



مجلس أبوظبي للتعليم
Abu Dhabi Education Council
التعليم أولاً Education First

Beginning Guide

The First Step Towards an Educational Journey



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Introduction:

Private Schools and Quality Assurance Sector in ADEC welcomes students and their parents in this academic year, and calls for parents who enroll their children for the first time in private schools to benefit from this booklet which contains valuable information and important tips on how to teach students at home and focus the attention on behavior, relationships and nutrition. Additionally, the booklet includes the foundation guidelines, which help in choosing the right school considering the results of Irtiqa'a inspection program of the private schools in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi.

Many of the Educational research has shown that the cooperation and the positive relationship between parents and teachers lead to better academic outcomes for students. Therefore, it is crucial to have an effective partnership between home and school from the beginning.

Since childhood is the foundation of the educational path for the students, Private Schools and Quality Assurance Sector established a guide that helps parents of students in kindergarten who enroll their children in school for the first time in their lives; to serve as a mentor and guide on how to deal with this new situation and the change in the life of our children, the approaches mentioned are based on the latest research and theories in the field of education, communication and psychology.

This guide comes in its first edition to help the targeted groups of parents to understand the characteristics of their children's age as they enter the school for the first time in their lives, the difficulties they may face, how to deal with and overcome them and guide parents towards the effective parenting not only helps in dealing with the situation but also leads to the exploitation of the child's abilities and reveals their talents and establishes solid academic future.

Private Schools and Quality Assurance Sector aspires to provide all that is beneficial through this guide, with a note that we are ready to receive your comments in order to enhance the booklet in the coming editions, until it is reissued beautifully and meaningfully, as what our children deserve.

Eng. Hamad Ali Al Dhaheri

Executive Director- PSQA - Private Schools and Quality Assurance sector



Before Day One



Dear Parent: Always remember the existence of individual differences and differences between children in the willingness and readiness to join and learn at this stage, therefore, parents also need training to prepare for this stage through:

- Talking with your child and trying to encourage him/her to enjoy the next stage in his/her life.
- Explaining to the child the importance of the role of school in his/her life.
- Training the child to blend in with a number of children, and to establish social relationships with them to learn sharing and giving and how to cope with problems and to learn skills of finding appropriate solutions.
- Preparing the child to be gradually separated from his mother some hours of the day (Here comes the benefit of pre-school nursery).
- It may be useful for the child to accompany his parents to the school that he will join before the start of the school year to his/her parents to his/her new school, before the start of the school year in order to recognize the place and the general atmosphere in the school accompanied by parents in a reassuring setting.
- Emphasizing the child's sense of security; that is, he/she will not be left in a strange place, as the mother and father should not try to hide or flee from the child in school without talking with the child honestly and assuring him that he will be picked up after the end of the school day.
- In efforts to facilitate a more safe and secure feel for your child, it's advisable to speak with him/her about picking them up after school.
- Readiness for a new type of social life, especially if he/she is the first child who has enrolled in school.
- Being patient with positive spirits and enthusiasm to start the academic year.

Source:

Adapted from "together, hand in hand, for the first steps of our children in Kindergarten" ADEC (2013-2014).

“There is a link between parental involvement, teacher communication and taking part in different school related activities and voluntary work, in order to ensure the success of a student.”

Source:

The transition from kindergarten to first grade, Mantzicopoulos, P. (2003). Flunking kindergarten after Head Start: An inquiry into the contribution of contextual and individual variables. Journal of Educational Psychology, 95 (2), 268–278.



Day One:

Talk to your child and explain the nature of a school day

Visit your child’s school, Accompany your child to school and meet with his/her teachers

Assist your child when selecting his/her schoolbag and stationary

In order to ensure the safety of your child, please ensure you teach him/her the following:

Information, which provides safety and assurance to him:

- ✓ His/her full name.
- ✓ The names of his/her parents.
- ✓ Names of people who will accompany him/her to school during drop off and pick up
- ✓ Allergies to certain types of food.
- ✓ Restrictions regarding talking with strangers.
- ✓ How to find the school management office, his/her classroom and a nearby toilet.
- ✓ Help the child memorize your phone number if possible.

“There is strong consensus, supported by a variety of evidence dating from over 40 years, that positive parental engagement can and does significantly influence student academic attainment.”

