



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

Directorate of Private Schools & Kindergartens Reviews Review Report

**Bahrain Bayan School
Isa Town – Central Governorate
Kingdom of Bahrain**

Date of Review: 30 September – 2 October 2013

SP037-C1-R037

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Directorate of Private Schools & Kindergartens Reviews

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 ten 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	Bahrain Bayan School												
School's type	Private												
Year of establishment	1982												
Age range of students	6-18 Years												
Grades (e.g. 1 to 12)	Primary				Middle				High				
	1-5				6-8				9-12				
Number of students	Boys	490	Girls	442	Total	932							
Students' social background	Middle class socially advantaged families												
Classes per grade	Grade	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
	Classes	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Town /Village	Isa Town												
Governorate	Central												
Number of administrative staff	41												
Number of teaching staff	77												
Curriculum	American Education Reaches Out (AERO) Standard-Based Curriculum – International Baccalaureate Diploma (IB) – Ministry of Education for Arabic, Islamic Studies, Citizenship and Social Studies												
Main language(s) of instruction	Arabic and English												
Principal's tenure	2 years												
External assessment and examinations	International Baccalaureate (IB), Scholastic Aptitude/Assessment Test (SAT), American College Testing (ACT), EXPLORE and Program for Literacy and Numeracy (PLAN) Tests												
Accreditation (if applicable)	The Middle States Association (MSA) of Colleges and Schools												

Number of students in the following categories according to the school's classification	Outstanding	Gifted & Talented	Physical Disabilities	Learning Difficulties
	-	-	-	-
Major recent changes in the school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • changes in senior management 2012-13 • MSA accreditation 2012 • addition of new facilities: Prayer Hall, sports track and football field with lighting, and Pre-School/ Primary multi-purpose hall • adopting the American Education Reaches Out (AERO) Standard-Based Curriculum 2011-12 • ordering textbooks, materials and teacher resources for 2013-14. 			

Table of review judgements awarded

Aspect	Grade: Description			
The school's overall effectiveness	2: Good			
The school's capacity to improve	1: Outstanding			
	Elementary / Primary	Middle / Intermediate	High / Secondary	Overall
Students' academic achievement	2	2	2	2
Students' personal development	1	1	1	1
The quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning	2	2	2	2
The quality of the curriculum implementation	1	1	1	1
The quality of support and guidance for students	1	1	1	1
The quality and effectiveness of leadership, management and governance	1	1	1	1

Key:

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

Review judgements

Overall effectiveness

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

Grade: 2 Good

As a result of excellent curricular provision and good quality teaching and learning, students' academic achievement is good. Performance in the IB is outstanding with attainment well above world average. In other external examinations performance is satisfactory. Students' personal development is outstanding. Throughout the school, students demonstrate high levels of self-confidence and leadership skills both in lessons and generally. Excellent support and guidance systems ensure the safety and welfare of all students. The move to an internationally recognised comprehensive curriculum package, linked to the wide range of extra-curricular activities, makes curriculum implementation and enrichment outstanding overall. The visionary Board of Trustees, alongside the highly effective leadership and management, provides an excellent driving force to support the systematic and rapid rates of progress that the school has enjoyed.

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

Grade: 1 Outstanding

The school has been successful in significantly improving students' attainment in the IB examinations. Leaders are keenly aware of the need to further enhance teaching and learning by employing even more effective use of information technology and further modernising and expanding school facilities. The appraisal system provides a driving force to secure continuous improvement. The system provides ownership to all parties involved, backed by a rigorous programme of professional development.

There is shared commitment to the highly ambitious aims and aspirations for securing outstanding performance throughout the school, with well-developed organisational structures. Close monitoring by the Board of Trustees and Board of Directors contributes well to the school's on-going development and strategic planning. These provide further evidence of an outstanding capacity to improve.

Students' achievement

□ How well do students achieve in their academic work?

Grade: 2 Good

Students' attainment in the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme is markedly and consistently high. In the majority of subjects, for example school averages, are above the worldwide average. A significant cohort of students has obtained grades 6 and above in several IB subjects for the past few years and current high school students are on track to achieve similar levels.

