



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

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

**The International School of Choueifat  
Amwaj Islands – Muharraq Governorate  
Kingdom of Bahrain**

**Date of Review: 7-9 March 2016**  
SP016-C2-R018

## Introduction

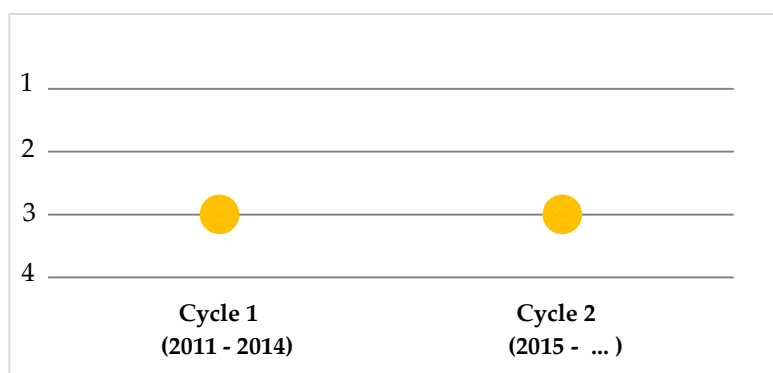
The Directorate of Private Schools & Kindergartens Reviews (DPS), which is a part of the National Authority for Qualifications and Quality Assurance of Education and Training (QQA), conducted this review over three days by a team of eleven reviewers. During the review, reviewers observed lessons and 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

<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>Satisfactory</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>Inadequate</b>	<b>4</b>
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Aspect		Grade			
		Elementary / Primary	Middle / Intermediate	High / Secondary	Overall
Quality of outcomes	Students' academic achievement	3	3	3	3
	Students' personal development	3	3	3	3
Quality of processes	Teaching and learning	3	3	3	3
	Students' support and guidance	3	3	3	3
Quality assurance of outcomes and processes	Leadership, management and governance	3	3	3	3
Capacity to improve		4			
The school's overall effectiveness		3			

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 'Satisfactory'

#### Judgement justifications

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The schools' overall effectiveness is satisfactory. This is a result of the satisfactory levels of students' academic achievement and personal development, teaching and learning, and the support and guidance provided.</li> <li>• Students attain high pass rates in internal assessments. However, against external benchmarks their performance is generally within the average range.</li> <li>• Students achieve satisfactory standards and progress in most core subjects. However, throughout the school standards and progress in Arabic are below expectations.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory across the school. In the best lessons, teachers use a range of strategies. However, in most lessons teachers are not sufficiently focused on developing the students' understanding and skills.</li> <li>• Assessment outcomes are not commonly used to inform and modify lesson planning. As a result, opportunities to further challenge the higher achievers and provide support for the lower achievers are overlooked.</li> <li>• Across the school, not enough opportunities are provided for students to work either collaboratively or independently in lessons. Consequently,</li> </ul> |
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the development of inquiry, investigative and problem solving skills is limited. The school's resources and facilities are not fully utilised to enrich students' learning experiences.

- The school's informal self-evaluation process covers the main strengths and challenges. However, it lacks rigour and it is not fully embedded in school systems. No clear links are made between the findings resulting from the self-evaluation process and stated key strategic priorities.
- Although the school implements the SABIS centralised strategic planning and subject wise action planning to support less able students, the school wide action planning lacks clear time frames and

agreed success criteria to monitor progress.

- The school provides a professional development programme for staff but this is not tailored closely enough to individual needs.
- The school's system for monitoring students' academic progress and personal development provides a clear picture of individual performance. However, the system is rarely interrogated to inform teaching strategies.
- Students are punctual and show good behaviour across the school.
- Positive links with the local community are maintained.
- Most students and parents express satisfaction with the education provided by the school.

## Main positive features

- Students' positive behaviour and punctuality across the school.
- The systematic monitoring of students' academic progress and personal development.

## Recommendations

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
  - a more rigorous approach to self-evaluation, ensuring clear links to key strategic priorities
  - customised professional development programmes to meet the individual needs of all staff
  - better utilisation of school resources and facilities to enhance students' experiences.
- Increase students' progress and raise standards, particularly in Arabic.
- Raise students' academic achievement through strengthening the quality of teaching and learning by:
  - utilising the rich data from the school's monitoring systems to better meet the educational needs of all groups of students particularly the highest and lowest achievers
  - providing more opportunities for students to participate collaboratively, enquire, experiment and develop independent learning skills.

