

New World Private School Inspection Report

Kindergarten to Cycle 3

Report published May 2011

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Explanation of the inspection levels used in the report

Outstanding – exceptionally high quality of performance or practice.

Good – the expected level of quality for every school in Dubai.

Acceptable – the minimum level of acceptability required for Dubai. All key aspects of performance and practice in every school should meet or exceed this level.

Unsatisfactory – quality not yet at the level acceptable for schools in Dubai. Schools will be expected to take urgent measures to improve the quality of any aspect of their performance or practice that is judged at this level.

New World Private School was inspected in February 2011 as part of the regular inspection of 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, the school's processes for self-evaluation and capacity for improvement. There was a particular focus on students' progress in Islamic Education (for Muslim students), Arabic, English, mathematics and science.

Basic information about the school

Located in Al Twar 1, New World Private School is a private school providing education for boys and girls from the Kindergarten to Cycle 3, aged three to 18 years. The school follows a Ministry of Education curriculum. At the time of the inspection there were 1815 students on the roll. The student attendance reported by the school for the last academic session was acceptable.

As part of the inspection process, the Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau (DSIB) analysed responses to on-line questionnaires completed by parents. Parents were very positive about their school. Almost all parents were pleased with their children's progress in all key subjects and thought that the school was well led. They were happy with the quality of teaching and the enjoyment shown by their children towards their lessons. Almost all parents thought that students behaved well. They thought the school was a safe environment for learning and that their children were encouraged to be healthy. Almost all were pleased with parent-teacher meetings, the quality of communication with the school and the positive response shown to their concerns. A few parents did not think that information on their children's progress were sufficiently informative. A similarly small number were not pleased with the quality of homework.

How well does the school perform overall?

New World Private School provided an acceptable quality of education for its students. Positive progress had been made in meeting most of the recommendations of the last inspection. Only partial success had been made in raising attainment and progress across the school. The school's approach to development and action planning had improved but still required to be more specific in the criteria against which success could be measured. Baseline tests had been introduced to help identify students' ability levels and departments had started the process of identifying more clearly the skills they wished students to develop. Classes had been re-organised to help students who required additional support. Individual education programmes had been produced to assist those students with special educational needs. New lesson planning and assessment approaches had been introduced. Teachers had benefited to some degree from sharing teaching practice through staff development and through visiting each other's classes. Improvements had been made to information and communications technology (ICT) resources and the development of resources for investigative science and facilities to support more practical mathematics. Despite these improvements there remained inconsistencies in students' attainment and progress and in teaching, learning and assessment. This included insufficient opportunities for students to develop their independent or active learning. The school was strongly committed to continuous improvement and showed capacity to effectively achieve most of their planned improvements.

Students' attainment and progress varied across the school. Improvements had been made in Islamic Education and mathematics but students' attainment in Arabic had declined in Cycle 3 and in science in the Kindergarten and in Cycle 1. Attitudes and behaviour were acceptable in the Kindergarten but were good across the rest of the school. Islamic, cultural and civic understanding had improved and was now good across all phases. Teaching, learning and assessment remained acceptable. The curriculum was acceptable in the Kindergarten but was good across the other phases. The school had good procedures to protect and support its students. The quality of leadership, partnership with parents and the community remained good. Self-evaluation and governance remained acceptable.

Key features of the school

- The co-operative and supportive interaction between students and teachers;
- The focus on distributive leadership and the commitment of staff to improving their school;
- The good quality of teaching in science in Cycles 2 and 3 and the commitment to promote investigative science in lessons and through links with the wider community;
- The improvements in attainment and progress in Islamic Education and at Cycle 3 in mathematics;
- The improvements in students' Islamic, cultural and civic understanding.

Recommendations

- Improve students' attainment in Arabic in Cycle 3 and science in the Kindergarten and Cycle 1;
- Improve the quality of the curriculum in the Kindergarten to broaden children's learning experiences and provide more choice and increased challenge;
- Develop teaching, learning and assessment to ensure improvements in students' skills, including independent, active and investigative learning and plan more effectively to meet students' varying needs;
- Review school initiatives and related developments to ensure that they lead to improvements in students' attainment and progress;
- Use international and UAE information to set benchmarks against which students' attainment and progress can be measured.

How good are the students' attainment and progress in key subjects?

