



هيئة جودة التعليم والتدريب
Education & Training Quality Authority
Kingdom of Bahrain - مملكة البحرين

Directorate of Private Schools & Kindergartens Reviews Review Report

**Al Mahd Day Boarding School – Riffa Branch
East Riffa – Southern Governorate
Kingdom of Bahrain**

**Date of Review: 25-27 February 2018
SP056-C2-R051**

Introduction

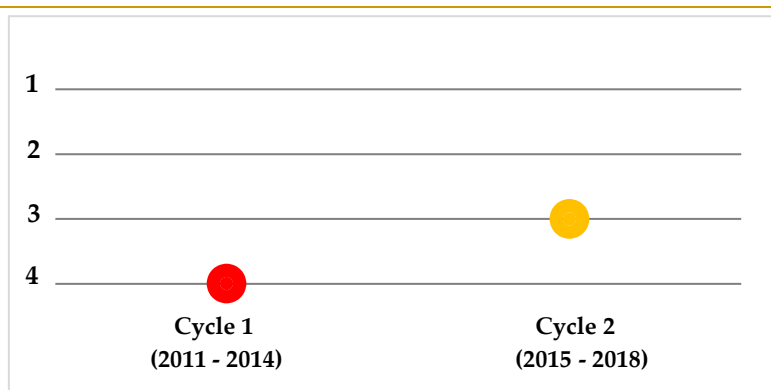
The Directorate of Private Schools & Kindergartens Reviews (DPS), which is a part of the Education & Training Quality Authority (BQA), conducted this review over three days by a team of six reviewers. During the review, reviewers observed lessons and other activities, scrutinised students' written works and analysed 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
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Aspect		Grade			
		Elementary / Primary	Middle / Intermediate	High / Secondary	Overall
Quality of outcomes	Students' academic achievement	3	-	-	3
	Students' personal development	3	-	-	3
Quality of processes	Teaching and learning	3	-	-	3
	Students' support and guidance	3	-	-	3
Quality assurance of outcomes and processes	Leadership, management and governance	3	-	-	3
Capacity to improve		3			
The school's overall effectiveness		3			

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



1	Outstanding	2	Good	3	Satisfactory	4	Inadequate
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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 'Satisfactory'

Judgement justifications

- The school has successfully improved its performance to satisfactory level since the previous review.
- Students achieved high pass rates in the 2016-2017 internal examinations across all grades in core subjects. Proficiency rates were high in Grades 1 to 3, but average in Grades 4 to 6, except for Grade 6 English and mathematics which were low.
- The majority of students have appropriate comprehension skills in English and Arabic; however, problem solving and scientific experimentation skills are less developed, particularly in Grades 5 and 6.
- The majority of students participate adequately in the school activities and assume leading roles which appropriately develop their self-confidence. However, in the majority of lessons, such opportunities are inconsistent and teachers tend to give their attention to the more able students.
- Most teachers use a range of appropriate teaching strategies that include role play and group work, as well as using resources such as smart boards and TVs. However, the effective use of learning time and assessment results to support students is inconsistent in modifying and

meeting the needs of students, particularly the low achievers.

- The impact of reinforcement support programmes is inconsistent. More effective support is needed for the lower achievers and those with learning difficulties to enable them to make progress.

- The senior management show a realistic awareness of the school's performance. Planning and monitoring performance are adequate. However, planning still needs to be updated regularly, with improvement priorities emerging from the continuous self-evaluation in order to sustain and improve the satisfactory performance.

Main positive features

- Leadership roles are adequately provided for the more able students in school activities and events.
- The senior leadership is aware of the school's performance and improvement priorities.

Recommendations

- Benefit further from the self-evaluation results to monitor and amend action planning to ensure more consistent and sustainable overall improvement.
- Raise students' standards and skills, particularly in mathematics and science in Grades 5 and 6.
- Monitor the impact of teachers' professional development programmes on the development of more effective teaching and learning strategies that focus on:
 - use of assessment results in supporting all categories of students, with more focus on the low achieving
 - managing learning time more productively
 - providing more opportunities for students to participate in lessons and assume leadership roles.
- Ensure the effectiveness of the reinforcement lessons and programmes in supporting students, particularly the low achievers and those with learning difficulties.