## □ Capacity to improve 'Inadequate'

### Judgement justifications

- The school informally identifies key strategic priorities through meetings and discussions, but these are not strictly linked to a rigorous self-evaluation involving all stakeholders.
- The school adapts the general strategic planning for the SABIS curriculum schools, but it lacks short-term action planning with clear time frames and agreed success criteria.
- Although the school's teaching styles and strategies are focusing on periodic assessments, they are neither enriched nor flexible enough to meet the needs of individual students.
- The professional development programmes provided by SABIS at this campus are not customised sufficiently to meet the individual needs of teachers.
- While reviewing the school's history, it is evident that it has not taken serious initiatives to help improve the performance of the school.

## Quality of outcomes

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### □ Students' academic achievement 'Satisfactory'

#### Judgement justifications

- Students' pass rates were high in the internal school examinations from 2013 to 2015. These examination results were based on periodic tests, homework and the AMS (Academic Monitoring System) scores.
  - In 2015, proficiency rates were high in the primary school but inconsistent in the intermediate school, ranging from 32% in Grade 8 science to 81% in Grade 6 English. In the secondary school, though the proficiency rates were low in Grade 12 economics and Grade 9 mathematics, the percentages were high in most other subjects and grade levels.
  - Students' attainment in the external examinations in 2015 varied. In the Cambridge International IGCSE examinations the percentages of students attaining a grade B or above were high at 65% or above in most of the subjects attempted. However, the percentages were lower in history where 25% of students attained a B or above, and in Arabic as a First Language where the student who attempted this examination scored a C grade. The number of students attempting five or more individual subjects, which is the norm at this level, was low.
  - Similarly, too few students attempted AS (Advanced Subsidiary) Level and A (Advanced) Level examinations. Students' attainment in mathematics and physics was better, with 50% of students attaining a B or above in both subjects.
- However, in chemistry and biology the attainment was below satisfactory.
- In the AP (Advanced Placement) examinations, more than 60% of students attained a score of 4 and above in calculus AB, physics 1, and chemistry. However, the scores were below satisfactory in environmental studies and European history.
  - In SAT, students' scores were better in mathematics, where 82% of students attained at or above the international mean. However, the scores in critical reading were below expectations.
  - Standards of the majority of students currently meet age expectations in English, mathematics and science across the school. By contrast, students' standards in Arabic are below expectations at all levels.
  - In most lessons, the progress of high and average ability students is satisfactory. However, the less able students do not make adequate progress in a number of lessons due to the lack of support provided.
  - In English, students of all age groups use vocabulary appropriately in conversation. Their listening, speaking, and reading comprehension skills are good across the school. However, students' extended and creative writing skills are not sufficiently well developed.
  - In Arabic, although the majority of students demonstrate satisfactory

speaking skills, their reading and writing skills are under-developed.

- In mathematics, most students have adequate basic skills. For example, in the primary school, students work on fractions and in the intermediate school they solve problems applying the Pythagorean Theorem. The majority of students in the secondary school work confidently on statistics. By contrast, the ability of students to apply reasoning and engage in problem solving is not sufficiently developed.

- In science, students develop an adequate understanding of scientific concepts across the school. For example, primary school students have a good understanding of magnetism and students at the intermediate level have a basic knowledge of frictional and gravitational forces. However, students' investigative and experimental skills are not sufficiently developed at all stages.

### **Areas for improvement**

- Students' standards and progress in Arabic across the school.
- Students' creative and extended writing skills in English.
- Students' ability to apply reasoning and problem solving in mathematics and their investigative and experimental skills in science.

### **□ Students' personal development 'Satisfactory'**

#### **Judgement justifications**

- Most students participate in aspects of school life through the SLO (Students' Life Organisation) programme and the extracurricular activities on offer such as sports and art. The away camp in Bath, United Kingdom, provided an opportunity for students to develop life skills. A good number of students also enjoy taking part in school activities. When given the opportunity, they work well in groups, but this is a rare occurrence in lessons.
- The Students' Life Organisation programme allows students, particularly the ones with key responsibilities such as

prefects or shadow teachers, to develop leadership skills. They keep the campus clean, monitor behaviour and participate in various in-house and interschool competitions.

- Students rarely show self-confidence during lessons as the teacher-centred approach to learning does not give them enough opportunities to collaborate, investigate or experiment. Similarly, they are not often encouraged to research or work independently.
- Students feel safe and secure at school. This is apparent through their good behaviour in classrooms and around the

school. Despite the students' diverse backgrounds, they interact positively and demonstrate mature behaviours at break time with little adult supervision.

- Students have adequate knowledge of local and international cultures. They can name the key monuments and attractions of Bahrain. During the international day they learn about the cultures of some of their peers. However, such opportunities to learn about one another's cultures are still limited.

