and participate in whole-school activities. A range of student leadership opportunities exist across the academy, including an academy council with designated roles of responsibility. Displays around the academy on a variety of topics include health, hygiene and safety, making informed choices regarding healthy food, career guidance, and topics that are related

to expected British values. There is also a strong focus on attendance and punctuality, and effective systems are in place to deal with any issues in these two areas.

The new pastoral team which has been in place since the beginning of this academic year has a strong sense of purpose, and the systems now in place display the potential to further develop this already strong aspect of academy life. The whole academy, supported by a very active Parents Committee, organise a range of special days throughout the year, including National Day and International Day, to celebrate the diversity and inclusive aspects of the academy thereby promoting positive attitudes towards others.

In the secondary school, the students are able to verbalise that the international mindedness taught through the focus of the British curriculum is the key reason why they chose to attend the academy. The parents also referred to this aspect when they highlighted the need to maintain the demographics of the academy, so they reflect their wish for internationalism and multi-culturalism. The students identified some key elements that made their academy British in their view: the curriculum and its higher academic demands ('I researched a lot and I know it is so much stronger than the American curriculum'), the house system ('It is so British!'), the uniform, the concept of challenging oneself and others ('The American curriculum is easier but I want a stricter curriculum as it is more desirable for university'), and the wider opportunities such experience offers them post-secondary with a curriculum recognised worldwide.

Through moral education lessons and other learning experiences, the students develop some awareness of the concept of democracy and the secondary school identified the need to create opportunities to put their understanding into practice more widely. This will take place in the near future with a democratic selection of a new Student Council.

The students were very proud of their mother tongue and their cultural heritage. An activity on Nelson Mandela illustrated an understanding of tolerance and respect for peoples of other languages and cultures in a year 9 lesson.

The students recognised the opportunities created by the academy to encourage their participation in the life of the academy, such as taking part in assemblies, in shows or contributing to the organisation of academy-wide events (Pink Day, International Day, Language Week, for example), as well as in the wider community. The students appreciated that the teachers kept them informed of subject-specific events taking place in the city in which they could get involved and thus develop additional extracurricular skills. The students felt that such experiences consolidated their self-confidence and promoted the notion of taking responsibility for shaping their own learning and understanding of the wider world. The head of secondary shared that the Student Council was getting ready to drive the project of a sustainable classroom, fully run off grid. Some students show evidence of self-reflection as some admitted that they needed to make more efforts to get involved outside of the minimum academy hours and enhance their learning.

The students, the parents and the staff spoken to referred to a change in the mindset of the students under the new leadership team, where the students are now more ambitious for themselves.

Although the students generally felt that improvement was needed for their voice to be heard, the impact of student voice was seen for example in year 10 when their request to reduce the number of IGCSE subjects chosen was granted and the secondary academy leadership team acknowledged the need to enhance the student voice and the democratic process associated to it.

Both the parent and the student bodies confirmed the feeling of personal and physical safety around the whole academy. Similarly, they firmly stated that the teachers have a robust understanding of students' individual strengths and weaknesses, allowing for differentiated support. Both the parents and their children agreed that the relationship between the teachers and the learners allow for a very safe, positive, interactive and fun learning environment. The students know who to approach in case of need.

The students develop an awareness and understanding of social, moral, spiritual and cultural aspects through a combination of assemblies, moral education lessons, extracurricular activities, academy events and through the formal and informal curriculum as they move through the Key Stages. The academy actively promotes tolerance and respect for human differences. This is embedded in the culture and ethos of Al Mamoura.

The academy started using the PASS assessment by GL this academic year, at Key Stage 3. It provides an understanding of how students felt and the reasons why. The academy has a full-time academy counsellor who supports the heads of key stage. Based on the data collected, a pastoral mentoring system was put in place with pastoral interventions and attainment interventions. The leadership team acknowledged that the project was in its infancy and more work was needed to make the data collected and the mentoring system impactful on the students' wellbeing and achievement.

Most students were well behaved in class and around academy, polite, respectful and articulate. Pockets of mildly challenging attitudes towards learning were identified by the secondary school. Students' initiative to greet and offer the inspectors help around the academy was evident throughout the visit.

