

**Second
Follow-Through Inspection Report
ON
Pakistan Education Academy**

Report Published February 2011

Basic information

Pakistan Education Academy was inspected during the 2009-10 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 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 Pakistan Education Academy had still not satisfactorily addressed the recommendations made by DSIB at the Initial Quality Inspection. Inspectors will continue to undertake Follow-Through Inspections until the recommendations made by inspectors have been satisfactorily addressed.

Overview

Whilst the school leadership were committed to improve, the circumstances in this school make change difficult to achieve. The senior leadership team were committed but exerted little positive influence over the way the school worked. Leaders and teachers lacked the expertise and understanding needed to improve academic standards. Teaching staff and support staff were under-developed and the plan for professional development was limited. Not all staff were committed to change. The progress noted in the previous Follow-Through Inspection in Kindergarten had not been maintained and illustrated the need for senior leaders to take a more strategic role in ensuring positive initiatives were understood and acted upon by all staff. Students remained committed and happy and the relationships within the school were more positive. However, the school lacked the capacity to improve. Throughout the school, there was a lack of challenge for students, especially in the elementary phase and in Kindergarten. At the secondary stages students were also capable of achieving much higher standards.

Initial Quality Inspection Recommendations

Improve teaching skills so that all students can learn more effectively.

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

The school's internal training of teachers was still in its infancy and had yet to have significant influence on classroom practice, although there had been some improvement. Approximately half of the lessons observed were acceptable but too many were still unsatisfactory. Teachers did not have sufficiently high expectations of their students and the pace of learning was often at the pace of the slowest learner. Students were told too much by teachers, so that they had little chance to think for themselves and learn at their own speed. Learning was too tightly linked to textbooks and not to real-life situations and students lacked the opportunity to collaborate and gain in independence. The school had plans to involve external specialist support and to learn from teaching excellence beyond the school, but had not yet put the plans into practice.

Introduce an activity-based curriculum in the Kindergarten.

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

Staff changes had meant that the previous positive start to this recommendation had not been maintained. During class time children in Kindergarten had little opportunity to engage in active learning and therefore lacked independence. The activity room was no longer being used as previously planned. During playtime the activity room was used well by classroom assistants who supported children in role play in the kitchen area, sharing ideas, using complex language and sharing reading books. This was not, however, a feature of classroom practice. The recently appointed Kindergarten leader had started to provide leadership for teachers regarding activity-based learning in the classroom and recent visits to the zoo supported a more child-centred approach to the curriculum. However, teacher expertise remained poor and there had minimal improvements in children's learning experiences.

Design a broad and balanced curriculum that includes opportunities for all students to take part in creative activities and physical education.

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

Individual teachers and subject leaders had made some progress in broadening the curriculum. For example, the science co-ordinator had enabled students in Grade 8 to create home-based projects on temperature and expansion which meant that students were more enthusiastic about what they had learned. Pairs of students were actively involved in a physics investigation and shared their hypotheses. Students also spoke enthusiastically about the introduction of a speech and drama club. Overall, however, the curriculum remained narrow and lacked breadth and balance. Creative activities were still limited as art, drama and music did not feature in the secondary curriculum and extra-curricular activities were still limited in range and number.

Use assessment data to track students' progress and help raise their levels of attainment.

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

The school had started to record test results and had begun to use them to identify students requiring assistance in their learning. Through their assessment in lessons, teachers provided some support and guidance for less able students. Teachers of older students were more aware of their students' needs and matched work accordingly. However, the senior leaders had not yet ensured that all teachers used assessment information routinely to plan their lessons so that all students received sufficient challenge for their different abilities in all subjects. The action plan to improve assessment was not detailed enough and did not show a systematic approach that is likely to ensure success in the near future.

Review the structure of the school day so that all students receive sufficient teaching time.

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

Despite all of the students attending during one shift, the school day remained too short for students to receive sufficient teaching time. The short length of the school day meant that significant areas of the curriculum were compromised due to a lack of teaching time. For example, the girls had no physical education lessons and secondary students did not receive tuition in music, drama or art. These subjects were also limited in Grades 1 to 8. Boys received only one physical education lesson each week. The school still failed to provide the required amount of lessons for Arabic, for example, Grade 9 students had

only one period of Arabic per week. The length of the school day also prevented the school carrying out any meaningful professional development and impeded monitoring and evaluation by subject leaders.

Take steps to ensure the personal safety and health of all students in school, with particular reference to cleanliness.

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

The students interviewed felt safe in school but despite significantly more cleaning staff the school continued to be poorly maintained, unclean and therefore, unsafe. Toilets were not functioning effectively and hygiene practices were poor. Cleaning chemicals were left within reach of young children. As unhealthy food options were still available and there was little education regarding healthy eating, most students opted for unhealthy options. Whilst the nurse and doctor provided an acceptable quality of care to students, one nurse for 1450 students was inadequate. The school had not had a fire drill since last October and there were no visible procedures for evacuation. This together with expired fire extinguishers presented a significant hazard to student and staff safety.

Develop leaders in the school who have the capacity to implement changes and initiate improvement activities.

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

Individual subject leaders were committed to improving. However, most had a very limited capacity to implement changes and initiate improvement activities. Whilst a few co-ordinators were developing their expertise through their own personal research into how students learn best, they still lacked understanding of which changes would best lead to improvement. Feedback on planning was given by most co-ordinators but there was no mechanism to evaluate how this feedback supported students' learning and led to improvement. Any small initiatives implemented by individuals had little impact as they were not developed across the school nor supported with resources. Where improvements had been made, for example in Kindergarten, these had been lost due to the resignation of key personnel and a lack of understanding of how to continue initiatives.

Create a governing body to monitor, support and advise the leadership of the school.

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

Despite an evident desire to obtain the support of a governing body, the school leadership had been unable to persuade the owners of the need to create such a body and there were no plans for such a body to be created in the near future. There was therefore, a lack of accountability and objective evaluation of all aspects of the school's performance and the leadership had no external support to initiate changes. Whilst there was still a parents' committee, this has little impact on the life of the school.

What happens next?

DSIB will continue to undertake Follow-Through Inspections of Pakistan Education Academy 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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