

# Pakistan Education Academy Inspection Report

Kindergarten to Grade 12

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## Explanation of the inspection levels used in the report

**Outstanding** – exceptionally high quality of performance or practice.

**Good** – the expected level of quality for every school in Dubai.

**Acceptable** – the minimum level of acceptability required for Dubai. All key aspects of performance and practice in every school should meet or exceed this level.

**Unsatisfactory** – quality not yet at the level acceptable for schools in Dubai. Schools will be expected to take urgent measures to improve the quality of any aspect of their performance or practice that is judged at this level.

The Pakistan Education Academy was inspected in December 2009 as part of the regular inspection of 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, the school's processes for self-evaluation and its capacity for improvement. There was a particular focus on students' progress in Islamic Education (for Muslim students), Arabic, English, mathematics and science.

### Basic information about the school

Located in Oud Metha, the Pakistan Education Academy is a private school providing education for boys and girls from Kindergarten (KG) to Grade 12, aged four to 18 years. The school follows a Pakistani curriculum. At the time of the inspection a dispute about the ownership of the school was having a damaging effect upon the education of the students. The Principal had not been in school for two months leading up to the inspection and had only returned on the first day of the inspection. At the time of the inspection, there were 1,664 students on roll. The student attendance reported by the school for the last academic session was unsatisfactory.

Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau analysed responses to on-line questionnaires completed by parents. Of the parents who responded, most felt that their children liked school. Most felt that their children made good progress in English, mathematics and science and a majority believed they were making good progress in Islamic Education and Arabic. Most parents commented positively about behaviour at the school and believed that the staff expected their children to work hard, to do their best and to be independent and responsible. Most parents thought that teaching was good and that the students were treated fairly. However, the majority felt that there was an insufficient range of stimulating activities. Most parents thought that the school was caring and that it kept their children safe and healthy. The majority said that teachers explained to them how they could help their children and that the school was well led and had good links with parents. A minority of parents believed that the school had good links with the local community. Most felt that the school gave them good information about the progress of their children but some parents felt uncomfortable about

approaching the school with a question or complaint and the majority thought that the school would not deal satisfactorily with their issues and concerns. Comments on the questionnaire were chiefly concerned with the behaviour of teachers, the lack of cleanliness in the washroom and the insufficiency of extra-curricular provision. A few parents also felt that their children were not safe in school. The findings of the inspection endorsed the parents' views about the good behaviour of the students and the lack of cleanliness in the school.

## How well does the school perform overall?

Overall, the school's performance was unsatisfactory. The attainment and progress of children in the KG were unsatisfactory as a whole. Attainment in Islamic Education in Grades 1 to 12 was acceptable but progress was unsatisfactory. Attainment and progress in Arabic were unsatisfactory. Attainment and progress in English, mathematics and science were acceptable. The students' personal and social development was also acceptable overall. They behaved well around the school and were polite and respectful towards their teachers. Older students fulfilled posts of responsibility.

Teaching and learning were unsatisfactory. A significant number of teachers lectured students and did not engage them in the lessons. There was too much reliance on the textbooks and too little opportunity for students to contribute and play an active part in lessons. Students were motivated to learn and concentrated well in lessons but they did not develop habits of critical thinking and were not required to apply their skills to unfamiliar situations. Teachers' assessment procedures did not help students to understand how they could improve. The school's curriculum was unsatisfactory. The two-shift day meant that students, particularly boys, spent too little time in class and the curriculum lacked breadth and balance. There were too few opportunities for creative and physical education. Students' learning was limited by the lack of an adequate extra-curricular programme and outside links. The school failed to protect and support its students satisfactorily. Basic safety precautions were not taken and insufficient attention was paid to cleanliness and hygiene. Teachers failed to offer students sufficient support and guidance and a few parents expressed concern about students' personal safety in school. There were no procedures in place to address the poor attendance of students.

The quality of the leadership and management of the school was unsatisfactory. Improvement activities concentrated on facilities and resources. There was too little focus on evaluating the quality of the education students were receiving and on initiating the changes needed to improve it. The school had an unrealistic idea of its own performance. Parents were kept well informed about their children's progress but they were not involved sufficiently in school life. The school had not developed an effective relationship with the wider community to bring in fresh ideas from which the students could learn. The poor quality of governance had damaging consequences for the school. The dispute about ownership had led to poor staff morale and uncertainty about the direction in which the school was travelling. This had a negative effect on the students' education. The library was poorly stocked and there were too few modern resources to support learning.