## 7. *Standard 3* The welfare, health and safety of the students

The provision for the welfare, health and safety of the students is outstanding.

Policies and procedures are in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of all students in the academy. The academy has a health and safety framework with detailed policies for fire risk management, risk assessment policy and safeguarding policy.

The academy displays information that outlines who the designated safeguarding leaders (DSLs) are and gives their contact details. All members of the senior leadership team have completed level 3 safeguarding training, all staff have completed safeguarding training. The academy also has a number of other strategies to safeguard students. For example, security guards that monitor the entry, exit and playgrounds, a card entry system to enter different parts of the building, CCTV and security tags for all stakeholders. All visitors and staff to the campus sign in and out on arrival and departure. The academy ensures that recruitment checks are carried out in a comprehensive manner and that records are all checked by the academy prior to staff starting work, although the centralised nature of this process can sometimes be a hindrance.

Standards of behaviour at the academy are high, underpinned by a behaviour policy which promotes consistent approaches throughout the academy. Positive praise was also evident in most classes during observations. All students with behaviour concerns are documented with the pastoral team. Students commented that a policy that sets out the 'behaviours of an Aldar Al Mamoura student' would enhance the collective responsibility that the academy expects.

The operations and services manager takes personal and direct responsibility for safety within the academy. She has a strong health and safety team that ensure compliance with local laws. A health and safety officer within the academy undertakes inspection walks each week. Systems are in place to raise Health & Safety issues and are dealt with in a timely manner. The academy has a sound policy for the prevention of bullying and there are no recorded instances on file. During a parent interview, they said they felt their children were safe in the academy. There is support for the academy from the Aldar Group.

The academy has a suitable fire risk management policy and set of procedures in place that is regularly checked by the local authorities. The academy has evacuation routes mapped out and have practiced fire drills. Appropriate staff are trained as fire marshals and their identities are widely disseminated and publicised.

There is a comprehensive first aid policy. The academy has a qualified nurse on site, with a well-resourced medical room. The youngest students are accompanied to the medical room, while older students obtain a 'nurse pass'. The academy nurse keeps a record of all students visiting the medical room and the care received. The level of supervision at break and lunchtime is good, with a clear timetable of staff who provide a safe and caring environment for all.

At the beginning and end of the day staff, including a security guard, supervise the safe arrival and departure of students. Students that travel by bus are supervised by a member of staff to and from the campus. Bus organisation to the rear of the academy is a strength.

The academy has an admissions policy and admissions officer in place. The attendance register is maintained electronically and conforms to local regulatory requirements. Some parents have found the attendance rules of a British academy challenging. The academy has communicated to parents about the importance of having good attendance at academy and there are displays which highlight the risks of poor attendance and the possible impact on academic attainment. This still remains an area for ongoing development.

The academy has an appropriate risk assessment policy. Risk assessments are written for any out of school activity and/or academy trip and all trips are preceded by an advance visit. Risk assessments are also completed for all events in academy.



## 8. *Standard 4*

### The suitability of the proprietor and staff

The suitability of the proprietor and staff is of a high order and the quality of governance is being effectively developed at the academy.

The board of management role through the parent company, Aldar provides effective oversight of the academy in line with its aims and discharges its responsibilities for ensuring the maintenance of high educational standards. Aldar ensures the suitability of the principal as the leader of the academy.

The Regional Director provides support and guidance and, as the principal's line manager is responsible for the principal's performance management. The company provides administrative, HR and IT support. Whilst Aldar offers operational support and provides policies relating to human resources and health and safety, the principal and senior leaders are responsible for ensuring that policies and procedures are pertinent to Al Mamoura academy.

Effective and detailed financial planning has resulted in major investments in the academy's excellent accommodation and a generous provision of staff. These key elements allow all areas of the curriculum to be taught effectively and offers wide -ranging opportunities for all students to achieve.

Through its regional support structure and regular reports from the principal and other senior leaders, the board has an effective insight into the working of the academy. They are developing their effectiveness in implementing their monitoring role and holding staff to account for the standards achieved and the quality of education provided. This is an aspect of governance that could be strengthened further.

The Board ensures academy strategic plans are scrutinised and they accurately reflect the views of the wider community. The Board has a key role to ensure leaders are provided with the necessary support to enable them to fulfil the academy's strategic goals and bring further improvement.

