



الهيئة الوطنية
للمؤهلات وضمان جودة التعليم والتدريب
National Authority for Qualifications &
Quality Assurance of Education & Training

Directorate of Private Schools & Kindergartens Reviews Review Report

**Talent International & The Infant School – Riffa
East Riffa – Southern Governorate
Kingdom of Bahrain**

**Date of Review: 18-20 April 2016
SP022-C2-R021**

Introduction

The Directorate of Private Schools & Kindergartens Reviews (DPS), which is a part of the National Authority for Qualifications and Quality Assurance of Education and Training (QQA), conducted this review over three days by a team of six reviewers. During the review, reviewers observed lessons and other activities, scrutinised students' written work and analysed the school's performance data and other documents. They met with staff members, students and parents. This Report summarises their findings and recommendations.

Summary of review judgements

Outstanding 1

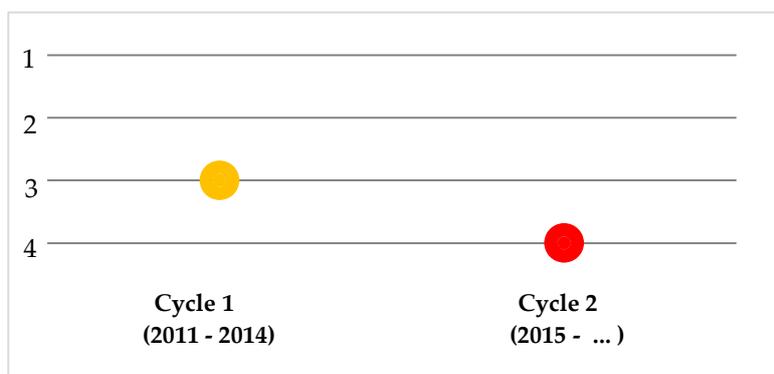
Good 2

Satisfactory 3

Inadequate 4

Aspect		Grade			
		Elementary / Primary	Middle / Intermediate	High / Secondary	Overall
Quality of outcomes	Students' academic achievement	4	4	-	4
	Students' personal development	3	3	-	3
Quality of processes	Teaching and learning	4	4	-	4
	Students' support and guidance	3	3	-	3
Quality assurance of outcomes and processes	Leadership, management and governance	4	4	-	4
Capacity to improve		4			
The school's overall effectiveness		4			

The chart demonstrates the school's overall effectiveness throughout the review cycles.



School Report

Percentile words used in relation to different judgements

Grade	Relative words used	Interpretation
Outstanding	All / Almost all	Indicates completeness and comprehensiveness/about to reach completeness and comprehensiveness.
	The vast majority	Indicates an amount that exceeds most.
Good	Most	Indicates an amount that exceeds majority.
Satisfactory	Majority / Adequate / Suitable / Variable	Indicates more than average.
Inadequate	Minority / Few	Indicates less than average.
	Limited	Indicates less than minority.
	Very limited	Indicates scarcity/rarity.
	None	Indicates unavailability/nothing.

School's overall effectiveness 'Inadequate'

Judgement justifications

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school's overall effectiveness is inadequate, due to students' academic achievement, teaching and learning, and leadership, management and governance being inadequate. • Students achieve high pass rates in school internal examinations. However, their proficiency rates are inconsistent and mostly low in the school's higher grades in core subjects. • Students' standards in Arabic are below age expectations in terms of examinations results and their written work, which is not supported by the lack of accurate correction. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students' personal development is satisfactory. Students are sensitively supported and feel safe and secure at school. However, development of a sense of responsibility and the assumption of leadership roles is only evident in the better lessons. • In general, students make inadequate progress in a significant numbers of core subjects, particularly Arabic. This is due to the ineffective use of teacher-centred approach in most lessons that neither provides sufficient support to all categories of students nor caters for their needs in class activities and homework. |
|---|--|

- The school has a detailed long-term strategic plan that is converted into action planning. Plans are based on self-evaluation results and the involvement of

stakeholders. However, the school's evaluation of teachers' performance is not focused enough to encourage better classroom practices.