## Key features of the school

- The good behaviour of the students and their motivation to learn;
- The Pakistani and Islamic identity of the school;
- Weak attainment and progress and the unsatisfactory quality of teaching and learning;
- The uncertainty surrounding the ownership of the school and the management of the staff;
- The school's unrealistic view of its own performance.

## Recommendations

- Improve teaching skills so that all students can learn more effectively;
- Introduce an activity-based curriculum in the KG;
- Use assessment data to track students' progress and help raise their levels of attainment;
- Design a broad and balanced curriculum that includes opportunities for all students to take part in creative activities and physical education;
- Review the structure of the school day so that all students receive sufficient teaching time;
- Take steps to ensure the personal safety and health of all students in school, with particular reference to cleanliness;
- Develop leaders in the school who have the capacity to implement changes and initiate improvement activities;
- Create a governing body to monitor, support and advise the leadership of the school.

## How good are the students' attainment and progress in key subjects?

Attainment in Islamic Education was acceptable. Younger students were able to memorise short chapters of The Holy Qur'an and relate to the life of the Prophet Mohammed (PBUH). Older students had a good understanding of Islamic values and beliefs. In a Grade 12 lesson, for example, they could discuss human rights in Islam and in a Grade 9 lesson they learned about the importance of family life. Recitation skills were weak. All boys performed their Zuhur and Asar prayers together within the school's newly built mosque. Both male and female students learned to be proud of their faith and their behaviour around the school demonstrated Islamic values. Nevertheless, students made unsatisfactory progress and could have attained higher standards in the subject.

Attainment and progress in Arabic were unsatisfactory. Some students in the primary section learned family names of family members, a few numbers and could write simple words. In Grade 3 some students were able to introduce themselves in Arabic and in Grade 5, a few recognised and used pronouns. Throughout the school, most students' reading and writing abilities were acceptable and, in Grade 11, a few students were able to read and translate a lengthy text with accuracy. However, most students were not making satisfactory progress in speaking and listening and could not converse or use Arabic in their daily lives. Results for the last three years showed that the majority of students were barely passing the exams and attainment was deteriorating year-on-year.

The students' attainment and progress in English were unsatisfactory in the KG and acceptable in the other phases. In the KG, most could sing English songs but were not able to read and write to the standards expected of children of their age. Most students from Grades 3 to 11 could understand, speak, write and answer questions in English. They were able to listen with understanding and to express themselves in accurate English. By Grade 6, students could complete grammatical exercises and use dictionaries to improve their vocabulary. Grade 10 students could read for meaning, make inferences and paraphrase stanzas of poetry. By Grade 11 students could respond to poetry, engage in discussion about it and relate the issues raised to their daily lives. Grade 12 students were able to converse readily and use English for a wide variety of purposes.

Attainment and progress in mathematics were unsatisfactory in the KG but acceptable in the primary and secondary phases, where the standards attained were in line with international norms. Numeric and algebraic skills were well developed throughout the school and students' skills in shape, space, measures and data handling were age appropriate. In the primary phase students could handle addition, subtraction and multiplication confidently and by Grade 8 they could calculate fractions and percentages. By Grade 11 students could use algebraic and graphical methods to solve simultaneous equations in two variables and by Grade 12 they could sketch graphs of sine, cosine and tangent for any angle and generate and interpret graphs based on these functions. However, students were not able to apply what they had learned to real life situations.

Students' attainment and progress in science were acceptable in the primary and secondary phases but unsatisfactory in the KG. Children in KG learned science as a topic but covered too little scientific material to make appropriate progress. In the primary phase most of the students could define and classify objects but were unable to relate their learning to real life. In the secondary phase students were able to draw on examples from beyond the textbooks. Most of them could draw diagrams precisely and could find material from reference books and the internet to support their studies. Students' questions in Grades 9 and 10 reflected their ability to relate theoretical knowledge to facts. Students attained levels in line with international age-related expectations in examinations.

## How good is the students' personal and social development?

The personal and social development of students was acceptable overall. All students behaved well in and about the school and were consistently polite and respectful. Most students were orderly in their classrooms and politely sought permission before entering or leaving. Students had positive and respectful relationships with their teachers. Their attitudes towards learning were generally good and most students had clear ambitions for their future lives. Attendance was unsatisfactory and the school had no effective plan to improve it.

Students' civic understanding was acceptable. Some students acted as prefects, head boys and head girls and supported the teachers in maintaining order around the school. They expressed a wish for an elected school council in which they could raise and discuss issues related to their school. Students were proud of their faith and their origins but expressed respect for other cultures and appreciated the multicultural society in Dubai. They sometimes took part in local events, for example, a marathon organised by Dubai Police, and in cultural competitions. They enjoyed celebrating on occasions such as National Day.

