

New World Private School Inspection Report

Kindergarten to Grade 12

Report published May 2010

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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 January 2010 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, New World Private School is a private school providing education for boys and girls from Kindergarten (KG) to Grade 12, aged four to 18 years. The school follows a Ministry of Education. At the time of the inspection, there were 1750 students on roll, of which 750 were new to the school. One third of the teachers were new to the school. The student attendance reported by the school for the last academic session was acceptable.

Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau (DSIB) analysed responses to on-line questionnaires completed by parents. Only a few parents had completed the questionnaire. Almost all parents who responded to the questionnaire agreed that their child liked school and made good progress in Islamic Education and Arabic. There were criticisms of teaching, leadership and the way the school communicated with parents and responded to their concerns. While some parents praised the level of communication, a few were critical. A majority of parents stated they did not know how the school had responded to the recommendations of the previous inspection.

How well does the school perform overall?

New World Private School provided an acceptable quality of education with good features. The commitment of the Principal meant there had been a positive response to the recommendations of the previous report, which in turn had been a catalyst for a more structured approach to self-evaluation. Levels of attainment and progress, though remaining acceptable in Islamic Education, English, mathematics, and in science in KG, were improving as a result of greater curriculum emphasis on thinking skills and the application of knowledge. In Arabic, the impact of the communications skills programme had raised the level of attainment to good. The science club, and particularly the links with astronomy, was fostering students' increased interest in field work and investigative science, leading to good attainment and progress in science. The attitudes and behaviour of students was good. However, while girls were mature and sensible in the way they conducted themselves the boys were not yet consistently self-disciplined. The oldest students were able to discuss Dubai, Islam and environmental issues with insight but throughout the school students did not yet fully realise their own potential as school leaders.

The school had put in place several successful measures to raise the quality of teaching and learning. Through the effectiveness of subject co-ordinators, good practice was being identified and measures put in place to support the many teachers new to the school. Although teaching and learning remained acceptable, teachers were coming to terms with new course materials, more successfully in the girls' section where there was more confidence in promoting active and collaborative learning. Teachers were gaining a more analytical view of students' capabilities and beginning to make better use of assessment information to plan learning. With the Ministry of Education curriculum as the basis, the school provided a good curriculum, adding programmes such as preparation for international examinations in English; 'Thinking Skills'; 'Communication Skills' and science for younger students taught through the English language. However, although there were plans to do so, projects that were stimulating active learning elsewhere were not yet effective in KG. Links with the community provided students with wide-ranging choices in sports, from karate to basketball, taught by coaches from a nearby sports club. The introduction of E-learning through a whole school approach gave teachers, students and parents access on-line course materials and test results, enabling parents to receive information about their child and to support them in their learning. A recently established partnership with Dubai Astronomy Group not only resulted in unique and challenging activities but was a stimulus for creative curriculum innovation. The school cared well for its students and ensured all the health and safety requirements were in place. The team of social workers and counsellors ensured that students' behavioural and emotional needs were met and this had been a major factor in the improvement of boys' behaviour since the previous inspection. Monitoring of students' academic progress gave the school a basis for supporting lower attaining students and supported the school's mission that 'no-one is left behind'. However, inspectors agreed with parents that the potential of the more able students was not fully exploited. There was a good understanding of the needs of students with physical and learning difficulties that resulted in a high level of care, inclusion and support.

The Principal was a guiding hand behind the development of middle leaders, who were taking responsibility as subject co-ordinators in leading their departments. Links that she had forged with the more immediate community resulted in formal agreements with Dubai clubs for the benefit of the students, as well as members of the new governing board.

Key features of the school

- Good leadership of the Principal in ensuring everyone is committed to achieving high standards of teaching and learning in a growing school;
- Links with the community and use of the environment that develop students' investigative and analytical skills and stimulate curriculum development;
- Good provision for new students;
- Girls' very positive attitude to their studies and their command of the English language;
- Improvement in boys' behaviour.

Recommendations

- Continue to raise levels of attainment and progress across all the school.
- Define more fully the timescale, criteria against which success can be measured and areas of responsibility to take forward the school's action plan.
- Continue to expand the opportunities for the more able students both in lessons and extra-curricular activities and provide more opportunities for all students to be independent, active learners and creative thinkers.
- Continue to implement E-learning and ensure it becomes embedded in the life of the school.
- Continue to implement plans to improve the curriculum, teaching and learning in the Kindergarten in order to develop children's independence and active involvement in their learning.

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

Attainment and progress in Islamic Education were acceptable in all stages. Most of the younger students could read short verses of The Holy Qur'an and the Prophet's Sayings, and others memorised some of these. However, the errors they made were due to a weakness in the Arabic language, which was also a feature in the older grades. The majority of students in Grades 6 to 9 could discuss certain Islamic related subjects, were familiar with the recitation rules and participated actively in class. In Grades 10 to 12 a few students experienced difficulty in reading The Holy Qur'an and did not provide accurate answers regarding basic concepts in Islam such as the Prophet's full name and the explanation of verses. This reflected a lack of background knowledge of Islam that had not been fully understood in previous years.