Source:

(Emerson, Fear, Fox and Sanders 2012) <http://education.qld.gov.au/schools/parent-community-engagement-framework/>



Questions to Ask your Child after School:

- ✓ How do you feel? (Are you tired, hungry, happy, sad, excited, angry, etc. ?)
- ✓ What did you do in school today?
- ✓ What was your favorite thing you did today?
- ✓ What words did you practice saying today?
- ✓ What day of the week is it? What will tomorrow be?
- ✓ What song did you sing at school today?

Homework:

- ✓ Let's look in your homework bag together.
- ✓ What is this?
- ✓ Did you do this work in class?

Did you...

Cut.....	Paste.....	Find.....
Read.....	Say.....	Sort.....
Trace.....	Draw.....	Write.....



General Characteristics of Early Childhood

The characteristics of a child at a younger age should be accepted by parents, guided and refined. These characteristics are common in girls and boys to different degrees, which indicates that the child is normal:

- **Constant Movements:** continuous moving in different directions, climbing and sliding increases the child's intelligence and enriches his experience when he grows up.
- **Imitation:** the child imitates the parents in every way. Hence the importance of learning by example and parents are role models for the child.
- **Stubbornness:** parents should not be surprised from the stubbornness of the child and accuse him of that, rather parents should encourage him to do the right thing and tell stories and anecdotes which highlight the consequences of stubbornness.
- **Lack of Distinction between Right and Wrong:** A child may light a match and get



burned, or put his hand in hot water without knowing the harm, the child should not be held accountable because his mind is not yet matured, and the right thing to do is remove what could harm him and ensure his safety.

- **Frequent Questions:** the child asks about anything, at any time and in any way, questions may be embarrassing sometimes, always encourage questions, answer the questions and ensure honest answers.
- **Sharp Memory:** the child saves a lot of information without understanding, because of his young age, it is easy at this stage to memorize anything, taking into account turning the method of memorization into an interesting one.
- **Love Encouragement:** the child loves encouragement in both forms, materialistic and emotional. This can help behavior modification.
- **Love to Play and have Fun:** playing is the child's method to acquire skills, compile experiences, develop multiple intelligence and is considered the best way to learn.
- **Enjoy Competition:** under the parents' guidance and rationalization, this could be an important factor for future excellence and innovation.
- **The Imaginative Thinking:** do not worry when you find a child busy daydreaming or thinking, because a child's imagination dominates his/her way of thinking as well as daydreaming.
- **The Tendency to Acquire Skills:** a child under six years tries to gain and master some skills similar to his father or his mother.
- **The Rapid Growth of Language:** the linguistic dictionary of a child grows constantly, and is affected by his general health, family status, social and economic content and language level of the parents.
- **The Tendency to Assemble and Dismantle:** This is normal at this age. Encourage your child, however, to play with puzzles, train tracks, cubes, clay and paper.
- **Intensity of Emotions:** the child might get excited by one notch over important or trivial things, and these emotions can include fear, anger and jealousy.

Source:

Adapted from "together, hand in hand, for the first steps of our children in Kindergarten"

ADEC (2013-2014).



Behaviour and Relationships

Children are always testing boundaries. They misbehave and wait to see what will happen next. If nothing happens, they may continue to misbehave. If parents shout at their children, they may become defiant and continue to misbehave. If their parents show them consequences of their behaviours, they will reconsider their attitude.

All children around the world have episodes of misbehaviour. How parents deal with their child's unacceptable behaviour will either improve the child's behaviour or make it worse.

What is bad behaviour?

As a starting point, parents need to define what they consider misbehaviour from their child. Is running around considered misbehaviour? Is breaking things whilst exploring considered misbehaviour? Is telling lies misbehaviour? Define what acts you consider as bad behaviour and think what makes the child misbehave. Then you may want to consider the reasons why your child is acting this way. This is important because most of the time when our children are misbehaving it is not because they are bad, but mostly because they are trying to express their feelings or to explore their world.

Consistency is the key!

If you are consistent about your expectations from your child, consequences and rewards for their actions, your behaviour management will have a more credible impact on your child. When you identify your rewards and consequences consider the following:

- For rewards, do not promise your child what you cannot give. You can say **"I will try to"** if you are not 100% sure.
- When you cannot fulfil your promise to your child, sit with him/her and explain why you can't and then make it up for your child as soon as you can.
- You can comment on the behaviour and the action, but avoid making negative comments about your child herself/himself and only criticize the bad behaviour. This is because one of the most effective steps to improve your child's behaviour is to help her/him develop her/his self-esteem.
- An effective consequence is to temporarily deprive your child of something she/he likes such as, games. You can also use time-out. This means you tell your child to stay on a seat or in her/his room for 15 minutes. Tell your child that she/he needs to think about what she/he has done wrong and then come back to ask the child to reflect and apologize. Always explain why you are doing so.

