



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

Directorate of Private Schools & Kindergartens Reviews Review Report

**Ibn Khuldoon National School
Isa Town – Central Governorate
Kingdom of Bahrain**

Date of Review: 23-25 September 2013

SP036-C1-R036

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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	Ibn Khuldoon National School												
School's type	Private												
Year of establishment	1983												
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	721	Girls	541	Total			1262					
Students' social background	Mainly above average socio-economic backgrounds												
Classes per grade	Grade	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
	Classes	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	6	6	6	6
Town /Village	Isa town												
Governorate	Central												
Number of administrative staff	20												
Number of teaching staff	149												
Curriculum	International Baccalaureate Diploma, American Curriculum, Ministry of Education for Arabic, Islamic Studies, Citizenship and social studies												
Main language(s) of instruction	English and Arabic												
Principal's tenure	5 years												
External assessment and examinations	International Baccalaureate (IB), Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), The Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL)												
Accreditation (if applicable)	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		
											52		
Major recent changes in the school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviewing standards and assessment on the school's ATLAS website. 												

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introduction of Measure of Academic Progress (MAP) online testing• The launch of Power School and Gradebook, the online information management systems.
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Table of review judgements awarded

Aspect	Grade: Description			
The school's overall effectiveness	1: Outstanding			
The school's capacity to improve	1: Outstanding			
	Elementary / Primary	Middle / Intermediate	High / Secondary	Overall
Students' academic achievement	1	1	2	1
Students' personal development	1	1	1	1
The quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning	1	1	2	1
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: 1 Outstanding

The school's excellence stems from its highly effective teaching and learning. These are essential in aiding the students' outstanding progress and attainment in elementary and middle schools. In addition, high school students are also making outstanding progress in the IB Diploma with them scoring above world average. Moreover, students demonstrate an excellent understanding of Bahrain's heritage and Islamic values and their self-confidence and leadership roles are highly developed. Students also thrive through the outstandingly effective support and guidance provided which meets both their academic and personal needs exceptionally well. The rigorous review of the curriculum and the wide range of extracurricular activities contribute to make curriculum enrichment and implementation outstanding. All this is backed by a highly effective leadership and management which is thoroughly supported by the Board of Trustees.

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

Grade: 1 Outstanding

The school has been successful in making significant changes in the recent years which have had a positive impact on students' achievement. One of the major developments has been in the rigorous review process of the different aspects of the school's provision and the subsequent excellent strategic planning for improvement. This is based on clear objectives with rigorous monitoring and evaluation procedures. The whole school shares a high level of commitment to the ambitious aims and aspirations of achieving outstanding performance as a bilingual school. The planning process is complemented by a highly structured accountability system which focuses on improving support and the performance of both staff and students. The outstanding support provided by the Board of Trustees and the Board of Directors contribute exceptionally well to the school's performance and strategic leadership.

Students' achievement

□ How well do students achieve in their academic work?

Grade: 1 Outstanding

Levels of attainment of students in the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme are significantly and consistently high. In the majority of subjects, school averages exceed the worldwide averages, particularly in Arabic B Standard Level (SL), biology Higher Level (HL) & SL, chemistry HL & SL, mathematics studies SL, mathematics SL and in visual arts option A HL & SL. Students are also performing significantly well in extended essays. Moreover, significant cohort of students obtained grades 6 and above in various IB subjects.

Internal test results suggest that attainment of students is high, particularly in the elementary and middle schools. Over the last three years, almost all students in all three schools have attained the pass rate in all subjects in internal examinations. Across the school, a significant cohort of students have scored well above expected pass rates but the proportion exceeding 80% fluctuates between grades and over time in the high school.

In both the elementary and middle schools, students demonstrate high standards in lessons. In the high school, however, students' achievement in lessons varied in the different programmes particularly in non-IB lessons. Elementary school students demonstrate good standards in Arabic with better language skills in elementary and middle school. In English, the majority of elementary school students demonstrate higher than the expected standards whereas the majority of middle and high school students perform according to age-related expectations. In science, students in the middle and high schools attain standards that are above age expectations. In mathematics, students' standards, across the school, are above age related expectations. Additionally, a significant cohort of students demonstrates standards well above age expectations, particularly in the elementary and in high school.

