

Fourth
Follow-Through Inspection Report
on
United International Private School

Kindergarten to Grade 10

Report published May 2011

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) has now conducted four Follow-Through Inspections; the first in May 2009, a second Follow-Through Inspection in October 2009, a third Follow-Through Inspection in April 2010 and a fourth in November 2010. The purpose of this fourth 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 reports.

Progress

Inspectors judged that United International Private School had satisfactorily addressed the recommendations made by DSIB at the Initial Quality Inspection. Inspectors will inspect the school as part of the regular school inspection cycle during the coming academic year.

Overview

Led by enlightened and dedicated leadership, the school had worked hard to secure improvements for the benefit of its students. It had maintained the progress seen at the most recent Follow-Through Inspection and developed further. For example, the assessment process was more thorough and increasingly effective. The school had invested well in a new building that had helped to ease overcrowding throughout the school and provided valuable space for the Kindergarten. The staff had responded enthusiastically to the need to improve teaching strategies and the quality of learning. In all classrooms, teachers were involving students much more in their own learning; this was improving their progress, as well as their enjoyment of their work. Teachers were becoming more versatile in their planning, although they did not yet allow enough for the different abilities of the students in each class. The school had also focused strongly and successfully on expanding students' awareness of Islamic culture in lessons and assemblies exemplified by the models of famous landmarks in Dubai, made from recycled

materials, around the school. The school was well aware of how it needed to improve further and had the capacity in its leadership and staff to do so decisively.

Initial Quality Inspection Recommendations

Ensure full compliance in provision of Islamic Education and Arabic.

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

The curriculum in all primary and secondary classes was fully compliant with the Ministry of Education regulations regarding the time to be allocated to these subjects. Muslim students in Grades 1 to 3 studied three periods of Islamic Education per week; in Grades 4 to 9 they studied two periods. Non-native speakers of Arabic from Grades 1 to 10 studied four periods of Arabic per week.

Develop an understanding and appreciation of Islam throughout the school.

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

All students listened carefully to The Holy Qur'an and Prophet's Sayings during assembly. They showed good knowledge and understanding of general Islamic principles. They demonstrated an appreciation of the Pillars of Islam. Muslim students presented a good performance of Pilgrimage (Hajj to Mecca), and other students listened and observed carefully. There were good relationships between Muslim students and others throughout the school. Most students understood how Islam respects all people. They also had a secure understanding of the relevance and the impact of Islam on contemporary society in Dubai.

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 met the requirements of this recommendation to an acceptable level.

Focused monitoring and professional development had led to improvements in teaching in all subjects. Many lessons included a range of learning strategies including role play, investigation and enquiry. Students worked very well in collaborative groups to produce shared stories and presentations. Science lessons were characterised by practical activities and while the laboratories were small, they were used effectively to support investigations. Students responded well to being given greater independence. In Kindergarten, activities did not always suit the needs of young learners and there was not enough focus on activity-based learning. Overall, teachers were beginning to plan

learning activities which better met the needs of a range of students. Although they had used the data from recent international tests to inform their planning, lessons did not routinely have enough challenge for the different abilities of students.

Make provision for students with special educational needs.

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

It had effectively linked the provision of students with special educational needs with results of the diagnostic tests, which were carried out twice a year in all subjects. After consultation with parents, educational programmes were designed for those students who needed extra help, including attending enrichment classes. Students with higher ability were given extra assignments such as tutoring students with lower abilities. Students and their parents had a better and more detailed understanding of their progress. This created a more positive learning environment for all students in the school.

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

It had made significant progress in completely restructuring the assessment process across all subjects. Assessment was being used effectively to track students' progress, and to inform lesson planning and curriculum development. While these developments were in the early stages, there had been noticeable impact in science and in English where data had been analysed effectively to bring about a more focused approach to teaching writing and an emphasis on investigation in science. The use of assessment tools in lessons, such as mini-whiteboards, ensured students were increasingly involved in assessments which guided their learning. Leadership personnel were aware of the need to further develop the use of assessment guidelines to provide more precise feedback to students on how to improve.

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

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

The school displayed a strong commitment to improve. It responded to ideas and opinions from key people, especially staff, parents and, to a lesser extent, students. Senior staff conducted regular and thorough monitoring of its provision, and teaching in

particular. They gathered a considerable amount of information that helped them to identify strengths and areas to improve. They had clearly been successful in improving teaching and learning. Subject leaders produced effective improvement plans; these were well structured and had achievable targets that were relevant to the needs of the students.

Improve existing facilities and resources.

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

The school had moved into new premises. Its 17 classrooms and other rooms created much-needed space for all students across the school. Although many classrooms remained quite small, they were fit for purpose and did not represent a barrier to effective learning. The specialist rooms, especially the library, computer rooms and science laboratories were suitably resourced and used constantly by all classes. The school had also invested in new air conditioners to minimise any excess noise in classrooms.

What happens next?

United International Private School will be scheduled as part of the regular inspection cycle for a full inspection during the next academic year.

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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