



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

Directorate of Private Schools & Kindergartens Reviews Review Report

**Arabian Pearl Gulf School
Bilad Al Qadeem – Capital Governorate
Kingdom of Bahrain**

Date of Review: 16-18 November 2015
SP006-C2-R008

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 nine 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

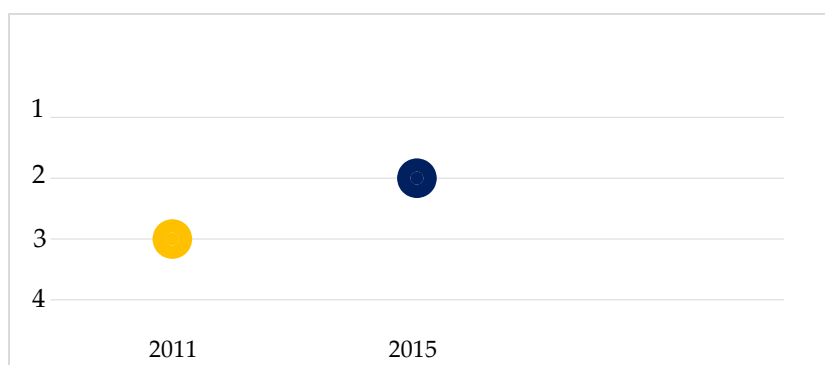
Good 2

Satisfactory 3

Inadequate 4

Aspect		Grade			
		Elementary / Primary	Middle / Intermediate	High / Secondary	Overall
Quality of outcomes	Students' academic achievement	2	2	2	2
	Students' personal development	2	2	1	2
Quality of processes	Teaching and learning	2	2	2	2
	Students' support and guidance	2	2	2	2
Quality assurance of outcomes and processes	Leadership, management and governance	2	2	2	2
Capacity to improve		2			
The school's overall effectiveness		2			

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



1 Outstanding
 2 Good
 3 Satisfactory
 4 Inadequate

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 'Good'

Judgement justifications

- The school's overall effectiveness improved from satisfactory in the previous review to good in almost all aspects, with outstanding personal development in the high school.
 - Most students make good progress in lessons and in their written work.
 - Standards attained by most students are above their age-related expectations in English and mathematics.
 - Most students participate enthusiastically in all aspects of school life. They work well together in a number of co-curricular activities which support the development of different aspects of their personality.
- They have strong relations with their colleagues and feel extremely safe and secure at school. They exhibit highly positive behaviour and strong commitment to values of Islam and an understanding of Bahraini culture.
- In most lessons, teachers implement a wide range of effective teaching strategies supported by a variety of resources to enrich and enhance students' learning. They encourage and motivate students to participate actively throughout lessons. However, students' problem-solving and Arabic language skills, particularly in the middle school are not well developed.

- Students' learning needs are identified effectively and met outstandingly well with well-designed activities that cater for their differing needs. They are also sensitively and well supported, both inside and outside school, if they face problems.
- The school's self-evaluation is rigorous and strategic planning, supported by departmental plans, contributes to the realisation of the school's vision and mission.

Main positive features

- Students' progress in their knowledge, understanding and skills across the school.
- The students' highly positive behaviour, their strong commitment to the values of Islam and their understanding of Bahraini culture.
- The highly sensitive and individualised support and care designed to resolve students' problems and develop their personalities.
- The wide range of extracurricular activities that contribute well to developing students' learning experiences.
- The positive impact of the continuous professional development programme on teaching practices, particularly in primary and high schools.

Recommendations

- Further improve the quality of teaching and learning with a focus on:
 - developing students' problem-solving skills and Arabic language, particularly in the middle school
 - consistently promoting students' higher-order thinking skills in all lessons
 - setting activities in lessons that are tailored to provide challenge for all groups of students including the use of assessment for learning.
- Continue to seek to broaden the membership of the Board of Directors.

Capacity to improve 'Good'

Judgement justifications

- The school's capacity to improve is good due to the overall performance of the school and the level of care provided to all students, which impacts positively on their progress and the standards achieved.
- Strategic planning, self-evaluation and management of staff are effective in

improving the school's overall performance.

- The professional development programmes have a highly positive impact on the improvements in teaching practices and the consequent acceleration of students' learning.
- The learning support team, part of the special educational needs department (SPED), both supports and consolidates the work done in class and has a strong impact.

- The school has a strong, close-knit family atmosphere which provides the staff with a highly positive working environment.
- Good induction and transition programmes help students settle well and guides them in the next stage of their education.

