

Third
Follow-Through Inspection Report
on
United International Private School

Basic information

United International Private School was inspected during the 2008-9 academic year 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, a second Follow-Through Inspection during November 2009 and a third Follow-Through Inspection in April 2010. The purpose of these Follow-Through Inspections was to evaluate the progress made by the school in achieving improvements based on the recommendations set out in the first inspection report.

This is the third Follow-Through report issued on United International Private School.

Progress

Inspectors judged that United International Private School had still not satisfactorily addressed all of the recommendations made by DSIB at the Initial Quality Inspection. Inspectors will continue to undertake Follow-Through Inspections at regular intervals until all the recommendations made by inspectors have been addressed to an acceptable level.

Overview

The United International Private School had made significant improvements since the previous Follow-Through Inspection. The time allocated to the teaching of Islamic Education and Arabic was compliant with Ministry of Education regulations and the school had taken appropriate measures to improve students' understanding and appreciation of Islam and the UAE. Provision for students with special educational needs was acceptable. Assessment of learning had improved but data was not used well to inform curriculum plans. Arrangements for self-evaluation and school development plans had improved and the school's leaders had established a clearer understanding of students' attainment levels in three key subjects. Resources for learning were underused in science lessons and noisy air conditioners affected the quality of students' learning experiences. More than a few classrooms were too small for the numbers of students in attendance. The school had provided professional development for teachers and this had led to improvement in the quality of students' learning. However, there were still too many students who were not engaged fully in their lessons. The school managers demonstrated capacity to lead further improvement.

Initial Quality Inspection Recommendations

Ensure full compliance in provision of Islamic Education and Arabic.

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

All classes in both the primary and secondary schools were fully compliant with Ministry of Education regulations regarding the time to be allocated in the curriculum to Islamic Education and Arabic. Non-native speakers of Arabic from Grade 1 to Grade 10 took four periods per week. They also took two periods of Islamic Education across the school.

Develop an understanding and appreciation of Islam throughout the school.

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

Students' understanding and appreciation of Islam was evident throughout the school. Students demonstrated a basic level of understanding of Islam. They had a secure understanding of the relevance and impact of Islam on contemporary society in Dubai. The school facility featured many quotes from The Holy Qur'an in both Arabic and English and numerous displays were used effectively to promote understanding about Dubai and the UAE.

Improve teaching methods and activities so that students' learning needs and interests are more closely met and students are more actively involved in lessons.

The school had not met the requirements of this recommendation to an acceptable level. Teaching methods had improved since the previous Follow-Through Inspection in October 2009. Teachers planned their lessons more carefully to make sure that students were actively engaged in activities which helped develop their learning. Almost all teachers included student activities in their lessons and the majority of the lessons observed were well executed. However, despite these positive steps, there were still too many lessons, approximately one third, where students were not appropriately challenged. In most of the classes observed by inspectors, teachers provided the same tasks for all students. Higher achieving students and those requiring additional help with their learning required better support. Although a majority of teachers asked thought-provoking questions, more than a few asked their students to chant simple facts in unison as a way to learn. This did not assist the understanding of many of the students. Importantly, overcrowded classrooms impeded the range of learning activities possible in a significant number of cases.

Make provision for students with special educational needs.

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

Provision for students with special educational needs was acceptable. Provision was offered to students on Saturdays only and not during regular lessons or during the school day. There were two specialised teachers who had a full teaching timetable during the week and then taught eleven students on Saturdays. Support was provided across all subjects except Islamic Education and Arabic. Individual education plans were in place for each identified student and these were regularly updated. Support teachers co-operated with subject teachers to track the progress of the students with special educational needs.

Involve all teachers in analysing and using a range of assessment data to improve feedback to students and the tracking of their progress, and to inform lesson planning and curriculum development.

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

Following the last Follow-Through Inspection, there had been improvements in the arrangements to assess and track students' progress. Teachers used a range of assessment data to inform their work. Staff recorded students' progress using data from quizzes, homework, interaction in the classroom and examinations. However, the assessment data was not used effectively to plan the curriculum in certain subjects.

Develop rigorous self-evaluation which identifies key priorities for the school's improvement plan.

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

The schools' arrangements for self-evaluation and improvement planning were much improved. There was a clear focus upon the key priorities of curriculum, teaching, assessment and tracking of students' progress. International benchmark testing had been completed in English, mathematics and science and the results had been thoroughly analysed to identify strengths and weaknesses in attainment and progress and to plan strategies to address these weaknesses. School leaders had an accurate knowledge of their students' progress against international standards and had taken action to raise attainment. Professional development had been provided for teachers, following a survey of their individual needs. The training included classroom management courses. Policies and procedures for assessment had been improved, and four workshops had been provided for teachers on examination development and assessing learning.

Improve existing facilities and resources.

The school had not met the requirements of this recommendation to an acceptable level. During the Follow-Through Inspection, the library was not used by students, indicating that this resource was not being used effectively to support learning. Although two science laboratories were provided by the school, students were not observed using them for investigations. The compact classrooms did not allow teachers to use a sufficiently wide variety of teaching methods and this, in turn, affected the quality of students' learning. Air-conditioners in classrooms frequently made excessive noise, which impeded the abilities of teachers and students to hear one another.

What happens next?

DSIB will continue to undertake Follow-Through Inspections of United International Private School until the school has progressed to the stage where they are included in the regular 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 Initial Quality Inspection.

**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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