

New Indian Model School Inspection Report

Kindergarten to Grade 12

Report issued February 2010

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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 New Indian Model School 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 the Al Gahoud area of Dubai, the New Indian Model School is a private school providing education for 6,000 students from Kindergarten (KG) to Grade 12, ages three to 18 years. The school followed a Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) curriculum, and operated a two-shift system, with girls and younger boys attending in the morning and older boys attending in the afternoon. The student attendance reported by the school for the last academic session was unsatisfactory. It was, however, adversely affected by some parents prolonging their stay in India because of fears of swine flu.

Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau analysed responses to on-line questionnaires completed by parents. A very high proportion of these responses stated that children liked their school and considered that staff encouraged them to do their best and become independent. A large majority considered that teaching was good. However, a significant number would welcome more extra-curricular activities, sport and games, particularly for girls, and would prefer morning tuition for all the boys. A high proportion believed that their children were treated fairly in school. They felt comfortable about approaching the school. They appreciated that the school consulted them and was concerned about their child's welfare. They considered that their children made good progress.

How well does the school perform overall?

The New Indian Model School provided an acceptable standard of education, with several good features. The students' attainment and progress were at least acceptable in all the key subjects at all phases. Attainment and progress were good in the middle and upper schools in Islamic Education, Arabic and mathematics. Students' attitudes and behaviour were good. They showed care and consideration for others, had a mature understanding of Islamic traditions and values and knew how they could contribute to Dubai's future development.

The quality of teaching and learning was acceptable. Teachers had acceptable subject knowledge but used too narrow a range of teaching methods and therefore did not always fully engage students. Assessment was unsatisfactory. Teachers did not use the data they had to help improve teaching and learning and their marking provided insufficient guidance to help students improve. The curriculum was of acceptable quality. However, there were few creative options, little sport for girls, and insufficient opportunities for students to use information and communication technologies, undertake research or develop critical thinking. The school's support and protection of students were good, as were staff-student relationships.

Leadership and management of the school were acceptable. The recently appointed Principal had begun monitoring and evaluating various aspects of the school and had diagnosed the need to broaden teaching styles after observing several classes. He was working with the experienced senior team to introduce improvements. It was too early to see a major impact, however. Partnerships with parents and the local community were at an early stage of development and of acceptable quality. Governance was acceptable: the Trustees were actively involved in the school and actively supported major improvements. They did not, however, consult or involve parents or other stakeholders in decision-making. The school's staffing, facilities and resources were acceptable overall.

Key features of the school

- Students achieved well in Islamic Education, Arabic and mathematics in the middle and upper schools;
- The high quality of assemblies promoted good values and enhanced general knowledge and confidence in speaking;
- The students' appreciation of Islamic values was demonstrated in their care for others;
- The students' behaviour was good;
- The students' understanding of Dubai and its culture was outstanding;
- The quality of teaching across the school was inconsistent, varying from outstanding to unsatisfactory. Generally, the range of teaching strategies was narrow;
- Assessment was unsatisfactory. The school did not use available assessment data to provide students with the information they needed to understand how well they were performing, what they needed to do to improve and how to do it;
- The school successfully ensured the safety and well-being of its students;
- The Principal and the senior team had recently improved the monitoring of teaching and identified weaknesses, but further work was needed;
- The Trustees provided financial support, and were well informed about the school. They did not, however, consult with parents to take account of their views.

Recommendations

- Improve students' attainment and progress in English;
- Establish consistently high quality of teaching and increase the teachers' range of teaching strategies;
- Improve the use of assessment data to help the teachers to:
 - plan lessons
 - identify the teachers' professional learning needs
 - provide students with detailed information about what they are doing well, what they need to do next to improve their learning and how to do so;
- Provide more Arabic lessons in Grade 9 in order to be compliant with Ministry of Education requirements;
- The Trustees should consult parents and involve them in decision-making.

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

Attainment in Islamic Education was good. Almost all students made good progress, particularly with their understanding of Islam and Islamic practices. The level of detail and accuracy demonstrated by students in their written and oral responses to questions was above the expected level for their age. They made good links between what they were learning and their everyday lives. Students in all grades discussed the teachings of the Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) and linked them to daily life. Students' recitation of The Holy Qur'an was variable in quality. Only a few students in all grades were unable to recite it with sufficient accuracy.

Attainment and progress were good overall in Arabic. Most Grade 3 students could name, read and write simple words such as the names of fruits. By Grade 5 they demonstrated, through drama, good understanding of a story and could read and write correctly. Grade 10 students read, understood and wrote about the lives of historical figures. They used drama, discussions, question and answer sessions and conversations effectively to show understanding of the stories they had read. By Year 12, most students contributed well to group discussions about characters, but a few, especially boys, pronounced incorrectly and were unable to participate fully.

