



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

# **Directorate of Private Schools & Kindergartens Reviews Review Report**

**Al-Falah Private School  
Muharraq Branch - Boys Section  
Muharraq - Muharraq Governorate  
Kingdom of Bahrain**

**Date of Review: 22 - 24 April 2013**

SP033-C1-R033

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## The Directorate of Private Schools & Kindergartens Reviews

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The Directorate of Private Schools & Kindergartens Reviews (DPS) is part of the National Authority for Qualifications and Quality Assurance of Education and Training (QQA) that was officially set up in 2008 as an independent body governed and supervised by the Council of Ministers. It is established to raise standards in education and training.

The DPS is responsible for:

- evaluating and reporting on the quality of provision in all private schools and kindergartens
- establishing success measures
- spreading best practice
- making recommendations for private school/kindergarten improvements.

Review involves monitoring standards and evaluating the quality of provision against a clear set of indicators. The reviews are independent, objective and transparent. They provide important information for private schools and kindergartens about their strengths and areas for improvement to assist in focusing efforts and resources as part of the cycle of school improvement in order to raise standards.

Review grades are awarded a four-point scale:

Grade description	Interpretation
Outstanding (1)	Outcomes or provision are at least good in all areas and outstanding in the majority.
Good (2)	Outcomes or provision are at least satisfactory in all areas and good in the majority.
Satisfactory (3)	A basic level of adequacy. There are no major weaknesses, or the majority of areas are satisfactory. Some areas may be good.
Inadequate (4)	There are major weaknesses or the majority of areas are inadequate.

## Introduction

This review was conducted over three days, by a team of seven reviewers. During the review, reviewers observed lessons and other activities, examined students' written and other work, analysed data concerning the school's performance and other documents, and talked with staff, students and parents. This report summarises their findings and recommendations.

## Characteristics of the school

School's name		Al-Falah Private School Muharraq Branch – Boys Section												
School's type		Private												
Year of establishment		1990												
Age range of students		8-18 years												
Grades (e.g. 1 to 12)		Primary				Middle				High				
		3-6				7-9				10-12				
Number of students		Boys	286	Girls		-				Total		286		
Students' social background		Most students come from high-income families.												
Classes per grade	Grade	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
	Classes	-	-	1	2	1	2	2	2	1	2	1	2	
Town /Village		Muharraq												
Governorate		Muharraq												
Number of administrative staff		3												
Number of teaching staff		34												
Curriculum		Ministry of Education ( MoE)												
Main language(s) of instruction		Arabic												
Principal's tenure		2 years												
External assessment and examinations		MoE third intermediate level examinations												
Accreditation (if applicable)		-												
Number of students in the following categories according to the school's classification		Outstanding			Gifted & Talented			Physical Disabilities			Learning Difficulties			
		95			42			1			27			
Major recent changes in the school		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Appointing 5 new coordinators in the current academic year 2012- 2013 for the following subjects: Arabic, Islamic education, science, mathematics and</li></ul>												

	<p>social studies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appointing 10 new teachers in the current academic year for the following subjects: 2 in Arabic and mathematics, 3 in Islamic education, and 1 in English language, science and social studies</li> <li>• Installing a new computer and internet network in school.</li> </ul>
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## Table of review judgements awarded

Aspect	Grade: Description			
The school's overall effectiveness	3: Satisfactory			
The school's capacity to improve	3: Satisfactory			
	Elementary / Primary	Middle / Intermediate	High / Secondary	Overall
Students' academic achievement	3	4	3	3
Students' personal development	3	3	3	3
The quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning	3	4	3	3
The quality of the curriculum implementation	3	3	3	3
The quality of support and guidance for students	4	4	4	4
The quality and effectiveness of leadership, management and governance	3	3	3	3

### Key:

- 1: Outstanding
- 2: Good
- 3: Satisfactory
- 4: Inadequate

## Review judgements

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### Overall effectiveness

- ☐ **How effective is the school in meeting the needs of students and their parents?**

#### **Grade: 3 Satisfactory**

Al-Falah Private School – Muharraaq Branch – Boys Section has satisfactory overall performance. Most aspects of the school are satisfactory, though support and guidance is inadequate due to the school's non-compliance with safety and security requirements in the school building. Students' discipline and adherence to Islamic behaviour and values is evident from extra-curricular programmes and activities which promote such values. The school adequately monitors the teaching process through frequent class visits, which reflects in most students' achievement such as their clear progress in Arabic. However, academic support provided to low achievers is less effective, reflected in slow progress in some intermediate level lessons, particularly science. Students and parents are satisfied with the school.

- ☐ **How strong is the school's capacity to improve?**

#### **Grade: 3 Satisfactory**

The school's capacity to improve is satisfactory. There is a strategic plan based on school situation analysis, though performance indicators vary in terms of accuracy, clarity and adequate monitoring mechanisms. However, these reflect satisfactorily on the school's overall performance, especially academic achievement and the effectiveness of teaching and learning. Several improvements have been achieved, including spreading a culture of progress and development, more frequent class visits, and professional development programmes. The school also focuses on developing students' awareness and improving discipline. However, challenges such as the school building not meeting safety and security requirements, the instability of teaching staff, and insufficient monitoring of the impact of professional development programmes on teachers' performance do not contribute to raising the school's capacity to improve beyond satisfactory.