Develop a behaviour management system

- Adopt a two-warning system. When your child misbehaves, take her/him aside and tell her/him that she/he has misbehaved and that this is the first warning. If it happens again, tell your child that this is the second warning and explain what will happen next if this action is repeated. On the third misconduct, make sure you do what you promised your child.
- If your child's behaviour is very challenging, put up a behaviour chart on the fridge or somewhere around the house. Tell your child that if she/he behaves well, at the end of the day she/he will get a happy face on the chart. If she/he misbehaves, she/he will get a sad face. Then at the end of the week if the child has more happy faces than sad faces, there will be a reward.



Further Advice

- Try to be positive with your child and to compliment the simple things she/he does well. This will build her/his self-confidence and will help her/him think better of her/himself.
- How you communicate with your child has a great impact on the relationship. When you communicate with your child, you need to call her/him by her/his first name. You also need to make eye contact and sometimes to crouch down to her/his level. Holding your child often will give her/him a sense of security and will strengthen the strong bond between you.
- Provide your child with interesting activities. When children have plenty of interesting things to do, they don't get bored and they are less likely to misbehave.
- Be a good role model for your children. Children learn a lot by observing others. Show your child through your own actions how you would like her/him to behave.
- Ignore minor misbehaviours. Some misbehaviours are best dealt with by completely ignoring them and praising positive behaviors.
- Try to involve your child in some charity work. It is important to teach your child to give back to society and to be good to others.
- Teach your child to say "thank you" and "sorry" when its needed to anyone whether young or old.

Developing Language

Literacy development refers to the ability to listen, speak, read and write.



LISTENING

- Encourage an understanding that letters are related to sounds – The letter 'a' makes an 'a' sound like at the beginning of 'apple'.
- Make up words together that have the same rhyme. For example: (land, sand), (pay, say), (bed, red).

Ask about the sound your child can hear at the beginning of a word – your child can repeat the sound you make, and later they may be able to say the letter name by pointing at objects and naming them.





SPEAKING

When reading or shopping in the market with your child or at the restaurant, ask your child open ended questions. For example,

1. What will happen next in the story?
2. How many people do you think are in the supermarket?



Here are some more sound-and-letter activities you and your child can do together:

- Help your child identify the letters that begin with the names of familiar things around the house.
- At meals at home write on a card the beginning letter of each food you are serving. Have your child match the letters and the food.



WRITING



- Sit with your child and tell her/him that you will play together.
- Prepare paper, crayons, markers and thick coloring pencils. Draw together and help your child to try to write the name of the objects in the drawing.
- OR you can model writing labels or a caption for the pictures your child has drawn, which then becomes something your child can read.
- Encourage your child to talk about what she/he has drawn.
- When your child begins to form letters, encourage her/him to use the correct letter formation.
- Use things you have in the kitchen like salt or flour, or things in the house such as shaving foam, to help your child practice forming letters he/she is learning or has learned at school.
- You can also make play dough together with your child using flour, salt, oil, water and food colorings or buy some from the market.
- Use the play dough to form letters or even numbers.
- This will help your child store a visual image of the letter/numbers as well as develop her/his motor skills.
- You can use the play dough with your child to make different shapes, animals, foods or things around the house.
- Purchase a set of letter stencils.
- Show your child how to place a stencil on a sheet of paper and colour over it or trace around it with a crayon.
- Or show her/him how to set the stencil on the table, then place a sheet of plain paper on top of it and rub an unwrapped crayon over it to make a letter rubbing.
- Do the same with a coin of a dirham or 50 fils to practice Maths concepts such as recognizing the face value of coins and naming the coin.
- Encourage your child to use the stencils to write their names and other familiar words.
- Collect alphabet rubber stamps and rubber stamps featuring objects that begin with each letter of the alphabet. Let your child use the alphabet stamps to make alphabet cards, alphabet books, and alphabet pictures.



