

# **Follow-Through Inspection Report on Arab Unity School**

**Report issued June 2009**

## Basic information

Arab Unity School was inspected in October 2008 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, school inspectors identified a number of recommendations which the school was required to address.

Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau (DSIB) conducted a Follow-Through Inspection during March 2009. The purpose of this 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.

## Progress

Inspectors judged that Arab Unity School had not yet satisfactorily addressed the recommendations made by DSIB at the Initial Quality Inspection. Inspectors will continue to undertake Follow-Through Inspections at three monthly intervals until the recommendations made by inspectors have been satisfactorily addressed.

At the time of the next full inspection the school will have an opportunity to alter the unsatisfactory grading achieved in the Initial Quality Inspection.

## Initial Quality Inspection Recommendations

- Raise standards of attainment and progress in all subjects across the school;
- Centralise the learner and the learning experience in order to improve the quality of teaching and learning;
- Establish an assessment system to enable teachers to track the progress of students;
- Ensure compliance in regard to Arabic Language and Islamic Studies;
- Broaden the curriculum to meet the needs, interests and aspirations of all learners;
- Ensure the health, safety and welfare of all children and students, including transport arrangements;
- Establish a clear vision and the values that underpin it within the school community;
- Implement a staffing structure and ensure professional development supports a learning culture;

- Establish a robust management structure that will encompass all key aspects of the school's improvement programme and empower the leadership with the necessary tools and budget to implement change successfully;
- Monitor and evaluate the performance of all aspects of the school.

## Overview of progress achieved

### **Raise standards of attainment and progress in all subjects across the school.**

The school had made satisfactory progress towards addressing this recommendation.

Observation of teaching and learning showed that students were given more opportunities to apply their knowledge in discussion and debate and this was evidence of improvements in standards of attainment. Teachers' records showed that students were making at least satisfactory progress in lessons and tests.

### **Centralise the learner and the learning experience in order to improve the quality of teaching and learning.**

The school had made satisfactory progress towards addressing this recommendation.

At the time of the Initial Quality Inspection the Principal had been in post for only a few weeks. By the time of the Follow-Through Inspection the impact of her leadership on improving the quality of teaching and learning was considerable. Teachers and students alike spoke enthusiastically about the changes that were taking place in the classroom and the enjoyment that sprang from students' greater involvement in lessons. Teachers had participated in training with the Principal about how to involve students more in their learning. In observations made by inspectors during the visit students were observed presenting their research, using information and communication technology and working in groups to solve problems.

### **Establish an assessment system to enable teachers to track the progress of students.**

The school had made satisfactory progress towards addressing this recommendation.

A common format was now being used to measure students' attainment. Criteria for judging standards had been introduced and were used, and for the most part understood well, by teachers and students. Students reported that they were aware of more rigour in the way teachers now monitored their work and they said that although they were working harder they were enjoying it more.

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**Ensure compliance in regard to Arabic Language and Islamic Studies.**

The school had made satisfactory progress towards addressing this recommendation.

The timetable provision met requirements.

**Broaden the curriculum to meet the needs, interests and aspirations of all learners.**

The school had made satisfactory progress towards addressing this recommendation.

Students had already made their choices for examination courses in the upper school: these included a broader range of International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) and Advanced Level subjects that had been added to the options available. The curriculum for younger students had not yet been broadened to include more sport and arts subjects.

**Ensure the health, safety and welfare of all children and students, including transport arrangements.**

The school had made unsatisfactory progress towards addressing this recommendation.

Some modifications had been made to the arrangements for the arrival and departure of buses but there still remained weaknesses in this area. Children in Kindergarten spent up to an hour on the bus waiting for older students to arrive from their lessons. This discomfort felt by the youngest children was unsatisfactory. Students also reported that although there are now supervisors on the buses the air conditioning was not always used. The cleanliness and maintenance of the building, particularly the toilets, was much improved since the Initial Quality Inspection and fire drills had begun to be held regularly.

**Establish a clear vision and the values that underpin it within the school community.**

The school had made satisfactory progress towards addressing this recommendation.

The owners and the school senior leadership team had begun revising the vision for the school. Their desire to modernise the school was beginning to be realised. Parents and students had been consulted and the vision of putting students at the heart of the school's life had been shared with the school community.

**Implement a staffing structure and ensure professional development supports a learning culture.**

The school had made satisfactory progress towards addressing this recommendation.

Staff were now clear about the expectations of them and had participated in professional development in order to improve their teaching practice in the classroom and to develop further their responsibilities as leaders of subjects and areas in the school.

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**Establish a robust management structure that will encompass all key aspects of the school's improvement programme and empower the leadership with the necessary tools and budget to implement change successfully.**

The school had made unsatisfactory progress towards addressing this recommendation.

In the action plan the time-scale for the completion of the first stage of this recommendation was later this academic year, in preparation for the new school year in September. There was still much to be accomplished in defining lines of responsibility and accountability. Very little had been accomplished in establishing a senior management structure that showed clear lines of accountability and empowered the executive officer to continue the securing of school improvement. However, the school had established a steering group that oversaw and monitored the work of the school and this was an important development in fostering delegated leadership.

**Monitor and evaluate the performance of all aspects of the school.**

The school had made satisfactory progress towards addressing this recommendation.

The newly developed action plan was comprehensive and robust, although the success criteria for the curriculum and health and safety were not sufficiently linked to the desired outcomes. The school improvement plan was based on the action plan and identified shared responsibility between middle and senior leaders and the owners.

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## What happens next?

DSIB will continue to undertake Follow-Through Inspections of Arab Unity School 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 this occurs.

## 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](mailto:inspection@khda.gov.ae).

More information about Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau can be found at [www.khda.gov.ae](http://www.khda.gov.ae).

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