

# Progress Review Visit Report

## Al Arqm Private School

Report published on May 2015

Knowledge and Human Development Authority

P.O. Box 500008, UAE, Tel: +971-4-3640000, Fax: +971-4-3640001, info@khda.gov.ae, www.khda.gov.ae

## Basic information

Al Arqm Private School was inspected during the 2012-13 academic year as part of the full inspection cycle across all schools in Dubai. The inspection covered all stages and key aspects of the work of the school. 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 Progress Review Visit to Al Arqm Private School since the full inspection. This was the second Progress Review Visit which evaluated the progress of the school in meeting the recommendations.

## Progress

It was judged that the school had not met all of the recommendations to an acceptable level. Al Arqm Private School will continue to be inspected by DSIB at regular intervals in accordance with the Progress Review Visit cycle.

## Overview

Since the last Progress Review Visit, the leadership team had taken steps to improve the school. The leadership structure had been changed, resulting in better distribution of roles and responsibilities. There was better communication and collaboration between the boys' and the girls' sections, improving the sharing of professional practice. Teaching staff had received regular and extensive training to develop their planning and instructional skills. This had contributed to the improved quality of teaching seen in some lessons. However, one third of observed lessons were still unsatisfactory. The owners of the school had invested well to ensure a safer learning environment for their students. They had resolved most of the conditions that were previously considered unsafe. Premises were regularly maintained, staff were more vigilant, and chemicals and detergents were securely stored. However, the safer arrival and departure of students and procedures related to child protection were still under developed. The school had improved its provision for students with special educational needs. Students with individual educational plans now received better support by specialist staff. Although the school had established systems to identify the special educational needs of some of its students, these were not always accurate. Teachers were not effective in supporting students with special educational needs in classrooms. Board members were increasingly aware of the school's priorities and requirements but still lacked a broad representation. The Board supported the school financially and provided staff with professional development opportunities. However, it had not yet succeeded in improving the school's self-evaluation and development planning systems.

## Inspection recommendations

Improve teaching, learning and assessment across all phases to improve the attainment and progress made by the students;

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

The quality of teaching was improving overall, particularly in the girls' section. The majority of observed lessons were judged acceptable. However, a significant number were unsatisfactory, especially in Cycle1 and Kindergarten. The majority of teachers provided more opportunities for active involvement in learning; however too often excessive teacher talk was observed. The level of challenge for students remained too low. Classroom management had improved significantly, with a few exceptions in Kindergarten and the lower classes of Cycle 1. Lessons in the girls' section were more interactive and vibrant than those observed in the boys' section. Girls were more interested in learning and enjoyed collaborating with their peers. When given the opportunity, boys engaged appropriately but often lacked the curiosity to learn independently. The school had developed its assessment procedures. Teachers could identify strengths and weaknesses of students but did little with this knowledge. For example, teaching or assessment strategies rarely took different needs and learning styles into account. Written and oral feedback were very limited. Nevertheless, a few instances of additional but infrequent support to less able students were observed.

Ensure the well-being of all students through more effective and rigorous health and safety provision;

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

The governors and leaders of the school had worked hard to provide a safe environment. Significant improvements had been made to the school's infrastructure. New safety and security procedures had been established, including improved procedures for school evacuations and better laboratories. The school provided healthy food for its students. Supervision of students before, during, and after school were now improved. However, arrangements for student departure at the end of the school day, remained unsatisfactory. The school did not have a clear child protection policy. Staff and students had not received any training on this important aspect.

Identify the special educational needs of students accurately and ensure that they are supported in lessons to make good progress;

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

The school had continued to improve provision for students with special educational needs. A specialist had been appointed and a committee had been formed to lead the improvement. A lack of precision with initial diagnosis led to inaccurate categorisation of some students. Individual educational plans were in place for a few Cycle 1 students. Written in English and Arabic, they had specific targets and timelines. Communication with parents of students with special educational needs had improved, but accurate monitoring of student progress lacked rigour. Too many teachers did not understand how to support students effectively. Consequently, progress was very limited.

Involve the Board of Governors in making self-evaluation more accurate, so that improvement plans lead to better provision for students.

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

The Board of Governors continued to be unrepresentative. The Board did, however have a better understanding of the school's priorities. They provided sufficient resources to support development in major aspects of the school, such as leadership, teaching and learning, school premises and facilities. Supported by the Board, senior leaders had set up teams to identify the schools strengths and areas for development. The same criteria used by Dubai School Inspection Bureau was used for this work, implementing appropriate processes which were based on measuring school's performance. However, self-evaluation still lacked rigour and was optimistic in its judgements. It did not include valid evidence of performance to support the given evaluations. The Board had little impact on improving the quality of school's self-evaluation. Links to the improvement in students' outcomes were also lacking.

## What happens next?

The school has not met all of the recommendations to an acceptable level. Al Arqm Private School will continue to be inspected by DSIB at regular intervals in accordance with the Progress Review Visits' 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:  
[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).

**Copyright © 2015**

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.