

**Second
Follow-Through Inspection Report
on
Buds Public School**

Report Published February 2011

Basic information

Buds Public School was inspected in December 2009 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 May 2010 and a second Follow-Through Inspection during September 2010. The purpose of this 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 Buds Public School had 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.

Overview

Although the school had not met the requirements of all of the recommendations to an acceptable level and minimal progress had been achieved in some areas. The membership of the school's advisory group had widened to include representation from members of the local community and this had led to the school receiving initial guidance and feedback on its action plan. Whilst this had not yet resulted in impact on the students, it was seen by inspectors as a positive development. The continued lack of challenge in lessons together with curriculum and learning activities which did not meet the needs of students meant that expectations and therefore, attainment, remained low. Some progress in lesson planning had ensured greater consistency in sharing lesson objectives but these were often not revisited at the end of lessons to determine whether students had understood. Despite the beginnings of a performance management system, teachers' understanding of best educational practice was still under-developed and teaching was therefore mostly ineffective in meeting the needs of learners.

Initial Quality Inspection Recommendations

Develop a culture of high expectations and challenge that celebrates student success rather than accepting their limitations.

The school had not met the requirements of this recommendation to an acceptable level.

Staff had continued to extend the number and range of extra-curricular activities available in the school in order to provide greater challenge for students. The students enjoyed the extra-curricular clubs. Teachers used praise more consistently across all stages of the school to encourage and motivate students. However, in a significant proportion of lessons observed during the Follow-Through Inspection, expectations were not sufficiently high. Teachers did not set specific tasks for the higher achieving students. In most lessons the pace of learning was not sufficiently brisk to maintain challenge for all students. In Kindergarten and in the early primary grades, the practical activities set by teachers were often low level tasks such as colouring in or copying from the whiteboard. These were not effective in helping children develop their understanding or key skills.

Extend the curriculum to include more challenge and higher order thinking.

The school had not met the requirements of this recommendation to an acceptable level.

Extra-curricular clubs, projects assigned outside of class time and the use of additional worksheets continued to be the main means of curriculum development. Information on learning styles was posted around the school, but was rarely evident in the teaching of the curriculum. The curriculum centred on the delivery of knowledge - most frequently through teachers' lectures, and use of texts and worksheets. Only a few lessons allowed students to actively engage with the content through discussion and practical activities. This element was particularly lacking in the classes for younger students who were rarely given opportunities to connect their learning to their own lives. The curriculum did not adequately address the development of skills and deeper understanding of key concepts.

Address the needs of different students and identify clear learning outcomes in lesson planning.

The school had not met the requirements of this recommendation to an acceptable level.

A common format for lesson planning had been introduced and this was effective in helping teachers identify the objectives for every lesson. Most teachers used the planner well. They shared the lesson objectives with students but did not review these during or at the end of the lesson and so did not know the extent to which students had met the objectives set. The tasks planned by teachers were not always well matched to the learning needs of students. For example, students would always complete the same task as their peers regardless of their prior achievement. Students requiring extra support were not correctly identified during lessons and assessment systems were not well developed to ensure those requiring assistance received focussed intervention from teachers.

Improve the quality of teaching by using a broader range of teaching strategies.

The school had not met the requirements of this recommendation to an acceptable level.

Limited progress had been made since the last Follow-Through Inspection. A few teachers in the upper stages of the school used group work effectively but this was not evident in the younger classes. Often the pace of the lesson was slow because students waited passively whilst their teachers prepared resources. In a majority of lessons, students were not sufficiently active and spent a large proportion of their lesson time listening to lengthy explanations. Activities were not appropriately challenging. Some practical activities had been introduced, most notably in the Kindergarten and primary stages. However, limited resources and a poor match between task and learning objective meant that the activities were frequently inappropriate for the age and stage of student's development. Teachers did not provide sufficient opportunities for students to work together to solve problems, investigate or research.

Develop assessment processes so that teachers are aware of students' understanding as well as their factual knowledge.

The school had not met the requirements of this recommendation to an acceptable level.

Teachers assessed students' progress regularly using a range of school based tests and examinations. The assessment information was not used effectively by class teachers to support the students' acquisition of key skills. During lessons observed by inspectors, teachers did not question students carefully enough to check their understanding. Consequently, students requiring assistance were not always given the support they needed. Although teachers marked the student's work regularly, the written guidance given was not sufficiently detailed. Students demonstrated limited awareness of their strengths and aspects that required improvement. Teachers commented about the good presentation of work but did not assess the acquisition of skills or students' understanding with sufficient regularity.

Introduce performance management techniques that support and ensure teachers' professional growth.

The school had not met the requirements of this recommendation to an acceptable level.

The school had developed a performance management system which was supplemented by general, whole school and subject specific training. A few teachers had adopted practices, other than repetition and recall, which had resulted in greater engagement and improved students' progress in their lessons. Overall, however, the process of performance management was not yet fully effective in leading to significant improvements in the quality of teaching. The advice offered to teachers by senior leaders was not always sufficiently specific. At all stages of the school, teachers demonstrated a limited understanding of best practice in teaching.

Formalise and broaden the role of the advisory group to ensure that it has stakeholder representation, provides regular guidance and holds the leadership of the school to account.

The school had met the requirements of this recommendation to an acceptable level.

The membership of the school's advisory group had widened to include representation from members of the local community. Invitations had also been sent to parents inviting their participation in the group as active members. The advisory group had started to provide guidance to the school on various aspects of the school's work and took an active role in reviewing the school's 4-year plan. The group held the school accountable for the implementation of the action specified in this plan and within the time frames set. However, these changes had yet to hold the school to account and ensure improved outcomes for students.

Develop a school development plan which sets out measurable goals and time-frames to ensure that the school makes significant progress.

The school had not met the requirements of this recommendation to an acceptable level.

The school's action plan was still too broad and time frames were still unclear. The plan showed to whom different tasks were assigned but did not provide enough guidance on how the school's aspirations in the different areas would be achieved. It was not clear how the school would be able to measure the success of the action taken. The school management had only shared this plan with heads of subjects and implementation of the plan had not started yet. The plan did not appropriately focus on building the school's capacity to lead and manage change such as the required improvements in teaching, learning and the curriculum.

What happens next?

DSIB will continue to undertake Follow-Through Inspections of Buds Public 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 the school has satisfactorily addressed all of the recommendations from the last inspection.

Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau

Knowledge and Human Development Authority

How to contact us

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