

Follow-Through Inspection Report

English Language Private School

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Knowledge and Human Development Authority

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Basic information

English Language Private School was inspected during the 2009-2010 academic year as part of the full 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 conducted two Guidance Visits and five Follow-Through Inspections in English Language Private School since the full inspection. This sixth Follow-Through Inspection evaluated the progress of the school in meeting the recommendations.

Progress

The school had not met all of the recommendations to an acceptable level. English Language Private School will continue to be inspected by DSIB at regular intervals in accordance with the Follow-Through Inspection cycle.

Overview

The English Language Private School had not yet met all the recommendations of the inspection report to an acceptable level. However during the Follow-Through Inspection, it was observed that considerable progress had been made towards improvement in all four recommendations, with two now being judged acceptable. A positive atmosphere of energy and optimism was evident among the leadership, teachers and students. Relationships between almost all adults and students were positive; an ethos of understanding and encouraging individual students was developing. A number of new leadership positions had been created and the post-holders had been given the training and authority they needed to be effective in their roles. Self-evaluation had resulted in a realistic view of the improvements in curriculum and teaching skills that were required to move the school forward. Intensive training was supporting this development but had not yet consistently impacted upon the quality of planning and teaching across all classes; therefore most students were not making the progress of which they were capable. The Kindergarten lacked a comprehensive curriculum plan. Teachers' ability to assess students' understanding accurately and use this information to plan challenging and engaging work required further development.

Inspection recommendations

1-Ensure that the use of corporal punishment and emotional abuse in the school ceases immediately

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

There was no evidence of corporal punishment but there were a few cases of verbal disrespect by teachers towards students. The school administration had terminated the services of teachers who used corporal punishment and organised sessions on behaviour management for the staff. The school had implemented a behaviour policy with clear expectations and consequences for all students. The school had also informed parents of the policy and its expectations. A survey of students had provided feedback on their perceptions of the school's social and emotional environment. The counsellor provided individual and group sessions to support junior and senior students. As a result, there was improvement in students' behaviour and in the quality of relationships with teachers.

2-Develop shared leadership so that all staff can carry out their duties and make a greater impact on the life of the school

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

Leadership roles had been widely distributed. Heads of departments were receiving ongoing training and support so that they had the necessary skills to support and guide teachers. Vice Principal roles had been created, each with specific responsibilities for the development of the school. A continuous school review was in process to which all senior leaders contributed on a weekly basis. The Principal acted as a significant role model; he was a regularly visible participant in activities with teachers and students. Leaders were realistic about the need for further development in curriculum, teaching and assessment, especially in Kindergarten. A well-thought-out plan was in place to address these issues over time. There was a mood of justifiable optimism about the future throughout the school.

3-Develop the curriculum and teaching strategies to encourage children in the Kindergarten to explore, investigate and develop their creativity; provide active and age-appropriate learning across the school, develop students' abilities to think for themselves so that all students have improved learning opportunities; ensure that teachers plan appropriate outcomes for each lesson, setting out what children need to understand, as well as know and do

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

A comprehensive audit of the kindergarten phase had identified key areas for development. A recently appointed Kindergarten Coordinator provided focused leadership. Introduction of the full Early Years Foundation Stage was planned, but its implementation was incomplete.

The need to develop kindergarten teachers' knowledge of modern teaching methods was acknowledged. Whole-staff professional development had been provided. However, more specific targeted training in how young children learn through exploration, investigation and play was required. Across the higher phases, in the better lessons, teachers provided students with opportunities to reason, develop and apply their understanding. Teachers increasingly used technology, meaningful group work and practical resources to support learning. In a number of lessons teachers still focused on the recall of facts and talked excessively. This restricted opportunities for students to think for themselves. Across the school, consistency in lesson planning was improved. Objectives and learning outcomes were identified, but too often these lacked precision and were not discussed with students. Improved assessment of learning enabled teachers to understand each student's learning needs better, but use of the assessment information to adapt lessons to the different needs of students had yet to be seen.

4-Provide teachers with training, support and resources so that they are able to carry out their duties effectively

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

There was evident progress on two aspects of this recommendation, specifically the training and support provided to teachers. Since the previous inspection, school leaders had identified weaknesses in teaching, planned a programme of development and delivered weekly 90-minute sessions to teachers. Topics included making better use of technology in teaching, and linking National Curriculum expectations to teaching and assessment practices. Teachers were positive about the new training and its effects upon their students. Support had been provided to many teachers with good effects, but more support was needed to address some persistent weaknesses, especially the teaching to the lower grades. The school had provided new laptop computers, which were used to improve learning in some lessons. The resources in Kindergarten remained insufficient for the delivery of the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum. Teachers often brought resources from home to help their students learn. The furniture in the school was of variable quality; in some classrooms it was well worn and not suitable for the needs of the students.

What happens next?

The school has been unsatisfactory for a period of three academic years. English Language Private School will now be scheduled as part of the regular inspection cycle for a full inspection during the next academic year

Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau
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How to contact us

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