Attainment and progress in Kindergarten and Cycle 3 in Islamic Education were good. In Cycles 1 and 2, attainment was acceptable and progress was good in Cycle 1. In Cycle 2 progress was acceptable. Students in Kindergarten demonstrated a good understanding of Islam relative to their age. They could memorise and recite simple verses from The Holy Qur'an. In Cycle 3, most students were able to discuss complex ideas relating to aspects of Islam and could connect their knowledge to their own experiences and daily lives. In Cycles 1 and 2, middle school students lacked confidence and enthusiasm and were not always accurate or precise in their recitation skills.

In Arabic as a first language, students' attainment was good in the Kindergarten and in Cycles 1 and 2, while acceptable in Cycle 3. Students' progress was good across all phases. In the Kindergarten, most students responded effectively when spoken to in standard Arabic. They could accurately match sounds to letters and read well. In Cycles 1 and 2, most students had good oral and reading comprehension skills. They made steady progress in understanding and applying grammar. The majority demonstrated good reading and writing skills. In Cycle 3, the majority of students also made good progress in most aspects, particularly in reading where they could analyse poetry and explain aspects of grammar. The boys' independent writing skills in the upper stages of the school were only acceptable.

Attainment and progress in English were acceptable at all phases of the school. They achieved in line with international standards for students with English as a second language. Kindergarten children could listen and say letters and words accurately. They lacked independence in using their language skills. In Cycle 1, students' progress in listening, talking, reading and writing were strongest in Grades 4 and 5. In Cycle 2, students' understanding of grammar was good. The majority could read confidently from the textbook and write answers and simple paragraphs. In Cycle 3, by Grade 12, students listened attentively and spoke about

complex ideas. They could write compound sentences and short paragraphs. Students at all cycles lacked extended writing skills.

Attainment and progress in mathematics were acceptable in the Kindergarten and in Cycles 1 and 2. They were good in Cycle 3 when compared with international levels of performance. Kindergarten children counted from 1 to 20 in sequence and knew some of the features of two-dimensional shapes. Cycle 1 and 2 students could determine appropriate units of measurement to use in given circumstances. They needed more challenge and independent research activities to extend their skills. Cycle 3 students demonstrated a greater level of independence and ability to apply mathematics to everyday situations. They were making good progress in developing problem-solving skills.

In science, attainment was unsatisfactory in the Kindergarten. Progress was acceptable. In Cycle 1 attainment was acceptable and progress was good. In Cycles 2 and 3, both attainment and progress were good. A majority of Kindergarten children were not sufficiently skilled in identifying the distinguishing features of certain animals and plants. In Cycle 1, students could apply scientific principles in physics and chemistry in line with international expectations. Their understanding of biology was less well developed. In Cycles 2 and 3 most students achieved levels which were above those levels expected for their stage. Students in Cycles 2 and 3 were effectively carrying out increasingly complex problems and investigative experiments.

How good is the students' personal and social development?

Attitudes and behaviour were acceptable in the Kindergarten. They were good in the other three phases. In a few classes in the Kindergarten children were noisy and not sufficiently considerate of others. In Cycles 1 to 3, almost all students responded positively to their teachers, participated well in lessons and followed school rules. They were co-operative and considerate of other students, including those with special educational needs. Most students understood healthy eating and enthusiastically took part in sports programmes. Students' punctuality at the beginning of the day remained a concern for staff despite efforts by the school to address this problem. Punctuality between classes was good.

Students' civic understanding, their understanding of Islam and their appreciation of local traditions and culture in all phases was good. Students showed good understanding of their responsibilities as members of a wider community. The student's council and school 'parliament' contributed to the development of school policy. They students understood the importance of Islam in contemporary society. Students appreciated the multi-cultural nature of Dubai and valued their UAE national identity. Most students demonstrated pride in their local heritage and folklore. Younger students had memorised the UAE national anthem and sang it with enthusiasm.

Economic and environmental understanding in the Kindergarten and in Cycles 1 and 2 were acceptable. By Cycle 3 students had a good understanding. Students kept their school clean and free of litter and took part in various Dubai's clean-up campaigns. They were less involved in wider local community environmental projects. Students at all phases could talk about the environmental challenges facing Dubai. In Cycle 3, students had a good knowledge of Dubai's

economy and the effects of the global financial crisis around the world. They could describe the multi-cultural nature of Dubai, its rapid economic progress and linked this to the challenges of air and water pollution from traffic and industry.

How good are the teaching and learning?

