

# Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau Newsletter

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## INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Is your school  
about to be  
inspected? 2

What happens  
during an in-  
spection 2

Inspection  
Reports 2

Inspections,  
The First Year 3

The People  
Behind the  
Bureau 3

Initial Quality  
Inspections  
Handbook 3

Inspections  
Q&A 4

## Inspections Begin on 6th October!



**Jameela Al Muhairi**  
Chief, DSIB

Welcome to the first edition of our quarterly newsletter.

It is my pleasure this September to welcome you to the start of the new academic year and to an educational milestone for Dubai with the operational start of the Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau.

As we embark on our first year of activity with a busy schedule of inspections, we look forward to working with you and to realising the key strategic

objective of assisting the improvement of all schools through the process of school inspection.

The first block of Initial Quality Inspections begin on the 6th of October.

On behalf of the Bureau, please accept our best wishes as you prepare and plan for your school inspection.

The skills of our permanent team of Inspectors and Associate Inspectors reflect the individual requirements of the different schools.

I have complete faith in the system that we have designed for Dubai. It is a system that will seek to identify strengths and weaknesses in schools and thereby seek to assist schools to know themselves and to move forward enabling improvement and innovation to

take effect.

By providing the means to assess schools with an authoritative inspection methodology, it is anticipated that it will be possible to make a major contribution to Dubai's reputation for educational excellence through the process of inspection.

We promise to deliver inspections of the highest standard. Inspection must play its part in the broader aim of establishing a global reputation for Dubai's education system that supports its long-term position as a world hub for investment and economic development.

We will publish our first annual report toward the end of the academic year. The annual report will provide us with a clear, overall picture of schooling in Dubai and will be a supportive document.

KHDA will also be able to use this information for important planning and policy purposes.

I see the annual report as a springboard from which we can start our exciting journey towards better schools, better-educated pupils, and a better and stronger workforce for Dubai in the future.

Best wishes,

Jameela Al Muhairi  
Chief, DSIB

## Welcome Peter Carpenter, Director of Inspections

Please join me in welcoming Peter Carpenter as Director of Inspections for the Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau.

Peter brings with him a wealth of expertise in inspection and education. We look forward to the value he brings to the role and more importantly to him leading the inspection teams.

Dubai is unique in that we have a diverse curricula and Peter's team will be instrumental in delivering inspections that conform to the standards stipulated in the Quality Promise, which is derived from the values set out by the Bureau.

# Is Your School About to be Inspected?



The first block of inspections runs from Oct - Dec '08

If you've received a notification letter that your school is due to be inspected or you are wondering how notification takes place, then this quick overview may be particularly useful to your school.

The bureau has ensured that all notification letters to schools are sent by both email and courier to guarantee that your school receives the notification on time. The inspection support team will also follow up with a telephone call to ensure that you are aware of your inspection date and the

documentation required by the bureau prior to the inspection.

The first visit to your school is suitably called the preliminary visit. The date is set by the Bureau and the visit lasts a day.

We would also like to draw your attention in particular to the **online school profile** that requires your input.

The key information required by the bureau regarding your school impacts hugely on the planning of your school's inspection. If you have not as yet completed your school

profile with the most up to date information regarding your school, please do so as soon as possible. Page 4 of this newsletter has more information on how to proceed.

We understand that changes in school timetables are necessary and we at the bureau want to make sure we use the latest school information in the inspection planning process.

We thank you in advance for your cooperation.

*DSIB is committed to Educational Quality and Improvement: "We will promote education of the highest quality in schools throughout Dubai in order to improve the learning and life chances for all children"*

**DSIB Value: Transparency: We will be open and transparent in our communications.**

## What Happens During an Inspection

The preliminary visit would have been completed along with the parents' questionnaires and then returned to the bureau. Analysed by the bureau, the information is used by the inspectors as an evidence base.

Remember that inspections are not meant to cause distress to any school. The inspection team are committed to the highest

standard of professional conduct, including courtesy to all involved and respect for the culture and religions of students, teachers and parents.

The team will spend time gathering evidence, observing lessons and sampling students' work. Inspectors will have discussions with students and staff involved in the work of the school. The Principal and Lead Inspector will meet daily

as part of the professional relationship between the school and the inspection team. Inspectors will review the documentation and paperwork of the school. A summary document is produced at the end of each inspection called the Record of Inspection Judgements. The contents form the basis for feedback to the school and the written report. School staff will have the opportunity to clarify the findings and ask for further explanations to illustrate judgements made. Throughout the entire process of inspection, feedback will be two-way.

## Inspection Reports

Inspection reports will be written after an inspection and will be sent to the school and to KHDA highlighting key strengths and providing recommendations for improvement. The full report will be confidential.

The DSIB's value on being

transparent is the commitment to being open with our communications which is why a summary of the school report will be shared with parents and the public. This will be communicated to parents by the school and also via the KHDA website.



# Inspections, The First Year by Peter Carpenter



**Peter Carpenter**  
Director of Inspections

Our work in the first year of inspections is very important for the future of educational provision in Dubai.