- Students are self-disciplined, attendance at school is good and they are punctual in lessons.
- Students care about one another and do not tolerate bullying or any form of intimidation. They are very pro-active in resolving issues when they occur, under the supervision of adults. They take part in charity events such as Pink Day and work with the local orphanage. Nevertheless, activities to outreach to the community are limited to only a small number of students.

### **Areas for improvement**

- Opportunities provided to students to demonstrate collaborative and independent learning skills, particularly in lessons.
- Students' understanding of Bahraini and international cultures.



## Quality of processes

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### □ Teaching and learning 'Satisfactory'

#### Judgement justifications

- The majority of teachers use adequate teaching and learning strategies to enable students to acquire knowledge and develop skills, including the ability to undertake exercises in comprehension and engage in guided work.
  - In the most successful lessons, class discussion is encouraged and students are allowed to show some independence. However, in the majority of lessons teaching is didactic and focuses heavily on drilling, providing few opportunities for students to be active learners. The drive to achieve the targeted lesson points impacts on teachers' flexibility and the allocation of thinking time allowed to students.
  - The available resources such as smart boards are not utilised to their full capacity as teaching tools. Many students have tablets that incorporate the school's programmes of study, but their use does not appear to impact on the level of student engagement. In science, only Grade 12 students have access to the school's one laboratory to develop their practical skills; in other grades simple experiments are demonstrated in classrooms.
  - Lessons are well managed due to the orderliness and self-discipline of the students. Students support the consistent drilling exercises due to the inherent constraints in the teaching programme, but teachers are not able to assess students' individual understanding.
- In general, students complete their work individually in classes and there are few opportunities for collaboration. In the better lessons, students ask questions and state their points of view. However, in the majority of lessons, no opportunities are provided for discussion or debate. The support provided to lower achieving students in class is very limited, usually only in the form of a simple clarification.
  - Teachers assess students using the specified questions set in the lessons' points that are part of the SABIS curriculum and through the use of oral and written assessments. In the better lessons, students are asked to reflect on their understanding in open questions.
  - Results of assessments and examinations are not used to modify lesson planning. In many lessons, assessments do not require students to think for themselves but rather to recite information.
  - Students' written class work is sometimes marked, but students are rarely provided with formal diagnostic feedback that would help them to understand how they could improve.
  - In a minority of lessons, teachers successfully prompt students to do analyses, such as in an English literature lesson where they were asked to analyse poetic images, personification and rhyme. However, in the majority of lessons, students' analytical, problem solving and investigative skills are not well developed.

- Lesson planning and delivery does not cater for students' different needs or allow for individual effort by teachers to support and challenge students. The more able students have no extension work

when they finish the allocated tasks; as a result, insufficient challenge is provided to them.

### Areas for improvement

- The range of strategies used to actively engage students in their learning.
- The use of assessment results to modify lesson planning and specifically to challenge the higher achievers and support the lower achievers.
- The development of students' higher order thinking skills, problem solving and investigative skills.

### □ Students' support and guidance 'Satisfactory'

#### Judgement justifications

- The school applies diagnostic testing on entry, and monitors students' academic progress systematically through weekly examination results. The data collected provides a clear picture of individual performance, but this is rarely used to inform or modify lesson planning and thereby improve the rate at which individual students progress.
- The support and guidance provided to slower learners outside lessons is heavily reliant on student teaching rather than professional support. The school does not do enough to extend its most able and gifted students. Parents are provided with a good overview of their child's progress.
- Students are adequately supported by staff if they face personal problems, but access to professional counselling is limited. Records of students' personal development are maintained effectively. The school has clear expectations of

student behaviour and is quick to administer sanctions.

- The school involves students in some charitable pursuits, and encourages student leaders through participation in overseas camps with students from other SABIS schools. The needs and age-related interests of the majority of students are served by the current number of weekly extracurricular activities provided, which include arts, music and team sports.
- Students and staff benefit from a spacious site and satisfactory standards of cleanliness. The school environment is monitored regularly and equipment is generally well maintained. Some risk assessments are not recorded systematically, and there has been no fire drill since June 2014. Similarly, there has been a lack of attention to first aid training and the provision of first aid boxes. However, all students have access to

qualified nurses throughout the school day.

- New students are inducted effectively into the school and familiarised with the school facilities. 'Sunshine Prefects' are appointed to buddy newcomers. Transition from one level to the next is organised effectively. However, the school provides inadequate professional guidance on career choices and university entrance requirements. Students are insufficiently well supported in completing applications for further academic study.
- The SABIS SLO programme provides students with good leadership opportunities. They are encouraged to be

involved in school life and the more able ones are selected to take responsibility for aspects of school provision including outreach, discipline, social responsibility, activities and sports. The student 'heads of department' and the 'head prefect' are tasked with organising groups of students at different levels of the school. Students run re-teach sessions out of lesson time to help weaker students understand key concepts.