## Students' achievement

### □ How well do students achieve in their academic work?

#### Grade: 3 Satisfactory

Students achieved pass rates ranging between 71% and 100% in the school examinations in most core subjects in the first semester of the academic year 2012-2013, but achieved low pass rates in some grades, especially mathematics in Grades 6, 9 and 11, as well as in science in Grade 9. Proficiency rates largely agree with pass rates for Grades 3, 4 and 12, though they vary for most core subjects in other grades. Although high pass rates reflect students' levels in good lessons, especially Arabic in all levels, more than half the lessons were only satisfactory, whilst levels regressed in some intermediate level lessons, notably in science, due to varied teaching methods and insufficient support for different categories of students.

Most students acquire adequate basic skills in Arabic in most levels, including reading, speaking, and content and syntactic analysis. Writing skills are acquired to a lesser degree, especially in the intermediate level. Students' proficiency in computer skills and English reading, listening and speaking matches expectations in most levels. The same goes for science skills in intermediate and secondary levels and mathematical skills in primary levels. Acquisition of writing skills is not on the same level.

Tracking students' results from 2010 to 2013 shows that secondary level students have achieved progress while primary and intermediate level students have regressed in most core subjects, especially mathematics. There has been good progress in most Arabic lessons due to effective teaching methods and the varied activities provided. However, the same levels have not been achieved in other lessons and written work, especially in science at intermediate level and mathematics at primary level, due to the varied effectiveness of teaching and learning and the limited support provided for low achievers.

Outstanding students have achieved sufficient progress considering their abilities in most lessons. Varied school activities and programmes adequately met their educational needs. However, low achieving students do not achieve sufficient progress in most lessons due to the insufficient support provided for them. Although they do achieve adequate progress in remedial lessons, this only reflects variedly on their achievement.



## **□ How good is the students' personal development?**

### **Grade: 3 Satisfactory**

Most students have good understanding of Bahrain's culture and Islamic values, demonstrated by their good behaviour, especially in interpersonal relationships based on mutual respect among peers and with teachers. This in turn reflects in the majority of school members feeling safe and secure in school. This understanding and observance of Islamic values is reflected in holding congregational prayer and the patriotism demonstrated in participation in school programmes and activities such as Quran lessons, visiting retirement homes, Shura Council and Bahrain National Museum, and celebrating National Action Charter Day. These promote national culture, values and positive behaviour. The students' moral awareness is evident in their regular and punctual attendance at school and the insignificant number of behavioural violations at intermediate and primary levels. Unacceptable behaviour by a few primary level students are addressed by the school with guidance, counselling and correction.

Most students participate confidently in school life, adequately developing their personalities through participation in committees and programmes such as the Student Council and the Young Missionary, and in activities such as the mathematics contest. They participate effectively in good lessons. However, although students are disciplined and have opportunities to work with their peers and to express themselves, their participation is undermined by the teacher-centred teaching methods, which can reflect adversely on motivation and personal development.

## **The quality of provision**

## **□ How effective are teaching and learning?**

### **Grade: 3 Satisfactory**

Teachers are familiar with their study materials, though presentation and performance varies in most lessons. In good lessons, teachers use effective teaching methods such as collective work, learning through play, brainstorming, discussions and debates. However, the majority of other lessons focus on teacher-centred teaching, which results in varied acquisition by students of skills, concepts and knowledge. Their attainment is good in most Arabic lessons, adequate in English lessons as well as in mathematics in the intermediate and secondary levels, and inadequate in some primary level lessons, especially science.

Teachers provide limited opportunities to develop students' higher order thinking skills and challenge their abilities. Arabic lessons are the exception, where there is attention to analysis questions and syntactic rules. Otherwise most lessons focus on imparting knowledge and developing lower order thinking skills, both when presenting lessons and in academic activities which – quite often – do not challenge students' abilities or develop their different needs. This is particularly so in mathematics and science lessons. This limits the broadening of students' intellectual powers and development of their different skills and abilities.

Most teachers manage students' behaviour and motivate them with marks and encouraging phrases, increasing their enthusiasm and participation in good lessons. Most lessons are presented in a gradual manner, some are slow-paced and characterised by detailed explanation, and information is presented in a fashion that hinders the achievement of lesson objectives. Added to insufficient academic support for low achieving students, this reflects variedly on students' overall achievement.

Adequate homework is assigned for most students, though the work is the same for all and does not consider their different levels. Homework is corrected irregularly with varied accuracy, comments and feedback being limited, though reflecting adequately in effectiveness. In good lessons teachers use varied assessment methods such as oral and written assessment. This is particularly the case in Arabic lessons. Individual assessment is limited to a small category of students.

