

## Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau (DSIB) Reports on Indian and Pakistani Schools

**2009 - 2010**

## Context

There are 21 Indian curriculum schools and four Pakistani curriculum schools in Dubai. These 25 schools were not inspected in the first cycle of inspections in Dubai as the calendar year in these schools is different to other schools. 20 schools providing an Indian curriculum and 3 schools providing a Pakistani curriculum were inspected between November 2009 and January 2010. One Pakistani school, The School of Islamic Studies and Holy Quran, is due to close and therefore did not receive a full inspection. One Indian school, JSS International School, is in the first year of operation and consequently, will be inspected for the first time next year.

## Inspection evidence

Inspectors observed around 2500 lessons in the 23 schools. Parents completed on-line questionnaires to inform the inspection process and a total of 22,487 were submitted. A total of 57,910 students currently attend these 23 Indian and Pakistani schools. This constitutes approximately 28% of Dubai's total student population. Three of the Indian schools are very large, with a student population of more than 5000 on roll.

## Overall performance of Indian schools

Of the 20 Indian schools, 17 provide an acceptable or good quality of education, overall. There were no outstanding schools. Three schools provide an unsatisfactory quality of education and will receive regular Follow-Through Inspections until they satisfactorily address the weaknesses identified in this year's inspection. The Follow-Through Inspection reports will be made available to parents on the KHDA website, [www.khda.gov.ae](http://www.khda.gov.ae).

## Overall performance of Pakistani schools

Three of the four Pakistani curriculum schools in Dubai were inspected this year. Two of the three schools provide an unsatisfactory quality of education, overall. Inspectors identified significant weaknesses in key aspects of the work of these schools. These schools will receive regular Follow-Through Inspections and the findings reported to parents on our website, [www.khda.gov.ae](http://www.khda.gov.ae).

### Strengths of provision in Indian schools

In almost all Indian schools, students' attainment and progress in Islamic Education is acceptable or better. Most Indian schools are compliant with KHDA requirements to teach the subject to all Muslim students and, in around a third of schools, students follow a well organised and carefully structured curriculum.

Students' civic understanding and their understanding of Islam is also a strong feature of school performance in Indian schools. In most schools inspectors have found that students demonstrate advanced knowledge and understanding of local traditions and culture. Many Indian schools place significant emphasis upon environmental issues and promote students' active involvement in caring for the school and local environment and students participate regularly in activities such as recycling and conservation.

In other key subjects, notably English and mathematics, almost all students make acceptable or better progress. They achieve highly in comparison to examination results from other CBSE or ICSE schools in India and around the world. Boys' attainment in the two subject areas is broadly in line with that of girls. As the students progress towards examinations at the secondary and post-16 stages, the quality of teaching improves and is better matched to the learning needs of the students preparing for external examinations against a prescribed syllabus.

A distinctive quality and a notable strength of the Indian schools is the attitudes and behaviour of the students of all ages. In most schools inspectors found this to be good or outstanding. Students consistently display a positive approach to their learning. In classes and around the school, both boys and girls are highly motivated and conscientious. Inspectors report very good behaviour in most classes. Consequently, although teaching is not always dynamic or varied, students make good progress in most schools across most of the key subjects studied.

### Areas requiring improvement in Indian schools

Students' attainment and progress in Arabic is unsatisfactory in around one third of Indian schools. This is largely due to the weak teaching skills and insecure subject knowledge of teaching staff in this key area of the curriculum. A few schools are not compliant with KHDA requirements relating to the time allocated for students to study Arabic. Most schools do not have clear curriculum guidance or standards to support the teaching of Arabic to those students for whom Arabic was a second language.

### Teaching for effective learning

Inspections identified significant variation in the quality of teaching and assessment practices across most Indian schools. In acceptable and unsatisfactory schools, there are too many examples of weak teaching, particularly in the Kindergarten and early primary years. In these phases of education, the teaching is often characterised by a methodology which is not appropriate to the needs of the youngest learners. In particular, young children spend too much time listening to adults talking and teachers provide insufficient opportunities for children to be active in their learning. Where children were engaged in activities these often do not consistently challenge or extend their learning in a meaningful way.

### The curriculum in Indian schools

The quality of the curriculum is unsatisfactory in 18% of the phases within the Indian schools. The curriculum in these phases lacks breadth and younger students have insufficient opportunities to be active in their learning. In most of these schools inspectors note that physical education is not taught well or with sufficient regularity. Although most schools offer a diverse range of extra-curricular activities to enhance the curriculum, it is only in the highest performing schools that staff monitor access and ensure that all students enjoy a sufficiently broad and balanced range of experiences.

### Quality of support

Inspectors evaluate the support provided to students in Indian schools. This includes the arrangements in each school for advice and guidance, including future education paths and careers guidance. Whilst most schools offering an Indian curriculum provide good support for students, a significant minority did not track student's academic performance well. The schools use regular tests and examinations to evaluate students' knowledge and skills but this assessment information does not always inform the planned curriculum for individuals or groups of students. Many schools do not track progress to help set challenging targets for students and guide improvement.

### Quality of school leadership and partnerships

Indian schools were judged to be well led in a majority of cases and around half of the schools enjoy good partnerships with parents and the community.

### Areas requiring improvement in Pakistani schools.

Two of the three Pakistani schools inspected provide an unsatisfactory quality of education. The third school provides an acceptable quality of education, overall, but with some features which were weak.

Across the three schools, around seven out of ten lessons observed were unsatisfactory. Teachers lack appropriate skills, qualifications and experience and often demonstrate little awareness of how students learn. Lessons are poorly planned and time is not used productively. No resources are used other than textbooks and teacher-talk. Teachers' working conditions in Pakistani schools are also often unsatisfactory with minimal training opportunities provided, poor contractual arrangements and weak management support and guidance for staff.

All three Pakistani schools have serious weaknesses with regard to the health and safety arrangements. This includes unsatisfactory practices relating to school transport, supervision and behaviour management. Corporal punishment is still used by teachers, even with children as young as four years of age.

A key feature of the two unsatisfactory Pakistani schools is weak leadership and ineffective professional relationships between school owners and school management. This leads to lack of clarity regarding key decision-making, improvement planning, deployment of resources and self-evaluation. Consequently, these schools lack direction and vision. Appropriate systems to ensure accountability are not in place.

### The views of parents

Parents of students attending Indian schools responded positively to the opportunity to comment about their children's school. The response rate from Indian parents was high and many parents used the opportunity to comment in detail about the work of each school. Almost all of the parents who responded to the questionnaire stated that their children enjoyed school. They felt that behaviour was good. Arrangements to ensure children's health and safety were also felt to be good.

Parents of students attending Pakistani schools were less positive about the performance of their schools. They commented critically about the links between home and school. In particular, they did not feel comfortable approaching the school and did not feel confident that the school would act on their concerns. They believed that the curriculum provided was narrow.