Internal assessments suggest that attainment by students is good across the school, with most students performing within grade expectations. Over time, almost all students in all three phases have attained high pass rates in all subjects in internal examinations. Across the school, a significant cohort of students have scored above expected pass rates but the proportion approaching the standards of excellence fluctuates between grades and over time.

In the elementary school, students demonstrate standards that are above the age related expectations, particularly in Arabic, English and mathematics lessons. However, in science, a significant proportion of students' standards are in line with age related expectations. In the middle school, students are performing very well in mathematics. In addition, most students exhibit good standards in other subjects. However, in lessons, a minority of science students are not performing well enough. In the high school, students' achievement in lessons is better in IB grades and the standards of other students are at least good. Students are performing better in English and in mathematics, particularly in grades 11 and 12, and their standards are at least good in other subjects.

The progress made by students in lessons and in their academic work is good across the school. Additionally, the progress by a majority of IB students in English is outstanding. However, a significant minority of middle school students are not making enough progress during lessons. The school's tracking over time shows that an increasing proportion of students are making better progress in almost all core subjects.

Throughout the school, in Arabic and in English, most students have well-developed language skills. Furthermore, students' arithmetic, problem-solving, practical and investigative skills are strong and sound.

□ How good is the students' personal development?

Grade: 1 Outstanding

Attendance is excellent and students are punctual, partly due to the introduction of an improved and effective system for checking absence and lateness.

Students participate fully and enthusiastically in school life. They enjoy whole-school events and extra-curricular activities such as assembly, book week and career days in the primary school, and physical education and business clubs in secondary school. Non-IB students participate eagerly in the well-founded Creativity, Action and Service (CAS) programme.

In almost all lessons students participate enthusiastically, respond to questions effectively and share ideas readily. They enjoy working collaboratively, particularly in primary school.

Students across the school show high levels of self-confidence and leadership skills. They work confidently and independently, relishing the progressive opportunities provided for them to take responsibility. For example, they take seriously the very effective student councils and also their participation in a Model United Nations (MUN) conference which is organised by students.

Students express a strong sense of safety and security and have outstanding relationships with each other and their teachers. This contributes to their positive behaviour. Students show respect and care for each other and school property. They have a deep understanding of Bahrain's heritage and culture and demonstrate a keen appreciation of Islamic values through the wide variety of cultural events provided.

The quality of provision

□ How effective are teaching and learning?

Grade: 2 Good

Teachers have strong subject knowledge and manage lessons effectively. Consequently, most lessons are orderly and productive, with students being self-disciplined and focussed on their learning. In the best lessons teachers actively drive learning forward and successfully extend students' knowledge, skills and understanding. Although there are daily lesson plans in all classes, little attention is given to ensuring activities and specified learning outcomes meet the different needs of students. However, in the best lessons students are challenged well with different levels of tasks. This is particularly the case in IB

lessons, where teachers frequently promote high levels of thinking and tackling of difficult concepts. As a result, these students pose their own questions well and test their hypotheses which are often supported with reasoning and well-founded arguments.

Throughout the school, most teachers are successful in developing students' higher order thinking skills, generally providing tasks which promote students' independent thinking and the skills of critical assessment, analysis and justification. The most successful lessons feature an effective range of teaching and learning strategies and resources. This gives students the opportunity to be both highly involved in their own learning and also to learn the skills of enquiry through research and collaboration. However, in some lessons, too little time is given for students to think and respond. Also, closed questioning sometimes limits opportunities for students to develop understanding. Furthermore, students are not supported sufficiently to meet their varied learning needs. Primary students benefit from good-quality support provided by teaching assistants who encourage and motivate them well.

Homework is used effectively. Staff ensure that the well-founded homework policy is successfully implemented. Positive features include its use in reinforcing understanding and, in better cases, to extend learning. In general, assessment is used well to provide appropriate tasks for students. Teachers successfully assess students both verbally and through written work. Assessment information gathered from observation and questioning is generally used well to identify potential areas that may need improvement to boost progress. This enhances test and examination data. Teachers' marking is regular, though on some occasions, insufficient guidance and feedback is given on what students must do to improve.