Main positive features

- Students are disciplined and feel safe and secure at school.

Recommendations

- Raise students' standards and basic skills in core subjects, particularly in English and Arabic.
- Improve the effectiveness of teaching and learning with focus on:
 - implementing effective teaching and learning strategies
 - using effective assessment methods to rigorously measure students' progress
 - productive time management
 - supporting all categories of students and challenging the more able ones.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership, management and governance by:
 - rigorously evaluating teachers' performance in the classroom
 - providing more effective professional development programmes and critically monitoring their impact on students' academic achievement.

□ Capacity to improve 'Inadequate'

Judgement justifications

- The school's overall effectiveness has declined from satisfactory in the previous review to inadequate in the current one.
- The school has introduced several changes, such as the implementation of the Abacus to further develop students' standards of mental mathematics in all grades and establishing a multipurpose hall in the school.
- The school faces a challenge in raising students' academic achievement due to the current level of teaching and learning

that does not cater for students' different needs. This holds back the progress of both the more able and the low achieving students.

- Despite the stability of most staff and the provision of a number of professional development programmes, the impact of workshops is inconsistent and is inadequate. This is evident in a significant number of core subjects' lessons.

- Leadership's lessons observations are not accurate enough and focus on practices more than the impact of teaching on students' achievement. Feedback to the teachers is not rigorous enough to improve performance in lessons.
- There are also significant discrepancies between the judgements reached by the review team and those given by the school in the self-evaluation form (SEF).

Quality of outcomes

□ Students' academic achievement 'Inadequate'

Judgement justifications

- Students' pass rates are consistently high across all grades and subjects in the school's internal examinations from 2013 to 2015. However, these high results do not reflect the standards seen in most lessons and in student' written work, which are significantly lower.
- Proficiency rates are inconsistent in the academic year 2014-2015. In the primary school, they range from 91% in Year 3 Arabic and mathematics to 46% in Year 5 English. In the middle school, the proficiency rates range from 100% in Year 9 Arabic to 0% in Years 8 and 9 English and science.
- Students' standards are much below curriculum expectations in core subjects, particularly in Arabic and English. In a few grades, the standards in mathematics and science are better than in languages.
- Students' progress is limited in a number of lessons in core subjects and in their written work. In a few better lessons, high achievers make adequate progress. However, students of different abilities do not develop understanding and skills, mainly due to low expectations and insufficient support provided to them within lessons.
- In English, students' listening and speaking skills are in line with grade expectations across the school. The majority of students in the middle school can read with age appropriate fluency. However, students' writing skills are underdeveloped across the school. Most students have difficulty in expressing their ideas through extended writing.
- In Arabic, although students in Grades 1 and 2 can read and comprehend simple vocabulary words, in all other grades students' basic language skills are below curriculum expectations. They make insufficient progress in lessons due to low expectations and inappropriate teaching strategies.
- In mathematics, students across the school have limited understanding of basic concepts. Nevertheless, in a few grades students' standards currently meet age-related expectations. However, students' ability to apply reasoning and problem solving is insufficiently developed across the school.
- In science, students show age appropriate standards. However, students' progress in lessons is limited and their investigative skills are underdeveloped across all grades.

Areas for improvement

- Students' standards and basic language skills in Arabic across the school.
- Students' progress in lessons and in their written work, particularly for the more and less able in Arabic and in English.

- Students' reading skills in Arabic and their writing skills in both Arabic and English across the school.
- Students' ability to apply reasoning and problem solving in mathematics, and their investigative skills in science.

□ Students' personal development 'Satisfactory'