□ Capacity to improve 'Satisfactory'

Judgement justifications

- Strategic and action planning are realistic and based on regular self-evaluation that focusses on identifying school-wide strengths and areas for improvement.

- The school's judgements in the Self-Evaluation Form (SEF) are consistent with the judgements reached by the review team in most aspects.
- The school's recent improvements that have raised the overall effectiveness include conducting many relevant professional development workshops and updating the school's facilities and ICT resources.
- The school's open-door policy promotes positive social and professional relationships among staff, which have a positive impact on their performance and

shows positively on students' overall achievement and engagement in the majority of lessons.

- Despite the systematic induction programme for new teachers in order to meet the school's expectations, the school still faces a challenge in the yearly turnover of teachers. This hinders the consistent impact of professional development programmes. It also affects further improvement of students' standards and proficiency rates in Grades 4 to 6 in all core subjects.

Quality of outcomes

□ Students' academic achievement 'Satisfactory'

Judgement justifications

- In the 2016-2017 internal examinations, students achieved high pass rates in all core subjects, ranging from 97% in Arabic and mathematics in Grade 5 to 100% in most core subjects of Grades 1, 2 and 6.
- The high proficiency rates are consistent with the pass rates in all subjects for Grades 1 to 3, ranging from 60% in Grade 3 Arabic to 82% in Grade 1 science. However, students achieved only average proficiency rates in Grades 4 to 6, ranging from 50% in Grade 5 English to 58% in Grade 4 science and English, except for English and mathematics in Grade 6 which were low at 48%.
- Students' standards are satisfactory in more than three quarters of the lessons observed in core subjects, reflecting the inconsistent proficiency rates.
- In 2016, Grade 6 students achieved well above the BQA national average in English, but they were average in Arabic.
- Students in Grade 6 opting to sit the 2017 Cambridge Primary Checkpoint performed better in science than in English and mathematics. Only a few students achieved 5 points and above in science and English, but none achieved any points in mathematics.
- Students adequately acquire knowledge, concepts and skills in all core subjects, as follows:
 - In Arabic, reading comprehension skills and use of grammar forms are adequate. In English, students show secure listening, speaking and reading skills. However, in both languages, extended writing skills are underdeveloped.
 - In mathematics, the majority of students can make calculations and compare 3-digit numbers, but still face difficulty in solving written problems in Grades 5 and 6. In science, students show appropriate knowledge of scientific concepts and can use measurement tools for scientific comparisons. However, their experimentation skills are not well developed, particularly in Grades 5 and 6.
- Students have scored high pass rates consistently for the past three academic years, from 2014-2015 to 2016-2017.
- Students, particularly those who are more able, make appropriate progress in most lessons and in their written work. However, low achievers' progress is less, due to the limited support provided to them. Students with learning difficulties show adequate progress in the programme provided for them.

Areas for improvement

- Writing skills in both Arabic and English, problem solving and scientific experimentation.

- Progress achieved by students with learning difficulties and low achievers in lessons and in their written work.

□ Students' personal development 'Satisfactory'

Judgement justifications

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The majority of students participate adequately in school life when they have the opportunity, especially in morning assembly and school events such as the 'World Peace Day', drawing competitions, and 'World Children's Day', as well as in school committees like the Disciplinary Committee, the Little Guide and as House Captains. • In the majority of lessons, students assume leadership roles and show their self-confidence, such as in assuming the role of a 'Junior Teacher'. However, such opportunities are mostly for the gifted and most able students, and the rest miss out on such roles. • Students behave positively and show respect for their teachers and peers. Most are self-disciplined, adhere to the rules of the school, and provide support to their younger peers in organising morning assemblies and events. The results show in the harmonious relations between them and the reduced behavioural problems, which impact positively on their sense of security. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The majority of students have a sufficient understanding of Bahrain's culture and participate in many events that promote the spirit of citizenship, such as National Day, Charter Day and Bahrain First. They go on trips to heritage sites such as Bahrain National Museum. Students are attentive and respect the recitation of the Holy Quran in the morning assembly. • The majority of students attend school regularly and on time. Their presence is encouraged by initiatives such as honouring the 'Early Birds' students with gifts in the assembly. • Opportunities to develop independent learning skills vary in lessons. In a limited number of lessons, students develop these skills through, for example, use of the dictionary to search for the meanings of words. • Students communicate appropriately in the majority of lessons, but opportunities to work together vary depending on the teaching and learning strategies used. |
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Areas for improvement

- Students' active participation in lessons and assumption of leadership roles consistently across the school, particularly in lessons.
- Development of independent learning, effective communication and group working skills.