### **□ How well does the implementation and enrichment of the curriculum meet the educational needs of the students?**

#### **Grade: 3 Satisfactory**

The school promotes students' understanding of their rights and responsibilities by entering into agreements with them and through their participation in committees and activities including the discipline committee, boy scouts, the green committee, the Students' Council and leading activities during morning assembly. Most text books are analysed with some research and the findings discussed, as in mathematics. Some text books are supported with enriching booklets, as in physics 102. However, these activities are insufficiently actioned, teachers focussing more on presenting the content of the text book. The school provides some enrichment lessons, such as Quran lessons, Islamic studies in English, TOEFL preparation lessons and life skills lessons. Students can participate in extra-curricular activities such as the prophetic biography contest, scientific work and school trips such as one to the British Council. These programmes support their acquisition of basic skills, meeting their needs and broadening intellectual capacities. Unfortunately, the opportunity to participate in these programmes does not include all student groups.

Some lessons relate academic subjects to life, especially in Arabic and science and to a lesser degree in English and mathematics. The school focuses on supporting the curricula through enriching the school environment with teaching aids and educational murals which promotes citizenship. Celebrating students' work and achievement in academic subjects is not on the same level.

## **□ How well are students guided and supported?**

### **Grade: 4 Inadequate**

Efforts to guide and support students are clear. However, the school building poses a threat to safety in emergencies, having only one stairway for three storeys. There is no evacuation plan or assembly point.

New students are introduced to school facilities and the student discipline code. Students are prepared for the next stage of education through lectures and visits, taking third intermediate level students to secondary schools and third secondary level students to the University of Bahrain and Bahrain Institute of Banking & Finance.

Students' academic needs are identified through diagnostic assessments, using these to create enrichment and remedial programmes and activities to support students according to needs. Outstanding and gifted students are supported through school committees. However, support for low achieving students during lessons and school programmes is not on the same level, reflecting on their academic progress. Special needs students are supported, including two students who have 'stuttering disorder' and assigning someone to help a physically disabled student.

Students' personal progress is monitored. Significant attention is paid to behaviour through focussing different departments, especially the social guidance department, on developing positive behaviour and addressing students' issues. This shows in their awareness and observance of Islamic values. The school communicates adequately with parents through an open day and informing them of their children's progress through irregular reports.

## Leadership, management and governance

- ☐ **How effective are leadership, management and governance in promoting high achievement, strong personal development and school improvement?**

### Grade: 3 Satisfactory

The school's vision focuses on achievement and creativity in nurturing students. School members participated in devising the vision, though in practice it varies across school work. There is a strategic plan, based on situational analysis conducted in cooperation with academic departments and staff members. However, it has not resulted in improvements in some departments, especially the science and mathematics departments, due to the lack of accurate implementation, monitoring mechanisms and clear performance indicators. Adequate efforts are made to assess school work, informing the school of its strengths and aspects needing improvement. The Board and school leadership monitor the performance of academic departments and assess performance. There is focus on addressing and following up on students' personal issues, reflecting in positive behaviour. However, the impact of assessment on improving teaching and learning varies, due to the focus during class visits on teaching methods and practices without monitoring their impact on academic achievement.

Senior leadership supports school members by promoting social and interpersonal relationships, delegating authority in the educational and teaching process; some administrative authorities are delegated to the school counsellor and there are designated coordinators for most academic departments; these work as middle management. This helps create a positive environment, increasing motivation. Senior management work on improving teachers' professional competence through periodic class visits, using the findings to determine training needs through internal and external workshops, such as on class management and on teaching and learning strategies; exchange class visits are also organised. However, their impact on teachers' performance varies across departments, largely due to instability of the teaching staff. Financial resources are adequately utilised with investment in available teaching facilities, including the science and computer labs and teaching resource centre. Opinions of students and parents are sought through questionnaires and direct communication, responding to suggestions such as that of parents' to make booklets to support text books and the students' request for personal hygiene items in the WC.

The school communicates with local community institutions such as Ajial Est and the Ministry of Social Development. There is a Parents' Council, enhancing communication with parents. The administration and deans boards adequately support the school in cooperation

with senior leadership, especially in professional development and spreading a culture of quality and development. This reflects adequately in the school's overall performance.

## **The school's main strengths**

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- The progress students achieve in most Arabic lessons
- Guidance programmes provided for students and their impact on behaviour of the most of them
- Nurturing a sense of citizenship and developing students' understanding of their rights, duties and responsibilities, in addition to deepening their understanding of Bahrain's culture and Islamic values.

## Recommendations

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### **In order to improve, the school should:**

- take the necessary measures to meet safety and security requirements
- improve students' academic achievement by developing teaching and learning strategies, especially in the intermediate level to ensure:
  - students' acquisition of basic skills in core subjects, especially in science and mathematics
  - consideration of the different levels of students in lessons and written work
  - students are provided with more opportunities to work together during lessons
  - assessment methods are diversified in order to diagnose and meet students' needs.
- develop the strategic plan to include clear performance indicators, assessment methods and monitoring mechanisms, especially for monitoring the impact of professional development programmes, in order to improve students' academic achievement.