An appropriate range of policies and practices are in place to support the welfare and safety of all students. A 'safer recruitment' policy is in place. Prior to the confirmation of staff appointments, appropriate checks, including police checks in the country of origin are carried out. These key responsibilities are managed by Aldar. All staff are checked to confirm identity, medical fitness, right to work in Abu Dhabi, previous employment activity, character references and suitability to work with children. Attested copies of qualifications are required for all teaching staff. There is no evidence that any member of staff or volunteer who carries out work, or intends to carry out work, at the academy is in contravention of any local, overseas or British disqualification, prohibition or restriction.

The academy maintains a central register of all staff who currently work in the academy. Staffing levels are generous and ensure the successful delivery of the curriculum. All teaching

staff have qualifications appropriate to their role; many staff have further academic or teaching qualifications that enhance academy development.

## 9. *Standard 5* The premises and accommodation

The premises and accommodation overall are outstanding.

The proprietors have invested in the academy to ensure the learning environment is of the highest quality ensuring resources are utilised to maximise the provision available for both students and staff.

The academy premises include 2 storeys, based around common courtyard areas. The ground floor is dedicated to Early Years and Key Stage 1. The outdoor learning areas for Early Years are excellent, covering all areas of the Early Years curriculum requirements. The second storey is shared by secondary and Key Stage 2. The premises are extremely well-maintained, clean with adequate ventilation, acoustics and lighting and a pleasant and conducive learning environment. The academy has a sufficient number of well-equipped classrooms including very well-equipped specialist subject rooms in the performing and visual arts and science and technology. Of particular mention, the open design of the teaching spaces, and its sports and swimming facilities are of a particularly high standard, including two specialised pools, very well-maintained soft surface sports facilities and a large multi-purpose gymnasium. Changing facilities are of a similarly high quality.

There is a sufficient number of gender-separated toilet facilities for staff and students including those for students with physical disabilities. The premises include a wide range of offices, housing administration and support staff, plus support rooms for network staff, maintenance, common work areas, locked electrical rooms, well-equipped and pleasant canteen, a range of external play areas, mosque area, a well-resourced clinic an excellent library resource that is well used by the students and a large and spacious reception area.

All support services in the academy observe agreed hygiene standards, wearing latex gloves and suitable protective clothing. Cleaners are on site throughout the day and do a thorough job of maintaining a visibly clean and tidy campus. There is a clinic that is appropriately staffed.

Exit signs are clearly displayed as are emergency evacuation procedures, with each teaching area having a distinct map detailing how areas are to be exited in an emergency. The evacuation areas are clearly displayed and are located away from the main building. Fire extinguishers are located at strategic points throughout the building and checked regularly.

Staff acknowledge that they need more open play areas for some year groups and the leadership team are currently looking at ways to create these.

## 10. Standard 6

### The provision of information for parents, carers and others

The quality of information provided by the academy for parents, carers and others is outstanding.

The academy's aims are clearly stated and visible in areas around the building.

The academy's website is user-friendly and contains a range of useful information for parents and prospective parents. The academy needs to ensure that the website is updated with the current academic year's information, including the contact information of the governing body, and with active links to documents.

Communication is frequent and varied. The academy parent portal contains a wealth of information and is updated as required. Weekly year group newsletters are emailed to primary parents and are posted on the portal. Fortnightly updates are sent out by the Parents' Relations Executive. In addition, social media in a variety of forms is used regularly to ensure contact with parents. Relevant policies are shared on the portal and can be accessed through the academy. The parents mentioned that they supported all the policies at the academy and would encourage the academy to consider a more reward-based behaviour policy.

The parents felt that the academy had a robust open-door policy and that they were able to speak to all staff as needed. The parents felt that a key strength is the value put on the home-school partnership by the academy, through highly effective communication, consistently approachable staff (senior leaders, middle leaders and teachers) and a solution-focused approach. Parents feel that the whole staff being available - and for most, visible - at drop-off and dismissal times allows for a free flow of personalised information, which ultimately benefits the students' wellbeing and reinforces the parents' support of the academy.