Students' awareness of the Dubai economy was acceptable. Older students showed a keen awareness of economic life in Dubai and an eagerness to contribute to it and serve the community. Younger students understood about such developments as the metro and various parks and malls. Students expressed their affiliation to Dubai and sang the national anthem in assembly. They understood about issues like the threats posed by pollution and could talk knowledgeably about global and environmental matters.

## How good are the teaching and learning?

The quality of teaching was unsatisfactory overall. In a significant number of lessons the teachers' weak knowledge of how students learn resulted in inadequate progress. Weak lesson planning that failed to match the work to the needs of all students, combined with an inappropriate lecturing style, frequently produced unsatisfactory learning. This was compounded by an over-reliance upon textbooks. The dependence on direct instruction denied students opportunities for discussion and debate and the chance to develop critical and higher order thinking skills. The limitations of the school's long-term and medium-term planning and the failure to use assessment data effectively left teachers without the guidance they needed to plan effectively. In the main, the staff worked hard to promote students' learning but a number of teachers were teaching subjects for which they needed further training. In the better lessons teachers had secure subject knowledge and made good use of resources. They made their lessons enjoyable and created an atmosphere of excitement through good humour, praise and encouragement. But the teaching methods used in many lessons did not sufficiently engage or motivate students.

Students demonstrated a strong desire to learn. Even when the teaching style made strong demands on their attention span, students remained focused on the lessons. Much of the success in examinations was as a result of very hard concentration and a willingness and eagerness to learn. When allowed, students collaborated effectively with one another, but they made limited connections between different areas of learning and seldom exhibited skills of critical thinking. Students rarely applied their skills in real-world or unfamiliar areas because they were not required to do so.

The assessment of students' work and monitoring of their progress were unsatisfactory. The school tested students extensively, but it did not use the data gathered to track students' progress effectively. The school's managers had data about the previous attainment of students but made no projections about what they were expected to achieve in the future. Assessment information was not used consistently or effectively to help teachers to plan their lessons. The quality of marking was too variable and was not implemented consistently across the school. Students were not sufficiently involved in assessing their own work and they received too little guidance on what they needed to do to improve their work.

## How well does the curriculum meet the educational needs of all students?

The school's curriculum was unsatisfactory. The school followed the Federal Board of Pakistan curriculum to enable students to transfer to and from similar schools. Though syllabus content was regularly reviewed and revised, the curriculum itself was based on examinations and driven by the textbooks. Owing to the two-shift day for boys and girls, the school day was too short by international standards, particularly the afternoon session for boys. The effect of the shortage of time overall was made worse by the allocation of too little time to some subjects, such as mathematics, Arabic and Islamic Education. Students' opportunities to learn creative subjects and take part in physical education were curtailed and music did not appear on the curriculum at all. Opportunities for choice were built into the secondary school curriculum and there were extra lessons on Saturday mornings before examinations. Students in Grade 12 attended higher education conferences. There were no special arrangements for new students whose first language was not spoken in the school. Students participated in centrally organised competitions and in some public speaking contests and societies met occasionally. But there were too few extra-curricular opportunities to engage most students' interest and extend their learning. There were no links with the community to prepare students for the world of work.

## How well does the school protect and support students?

The arrangements for the protection and support of students were unsatisfactory. There was no playground for the students, although both ends of the road where they played were sealed and supervised. Arrival and departure of students on the buses were well supervised but the buses were not equipped with seat belts, although the drivers had a record of all their passengers. The school building was large with wide corridors and sufficient staircases but the standard of cleanliness in school was very poor, particularly in the washroom areas where the floors were wet and there were no hygiene supplies. Cleaning materials were left out and presented a safety hazard. The drinking water facilities for students were unhygienic and below acceptable standards. The Civil Defence arranged training but no additional fire drills were held. A nurse administered first aid and kept meticulous records and a doctor visited to check the students' health. Medicines were safely stored but laboratory chemicals were not safely locked away. The school did not actively promote a healthy lifestyle.

Relationships between staff and students were respectful but staff did not know their students well. There were procedures for advice and guidance and behaviour management systems were in place. There was no system for the tracking of students' performance to support their academic progress and personal well-being. Students were punctual to lessons but attendance was very poor and there were no systems in place to address the matter.