Attainment and progress in Arabic were good across the whole school. Most students in Grades 1 to 5 could read simple words and put them in sentences. They practised the four skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening and acted in role play to help develop their skills in a range of contexts. In Grades 6 to 9 the majority of students could read poetry with few errors, explain some ideas and link them to real life situations and previous lessons. In Grades 10 to 12 most of the students could read and write correctly, understand grammatical ideas and apply them in different exercises. Many students connected what they had learnt in previous lessons to their current work and made links across the curriculum, to daily life and to the environment.

Attainment and progress in English were acceptable. Children in KG made the progress expected of additional language learners, learning the alphabet and forming letters well. Across the school all students, but particularly girls, showed high quality skills in listening and speaking. However, boys in Grades 1 to 9 were sometimes unable to sustain conversations at length and their skills in reading varied. Younger students had good writing skills and by Grade 6 could accurately identify the main components in writing a story. However, writing at all stages was sometimes insufficiently developed. Students in Grades 7 to 9 were able to present opinions and discuss their personal views, building on each other's responses. In Grade 9, girls showed highly quality independent learning skills in presenting and leading discussions about landmarks and directions. By Grade 12, most students were successfully developing their knowledge and application of grammar.

Attainment and progress in mathematics were acceptable. Students in KG had developed basic skills in counting and could recognise and draw shapes, making progress in line with that expected for their age. Students in Grades 1 to 5 had appropriate number skills and could use all four mathematical operations accurately when working with percentages, fractions and multi-digit numbers. By Grade 10 students used their mathematical skills to derive unknowns from equations and could plot functions accurately. By the end of Grade 12, students had a good understanding of the principles of calculus and could use this to solve complex equations. However, students did little to apply their mathematical skills to real life situations or apply

their mathematical knowledge and understanding to extended or open-ended research problems. However, a few students had constructed and used three dimensional models to illustrate mathematical functions.

Attainment and progress in science were good in most stages of the school and progress was acceptable in KG. Examination results for students in Grades 7 to 12 were improving year by year. Students in the older grades had well-developed skills in carrying out experiments and drawing conclusions from their findings. Students applied, and often worked out from themselves, mathematical formulae, for example, when calculating the volume of combustible material in physics. Students in Grade 9 successfully drew conclusions from their examination of the effect of enzymes on the digestive system. Younger students and children in KG were acquiring a good body of knowledge about plants and animals but were not yet carrying out sufficient investigations for themselves.

How good is the students' personal and social development?

The attitudes and behaviour of students were good. Each day commenced with vigorous singing of the National Anthem and students encouraged one another enthusiastically in celebrating their achievements. However, there were a significant number of students arriving late during assembly, though most were there for the start of lessons. Students led recitation of The Holy Qur'an in assembly and the call to prayer at midday. Behaviour was good in lessons and around the school and much improved since the previous inspection. The level of attendance during the last semester was acceptable.

Students in Grades 10 to 12 had a good understanding of Islam and of civic responsibility. They spoke of how Islam guided their lives and taught them how to behave towards each other and their families. Younger students knew the important events in the Muslim day and calendar and how men and women dressed and their understanding was acceptable. Members of the student council had a sense of responsibility for their duties in supporting teachers and supervisors in helping maintain discipline. Students also played a part in the appointment of teachers by giving their views after interviewees had taught a lesson.

Students' environmental and economic awareness was acceptable and good for students in Grades 10 to 12. All students were aware of Dubai's importance as a tourist and financial centre. Older students spoke with understanding of global environmental matters, the climate conference in Copenhagen and the 'green' buildings where water from air conditioning will be used to nurture plants. However, although they readily joined in with projects to help others, or to raise funds for charitable acts, they did not initiate schemes themselves. Younger students were unsure about the link between Dubai's position between desert and sea and the preciousness of water for our use. However, all students expressed great pride in the opening of the Burj Khalifa and marvelled at the achievement in building the Metro and its expected impact in reducing pollution.

How good are the teaching and learning?

The quality of teaching was acceptable with some areas of strength. Teachers had a good knowledge of their subject. Most were well prepared, explained tasks clearly and shared learning intentions effectively with students. Most teachers used questioning well to support student recall, engage them in discussions and check their understanding. Teachers were at varying stages of developing active learning approaches. These approaches were most effective in science and in the girls' classes in English where most teachers were skilled in modifying their teaching to reflect students' varying learning styles. However, teaching, particularly of boys, was often didactic and tasks and resources insufficiently modified to meet students' varying needs. While there were some good examples of teachers using information and communication technology (ICT) to enrich learners' experiences this was not yet a consistent feature of lessons across the school.

The quality of students' learning was acceptable. Most students were motivated to learn with girls being particularly focused on their learning. Most responded well to class discussions, took responsibility by demonstrating to their fellow students or through participation in group activities. In almost all classes students had positive relationships with their teachers. However, in a few classes, students were passive learners and not always sufficiently involved in group activities, particularly in mathematics. Students had limited opportunities to carry out creative investigative research through, for example, the use of the Internet to enrich their learning. Students' opportunities to link their learning to other areas of the curriculum and to their world out of school were not sufficiently developed.