The academy uses a variety of social media platforms to communicate reminders, news and successes. The academy has communication systems in place that are both time and language efficient. Documents, emails, text messages and messages on the parent portal are delivered in English and Arabic, and some parents pointed out that Korean has now been added due to an influx of Korean students on roll. The parents found the portal to be user-friendly and convenient as all documents remain posted and available there. The parents highlighted that teachers sent emails about whole-class matters or individual matters promptly when needed, and always speedily responded to a parent's email. An unofficial WhatsApp group exists for each year group and parents opt to belong to it or not. The parents exchange advice and keep one another updated on academy events through that channel. The parents also pointed out that those WhatsApp groups serve the purpose of helping parents understand the hierarchy at academy so concerns are shared with the most relevant staff and not immediately with the head of academy or principal as it is customary in the cultural context of the academy. Each class has a Parent Class Representative who acts as a link and support between the class teacher and the group of parents, sharing reminders and updates. As such, the parents felt that being a full-time working parent and not having the opportunity to drop off or collect their child from academy do not impact negatively on their ability to remain fully up to date

with academy life. This was further supported by the Parent handbook offered a wide range of key information and people to contact for help.

The parents further commented on the mutual home-academy partnership and the fact that they are encouraged to get involved in the academy life. The parents are invited to attend assemblies and principal's meetings to share their views. The parents particularly valued the principal's meetings they attended as they received follow-up on the items discussed, confirming the importance put upon the relationship between home and academy. The parents appreciated that the academy asked for their support and did not hesitate to identify specific skills and talents needed when planning an event. The parents emphasised that the request for help from the academy made their contributions feel wanted, and therefore valued and purposeful. The parents mentioned that academy might want to consider looking at the event calendar to spread out the needs for parent support throughout the year.

The parents clearly stated that they each feel special as all staff, including senior members, follow up on issues brought to their attention until a solution is effectively implemented for the benefit of all. In addition, the parents felt that they were kept aware of any issue arising during the school day. For example, the nurse would call them if their child visited her or the teacher would send an email if the child had an argument with a friend. This contributed to a sense of connection and security. The parents were adamant that such feeling was unanimous across the parent body from EYFS to secondary.

The parents spoke strongly about the positive impact the academy had on their children and how happy their children had become. Almost all parents met had an example to share. A mother had a very shy and quiet daughter, who would hardly communicate at home in her familiar context. The mother explained that because of the innovative teaching techniques used in the classroom and the creative projects students were given to engage with, her daughter's strengths came to light and were identified by her teachers, which ultimately increased her self-confidence. This girl now enjoyed friendship groups and was able to speak in assemblies. Another mum mentioned that her daughter suffered from separation anxiety. Her daughter's teacher made a point to build a relationship with the daughter and offer a reassuring environment, in which she could email her mother daily to say she missed her. The emails became less frequent and progressively stopped.

The parents felt that, although the academy was becoming big in numbers, individuality was key as staff knew the children and their families well. Because the staff displayed a solid knowledge of the students' individualities, the parents felt that the students were very well supported and challenged within the classroom. The parents were consistent in praising the senior leadership and the rest of the staff for being very caring and attentive to their and their children's specific emotional needs. The parents were very confident that their children were kept safe at school.

Parents expressed high levels of satisfaction with the education provided and their child's everyday experiences at academy.

Photographs of key staff are prominently displayed in the entrance hall, and teachers' and teaching assistants' photos are outside primary classrooms.

The parents who had joined the academy recently commented on the effective admissions process and the warm welcome.

Every student has a planner, which is updated yearly by pastoral teams. They are used in lessons to indicate the level of challenge: green for I am thriving, amber for I need some more support or time, and red for urgent teacher intervention is needed.

Reports on students' progress are issued three times a year at the end of each term. Parents felt that the reports, in their design and content, are accessible and thorough. Parent-Teacher Conferences are held at the end of the first two terms. Parents also receive a weekly email from their child's teachers outlining the achievements of the week and the next steps. Parents feel that they are kept well informed of their child's progress throughout the year and empowered to support their child at home.

## 11. Standard 7

### The academy 's procedure for handling complaints

The academies' procedures for handling complaints are transparent, open and effective, and take into account local laws and regulations meeting BSO standards.