## How good are the leadership and management of the school?

The quality of leadership and management was unsatisfactory. A contributory factor was that the Principal had been absent from her post for two months owing to a dispute involving the management of the school and had returned on the day the inspection began. This dispute had a damaging effect upon the leadership of the school and the education of the students. Parents expressed approval of the school's record of examination success and of the grounding that the school gave in Islamic Education within a Pakistani environment. However, the school's leaders did not give a clear picture of what was necessary to raise standards. A management team had been recently appointed but decision-making remained with the Principal and there were no procedures for encouraging teachers to improve teaching and learning. Teachers were monitored frequently but the process did not lead to professional development or discussions about how to spread good practice in the school.

The school improvement plan was mainly concerned with facilities and resources. There was no systematic evaluation of the school's strengths and weaknesses and therefore no action plan for improvement based on secure evidence. Assessment data had not been analysed to determine what steps should be taken to improve the learning opportunities for students.

Parents expressed a wish to be more fully involved in school life but the school had established no partnership with them to enlist their expertise in contributing towards school development. They were, however, kept well informed of their children's progress by monthly report cards and regular written reports. Students did not benefit from the engagement of the wider community with the school, nor did they have the opportunity to learn from taking part in business and community life. There were few links with other schools and, although students collected for charitable causes, they were not engaged in voluntary work.

The school did not have a board of governors committed to supporting and advising the leadership and management team. The Principal and the teachers were held accountable for examination results but there was no broader vision about how students needed to be educated in the modern world; nor were demands made on the leadership to change and develop school practices to meet the students' needs.

The school was adequately staffed with qualified teachers. The classrooms were of a good size and the furniture sufficient for the students' needs. The sports field and KG play area were out of use and there were not enough specialist rooms for both the primary and secondary schools. The library was poorly stocked and the school had too few modern resources, including technology, to meet the students' learning needs.

## Summary of inspection judgements

In their evaluation of the overall effectiveness of the school, the inspection team made judgements about the following aspects of the school's performance.

The four descriptors are: Outstanding; Good; Acceptable; Unsatisfactory.

How good are the students' attainment and progress in Islamic Education?			
Age group:	Kindergarten	Grades 1-8	Grades 9-12
Attainment	Not Applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Progress over time	Not Applicable	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory

How good are the students' attainment and progress in Arabic?			
Age group:	Kindergarten	Grades 1-8	Grades 9-12
Attainment	Not Applicable	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Progress over time	Not Applicable	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory

How good are the students' attainment and progress in English?			
Age group:	Kindergarten	Grades 1-8	Grades 9-12
Attainment	Unsatisfactory	Acceptable	Acceptable
Progress over time	Unsatisfactory	Acceptable	Acceptable

How good are the students' attainment and progress in mathematics?			
Age group:	Kindergarten	Grades 1-8	Grades 9-12
Attainment	Unsatisfactory	Acceptable	Acceptable
Progress over time	Unsatisfactory	Acceptable	Acceptable

How good are the students' attainment and progress in science?			
Age group:	Kindergarten	Grades 1-8	Grades 9-12
Attainment	Unsatisfactory	Acceptable	Acceptable
Progress over time	Unsatisfactory	Acceptable	Acceptable

How good is the students' personal and social development?			
Age group:	Kindergarten	Grades 1-8	Grades 9-12
Attitudes and behaviour	Good	Good	Good
Islamic, cultural and civic understanding	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Economic and environmental understanding	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

How good are teaching and learning?			
Age group:	Kindergarten	Grades 1-8	Grades 9-12
Teaching for effective learning	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Quality of students' learning	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Assessment	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory

How well does the curriculum meet the educational needs of all students?			
Age group:	Kindergarten	Grades 1-8	Grades 9 -12
Curriculum quality	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory

How well does the school protect and support students?			
Age group:	Kindergarten	Grades 1-8	Grades 9 -12
Health and safety	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Quality of support	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory

How good are the leadership and management of the school?	
Quality of leadership	Unsatisfactory
Self-evaluation and improvement planning	Unsatisfactory
Partnerships with parents and the community	Unsatisfactory
Governance	Unsatisfactory
Staffing, facilities and resources	Unsatisfactory

How well does the school perform overall?
Unsatisfactory

## Next Steps

The school has been asked to prepare an action plan indicating how it will address the main findings of the report, and to share that plan with parents. The next inspection will report on the progress made by the school.

Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau will undertake a Follow-Through Inspection of The Pakistan Education Academy within three months of the original inspection and report to parents regarding the progress made by the school.

**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](mailto:inspection@khda.gov.ae).

More information about Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau can be found at [www.khda.gov.ae](http://www.khda.gov.ae).

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