Quality of processes

□ Teaching and learning 'Satisfactory'

Judgement justifications

- In the majority of lessons, teachers use an adequate range of teaching and learning strategies, such as question and answer, role play collaborative work, discussion, debate, scientific experimentation and 'Joiner Teacher'. Various educational resources are appropriately used, such as Smart Boards and TVs, worksheets, dictionaries, and scientific equipment which motivate and enable the majority of students to acquire knowledge and develop understanding.
- Although strategies and activities are adequately used, they mainly focus on promoting leadership roles for the more able students, with less attention to the others, particularly the low achievers. This hinders their learning and acquisition of skills and knowledge in lessons. In the very few inadequate lessons, students are not able to make sufficient progress, due to the ineffective strategies and weak class management.
- Most lessons are orderly, with appropriate planning and behaviour management, while providing clear instructions and a proper sequence of activities. However, the effective use of learning time is inconsistent due to some teachers' tendency to exceed the time allocated for some activities like starting or ending the lesson without completion of individual assessments. This affects the achievement of lessons' objectives and allows insufficient time to support the low achievers when needed.
- Students are encouraged and motivated towards active learning appropriately, through positive compliments, clapping, group cups and stars stickers.
- In the majority of lessons, teachers use different assessment methods, such as verbal and written, individual, peer assessment and in groups. However, their effectiveness varies, as in some lessons where verbal and group assessment are used more which results in inaccurate measurement of individual students' understanding and progress. The use of results to identify and support students of all abilities is appropriate.
- In the better lessons, individual worksheets challenge the majority of students adequately. However, in some lessons, modification in planning and teaching based on assessment results is not clear, resulting in inconsistency in meeting the needs of students of different abilities, particularly the low achievers.
- Teachers assign a satisfactory amount of classroom activities and homework to students. These are regularly marked, despite some cases of inaccuracy and the inconsistent provision of feedback.
- Higher order thinking skills are under-developed in most lessons, as teachers mainly focus on knowledge acquisition and recollection, except for few examples such as text analysis in Arabic, provoking thinking in debates in English, and scientific justification in science.

- In a very few lessons, activities are prepared that challenge students gradually. However, differentiation is not well implemented, either in lessons or in

homework and written work. The more able students finish with no extension of work.

Areas for improvement

- Assessment for learning and use of its results to identify and support students of all abilities effectively, particularly the low achievers.
- More productive use of learning time.
- Differentiation to cater more for students' learning needs and challenge their abilities in lessons and written work.

□ Students' support and guidance 'Satisfactory'

Judgement justifications

- The more able students are encouraged to participate in various programmes such as competitions, debate and story writing. Students' learning needs are identified based on diagnostic tests results. The gifted and talented students participate in activities such as sports, speech and the talents show.
- Low achieving students are supported adequately through daily reinforcement lessons. However, the effectiveness of this support is inconsistent as some of the reinforcement lessons are only used for completing course content. Students with learning difficulties receive care and attention. A new support programme has been initiated to address their needs, but is in its early stage and is not systematic enough to achieve the required improvement in their progress.
- The school adequately meets students' personal needs through providing guidance and counselling when they face

- problems. It promotes positive values and behaviour and raises students' awareness through the morning assembly and workshops such as 'Cleanliness Day'.
- Students are provided with sufficient extracurricular activities to cater for their interests, such as handwriting and painting events, celebrations of 'Earth Day' and 'World Book Day'. The majority of students are encouraged to take part in inter-school and house competitions and go on visits to sites like Tasneem Garden.
- The school provides a suitably safe and healthy environment for the students and staff through regular maintenance and evacuation drills. The nurse provides appropriate health care and many students participate in the First Aid workshop.
- New students are inducted adequately through an introductory gathering for both students and their parents to inform them about the school systems. Grade 6

students who wish to continue their studies in Saar Branch go on a visit there to get acquainted with the staff and facilities.