- Students' communication skills are appropriately developed through the curriculum and enrichment activities. However, research skills, critical thinking skills, problem solving and investigative skills are not well developed.

### **Areas for improvement**

- The safety procedures, particularly fire practices and first aid training.
- The professional support to lower achieving students, and extending the most able.
- Developing comprehensive advice systems for students' future academic and career choices.
- Students' independent learning skills, including those of enquiry, critical thinking, problem solving and investigation.

## Quality assurance of outcomes and processes

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### □ Leadership, management and governance 'Satisfactory'

#### Judgement justifications

- The school has clear vision and mission statements, which focus on helping all students to achieve their full potential and the provision of an outstanding education for all. However, the implementation of this vision across the school is inconsistent.
- The school's self-evaluation is based on risk assessments, teacher evaluations, analysis of student attainment data and meetings with staff. However, the self-evaluation process lacks rigour, is not fully embedded in school systems and does not involve all stakeholders. Although the school is generally aware of its strengths and challenges it has not made clear links between key strategic priorities and self-evaluation results. Additionally, strategic planning lacks explicit action planning with clear time frames, agreed success criteria and accountability measures.
- Teachers' classroom performance is observed by the middle and senior leadership and monitored by the regional office, but the monitoring process is not rigorous or formative enough to have a strong impact on the quality of teaching and learning and student outcomes.
- The school provides professional development for staff to ensure that all teachers fully understand the distinctive SABIS educational programmes. However, the narrow interpretation of the programme impacts adversely on the effectiveness of teaching and learning, subsequently on student achievement.
- School leaders motivate staff through a range of incentives and there are opportunities for career progression. However, identification and sharing of the most productive practices as demonstrated in the strongest lessons is inconsistent.
- The school offers a wide range of learning resources and facilities including a library, a large sports field, a gymnasium, a swimming pool, a science laboratory and a computer room. Many classrooms are also fitted with smart boards. However, opportunities to enhance student learning are lost because many of these resources and facilities are under-utilised.
- The school has developed adequate links with the local community through awareness drives, beach clean-up campaigns, fund raising campaigns for cancer patients, organising fun days for orphans and inviting guest speakers to increase students' awareness of health issues.
- The roles and responsibilities of the Board of Directors and the school's senior leadership are clear and well respected. The SABIS organisation continuously monitors teacher and student performance. However, there is less rigour applied to maximising staff skills through rigorous professional

development and the effective deployment of available resources. In this

regard, the school is not meeting its commitment to parents.

### **Areas for improvement**

- The utilisation of learning resources and facilities to broaden students' learning experiences in lessons.
- The professional development programmes to meet teachers' individual needs and enhance the quality of teaching and learning.
- Rigorous self-evaluation, involving all stakeholders in the school in identifying key strategic priorities, with explicit school development planning.

## Appendix: Characteristics of the school

Name of the school (Arabic)	مدرسة الشويفات الدولية – المنامة													
Name of the school (English)	The International School of Choueifat - Manama													
Year of establishment	2006													
Address	Bldg 110, Area 257, Road 59, Choueifat Avenue													
Town /Village / Governorate	Amwaj Islands – Muharraq													
School's Contacts	+973 16033333				<b>Fax</b>		+973 16033330							
School's e-mail	iscmanama@sabis.net													
School's website	www.iscmanama.sabis.net													
Age range of students	6-18 Years													
Grades (e.g. 1 to 12)	<b>Primary</b>				<b>Middle</b>				<b>High</b>					
	2-6				7-9				10-13					
Number of students	<b>Boys</b>	618			<b>Girls</b>	495			<b>Total</b>	1113				
Students' social background	Diverse nationalities and backgrounds													
Classes per grade	<b>Grade</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	
	<b>Classes</b>	6	5	6	5	4	3	3	2	2	2	2	-	
Number of administrative staff	77													
Number of teaching staff	76													
Curriculum	SABIS®													
Main language(s) of instruction	English and Arabic													
Principal's tenure in the school	Third year													
External assessment and examinations	Advanced Placement (AP) College Board, Edexcel, AS & A levels, Cambridge IGCSE O levels													
Accreditation (if applicable)	Accreditation International (Ai), National Council for Private School Accreditation (NCPISA) and Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools (MSA)													
Major recent changes in the school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Changing of grades' names</li> <li>• Changing of class hours</li> <li>• New classrooms added</li> <li>• New computer lab added</li> <li>• Implementing the use of tablets in classrooms for certain grades.</li> </ul>													