The quality of teaching was acceptable. Teachers had good subject knowledge although teaching approaches varied in quality. Teachers used ICT well in most lessons to explain tasks, illustrate aspects of learning and stimulate students' interests. A recently introduced planning framework was helping support consistency. However, teachers' plans contained insufficient detail about the strategies to be used and teachers did not state clearly the skills they wanted the students to develop. Most teachers stated lesson objectives effectively but were less consistent in summarising what had been learned at the end of lessons. Teacher-directed and workbook-led learning dominated too many lessons. Investigative and collaborative activities were limited but were more evident in science lessons. In the best lessons focused questioning helped ensure appropriate pace and challenge. The increased emphasis on open-ended questioning introduced this semester was helping to promote students' critical thinking but was not yet a consistent feature of teaching across the school.

Students' learning was acceptable. Students were developing their active and independent learning skills, particularly in mathematics and science. Positive student-teacher relationships helped to provide a productive learning environment. In particular, boys were being encouraged to take a more prominent role in researching information and giving presentations to their class. However, many students remained over-reliant on their teachers as the main resource for their progress rather than taking individual responsibility for their learning. A notable feature of girls' classes was their attentiveness and conscientious approach to their work. In some of the Kindergarten and early Cycle 1 classes students were unable to sustain their concentration.

Assessment was acceptable. Recently enhanced individual student portfolios contained detailed information about tests and formative assessments. Records of students' achievements now included information on project work, homework and attitudes to learning. These on-going assessments were helping teachers provide more targeted support to individual students with identified learning needs. However, assessment information was not used sufficiently well to inform classroom activities and class groupings to meet the varying needs of all students. As a result, more able students were often insufficiently challenged. A greater emphasis by the school on identifying and measuring students' skills was still developing. Teachers were not using this information well enough to modify their teaching. Marking of students' work was routinely completed but was not sufficiently detailed to identify steps as to how students might improve. Many students were unaware of their personal targets and had little opportunity to engage in self-assessment.

How well does the curriculum meet the educational needs of all students?

The quality of the curriculum was acceptable in the Kindergarten and good across Cycles 1 to 3. It had a clear rationale, followed the Ministry of Education guidelines and was generally broad and balanced. The curriculum included a wide range of initiatives aimed at providing opportunities for greater challenge for more able students while supporting the less able. Many of these initiatives had been recently introduced as a result of regular reviews at whole-school and department levels. They included mathematics and science clubs, enhanced practical activities, as well as the delivery of both subjects through the English medium from Grades 1 to 7. The use of ICT was promoted across many subjects, including e-learning. This was beginning to improve learning opportunities in many subjects, though not all. Sessions in recitation of The Holy Qur'an had been timetabled to address gaps in students' learning. More opportunities for writing had been provided in Arabic and English through dedicated sessions. A new course book had been introduced which was more suitable for learners of English as a second language. An IELTS preparation course was organised for students in senior grades to prepare them for university. A good range of activities, particularly in sport, were organised during the school day and at weekends. The Kindergarten curriculum broadly covered appropriate learning opportunities in most key subjects. However, it offered little choice in learning for children and opportunities for their creative, physical and social development were limited.

How well does the school protect and support students?

Provision for health and safety was good. The school nurse and doctor effectively treated students and monitored their health. Students with weight problems were identified and a more focused programme of support had been started in the school. Healthy options were available in the canteen but were not sufficiently promoted in the Kindergarten. An enhanced sports programme in conjunction with local sports organisations was supporting students' fitness. Premises were very safe and equipment was regularly checked and maintained. Fire drills were held regularly and buses were carefully managed. The school operated an appropriate policy for child protection, which was known by staff.

The quality of support was good. Student and staff relationships were positive. The social workers knew their students and cared for their well-being. Students received suitable guidance about careers advice. Students knew about the school's system of rewards and sanctions and felt that these were applied fairly. There was an effective school behaviour policy and supervisors, and social workers collaborated well in handling behaviour issues. Arrangements for identifying and supporting students with learning difficulties had been improved and individual education plans were prepared for those with particular needs. The good support for students' pastoral care was being enhanced through the recently increased numbers of social workers in the school. Academic data was held and shared between teachers, social workers and parents but was not yet analysed and used precisely enough to be fully effective in supporting the progress of all students.

How good are the leadership and management of the school?

Leadership was good overall. The Principal was committed to distributive leadership. Senior and middle managers' management skills had developed and this had led to a clearer sense of direction for the school. They ensured caring relationships, including support for students with special educational needs. Managers and departmental teams met regularly to plan, discuss and review their work. They were at varying stages in developing their leadership skills to ensure consistency in improvements to students' attainment and progress.