Across the school, students' progress and attainment in English were acceptable. Over three years, results in examinations had improved. Vocabulary, speaking and pencil manipulation were well developed from the KG. Speaking, role-play and chanting in assemblies developed students' vocabulary, spoken fluency and confidence. They developed good vocabulary and listening skills and excellent handwriting. However, there was too little evidence of extended reading and creative writing, particularly in the upper secondary classes. Students predominantly wrote short sentences in workbooks or copied from the blackboard. The study of literature and poetry focused on memorisation and comprehension skills were weak.

Attainment in mathematics was good overall. Students consistently attained standards above age-related norms; they had particular strengths in mental calculation. Children made acceptable progress in the KG. They used appropriate mathematical language and could count beyond ten. Students made good progress in other years, showing high-level computational skills and the ability to derive and apply formulae. For example, students could calculate lengths of perimeters of regular polygons. In

the upper school, students could form laws of exponents and calculate the total surface area of a cylinder, pyramid and cone. The oldest students showed excellent problem solving skills, for example, on permutation and probability theorem.

Attainment and progress in science were acceptable. Up to Grade 2 the students' knowledge was basic. They categorised types of animals into wild and pet, land and water animals. They gradually increased their factual knowledge and, by Grade 12, they used appropriate scientific language, described processes, classified substances and demonstrated very good experimental skills in their laboratory work. Physics emerged as a strength of the school in external examinations at Grade 12. There was, however, little investigative and research work done independently by the students in most classes.

How good is the students' personal and social development?

Students' attitudes and behaviour were good and positive relationships prevailed throughout the school. Students behaved in a disciplined and orderly manner and conducted themselves in assemblies with patience and respect. They were mostly well behaved in the absence of teachers in the classrooms. The behaviour of a few younger students was unsatisfactory in the afternoons. Prefects and student volunteers contributed well to monitoring the movement in the corridors. Older students spontaneously helped the younger ones. Late arrivals at school were rare as the large majority came by bus. Students invariably arrived on time for lessons. Recently the average attendance was unsatisfactory. The school reported that this was adversely affected by many families remaining longer in India because of fears of swine flu.

The students demonstrated outstanding maturity and civic understanding. They showed care and consideration for their peers and staff. They had a good understanding of Islam and its teachings and were happy to follow the traditions and values. They clearly understood how they could contribute to the future of Dubai, and enjoyed its multicultural nature and cultural diversity. The senior students' knowledge and understanding of Dubai's economic progress and its position in the global economy were outstanding. All had an excellent awareness of the growth and the consequences of its rapid development, especially in the current world recession. They showed concern about environmental issues like conservation and recycling and had participated in schemes to support environmental preservation like 'Clean Dubai'.

How good are the teaching and learning?

The quality of teaching and learning was acceptable, overall. The majority of teachers structured their lessons satisfactorily with a clear introduction, often recapping on previous work, a main teaching activity and concluding with a summary of the main teaching points. However, learning objectives were not always clear in teachers' planning and quite often tasks and activities did not offer opportunities for students to think creatively and imaginatively. A minority of teachers planned interesting and relevant activities, which challenged thinking and engaged students in active learning. These teachers supported students' learning well through effective questioning and discussion. There was effective dialogue in these lessons, which extended students' thinking. The majority of teachers knew their subjects well and a few had very good subject knowledge. Most imparted knowledge effectively but a significant minority lacked the skills to teach really well. They

used a narrow range of teaching strategies, relying mostly on whole-class teaching, without supporting weaker students and extending the more able. The lessons were often focused on the completion of worksheets.

Students had too few opportunities to be actively involved in practical learning. Teachers often supplemented the textbooks with worksheets. These varied in quality and there was often a lack of appropriate challenge that resulted in poor consolidation of learning. Consequently, the pace of learning was too slow for students. A few teachers used information and communication technology in their teaching but few used it as a tool for teaching or research. In science lessons, the students gained knowledge but some scientific skills, such as hypothesising, were not well developed. Very few hands-on experiences were offered, and the students did not arrive at any conclusions independently through investigation or research.

Assessment arrangements were unsatisfactory. The school had recently introduced new procedures for assessment and record keeping but they required further standardisation. Whilst data had been gathered, they had neither been analysed nor used effectively to influence teaching and learning. A few teachers, particularly in the upper grades, had a good knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of their students' learning. As a result they were able to provide more closely matched learning support and guidance. Marking rarely provided any comments on the quality of students' work or suggestions for how it could be improved. Students were not trained in self-assessment, which limited their ability to review and improve their own work.