Quality of outcomes

□ Students' academic achievement 'Good'

Judgement justifications

- In internal examinations, students' attainment is very high with very high proficiency rates across the school. However, in 2014-2015, the attainment of Grade 9 students was low in English, biology and chemistry.
 - In the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IBDP), students' performance is very high in English B HL, biology HL, mathematics studies SL and business management SL. It is high in Arabic A, literature SL and business management HL.
 - In the QQA national examinations, students' attainment is well above the national average with Grade 3 and Grade 12 students attaining very high achievement in English.
 - In Arabic across the school, students' standards are generally in line with their age-related expectations.
- In English the standards demonstrated by the high school students are well above expectations. In the primary and middle stages, students' standards are above their age-related curriculum expectations.
 - Most students demonstrate well-developed communication skills in English across the school.
 - In science, students' standards are above their age-related expectations across the school. Their scientific enquiry skills are well developed.
 - In mathematics most students, particularly in the primary and high schools, demonstrate standards above their age related expectations. Their arithmetic skills are well developed.
 - Students show high standards and good progress in their academic work in core subjects.

Areas for improvement

- The progress of students in Arabic lessons, particularly in the middle school.
- Problem-solving and practical skills.

□ Students' personal development 'Good'

Judgement justifications

- Most students participate enthusiastically in all aspects of school life. They enjoy working together in groups, both in lessons and in a number of co-curricular activities such as science fairs and contests.
 - Involvement in activities helps students to build both skills and personal qualities. Activities include Model United Nations conferences, UNESCO international days, Youth Talk in which the students interact with students from the United States through video conferencing, Echoes which is an interschool speech competition for students of Grades 7 and 8, Voices (which is a series of intraschool speech competitions between all), and club activities.
 - Across the school students' attitudes are outstanding. Students have strong relationships with their colleagues and teachers, showing in their interaction with each other in lessons and during the recess and their positive participation in the morning assembly. They also have a strong commitment to attending school and lessons on time.
 - Students feel extremely safe and secure at school due to the exemplary behaviour of all in classrooms, corridors and playgrounds.
- Students demonstrate an outstanding appreciation of Islamic values and thorough understanding of Bahraini culture and heritage. These are developed through lessons in citizenship, celebrating National events and religious festivals, and through trips to museums and heritage sites.
 - Students are empathetic and compassionate to the feelings of others. They are involved in charity programmes and community service activities such as beach cleaning and supporting students with special educational needs.
 - In the vast majority of lessons across all grades, students work well together, respecting each other and working collaboratively in and out of lessons. They work in groups to prepare presentations, reach solutions and argue cases against other groups.
 - In better lessons, students develop independent working skills well. For example, in Grades 5 mathematics and 10 English students develop excellent analytic and interpretive skills through group discussions, while in Grade 5 science students refer to glossaries for terminologies related to echo systems and develop their scientific inquiry skills.

Areas for improvement

- Students' independent learning skills.

Quality of processes

□ Teaching and learning 'Good'

Judgement justifications

- In most lessons teachers use effective teaching strategies such as discussion, role-playing and collaborative work. In English lessons Grade 3 students are encouraged to write shaped poems, and to conduct high levels of discussion in higher grades. In the elementary school students' learning is developed well through role-play.
- Teachers use a wide variety of resources in most lessons, such as interactive screens to show video clips and songs. Flash cards, pictures, cubes and worksheets are also used effectively to enrich students' learning and enhance their experience.
- In most lessons teachers provide effective encouragement and constructive verbal reinforcement such as enabling students to participate actively in lessons. This results in students being well-motivated, curious and interested in their learning.
- Various methods of continuous assessment are successfully employed to measure students' performance and also to plan future learning. Most teachers provide immediate and ongoing feedback so that students know how to improve their work.
- Most lessons are managed effectively, particularly in terms of activities provided. Teachers' clear instructions consistently secure the students' interest and engagement in their learning. This leads to high levels of productivity. However, occasionally teachers do not manage time well with allocated times sometimes being exceeded.
- In most lessons, students are provided with sufficient opportunities to develop their higher order thinking skills, including justification, reasoning and expression of opinion. However, these skills are not sufficiently well secured. Skills such as critical thinking, synthesis and problem-solving are not consistently developed across the school.
- Implementing differentiation to meet students' needs and challenge their abilities is inconsistent. It is only in the very best lessons that suitable challenge is provided for all groups of students.

Areas for improvement

- Higher order thinking skills.
- Differentiation in lessons' activities.