READING

- Try to make bed-time reading with your child part of everyday routine.
- Take your child to the bookstore and encourage her/him to pick a book to read it together.
- Provide a warm, accepting atmosphere for reading and writing by responding to your child's requests for reading and re-reading favorite stories.
- Encourage your child to enjoy reading – by telling her/him stories about the pictures in the picture-book .
- Move your finger under the words as you read them to show how reading goes from left to right in English and from right to left in Arabic and from top to bottom. Ask your child to tell you about the pictures. Point out words that begin with the same sound.
- Choose a word from the story and ask your child to think of another word that starts with the same sound or a rhyming word (if there is one).

- Read to your child and talk about what you are reading together.
- Read books that have rhymes, rhythms, or repetition such as nursery rhymes.
- Help increase vocabulary by playing “What’s that?” “Where’s the ball?” When reading books together.
- Point out words on signs at the park, or at the zoo, when walking or driving.

Practicing Language Around Town:

- What English letters can you find?
- What can you find that is yellow... blue... etc.?
- Can you find signs written in both Arabic and English?
- Can you hear people speaking in English? What are some of the words you heard? (in the mall).
- Can you add the numbers ?
- Let's count the....
- What do you see on the menu you would like to eat?
- Can you order your food?



Use the world around you to encourage talking with your child.

Mathematics in Our Daily Lives

Families can have great fun at home developing Maths concepts during simple day to day activities. Maths can be reinforced and encouraged in a relaxed way to allow children to learn and have positive attitudes toward learning. You can interact with your child in any language. This will support and reinforce concepts and increase your child's vocabulary.

Counting from 1-5 then 1-10 while walking:

- Clapping hands while counting.
- Placing fruit/vegetables in a bag in the supermarket and counting items.
- Sitting on the table for a meal and answering questions like:
how many people are waiting in the queue?
how many cars are outside the house?
or how many trees are in our garden?
- Show your child two groups of objects (fruits or vegetables etc). Ask your child to tell you the total number of objects.
- Talk about the colours in the environment while shopping – or ask your child: what colour are the apples/grapes in supermarket?
- Different shapes are all around us – look for circles, rectangles, squares and triangles – the faces of a box, the street signs, the buildings and windows.

Enjoy Learning Science

Science should be fascinating for your child – you can be your child's best teacher.

Think about the world around us and talk about it with your child!

- **Weather** - getting hot/cold, clouds, where does the rain come from, what is the sun?
- **Cooking** - why do things change when they are hot/cold, how does a cooker/ microwave work, adding water/evaporation?
- **Animals** - what do animals need to survive, what food do they eat, what are sea animals and how do they breathe, what is the difference between living and non-living things?
- **How do things move** - cars, buses, bicycles, people, animals, battery operated toys - what are the thing that need to be pushed/pulled?
- **What is electricity and gas** - where they are from and how do they work – what equipment in your home needs electricity?
- **Water** - where does it come from and how does it reach our homes - make bubbles with your child and observe them disappearing and ask your child, where did they go?

Thinking and talking with your child gives her/him the opportunity to explore and investigate.

Health Nutrition

Parents have great influence on their children's current and future lifestyle. This means it is necessary to follow several tips like, regular check-ups, making breakfast a routine and helping your children make healthy food choices.

Start by asking yourself these questions:

- When you eat in restaurants or malls, do you order healthy food?
- What is your favorite dish? Is it healthy? Why do you consider it so?
- What is your child's favorite dish? Is it healthy? Why do you consider it so?
- Do you have breakfast everyday? If yes, what does it contain?
- Does your child have breakfast everyday? If yes, what does it contain?
- How does having or not having breakfast affect your child's mood?
- Do you monitor the amount of sugar your child consumes?
- How many cups of water does your child drink everyday?
- Is dinner a family time?
- What time does your child wake-up and what time does your child go to sleep during summer holiday?
- Approximately how many hours a day does your child watch television during summer holiday?
- What is your child's hobbies and is he active?
- Does your child play sports ?
- Generally, do you think you are providing your child with a healthy lifestyle?

Do you Feel it is Time to Make Some Changes?

Here are some tips that can help you provide a healthier lifestyle for your children and allow for optimal brain development.

1-Exercising can be a family time

- Take a short walk with your children.
- If it is too hot for an outdoor walk, you may go to the gym.
- Encourage your family to take the stairs instead of the elevator as much as possible.

2- Make simple dietary changes

Because....