Judgement justifications

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The majority of students participate in all aspects of school life. They enjoy working together in groups, both in the better lessons and in the extracurricular activities provided such as the science exhibition. However, students' leadership roles and sense of responsibility are not well developed in most lessons across grades. • Involvement in activities such as Student Council, Sports Day, mental maths quiz, art exhibition and club activities helps students to build skills and develop self-confidence. • Across the school, students are well mannered and their attitudes are good. They have a strong commitment to attending school and lessons regularly and on time. • Students feel extremely safe and secure at school. This shows in their behaviour in classrooms, corridors and playgrounds, and they are keen to keep the school | <p>buildings clean through the Ushers Committee.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students demonstrate a good appreciation of Islamic values and a thorough understanding of Bahraini culture and heritage. These are developed through lessons in citizenship, celebrating national events such as Arabic Language Day and religious festivals, and through taking part in trips to museums and heritage sites. • In some lessons, students work collaboratively and develop satisfactory communication and interpretive skills through group discussions. • In the very few better lessons, students develop independent working skills well. For example, in art students develop their designing skills by designs on paper bags. However, such skills are not well developed in most core subjects lessons due to the teaching methods that do not emphasis the importance of student independence in their learning. |
|---|---|

Areas for improvement

- Students' effective and self-confident participation in school life and taking responsibility of their learning.
- Students' independent learning skills and their ability to communicate and work effectively with others in lessons.

Quality of processes

□ Teaching and learning 'Inadequate'

Judgement justifications

- In most core subjects, teachers employ teaching and learning strategies that are ineffective, with a focus on question and answer and being mostly teachers centered. This negatively impacts on the development of students' understanding and skills. In the very few better lessons, teachers use suitable teaching methods such as discussion and dialogue, playing, acting and teamwork which reflects positively in students' development and understanding.
- Teachers' use of educational resources in lessons is inconsistent and focuses mostly on using the whiteboard and flashcards. In the better lessons, teachers use smart board and models as well as carrying out scientific experiments. While the impact varies in raising students' motivation toward learning, positive results are seen in the best lessons.
- Poor classroom management resulting in disorderly classes affects lesson productivity, especially in the inadequate lessons. In these, activities are not commensurate with age related expectations due to their being easy and not challenging students' abilities. Teachers' management of learning time contrasts, either taking too long over activities or finishing them too quickly, even before the end of class time without making sure that learning did occur or critically measuring it. This is despite the fact that most teachers are guided with lessons plans, though in some cases these were contrary to the actual delivery of the lessons.
- Teachers encourage and motivate students appropriately by appraisal, words of encouragement, awarding them sticker stars and encouraging them to complete in the house points system. This has a positive impact on the motivation of the majority of students, who in the best lessons participate enthusiastically.
- Teachers use ineffective assessment methods in many lessons, where students are either verbally assessed or, mostly, undergo whole class assessment. This does not help students' individual progress nor take into account students' different abilities and age related expectations. This negatively affects the overall diagnosis and meeting the different educational needs of students.
- Teachers provide insufficient educational support for students of different categories, particularly the low achievers.
- Higher order thinking skills are not developed, and challenge to students' abilities is only evident in a limited number of the better lessons and in homework. Most activities are the same for all and focus on knowledge acquisition and recollection without effective challenge.
- Students are given few activities and homework in most subjects and correction of notebooks is irregular and varies in accuracy. Work is reinforced with verbal appraisal, with insufficient

written feedback given to students in order to improve their performance and

most of the comments in their notebooks tend to be very similar across each group.

Areas for improvement

- Implementation of effective teaching and learning strategies and the utilisation of resources to ensure better productivity in lessons.
- Level of support provided to students, particularly to the low achievers in lessons.
- Effective use of assessment results and activities to meet the different learning needs of students.
- Time management in the less effective lessons.

□ Students' support and guidance 'Satisfactory'

Judgement justifications

- Teachers comment on students' personal and academic achievement in the students' Individual Record Books, which keep a track and monitor students' progress over time. Each student's attitude towards learning is described in acceptable detail.
 - The school introduced (Moodel) as a Learning Management System, which helps students to receive learning support materials, through online communication with teachers. It provides students with extra activities for more practice. Students are provided with useful online links that further enhance students' understanding in English and science. However, the implementation and use of (Moodel) is still teacher dependent, and so far, the lesser contribution is from the Arabic department.
 - The school tracks and monitors students' academic progress through (Moodel), but it is not very systematic nor organised to
- give details about students' progress in targeted skills and language competencies.
- Students are supported and sensitively assisted when they face problems. The school monitors and records incidents and takes appropriate action, which has led to a decline in unacceptable behaviour.
 - Talented and gifted students are supported by involving them in competitions such as Sport Day and drawing activities. However, high achievers are not sufficiently challenged in most lessons.
 - The majority of students are involved in an adequate range of extracurricular activities such as Science Exhibition, Sport Day, Arabic Week, participation in Bahrain Expo 2016, as well as various field trips.
 - Students are adequately prepared for the next stage of their education. A representative from Cambridge and a

career counsellor prepare Grade 8 students for the IGCSE curriculum.