- Students' life skills are inconsistently developed. In the better lessons, ICT skills are developed by using MS Excel.

Leadership roles are developed through the Students' Council and as house captains. However, the opportunities to further develop other life skills such as practical skills are limited.

Areas for improvement

- Meeting the different learning needs of all groups of students, particularly the low achievers and those with learning difficulties.
- Further development of student's life skills.

Quality assurance of outcomes and processes

□ Leadership, management and governance 'Satisfactory'

Judgement justifications

- The school's self-evaluation is regular and involves students, parents and teachers. This process adequately focuses on identifying school-wide strengths and areas for improvement, which are linked to planning for development based on the school's priorities.
- Strategic and action planning are realistic and sufficiently detailed, reflecting the school's vision and mission and based on the identified improvement priorities and the BQA recommendations. All of this improves the overall performance of the school. For sustainability of performance, action planning needs to be updated regularly to focus on any emerging improvement priorities to ensure consistent development.
- Adequate systems are in place to monitor the success of planning, with clear performance indicators such as monitoring teachers' performance which involves the Principal, the School Manager and subject coordinators. Teachers' professional development programmes are provided on the findings of these visits and on their training needs' analysis.
- The school's open-door policy, the newly developed school improvement team (SIT) and staff welfare sessions are adequately effective in promoting positive social and professional relationships among staff and generate enthusiasm for development.
- Staff are provided with clear job descriptions and are regularly subjected to a range of both in-house and external training programmes. These include topics such as assessment for learning, time management, lesson planning, inclusive classroom differentiated teaching, and extensive training in Cambridge Primary English as a second language, mathematics and science. However, due to the continuous teachers' turnover, the impact of training programmes is inconsistent and is reflected only satisfactorily in most lessons.
- The school provides a systematic induction programme for new teachers. This includes mock lessons and peer mentoring to ensure consistency in accordance with school's expectations.
- The school's leadership ensures the availability of adequate learning resources, including interactive whiteboards and smart TVs in classrooms. These are used appropriately in most lessons to promote students' learning and engage them in lessons.
- The school has developed proper links with the local community by participating in national events, visits to local organisations such as the Gulf Daily News (GDN) offices, and involving students in

charity services with Al Kawther Society for social care and visiting a senior citizens' home. The school invites guest speakers to deliver talks to students on various topics, creating awareness of road traffic rules, health and hygiene.

- The Board of Directors meets regularly and provides adequate strategic direction and support to the school's leadership.

This is achieved by the Board's awareness of the day to day functioning of the school and it holds the school leaders accountable for performance and students' welfare.

Areas for improvement

- Regularly updating action planning to focus on any emerging improvement priorities to ensure consistency in performance.
- Ensuring the consistent impact of professional development programmes on teachers' performance in lessons, particularly the newly joining teachers.

Appendix: Characteristics of the school

Name of the school (Arabic)	مدرسة المهدي الداخلية – فرع الرفاع													
Name of the school (English)	Al Mahd Day Boarding School – Riffa Branch													
Year of establishment	2011													
Address	Building 471, Road 4114, Block 941													
Town / Village / Governorate	East Riffa / Southern													
School's Contacts	17620730				Fax				17621090					
School's e-mail	amdb.s.riffa@gmail.com													
School's website	www.almahdschool.com													
Age range of students	6–12 years													
Grades (e.g. 1 to 12)	Primary				Middle				High					
	1 – 6				-				-					
Number of students	Boys		201		Girls		195		Total		396			
Students' social background	Most students are from average economic families													
Classes per grade	Grade	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
	Classes	4	4	3	3	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Number of administrative staff	13													
Number of teaching staff	32													
Curriculum	Cambridge (British)													
Main language(s) of instruction	English / Arabic													
Principal's tenure in the school	5 months													
External assessment and examinations	BQA National Examinations, Cambridge Primary Checkpoint Examinations for Grade 6													
Accreditation (if applicable)	-													
Major recent changes in the school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Principal appointed in September 2017. • Smart boards and smart TVs are installed. 													