

**Second
Follow-Through Inspection Report
on
Grammar School**

Report published May 2010

Basic information

The Grammar School was inspected in October 2008 as part of the initial quality inspection cycle across all schools in Dubai. The inspection covered key aspects of the work of the school at all stages. It evaluated students' achievements, the effectiveness of the school, the environment for learning and the school's processes for self-evaluation and capacity for improvement. During this inspection, the overall performance of the school was judged to be unsatisfactory and school inspectors identified a number of recommendations which the school was required to address.

Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau (DSIB) conducted a Follow-Through Inspection in June 2009 and a second Follow-Through Inspection during November 2009. The purpose of the second Follow-Through Inspection was to evaluate the progress made by the school in achieving improvements based on the recommendations set out in the first inspection report, and the subsequent Follow-Through report.

Progress

Inspectors judged that The Grammar School had still not satisfactorily addressed the recommendations made by DSIB at the Initial Quality Inspection. Inspectors will continue to undertake Follow-Through Inspections at three-monthly intervals until the recommendations made by inspectors have been satisfactorily addressed.

Initial Quality Inspection Recommendations

- Urgently improve the pattern of the school day and the transport arrangements so that:
 - buses are not dangerously overcrowded;
 - students arrive at and leave school at reasonable times;
- Ensure that no adult uses physical punishment against students;
- Raise students' attainment in all subjects and ensure that all students leave the school with a recognised qualification;

- Improve students' progress by:
 - developing a curriculum which addresses the learning needs of children of all abilities;
 - requiring teachers to plan effectively and use a wider range of teaching and learning styles;
 - encouraging the development of students' understanding, their creativity and their capacity to learn independently.
- Appoint a strong and purposeful leadership and management team with responsibilities and accountability at all levels.

Overview of progress achieved

Urgently improve the pattern of the school day and the transport arrangements so that buses are not dangerously overcrowded and students arrive at and leave school at reasonable times

The school had made satisfactory progress towards meeting this recommendation.

Observations of bus arrivals and departures showed that there was no overcrowding on buses and that the timing of the buses was reasonable. Students said that they felt safe on buses, although one bus had no seat belts in the front seats. The earliest arrivals were 30 minutes before the first lesson and afternoon departures took place soon after lessons or activities were finished. Students were well-supervised as they walked between the buses and the school buildings.

Ensure that no adult uses physical punishment against students

The school had made satisfactory progress towards meeting this recommendation.

Interviews with boys and girls across several grades confirmed that disciplinary procedures used by staff no longer involved physical punishment. Both students and school managers were asked about this issue and all indicated that it had been resolved when certain teachers and students left the school.

Raise students' attainment in all subjects and ensure that all students leave the school with a recognised qualification

The school had made satisfactory progress towards meeting this recommendation.

Almost all students passed examinations at international standards in English, mathematics and sciences but only a majority attained at a good level. The school's efforts to raise attainment were evident in lessons but there remained significant work to be done before attainment and progress in key subjects reached a good level among most students. Almost all students left the school with a recognised qualification from the UK and moved on to post-secondary education.

Improve students' progress by developing a curriculum which addresses the learning needs of children of all abilities

The school had made satisfactory progress towards meeting this recommendation.

The curriculum had been amended to include specific planning for students with a range of academic abilities. Inspectors observed improved arrangements in lessons. Documentary evidence and interviews with students confirmed the improved arrangements. The school had revised the curriculum to include a wider range of activities including arts, sports, music, debating and other options.

Require teachers to plan effectively and use a wider range of teaching and learning styles

The school had made unsatisfactory progress towards meeting this recommendation.

Although a few teachers provided lessons that involved students in varied and active ways of learning, students were passive recipients of information in the majority of lessons. Students frequently chanted short answers to their teachers' questions in unison as a way of indicating their understanding. Teachers' voices were heard far more frequently than those of their students and, in many lessons, students did not take notes. Overall, teachers did not use a sufficiently wide range of strategies to meet students' learning needs.

Encourage the development of students' understanding, creativity and capacity to learn independently

The school had made unsatisfactory progress towards meeting this recommendation.

Most students did not have opportunities to be creative during lessons and most were highly dependent upon their teachers throughout their lessons. A few teachers allowed independent learning to take place, for example, in science lessons. The most prevalent experience of students in the key subjects was for all to follow the same teaching at the same pace.

Appoint a strong and purposeful leadership and management team with responsibilities and accountability at all levels

The school had made unsatisfactory progress towards meeting this recommendation.

The school had a revised organisational chart which showed clearer lines of accountability and it had regular meetings between subject leaders, supervisors and the Principal. Despite the improvements in school organisation, these leaders did not have sufficient awareness of students' academic progress or their own roles and responsibilities to implement the school's action plan for the current school year. Improvements in teaching and learning had led to better attainment and progress. A change of overall leadership was planned for early 2010.

What happens next?

DSIB will continue to undertake Follow-Through Inspections of The Grammar School until the school has progressed to the stage where they are included in the usual inspection cycle for all Dubai schools. DSIB will continue to report to parents regarding the progress made by the school until this occurs.

Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau

Knowledge and Human Development Authority

How to contact us

If you have a concern or wish to comment on any aspect of this report you should contact: inspection@khda.gov.ae.

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