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

Grade: 1 Outstanding

In addition to IB curricula, the school has embarked on a major project to redesign the curriculum through AERO. This is a result of a rigorous evaluation of curricular provision. The over-arching finding revealed that there was a lack of continuity and progression between grades and between different classes within the same grade. Changes in Information and Communication Technology (ICT) are particularly notable. A director of technology has been appointed and the school's provision transformed. An exceptionally well-balanced range of courses is provided. In particular, high school students are provided with courses to meet their individual aspirations. Assessment schemes are being standardised and the focus on providing a range of tasks and activities within each unit of work is paying dividends, particularly in English.

The school's curriculum is enriched with an excellent range of after-school activities covering the full range of developmental areas. The physical education offered is particularly strong. Careful attention is paid to ensuring that the curriculum is enriched by trips and visits. In the primary school for example, an exemplary array of focused days and weeks make learning livelier. The school fully utilises its environment and resources to support the curriculum, including sports and ICT facilities. The whole school environment is used well to celebrate successes and Bahrain's traditions and culture.

□ How well are students guided and supported?

Grade: 1 Outstanding

The school has highly successful induction and transition procedures. For example, the orientation sessions at different grade levels and open-house meetings enable students to settle in easily and quickly. There is an extremely effective approach to tracking students' academic progress and personal development. For instance, the primary school 'child-study team' monitors students' performance in order to provide them with learning support as needed. In addition, the school's counselling team in the middle and secondary schools helps students to overcome potential difficulties. However, the enrichment programme to raise the academic achievement of more able students is less well developed. Parents are kept well informed about their childrens' progress through mid-term reports, parent-teacher meetings, emails and 'power school' – the online grading programme.

Students receive careful and sensitive support when facing problems, their concerns being dealt with confidentially. An extensive guidance programme is offered to support students in the next stage of their education. Strong university links have been secured and senior students receive excellent career counselling for college planning. The outstanding arrangements for students' health, safety and security are reflected in the crisis management programme and regular fire drills. The medical staff contribute exceptionally well in the promotion of students' health and well-being. The school buildings and facilities are kept in excellent condition.

Leadership, management and governance

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

Grade: 1 Outstanding

The school leaders have a very clear vision focused on their learners. They strive to equip young Bahrainis with twenty-first century skills whilst preserving their national identity. This mission is shared effectively through the very high expectations of the director general and his team. Leaders are highly motivated, particularly so for the middle managers who have a contagious passion for their subjects. However, department heads should develop colleagues by sharing best practices more strategically.

Self-evaluation has rapidly improved. Performance data are collected and analysed systematically at all management levels. For example, assessment data linked to students' progress has enabled the school to offer targeted additional support after school. Similarly, strong self-evaluation has led to an effective curriculum. Strategic planning is firmly focused on improvement. Key priorities include the use of e-learning to maximise learners' experience and the implementation of a new curriculum. Transparent leadership and a strong reporting system have resulted in rapid improvement throughout the school.

Recruitment of staff is very effective. Teachers are well-qualified and their deployment is strategic. A new appraisal system has recently been implemented to quality assure teachers' performance, resulting in a range of personalised professional activities in school being offered. However, although the school is aware of its strengths in teaching and learning, these are not sufficiently well built upon. Various key stakeholders are consulted in the strategic allocation of budgets. This is apparent through the rapid growth of modern facilities and resources. However, evidence of outstanding impact on students' outcomes is yet to be felt.

The school has adopted a wide variety of communication tools to seek the school communities views and inform their strategic plan. External links with the local community are constantly growing. A strong feature is the use of local businesses to raise students' understanding of the modern world of work and potential careers paths. The governing board is exemplary, communicating well with the school community. Its committees are firmly focused on improvement. The board holds the school leaders accountable for their performance in securing the best outcomes for the students.

The school's main strengths

- Inspiring and motivating leadership teams led by a visionary governing board
- Students across the school show high levels of self-confidence, work independently and have excellent leadership skills
- Outstanding support and guidance system that ensures total support and attention to all students
- A well-balanced curriculum package; to cater for depth and variety of knowledge to suit students' educational needs.

Recommendations

In order to improve, the school should:

- further improve the quality of teaching and learning through:
 - better use of teaching strategies particularly in science
 - more effective use of assessment in lessons to inform teaching
 - more support provided to less able students in lessons.
- accelerate students' academic progress during lessons.