□ Students' support and guidance 'Good'

Judgement justifications

- The school is highly effective in identifying and meeting the needs of different groups of students. The most able students enjoy competing for special award badges and are given opportunities to enrich their knowledge through participation in educational clubs such as mathematics and English.
- The school has excellent support and intervention procedures for Special Educational Needs (SPED) students. Students who are dyslexic are supported well, receiving help to read questions and having adapted examination papers with a bigger font. Remedial classes are conducted for less able students.
- Talented students are supported well through internal and external competitions such as poetry, robotics, photography and filmmaking.
- Students with personal and social needs are carefully and sensitively supported. They have the confidence to talk with their teachers or counsellors if they face problems inside or outside school. Different contests such as Voices and Echoes are held in school to enhance students' personal development and develop their confidence and move outside their comfort zone. In addition, workshops such as 'Peace' and 'No More' focus on developing their awareness about their age and personal needs.
- The school provides a good variety of well-attended extra-curricular activities. These support the development of students' interests and needs, particularly in sport, the arts, cooking, poetry and playing musical instruments.
- The school is highly effective in providing sensitive support for students with physical disabilities, for instance by ensuring that classrooms are on the ground floor.
- There is a good induction and transition programme that helps students to settle or prepare them for the next stage of their education. Students and their parents are given guidelines and instructions through students' orientation day, covering both IGCSE and IB students. Progression to university studies or the labour market includes visits to the school by external speakers.
- Students' life skills are developed well through the life skills curriculum for middle elementary and middle school. Students are encouraged to develop their ICT, communication and reading skills.
- The school provides a healthy and safe environment, with good maintenance and risk assessments, the close monitoring of fire extinguishers and providing a fitness programme for overweight students. However, some aspects of the new artificial grass areas could cause a trip hazard for students.

Areas for improvement

- Ensure that safe measures are in place within the playgrounds.

Quality assurance of outcomes and processes

□ Leadership, management and governance 'Good'

Judgement justifications

- Self-evaluation processes are sound, being wide-ranging and rigorous. They result in a good quality strategic plan which is supported by a range of effective departmental plans. Taken together, they both support the securing of the school's vision and are effective tools in improving performance and provision. Arrangements for the performance management of staff are good and are a key factor in lifting the quality of teaching and learning.
- There is an extensive continuous professional development programme which focuses well on improving the skills of staff. There has been a successful emphasis on extending the range of teaching and learning styles, accelerating learning and strengthening students' engagement in learning.
- The staff work closely together. Teamwork is strong and professional relationships are positive. Arrangements for the sharing of good practice and peer observations are particularly beneficial in consolidating good teamwork.
- Good use is made of the relatively restricted extent of the site. Accommodation is of good quality. The re-vamped library is a valuable resource that is used well. Resources are good. Staff enliven learning well by the use of interactive white boards and a good range of learning resources.
- The school successfully extends students' educational experiences and develops their personality. The school is successful in the wide range of competitions entered, which broaden students' horizons. This is aided, for example, by students holding video conferences with schools in the United States. Students' community development awareness is enhanced by visits to care homes for the elderly, an orphanage and beach cleaning.
- The Board of Directors, particularly the Chairman as proprietor of the school, holds the staff to account well. Extensive exploration of the school's budget, implementation of the strategic plan and support for students' achievements all contribute effectively to this. However, the Board's representation is narrow and would benefit from the addition of parent representation.

Areas for improvement

- Broaden the representation within the Board of Governance .

Appendix: Characteristics of the school

Name of the school (Arabic)	مدرسة لؤلؤة الخليج العربي													
Name of the school (English)	Arabian Pearl Gulf School (APG School)													
Year of establishment	1996													
Address	Building 1786 Road 6359 Block 363 Bilad Al Qadeem													
Town /Village / Governorate	Bilad Al Qadeem – Northern Governorate													
School's Contacts	17402394 - 17403666				Fax		17404074							
School's e-mail	info@apgschool.com													
School's website	www.apgschool.com													
Age range of students	6-18 Years													
Grades (e.g. 1 to 12)	Primary				Middle				High					
	1-6				7-9				10-12					
Number of students	Boys	593			Girls	512			Total	1105				
Students' social background	Middle class families													
Classes per grade	Grade	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
	Classes	7	7	6	6	6	6	6	5	5	3	2	2	
Number of administrative staff	13													
Number of teaching staff	118													
Curriculum	International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE). International Baccalaureate Diploma (IB).													
Main language(s) of instruction	English/Arabic/French													
Principal's tenure in the school	13 Years													
External assessment and examinations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE). International Baccalaureate Diploma (IB). 													
Accreditation (if applicable)	-													
Major recent changes in the school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The movement of kindergarten to separate premises and the middle school into a new building. The appointment of a gifted and talented specialist and a career counsellor. The introduction of 'Life Skills' as a subject in 2012-2013. 													