- Many diseases are largely preventable through a healthy diet.
- Proper nutrition increases energy, enhances healing, has a positive effect on moods and improves academic performance.
- Vegetables and fruits contain many vitamins, minerals and fibers that strengthen our bodies and help us grow in a healthy way.



Remember the Golden Rule:

Five refers to 5 servings of fruits and vegetables each day this is considered to be the right amount for children.



1. **Get your child interested in healthy food:** Try to make the process of food shopping, cooking and eating with your child fun.
2. **Make fixed meal times:**
3. **Let your child feed him/herself:**
4. **Encourage good table manners:**
5. **Give choices:** For example, show your children two different kinds of vegetables, and let them choose which they would prefer to eat.
6. **Add vegetables:** Into dishes but also put on the table vegetables that your child can see.
7. **Colours:** Make the selection of food with different colours wherever possible.
8. **Buy food in its season:**
9. **Be imaginative:** Think of fun ways to present food.
10. **Snacks:** Healthy snacks are great to help your child stay fit.

Find a school in a few easy steps

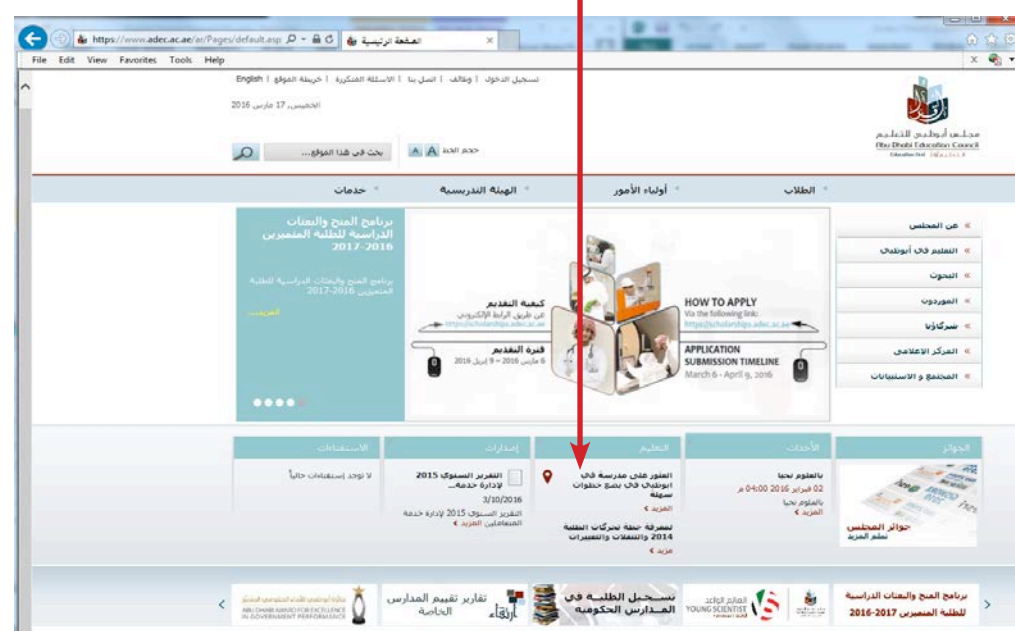
Step 1:

Visit The Abu Dhabi Education Council website on

www.adec.ac.ae

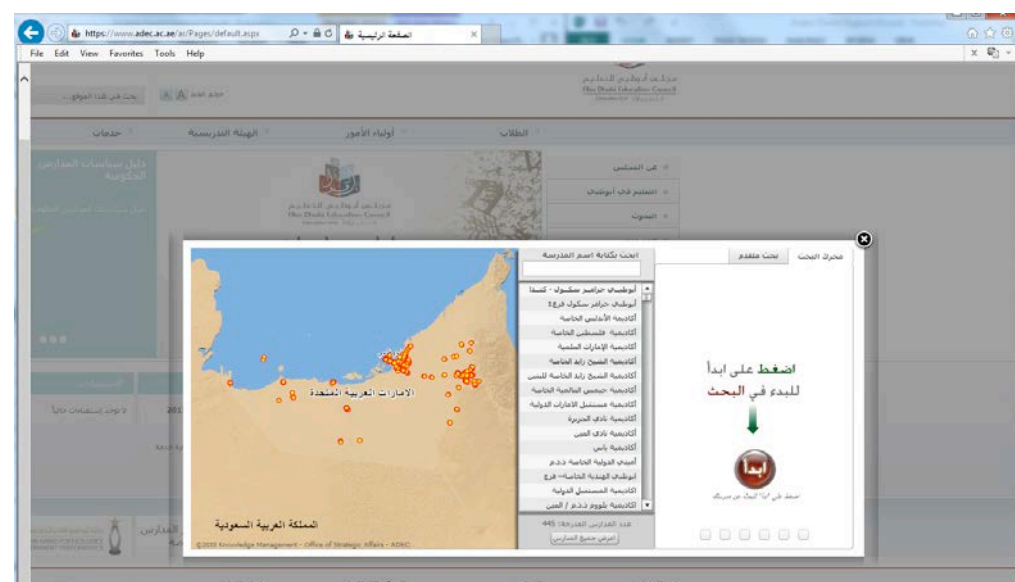
Step 2:

Please click here



Step 3:

Find a school based on: Name, Curriculum, Location.

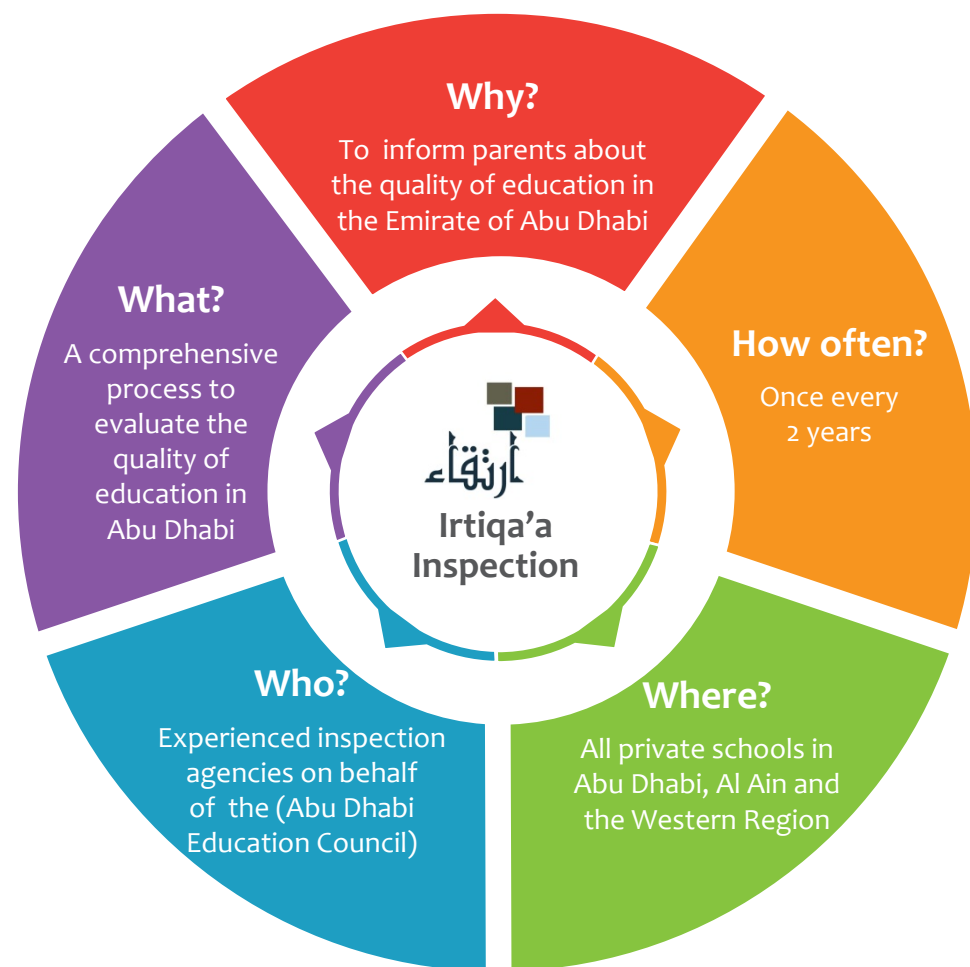


Do you Want to Know the Quality of Education in your Child's School?