Assessment was acceptable. The school carried out regular and detailed analyses of students' overall performance and used this information to discuss students' progress at a departmental level. Teachers monitored students' learning through class tasks and end of semester examinations but did not always use this information sufficiently well to set targets for students' learning. Many teachers used questioning effectively to build up a clear picture of individual students' progress but this was not consistent. Teachers regularly marked students' work and kept detailed records but provided very little written advice on how learners might improve their own work. Teachers knew their students well and gave them oral and written information on their progress. However, they did not involve their students sufficiently in evaluating their own progress or in setting their own targets for improvement.

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

The curriculum was good and provided a wide range of learning opportunities for all students. In KG it was acceptable in that it covered the basic elements of reading, writing and mathematical development but did not allow children enough scope to investigate and find things out through activities, both indoors and out. As well as the Ministry of Education text books, the school had invested in other course materials to promote more active and independent thinking and learning. Although these courses were effective in meeting these aims, their value as cross-curricular themes had not yet been exploited. There was also the provision for students to learn science through the English language. These additions had developed as a result of the school's review of the curriculum in order to meet the changing needs of the growing school community. In its first year, the science club was providing about 40 boys with opportunities to explore the wider environment of Dubai through geology and astronomy, in conjunction with Dubai Astronomy Group. The facilities of the science club were also accessible to all teachers and students and the projects there were already stimulating innovative curriculum planning as well as improving standards in science. Other community links brought expert coaches into the school to enhance the existing programme for physical education.

How well does the school protect and support students?

The school provided a safe and secure environment for students. They were well supervised at breaks, when moving between classes and when getting on and off the buses. Buildings were clean and well maintained. The highly effective medical staff ensured students' health was regularly checked and appropriate treatment given for those falling ill at school. Medicines were safely stored and locked away and student records detailed and regularly updated. The school's social workers provided excellent support for students with behavioural or personal problems and gave extensive and well-directed advice to teachers on how to deal with students with learning difficulties. Arrangements for child protection were informal but effectively monitored by the social workers. The school actively promoted healthy life-styles through its extensive physical education activities and healthy eating projects. Evacuation procedures were in place and had recently been practiced with the Civil Defence.

Staff-student relationships were good, particularly in the girls section. Teachers knew the strengths and weaknesses of students very well and students appreciated the support they received with their studies. However, advice on the next stage of education and career choices was still not routinely available for students. Improvements in boys' behaviour were significant as a result of improved procedures and supervision. Information on student attainment was comprehensive and regularly reported to parents. Students likely to underachieve were identified and given appropriate support to ensure they passed their final examinations. However, student progress was not monitored in such a way as to ensure individual students

achieved their full potential, for example by evaluating student performance against appropriately set targets.

How good are the leadership and management of the school?

The quality of leadership was good. The Principal's vision and ambition for the school inspired good leadership in academic and personal development. Time was set aside every week for teams to meet together and review the work of the department for the benefit of all students. The school was developing the leadership at different levels as a means of sharing existing good practice and developing ideas and resources in curriculum innovation. All staff were dedicated to ensuring high standards across the school.

Self-evaluation was acceptable. All the recommendations from the previous inspection had been subject to a rigorous investigation and action planning and good progress had been made in remedying weaknesses. The school improvement plan showed how initiatives at present in their early stage would be further developed and spread across the school. However, the timescale was not always clear and the measures for judging success not closely linked to improvements in student performance. Self-evaluation had been conducted at school and subject department level and that of the English department was particularly effective in setting the agenda for improvement.

There were good links with parents, who were keen to meet as mothers' and fathers' councils to share ideas with each other and with the school. The information provided on the academic and personal development of students had been improved as a result of parental comments in the previous inspection report and parents were welcomed into school and into classrooms, where appropriate, if they had specific concerns.

The school had established a governing board by expanding the membership of the board of trustees. Parents and members of the wider community had been recruited, with expertise of value to the school being an important criterion. Already one of the new members had advised the school on contractual agreements with local clubs to provide extra activities for students. Governance was acceptable because important steps had been taken in establishing a governing board but this group was yet to function as a critical friend of school management.

Staffing, facilities and resources were good and supported the curriculum effectively. Staff were appropriately qualified and well deployed, especially the teams of supervisory staff who had a positive impact in dealing promptly and firmly with boys' behaviour. Delivery of the curriculum was supported by an extensive range of facilities including science and mathematics laboratories, computer suites, music and art rooms, library and classroom data projectors. However, not all teachers and students yet made full use of the technology available at the school. The school's physical education activities were well catered for with both indoor and outdoor sports facilities, including two heated swimming pools.

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	Not applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
Progress over time	Not applicable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

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

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	Acceptable
Progress over time	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable

How good are the students' attainment and progress in science?				
Age group:	KG	Cycle 1	Cycle 2	Cycle 3
Attainment	Acceptable	Good	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	Good	Good	Good	Good
Islamic, cultural and civic understanding	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable	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	Good	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	Acceptable	Good	Good	Good

How good are the leadership and management of the school?	
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: inspection@khda.gov.ae.

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