We will inspect all schools in the first year and will provide schools with a detailed, formative inspection report to support further improvement.

We plan to introduce, following this initial year, a cycle of inspections and the timing of the inspection for each school will be dependent upon the outcome of the first inspection.

We will, in other words, be proportionate in our approach, targeting support where it is needed most of all.

Where schools can demonstrate high performance and the capacity to continue to improve, then inspection will be towards the end of the second cycle.

In our first year we will also provide parents of students at each school with a summary

report identifying the key strengths of each school and areas requiring improvement.

This is to ensure that the process is as transparent and open as possible. Inspection will also provide the Government of Dubai with qualitative and quantitative information regarding the performance of schools across the public and private sectors to inform policy decisions.

Our challenge is to undertake these tasks with rigour and professionalism.

We are committed to working closely with colleagues in schools to help ensure quality education for all students in Dubai.

## The People Behind the Bureau

Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau has a very experienced and highly qualified team of full-time inspectors. The inspectors have international experience both as principals and as school inspectors.

The Inspectors are a team of Principal, Senior, Senior Bilingual,

Bilingual and General Inspectors. More information on each of the inspectors' qualifications and experience will be shared with your school as part of the pre-inspection documentation.

Supporting the Inspectors and the operations of the Bureau are a team of Inspection Support

Coordinators. The team play a vital role in managing the logistics, planning, feedback and scheduling of all inspections. Their remit is to maintain the high level of customer excellence that the Bureau strives for. They are dedicated to ensuring that your queries and requests are dealt with efficiently and quickly at all times.

## The Initial Quality Inspections Handbook

After consultation with parents, teachers and principals from public and private schools, DSIB developed an inspection handbook.

Copies in both English and Arabic have been distributed to all schools.

The purpose of the handbook is to provide:

- Support and guidance for inspectors in their role
- Information for schools and

key stakeholders about the process and organisation of inspections

- Benchmarks and criteria for schools to use as a basis for evaluating their own work.

**To download a copy, please visit [www.khda.gov.ae](http://www.khda.gov.ae) and click on the DSIB banner, as below.**

## Parent Questionnaires

Part of the Inspection process involves the school distributing Parent Questionnaires provided by the Bureau.

Please ensure that your school follows the process below when handling Parent Questionnaires:

- Issue the Parent Questionnaires with a note to indicate the required return date.
- Ensure that the Parent Questionnaires are returned to the school sealed.
- Return the Parent Questionnaires to the Bureau via courier or driver.

Should the Bureau receive any tampered envelopes or ones that have not been sealed properly, we will consider this as a breach of confidentiality.



# Inspections Q&A

## **Q. When will I be informed about our school inspection?**

**A.** Schools will be notified by email approximately four working weeks before their inspections.

## **Q. What if we want to defer the inspection?**

**A.** Schools should let DSIB know immediately if there is a compelling reason why the dates proposed for the inspection are not possible from the school's perspective. Requests for deferral will be considered on an individual basis by the Chief of Inspection.

## **Q. How many inspectors will be on the team?**

**A.** Depending on the size of the school, a team of between three and five inspectors will spend between three and five days on site. Certain teams may have a further team member, an inspector in training, who will be shadowing more experienced colleagues.

## **Q. Will the inspection team be suitably qualified and experienced?**

**A.** Each inspection team will consist of highly qualified and experienced inspectors. The team will consist of inspectors with significant international curricular and school management experience. A précis of the qualifications and experience of each team member will be shared with the school with other pre-inspection documentation.

## **Q. What if we disagree with the findings of the inspection team?**

**A.** There will be several opportunities for schools to discuss the findings of the inspection team with the Lead Inspector and, if necessary, provide further evidence to help inspectors arrive at an accurate and fair view of the work of the school. The draft report will be sent to the school following the inspection week and, at this stage, schools have an opportunity to discuss the report provided by the inspection team.

## **Q. What if we wish to make a complaint?**

**A.** In almost all cases, concerns regarding any aspect of an inspection will be resolved through discussions with the Lead Inspector. However, if the Principal does not feel that this has led to a satisfactory solution, then a letter expressing the nature of the school's concern should be sent to the Chief of Inspection who will consider the matter further. A letter acknowledging receipt will be followed by an investigation and response within fourteen days.

**More answers are available online, visit [www.khda.gov.ae](http://www.khda.gov.ae)**

## **The Inspections Support Team would like to remind you to:**

- 1. Complete the online School Profile if you have not already done so. Simply go to [www.khda.gov.ae/form](http://www.khda.gov.ae/form).**
- 2. Know who your 'nominated person' is.**
- 3. Send out the Parent Questionnaires to parents as soon as you receive them.**

**Nominated Person:** The main contact for your inspection from the DSIB inspection support team. Contact details for your 'nominated person' are provided in your inspection notification letter.

**If you have any questions or require any further information, please contact us via email, telephone or post. Our details are below.**

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