Self-evaluation and improvement planning were acceptable. Development plans had been improved including clearer delegated tasks and timescale. Further work was required to ensure sufficiently clear criteria for success. Teachers used a more consistent framework to plan their lessons but this required further development. The recent analysis and assessment of students' skills within subject activities required to be refined. The information gathered to date was not sufficiently linked to teachers' lesson planning. Managers regularly observed teaching and learning. This provided useful information which was only being partially used to address weaknesses in teaching and learning and to identify and share best practice. Students' attainment information was effectively used to target short-term support to students with additional educational needs.

Partnerships with parents and the community were good. High quality communication with parents included information on their children's marks through the school's website. However, parents did not receive sufficient information on how to help their children improve their learning. Mothers' and fathers' councils helped the school organise events and contributed to student workshops. Parents were welcomed into classrooms and strong links had been established with the local community. This was supporting the curriculum, including enhanced sports activities.

Governance was acceptable. The Board of Trustees was increasingly assisting the school in meeting its priorities and in holding it accountable. It had been expanded to include some parental and wider representation. Not all parents were fully aware of the work of the Board and there was insufficient involvement of the wider parent and student community in its work.

Staffing, facilities and resources were good. Staff were well qualified and numerous, including an increase in the number of social workers. Staff development and annual reviews recently focused on developing students' higher order skills. Despite this, the quality of teaching to support, challenge and meet students' needs varied in quality. High quality facilities and resources included increased computer equipment and improvements in facilities and resources to enhance practical investigations in science and mathematics. Sports facilities were particularly well developed. Recent increases in specialist sports teachers and links with specialist sports organisations had led to a wider range of sports and health promoting activities. The library was limited for the size of school and Kindergarten resources insufficiently supported children's active learning.

Summary of inspection judgements

In their evaluation of the overall effectiveness of the school, the inspection team made judgements about the following aspects of the school's performance.

Four descriptors are: Outstanding; Good; Acceptable; Unsatisfactory.

How good are the students' attainment and progress in Islamic Education?				
Age group:	KG	Cycle 1	Cycle 2	Cycle 3
Attainment	Good	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good
Progress over time	Good	Good	Acceptable	Good

How good are the students' attainment and progress in Arabic?				
100% of students in the school studied Arabic as a first language.				
Age group:	KG	Cycle 1	Cycle 2	Cycle 3
Attainment in Arabic as a first language	Good	Good	Good	Acceptable
Progress in Arabic as a first language	Good	Good	Good	Good
Attainment in Arabic as an additional language	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Progress in Arabic as an additional language	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable

How good are the students' attainment and progress in English?

Age group:	KG	Cycle 1	Cycle 2	Cycle 3
Attainment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Progress over time	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

How good are the students' attainment and progress in mathematics?

Age group:	KG	Cycle 1	Cycle 2	Cycle 3
Attainment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good
Progress over time	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good

How good are the students' attainment and progress in science?

Age group:	KG	Cycle 1	Cycle 2	Cycle 3
Attainment	Unsatisfactory	Acceptable	Good	Good
Progress over time	Acceptable	Good	Good	Good

How good is the students' personal and social development?

Age group:	KG	Cycle 1	Cycle 2	Cycle 3
Attitudes and behaviour	Acceptable	Good	Good	Good
Islamic, cultural and civic understanding	Good	Good	Good	Good
Economic and environmental understanding	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Good

How good are teaching and learning?

Age group:	KG	Cycle 1	Cycle 2	Cycle 3
Teaching for effective learning	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Quality of students' learning	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Assessment	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

How well does the curriculum meet the educational needs of all students?

Age group:	KG	Cycle 1	Cycle 2	Cycle 3
Curriculum quality	Acceptable	Good	Good	Good

How well does the school protect and support students?

Age group:	KG	Cycle 1	Cycle 2	Cycle 3
Health and safety	Good	Good	Good	Good
Quality of support	Good	Good	Good	Good

How good are the leadership and management of the school?	
	Overall
Quality of leadership	Good
Self-evaluation and improvement planning	Acceptable
Partnerships with parents and the community	Good
Governance	Acceptable
Staffing, facilities and resources	Good
How well does the school perform overall?	
Acceptable	

Next steps

The school has been asked to prepare an action plan indicating how it will address the main findings of the report, and to share that plan with parents. The next inspection will report on the progress made by the school.

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

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