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

The curriculum was of acceptable quality. The school followed the CBSE curriculum, taught in English. It offered a rich variety of languages: Arabic, Hindi, Malayalam and Urdu. The KG rightly concentrated on developing language and basic number work, but had limited facilities for physical activities. The upper school covered the subjects required to prepare students for the Kerala Board's science and commerce examinations. The school's managers had reviewed the curriculum and had identified and planned to address a big increase in demand from Grade 2 to Grade 3. In Grade 9, the number of Arabic lessons provided did not meet Ministry of Education requirements. Information and communication technology was insufficiently integrated into teaching and learning, and the computer rooms were used mainly by the senior classes. Although drama was included in some English lessons, creative options within the curriculum were limited. Good assemblies and cross-curricular performances enabled students to develop their language and confidence in public speaking. Physical exercise was available to all students, but girls had limited access to sports. Students had opportunities to visit various parts of Dubai on days out and participated in Dubai's environmental campaigns. Extra-curricular activities were acceptable, taking into consideration the restrictions imposed on staff and facilities by the two-shift day. Students could enjoy art and physical education, with more sporting opportunities available to boys. The formation of English, mathematics, science, commerce, ecology and commerce clubs provided opportunities for students to develop their talent and skills.

How well does the school protect and support students?

The school's protection and support of students were good. Safety measures were good in the school as well as on the buses. Students were effectively supervised in school and during their arrival and departure on school transport. They reported that they felt safe and supported in school. The school had qualified medical staff with appropriate medical facilities; first aid kits were provided in all buses and all buildings. Regular fire drills were conducted and recorded. Classrooms in the new and older buildings were of adequate size, and appropriately furnished and equipped for learning, but a few were congested, especially the KG classes. Although the students' toilets were well maintained and hygienic in the morning shift for girls, there were lapses in the afternoon shift for boys. Child protection procedures were well understood by staff.

Almost all teachers and staff had good relationships with students. Parents confirmed that staff showed concern for the care and welfare of their children. A full-time counsellor provided pastoral care for students but did not provide in-depth career and college guidance. Student behaviour was excellent with few discipline issues. The monitoring of students' personal and academic progress was recorded for each student and shared during parent conferences six times per year. There were clear guidelines for attendance and punctuality.

How good are the leadership and management of the school?

The quality of leadership and management was acceptable overall. The recently appointed Principal showed good leadership qualities. A consultative leader, he worked closely with the senior staff, which ensured a consistent presence across the morning and afternoon school shifts. He had rapidly increased the number of classroom observations and correctly identified the urgent need to introduce a wider range of teaching styles, and to increase the use of modern technologies. A specialist had been appointed to provide staff training. It was, however, too soon to evaluate the impact of these promising initiatives.

The ambitious school development plan for the current academic year included many major developments, such as an indoor stadium and modification of laboratories. It accurately identified needs, such as the introduction of formative assessment, remedial coaching and additional activities and clubs. The plan was not yet costed or accompanied by a programme for implementing so many initiatives.

Partnership with parents was in an early stage of development. A parent committee had recently been established. It was too soon to see the effect of its support, but parents spoke positively about consultation and appreciated their six opportunities each year to consult with teachers.

Governance was acceptable. The Chair of Trustees had founded and built the school to provide an Indian education for children of families living in Dubai. He maintained regular contact with the school. Whilst anxious not to interfere in running the school, the Trustees were aware of its successes and supported its needs. They had recently funded the building of a large new block of classrooms and specialist facilities. They did not, however, consult sufficiently with parents or other stakeholders to consider their views.

Staffing was good. Despite its large size, the school was fully staffed with qualified teachers, mostly teaching within their speciality. Many were highly experienced. Facilities and resources were

acceptable overall. A new large block had just been built to provide additional classrooms and specialist facilities. Several of the older classrooms, including those in KG, were small and cramped and constricted teaching and learning. The school had recently equipped a multi-media room and specialist computer rooms. Its science laboratories were dated. The library was spacious but the books were not arranged attractively and it contained relatively few to attract young readers, although several spent time there each week when others in the class were learning Hindi or Malayalam. There was adequate space to play outdoors. The school had its own mosque.

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 to 8	Grades 9 to 12
Attainment	Not Applicable	Good	Good
Progress over time	Not Applicable	Good	Good

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

How well does the school perform overall?
Acceptable

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
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:
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More information about Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau can be found at www.khda.gov.ae

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