- A student with a disability is appropriately supported. Most staff are familiar with his case and cater for his condition appropriately, assisting him to participate in school life and activities such as Sport Day.
- Students and staff work in a healthy and safe environment. Students are trained on safety drill, and fire extinguishers are placed in every building and an assembly

point is established. Yet, with the overall condition of the school premises, regular monitoring and maintenance is required.

- Students' life skills are appropriately developed through extracurricular activities, ICT lessons, and Personal, Social and Health Education lessons (PSHE) for primary students, as well as Abacus lessons across the school.

Areas for improvement

- Systematic tracking and monitoring of students' academic progress, so that their learning needs are met.
- Development of students' life skills.
- Further monitoring and maintenance of school facilities to ensure students' safety.

Quality assurance of outcomes and processes

□ Leadership, management and governance 'Inadequate'

Judgement justifications

- The strategic and action planning is well documented, based on clear strategic priorities stemming from the school's self-evaluation. This includes data collected from surveys involving students, teachers and parents, as well as from meetings of the school's leadership, management and governance.
- However, the teachers' appraisal is not sufficiently stringent and does not adequately focus on the impact of classroom practices on students' achievement.
- Although the curriculum review is conducted annually and is linked to enrichment and changing of textbooks, enrichment of the syllabus with activities to promote the development of understanding and skills is limited. Only recently has the school properly aligned the British curriculum 'years' system from Year 1 to Year 13 with the Ministry of Education distribution of grades from Grade 1 to Grade 12.
- A significant number of in-house and external professional development programmes are provided to teachers on various topics including lesson planning, differentiation, exploring phonics and critical thinking in 21st century classrooms. However, the translation of these programmes into effective classroom practices is highly inconsistent, and more than a third of lessons in core subjects are judged as inadequate. This is due to challenges related to lessons planning and differentiation approaches to meet students' varying needs.
- Relations between the staff and leadership are positive. An open-door policy, a congenial environment and non-monetary incentives that result in low turnover motivate staff. However, the sharing of better practices to promote high quality learning is limited.
- The school has developed adequate links with the local community through excursions and exhibitions.
- The Board of Management adequately supports the school by providing strategic and financial advice, and holds the school leadership accountable for the school's provisions and outcomes.

Areas for improvement

- Rigour in the evaluation and monitoring of teaching and learning.
- The impact of professional development programmes on developing teachers' performance in lessons.
- Effective use of available facilities and learning resources.

Appendix: Characteristics of the school

Name of the school (Arabic)	المواهب والأطفال الدولية – فرع الرفاع													
Name of the school (English)	Talent International and Infant School - Riffa													
Year of establishment	1980													
Address	P.O Box 26625, East Riffa, Bahrain													
Town /Village / Governorate	East Riffa, Southern													
School's Contacts	17770078				Fax				17770073					
School's e-mail	infant.riffa@Talentschools.com													
School's website	www.talentschools.com													
Age range of students	6-14 Years													
Grades (e.g. 1 to 12)	Primary				Middle				High					
	1-6				7-8				-					
Number of students	Boys		110		Girls		65		Total		175			
Students' social background	Most come from average income families													
Classes per grade	Grade	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
	Classes	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	
Number of administrative staff	4													
Number of teaching staff	21													
Curriculum	British, Ministry of Education (MoE)													
Main language(s) of instruction	English, Arabic													
Principal's tenure in the school	26 years													
External assessment and examinations	-													
Accreditation (if applicable)	-													
Major recent changes in the school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementing Abacus for all grades, and Jolly Phonics Scheme at foundation level. Introduction of Learning Management System (Moodle). 													