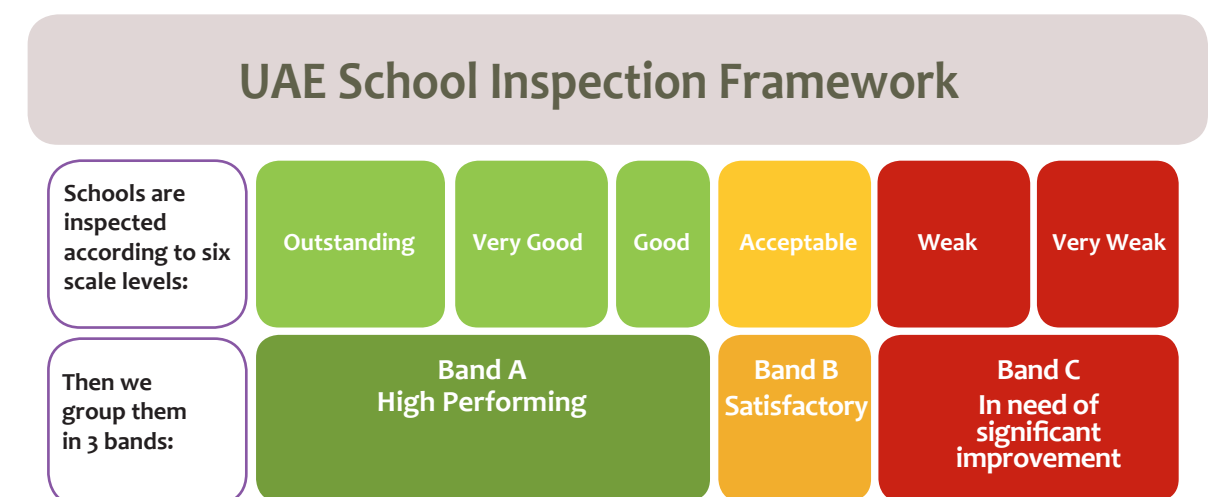
How to Choose a Suitable School for Your Child



Irtiqa'a inspection program helps parents learn more about the quality of education in private schools in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi



A Schools Overall Level of Performance

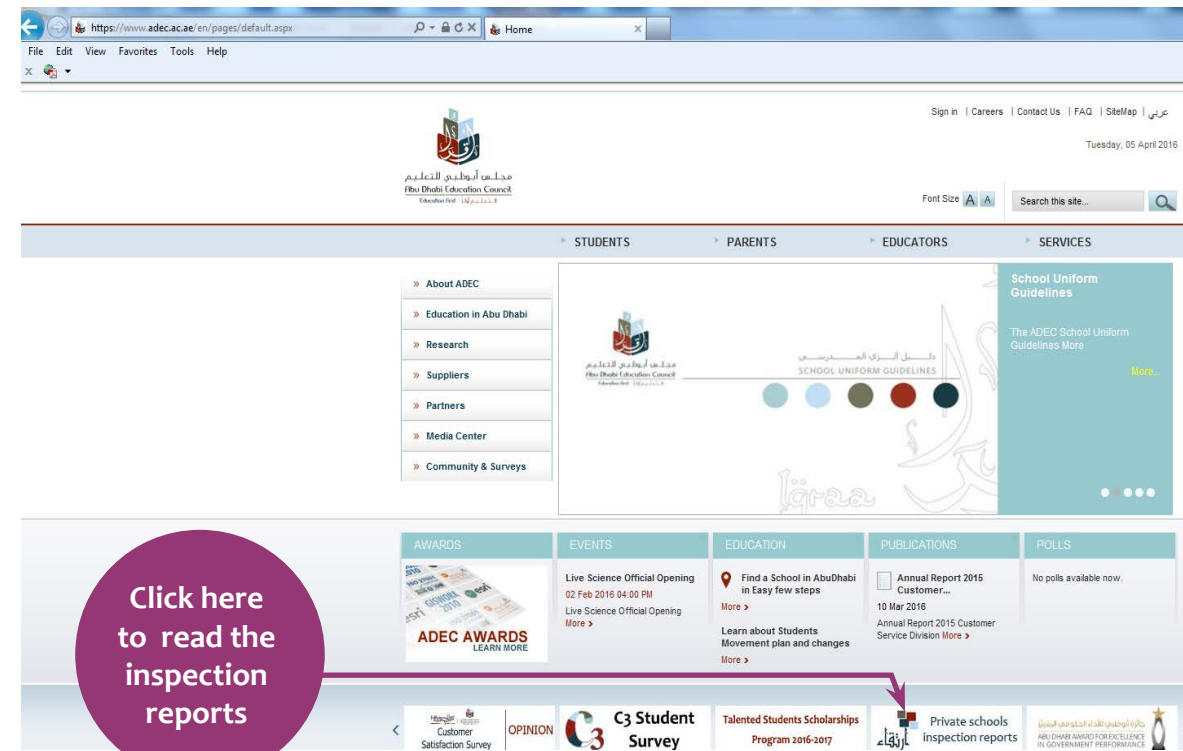


ADEC has been publishing private school inspection reports since 2013, to read Irtiqa'a inspection reports:

Step 1:

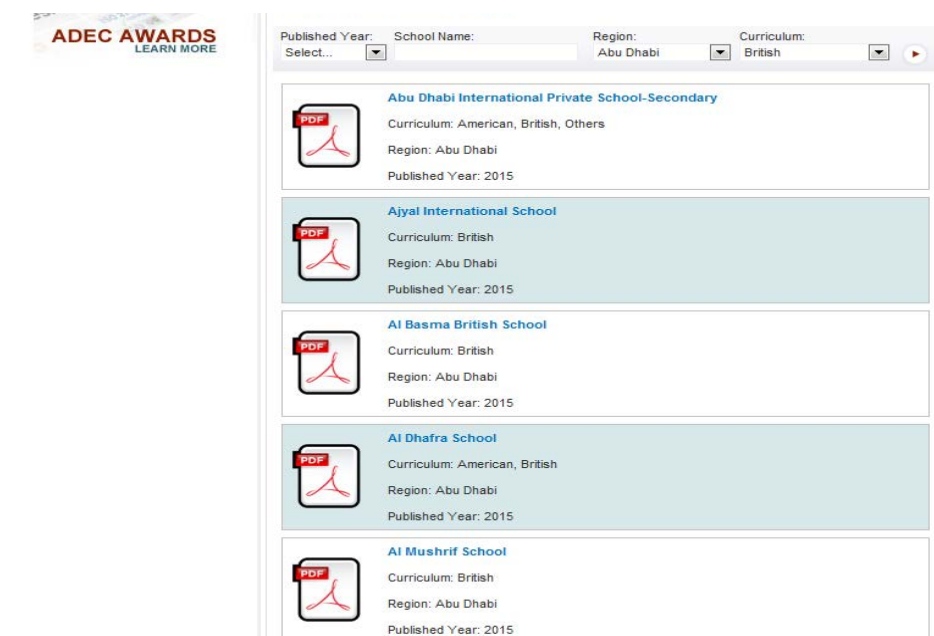
Visit Abu Dhabi Education Council on: www.adec.ac.ae

Step 2:



Step 3:

Search for the school inspection reports by : school name, curriculum, region and year of publishing, using the search engine shown in the picture below:



for private schools across the Emirate of Abu Dhabi,
please contact the Irtiqa'a Team on:

@ Irtiqaa @adec.ac.ae

02 615 0000



Suggestive useful Websites

<https://www.adec.ac.ae/en/Parents/Pages/default.aspx>

<https://www.adec.ac.ae/en/Parents/Pages/Parent-Involvement.aspx>

<https://www.adec.ac.ae/en/Parents/ParentsGuide/Pages/default.aspx>

<https://www.adec.ac.ae/en/Parents/PrivateSchools/Pages/default.aspx>

<https://www.adec.ac.ae/en/Parents/PrivateSchools/Pages/Irtiqa'a.aspx>

<https://www.adec.ac.ae/en/MediaCenter/Publications/KG%20parents%20Guide%20Manual%202013-2014/HTML/index.html>

<https://www.adec.ac.ae/en/mediacenter/news/pages/adec-announces-the-launch-of-the-school.aspx>

https://www.adec.ac.ae/en/MediaCenter/Publications/Parental%20engagement_EN/index.html

https://www.adec.ac.ae/en/MediaCenter/News/Pages/weya_ayalna-reaches-10-million.aspx

<http://www.shf.ae/en/>

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/182508/DFE-RR156.pdf





<http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/may11/vol68/num08/Involvement-or-Engagement%C2%A2.aspx>

http://www.csos.jhu.edu/P2000/nnps_model/school/sixtypes.htm

For more information regarding this booklet
please contact School Development Management -
Private Schools and Quality Assurance sector

 sch.development@adec.ac.ae

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