

Follow-Through Inspection Report

Crescent English School

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Knowledge and Human Development Authority

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Basic information

Crescent English School was inspected during the 2012-2013 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 one Follow-Through Inspection in Crescent English School since the full inspection. This First 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. Crescent English School will continue to be inspected by DSIB at regular intervals in accordance with the Follow-Through Inspection cycle.

Overview

The school's recently appointed Principal, Vice-Principal and Kindergarten co-ordinator had an ambitious, shared vision for the school. They had planned for and, in some cases, instigated a number of changes. They had been successful in meeting the requirements of two of the recommendations of the previous DSIB inspection report but had made only varied progress in addressing the other five recommendations. A key focus for the school was the improvement in provision for the Kindergarten section. Improvement plans were in place; however, limited action to date had prevented any significant improvement in the quality of learning outcomes for the children. Teaching, learning, assessment and the curriculum in Kindergarten remained unsatisfactory. Assessment systems across the school were not yet consistent or robust. Teachers had not used assessment data to support lesson planning or to adapt the curriculum to meet the individual learning needs of all students. Students with special educational needs had been identified but their learning needs were not yet being met.

Inspection recommendations

- Improve teaching and learning, particularly in the Kindergarten and the primary phase;

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

Teaching and learning had shown some improvement in the primary and higher phases but remained unsatisfactory in Kindergarten. Overall, the learning experiences of almost all Kindergarten children remained restricted. The recently appointed Kindergarten coordinator had focused on improving teachers' understanding of how young children learn. However, there remained too few opportunities for playing and exploring, for active learning, for creating and thinking. The holistic development of each child was limited. The quality of lesson planning in the lower school was varied. Learning objectives lacked the necessary precision. In too many Kindergarten lessons and a majority of the primary lessons, the purpose of learning was unclear. Teachers' talk dominated, with too few resources being available for students to use. Teachers' questioning focused on the recall of recently learned facts. It was seldom used to determine understanding. Teachers did not plan to meet the learning needs of all groups and individuals, including those students requiring additional help with their learning. Consequently, not all groups of students made sufficient progress.

- Improve assessment by using the outcomes of assessment of students' work more effectively to improve their learning experiences in lessons across all subjects;

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

The school's action plan had clearly highlighted the work necessary to address this recommendation. There had been some progress in the middle and secondary phases. However, in the Kindergarten and primary phase, assessment was in its early stages of responding to these requirements. There remained an inconsistency in sharing precise learning outcomes, restricting students' understanding of their progress. Assessment data were narrow in scope. Individual students' data were not recorded in personal profiles to show progress and development. As a result, teachers had poor knowledge of individual students' achievements and their learning needs. Teachers provided insufficient feedback to students. They seldom marked work or provided clear oral explanations. At the end of lessons, teachers seldom evaluated what children had learned or assessed what students needed to do to improve learning.

- Improve the curriculum and its delivery by raising staff expectations and engaging students more actively in their learning;

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

The curriculum had shown improvement in the primary and higher phases but remained unsatisfactory in the Kindergarten. It was reviewed annually by a committee of curriculum co-ordinators, departmental heads and subject leaders. As a result, the duration of lessons had improved in the higher grades, allowing teachers a greater flexibility in curriculum delivery. Other improvements included the development of a life skills programme in Grades 3 and 4. Students in higher phases experienced an enhanced range of sports and field trips to support their learning. The Kindergarten curriculum did not adequately cater for the educational needs and personal development of all groups of children including those with special educational needs. It was not integrated and holistic, and failed to create chances for active learning. It remained too based on text-book. Opportunities to enhance children's learning and sustain their interest were restricted due to an unattractive physical environment, limited facilities and resources, and narrow teaching approaches. Lessons did not foster playing, exploring, active learning, creativity or thinking critically.

- Ensure that the school is compliant in the teaching of Arabic in Grade 9;

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

The teaching time requirements for Arabic in Grade 9 had been increased to ensure compliance with the Ministry of Education guidelines. The school had made improvements by increasing display space for Arabic language and having a school-wide Arabic day.

- Identify more accurately students who have a special educational need, ensure teachers modify lessons appropriately to meet these needs, and track and monitor effectively the progress of students;

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

The school had attempted to improve the identification and support systems for students with special educational needs. Staff members had been trained to use the DSIB categories. They had been supported by a special needs co-ordinator in the identification of individual students. Information was being shared with parents; however, individual education plans for each student were not in place. Classroom teachers had not modified their lesson plans to ensure that the provision for each student with a special educational need best matched their individual learning needs. In most lessons, these students were given little specialist support, and therefore made poor progress.

- Create and implement a suitable child protection policy, including the relevant training of all staff;

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

The school had developed an appropriate policy and procedures for child protection. Two staff members had been appointed to oversee staff training and improve the awareness of students and parents. The school had more effective arrangements to protect students. Almost all staff members, students and parents were aware of the policy and could describe important procedures.

- Improve leadership capacity and governance and ensure that self-evaluation is rigorous and accurate.

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

The new school leaders had responded positively to the recommendations of the previous Inspection report. A clear vision, direction and timeframe for change, distributed leadership and more effective strategic planning, had resulted in a stronger sense of purpose. There was a determination to improve. Changes had been instigated or planned for as a result of review. Leaders had succeeded in improving the staff's understanding of child protection and the Grade 9 Arabic curriculum. Other key changes were in their early stages of planning or development and were yet to become embedded across the school.

What happens next?

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

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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