

Second
Follow-Through Inspection Report
On
Dubai Arab American School
Kindergarten to Grade 12

Report published May 2010

Basic information

Dubai Arab American School was inspected in January 2009 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) conducted a Follow-Through Inspection during May 2009 and a second Follow-Through Inspection during December 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 Dubai Arab American School had not yet satisfactorily addressed the recommendations made by DSIB in 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.

Initial Quality Inspection Recommendations

- Work with students and parents to promote positive attitudes and behaviour for student learning and school citizenship;
- Develop a comprehensive assessment and student tracking system to inform teaching and learning;
- Ensure a stable, qualified teaching faculty;
- Provide training for teachers in the areas of classroom management and delivery of instruction to students who have limited English skills;
- Develop a process for ongoing curricular review and development;
- Provide sufficient instructional and equipment resources;
- Prepare a strategic plan for school development and introduce rigorous and effective self-evaluation processes.

Overview of progress achieved

Work with students and parents to promote positive attitudes and behaviour for student learning and school citizenship

The school had not made satisfactory progress towards meeting this recommendation.

The school had introduced a new behaviour policy that was shared with teachers and parents. It was not displayed around the school and although it was shared with the students, a minority of students was not familiar with the policy. The behaviour policy was firmly implemented by the new Principal and supported by the staff. The reduced number of students in the classrooms and the newly implemented behaviour policy led to improved behaviour by most of the boys. In some lessons, a few students were still disruptive and not always on task and at times disturbed others. No professional development had yet addressed the issue of classroom management. In a few classrooms, students' desks still had graffiti and in some classrooms furniture was still not age-appropriate.

At break times, boys left litter under chairs in the courtyard despite an increased number of rubbish bins. The school had not yet offered any activities during break time. However, there were plans by the PE teacher to introduce sports competitions and activities in the second semester. The courtyards were bare, dull and uninviting. The hallways, on the other hand, especially in the KG section, were more colourful with displays on almost all boards. In the upper school, there were few displays of students' work.

Develop a comprehensive assessment and student tracking system to inform teaching and learning

The school had not made satisfactory progress towards meeting this recommendation.

The school continued to conduct diagnostic assessments at the beginning of the year in addition to a number of formal tests at regular intervals during a semester. However, teachers were not yet using this information to inform planning in order to meet the needs of all students or to benchmark the attainment and progress of students against international expectations. The school had cancelled the learning support classes for students and introduced after-school intervention classes. These classes took place after school from 2:15pm to 3:30pm daily with subjects allocated a slot on the schedule. Students who were identified as under-performing were supported in order to bridge gaps in their skills. However, work in the classroom was not well matched to the learning needs of all students. With the introduction of Grade 12 this year, the school had not introduced any external benchmarking systems; however they encouraged some Grade 11 and Grade 12 students to take the scholastic aptitude tests (SAT) in mathematics, using external agencies.

Ensure a stable, qualified teaching faculty

The school had not made satisfactory progress towards meeting this recommendation.

The Principal appointed a new cohort of staff thereby increasing the total number of teaching staff from 82 to 125. Almost all of these teachers were appropriately qualified for the responsibilities they held in the school. However, it was too early to judge the stability of the current teaching staff.

Provide training for teachers in the areas of classroom management and delivery of instruction to students who have limited English skills

The school had not made satisfactory progress towards meeting this recommendation.

The school continued to respond to this recommendation by providing some training for teachers in lesson delivery and planning. However, it had not yet focused on improving teachers' classroom management skills. According to the new Principal, no training had taken place in June, as planned, to tackle this issue.

Develop a process for ongoing curricular review and development

The school had made satisfactory progress towards meeting this recommendation.

Subject co-ordinators across the school had set standards in their subjects and were in the process of aligning those standards to the textbooks they currently used. These standards were not yet matched to international standards. In a number of key subjects, the curriculum did not ensure progression and continuity across the different school phases as each phase worked independently of others. The timetable was modified to ensure that students in the lower grades had access to the library once a week for Arabic and once a week for English. The school had extended art lessons up to and including Grade 9.

Provide sufficient instructional and equipment resources

The school had made satisfactory progress towards meeting this recommendation.

Resource rooms were provided for the main subjects and this allowed students to move between rooms for lessons. However, most of these subject rooms were not yet appropriately resourced to enhance teaching and learning as teachers still relied on the textbook and mostly used the rooms as classrooms. The four science laboratories were now accessible to teachers and students for use. These were not always used effectively to enhance scientific exploration, investigation and enquiry.

Prepare a strategic plan for school development and introduce rigorous and effective self-evaluation processes

The school had not made satisfactory progress towards meeting this recommendation.

The newly appointed Principal was in the process of identifying priorities for improvement in the school and was developing an action plan. The plan did not fully reflect the new vision and school priorities. It also was not specific in identifying the actions to be taken and success criteria. DSIB requested that the school provide an action plan for the next Follow-Through inspection.

What happens next?

DSIB will continue to undertake Follow-Through Inspections of Dubai Arab American 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.

**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.

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

Copyright 2010

This report is for internal use only and for the self-evaluation purposes of the school. It should not be used for commercial purposes or in connection with a prospectus or advertisement.