

**Follow-Through Inspection Report
on
Star International School – Al Twar**

Report issued June 2009

Basic information

Star International School was inspected in November 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 Star International School had made satisfactory progress towards addressing the recommendations from the Initial Quality Inspection and, as a result, will not require further Follow-Through Inspections.

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

- Improve progress in Arabic by making teaching more rigorous and interesting so that it matches the prior knowledge of the students;
- Share widely the best practices of teaching in the school so that all teachers reach the standards of the best;
- Delegate more responsibility within the school to students, particularly the older ones, to motivate and develop their preparedness for adult life;
- Review the direction of the school by involving all stakeholders in its development and producing formal plans of what needs to be done, how it is to be achieved and how success is to be recognised;
- Clarify the roles and responsibilities of the principal and define delegated powers so that the school can carry out its business without delay;
- Urgently introduce organisational structures and systems such as registers, recording students' progress, job descriptions, management reporting structures so staff are clear of their roles and students are effectively protected and given adequate guidance;

- Strengthen the management team of the school to provide better direction and support to the teachers to ensure proper monitoring and quality assurance of their work;
- Raise the standards of learning in the school by enabling students to take more responsibility for their work and by giving them quality feedback so that they know what to do to improve.

Overview of progress achieved

Improve progress in Arabic by making teaching more rigorous and interesting so that it matches the prior knowledge of the students.

The school had made satisfactory progress towards addressing this recommendation.

The school had provided professional development for staff and had modified the timetable to better meet the needs of students. Quizzes, competitions and participation in Ministry of Education events related to The Holy Qur'an had created greater interest for students. Students' knowledge and skills in Arabic had been assessed and the results used to inform teaching and learning. Teachers were now targeting work more effectively to match students' learning needs. Teachers were making better use of information and communication technology (ICT) in lessons and used a wider range of teaching strategies to engage and motivate students. Staff allocated greater time in lessons to develop students' reading and writing skills. There were more examples of cooperative learning taking place in Arabic and students' writing had improved. Students commented positively about their Arabic lessons and indicated greater interest and satisfaction. The school had arranged opportunities for Arabic teachers to observe good practice and teachers reported that this was helpful in improving their own teaching skills.

Share widely the best practices of teaching in the school so that all teachers reach the standards of the best.

Satisfactory progress had been made towards addressing this recommendation.

The Principal and staff had met to agree a whole school approach to improving teaching practice. The school had conducted an audit of teacher practice and planning. As a result, all teachers were involved in teacher appraisal which included opportunities for them to observe effective practitioners. Three-part lesson plans had been developed to ensure that the beginning, middle and end of lessons were well planned. Teachers were encouraged and supported to develop and identify resources in order to enhance teaching effectiveness. Resource rooms had been reorganised and this had resulted in greater usage. Resources were clearly labelled and usage recorded and tracked. The teachers had received training in the assessment of mathematics, literacy and science in Key Stages 1 and 2. Teachers and subject coordinators recorded and monitored students' assessment results and were beginning to use this information to track

progress. Reports to parents of student progress had been modified to reflect the change in assessment practices.

The school had introduced the UK Primary National Strategies focusing on literacy, mathematics, attendance and behaviour. Teachers had attended professional development in this programme. Weekly planning, assessment and lesson observations were central to this strategy. Monthly plans were checked by coordinators and lesson observations occurred at least once a month. Gifted and talented students had been identified and more challenging work was provided in lessons and through external events and competitions.

Delegate more responsibility within the school to students, particularly the older ones, to motivate and develop their preparedness for adult life.

The school had made a number of significant improvements in provision, which constituted satisfactory progress in the time available since the initial inspection.

Personal, social and health education lessons had been introduced each week for all students to provide them with opportunities to develop life skills. A school counsellor had been appointed and regular themed assemblies were held. Students had been provided with greater opportunities for leadership and personal development through the creation of school prefects, a student council, a House system and the election of a Head Boy and a Head Girl. There was greater access and participation in ICT programmes for research, literacy and cross-curricular applications.

Review the direction of the school by involving all stakeholders in its development and producing formal plans of what needs to be done, how it is to be achieved and how success is to be recognised.

Satisfactory progress had been made towards meeting this recommendation.

A useful school improvement plan had been developed. Staff, parents and the school governing body were involved in its development with the key design being the responsibility of coordinators, Principal and school directors. The action plan, which was shared with the parents, included identification of key goals, roles and responsibilities.

Clarify the roles and responsibilities of the Principal and define delegated powers so that the school can carry out its business without delay.

The school had made satisfactory progress towards addressing this recommendation.

The school managers had revised job descriptions for all key appointments and this had successfully clarified roles and responsibilities. Subject coordinators had been appointed for English, mathematics, science and ICT. Meetings and professional development had contributed to improvements in planning, teaching and students' learning. The subject leaders had been successful in a number of key initiatives including, for example, the

introduction of the new primary framework; support and development of teachers and the identification of resources.

Urgently introduce organisational structures and systems such as registers, recording students' progress, job descriptions, management reporting structures so staff are clear of their roles and students are effectively protected and given adequate guidance.

There had been a number of important improvements made in this aspect of the work of the school and satisfactory progress had been made.

A new data management system had been introduced and this had helped to improve the maintenance and use of school data.

The new school counsellor advised and supported students and greater provision was made for students with different abilities and needs. The processes for recording student attendance had been improved. A daily register of attendance was kept and the assistant principal followed up attendance. School bus transport arrangements had been reviewed and revised. The procedures were orderly and new arrangements, including seatbelts for all students and assistants on each of the students' buses, had helped to ensure student safety.

Strengthen the management team of the school to provide better direction and support to the teachers to ensure proper monitoring and quality assurance of their work.

The school managers had introduced a number of initiatives which had led to satisfactory progress.

Subject coordinators had been appointed and they were allocated four periods a week for coordination responsibilities. An additional key stage coordinator had been appointed as well as the new subject coordinators. The new subject coordinators were being supported to complete subject and related Masters Degrees. Regular subject and whole staff meetings included monitoring of improving teaching styles and policy development and implementation. The governing body had supported requests for additional resources. Interactive whiteboards had been installed throughout the school. The governing body had given regular support and effective guidance to the school Principal and staff.

Raise the standards of learning in the school by enabling students to take more responsibility for their work and by giving them quality feedback so that they know what to do to improve.

The school had made satisfactory progress towards addressing this recommendation.

The school had replaced the end-of-the-day 'homework hour' with an hour of additional teaching. Students in the lower classes were 'paired' with those in the higher classes in

a mentoring and support programme. There was joint planning within Key Stages and in the Foundation Stage and these meetings focussed closely on what teachers planned for students' learning. Students were assessed and grouped according to ability. This had led to a better match of tasks to their learning needs. Teachers provided students with improved guidance through marking. Students had more opportunities for greater independence and were encouraged to conduct role plays, dramatisations, oral presentations and peer assessment. Formative assessment and tracking of students' progress was beginning to be used in most classes but was not yet a feature of all of the teachers' work. Students were able to explain the positive changes in the learning opportunities available to them, including activities where they were able to participate in activities such as brain gym, recycling and charity days.

What happens next?

As a result of the progress made by Star International School towards meeting the recommendations from the Initial Quality Inspection, DSIB will undertake no further Follow-Through Inspections in relation to the initial inspection of the school.

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.

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