Parental feedback indicates a high degree of satisfaction with both the speed of response and the outcome of any concern or complaint. Al Mamoura Academy works hard to provide a good service for all parents and has established good relationships with parents, students and the wider community.

The academy takes informal concerns seriously and, in many cases a concern can be resolved quickly and will not reach the stage of becoming a formal complaint. In nearly all cases an individual member of staff will receive the first approach concerning any issues. The member of staff will make clear the Academies response to the concern raised and may agree certain actions to resolve the issue. Should the matter not be resolved informally, or parents are not satisfied with the response, the complaint will be passed to a member of the management team. Should the matter still be unresolved parents may choose to take the matter to the formal complaint's procedure.

The complainant can write to the academy principal, who will either take the case forward or appoint a senior colleague who has no prior involvement. If the complainant is not satisfied with the principal's (or other person's) decision, they can write to the Educational Director at Aldar Academies. The complaint will then be reviewed by a panel. The Panel's findings and recommendations in relation to the complaint are documented in a report and shared with the person concerned. The complainant also has the option under host country law to pursue the matter through the Department of Education and Knowledge (ADEK)

All details of the complaint's procedure are available through the academy and on the parent portal. Details are provided to explain both the process, timetable of events and anticipated time. During the inspection the academies records and documents show that concerns are heard properly and treated with care and consideration in line with the stated policy.

## 12. Standard 8

### Leadership and management of the academy

The leadership and management of the academy are good at all levels.

The effectiveness of leadership and management by the principal, senior leaders and middle leaders fully meets the standards for accreditation and demonstrates the potential for further strong development.

The academy runs well on a day to day basis. The recently appointed principal and her leadership team are developing an effective understanding of the academy's strength and areas for development. In a short space of time the leadership has developed as an effective team and undertaken the challenge of ensuring effective academy development as a key priority. The principal has successfully conveyed a drive and passion for continuous improvement and the highest possible standards. Developing leaders who have the skills and qualities to impact on the quality of outcomes is a key priority for this newly established team. Leadership is well distributed, there has been a clear drive to enhance the roles of senior and middle leaders, which has led to the staff taking a growing responsibility. Leaders need to be focused on instilling an appropriate level of consistency in key areas, at the moment this has not had time to be fully implemented.

The self-evaluation process in preparation for this inspection has enabled leaders to identify key priorities. The academy has a sound academy improvement plan, which can now (post-inspection) be developed further. Academy development priorities are set and regularly reviewed by senior managers, in line with middle leaders. The academy is committed to 'improving, improving and improving'; it has more than enough capacity and drive to do so. Collectively senior staff have already begun to implement a wide range of effective improvement strategies. There are good plans in place already to look at aspects of the academy: for example, how best to assess how well the aims are being achieved with regard to the mission statement, and a systematic review of the academy's current policies.

The academy is developing and implemented a comprehensive range of relevant policies. Not all policies are fully embedded as yet. They have also reviewed and implemented an appropriate professional development programme that is based on formal observations by the senior and middle leadership team. The consistency of judgements and outcomes are being refined and developed to further raise the quality of teaching and learning. Observations, together with data analysis, curriculum audits and book scrutiny are evolving as strategies to inform academy improvement planning.

Throughout the academy, leadership at all levels provides staff with clear educational direction. This developing stability is recognised and valued by parents as a key factor in the continued development of the learning for their sons and daughters. There are well-formulated strategic plans to guide the future development of the academy. The leadership team works successfully to ensure the academy vision and mission are embedded in practice.



The academy is successful in appointing, supporting and motivating staff of a high quality. Staff induction is thorough, effective and indicative of the academy's caring ethos. Academy leaders carry out their responsibilities diligently, including those for the safeguarding of all students and for the checking of the suitability of staff. Extensive checks are carried out before members of staff are appointed. Each check is recorded on a central register that is maintained by the Aldar human resource department. Care should be taken to ensure details are also readily available to the academy's administration teams as relevant.

The commitment, dedication and vision of the board is significant and a strength of the academy. As the board continues to develop its effective working partnership with senior leaders, they need to ensure all are held accountable for the success of outcomes. They have a clear drive to ensure the academy's aims are explicit on the journey to be a first-class educational institution by valuing and respecting the needs of every student.