Students' progress in mathematics is outstanding throughout the school. Additionally, progress in English in the elementary and middle schools, as well as science in the middle school are also outstanding. The school's tracking over time shows a growing proportion of students are making increasingly stronger progress in almost all core subjects.

Across the whole curriculum, students' problem-solving, practical and investigative skills are well above expected levels. However, students' writing skills in Arabic are less secure than their well-developed reading and speaking skills.

□ How good is the students' personal development?

Grade: 1 Outstanding

Students participate enthusiastically in all aspects of school life. This contributes exceptionally well to their confidence in taking responsibilities and handling leadership roles. Almost all students have a strong commitment to attending school and lessons on time. They enjoy working together in groups both in lessons and in the many student-initiated club activities. However, in the senior school students' involvement is not to their full potential in the less effective lessons. Students value their roles in the school's different activities, such as the Honour Society and Trade Quest. Representatives of Student Congress of the secondary school participate in PTSA (parent-teacher-student association) meeting in which they voice their interests, concerns and issues of significance. Students are dedicated to conserving resources through recycling and 'Go Green' clubs.

Throughout the school, the students' attitudes are outstanding. They demonstrate high levels of self-discipline and maturity. Students feel extremely safe and secure at school. This is the result of the highly effective anti-bullying interventions and programmes instigated by the school's management. These are also reflected in the students' exemplary behaviour in classrooms, corridors and playgrounds. Students demonstrate an outstanding appreciation of Islamic values and communicate great understanding of Bahrain's culture and heritage which is well-developed through lessons in social studies and by celebrating National events and religious festivals. They also take part in day trips to museums and heritage sites.

The quality of provision

□ How effective are teaching and learning?

Grade: 1 Outstanding

Teachers' subject knowledge is excellent. This enables them to provide both succinct explanations and to use probing questions to check students' learning and progress. This is particularly the case in the elementary and middle schools and IB where teachers are adept at adjusting their lessons in light of the students' responses. In highly effective lessons in the elementary school, for example, the teacher asks the students to check for themselves their level of understanding of the concept being taught, then adjusts instruction so that students are working at a number of levels. However, this is not always the case in high school. Although teaching and learning are outstanding in both the elementary and middle schools, in the high school it is good. Teachers invariably provide challenge to all groups of students in the elementary school, however, this is not consistently the case across the school

particularly in the high school. In consequence, these students' learning is good overall because teachers do not always challenge the most able.

Teachers' excellent management of the students' behaviour ensures that all classrooms present with a calm and purposeful atmosphere. This enables students across the school to thrive in their learning. They particularly appreciate the many opportunities provided for them to collaborate and, in consequence, students support each other in their learning exceptionally well. This is particularly evident in high school lessons in which the demanding objectives, focussing on the process of collaboration, are met in full. Students successfully work together, checking and challenging each other's results.

Teachers ensure that students' engagement in activities and their levels of concentration are very strong. This is because good-quality tasks are set and also skilful support and encouragement is given. This results in students enjoying lessons and learning. Teaching is further enlivened by the staff's good use of the technology available in each classroom. In the elementary school, well-trained teaching assistants provide excellent support to small groups of students thus aiding learning well. Assessments, both formative and summative, are effective and are generally used well to plan future activities. In addition, classwork is complemented by well-conceived homework tasks that invariably focus well on the topic being learned.

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

Grade: 1 Outstanding

The school delivers a broad and inclusive curriculum which is relevant to the students' needs. It allows students to pursue three differentiated examination routes in high school. The school community is very thorough in reviewing its programmes of study. Curriculum planning and delivery are regularly monitored and reviewed through the Atlas Portal to meet students' different abilities. Strong links between the Arabic and the English department exist. They come to life during reading week and lead to purposeful outcomes. However, this is not consistent across the subjects and phases. The school successfully uses the best practice from the International Baccalaureate learners' profile as an aspirational goal for all the students. Various committees and activities are in place to allow students to become responsible adults within the community, such as the Students' Congress. Students are very well prepared for the next stage. They acquire twenty first century skills which allow them to thrive at university and in any modern working environments. The extra-curricular programme is varied and contributes exceptionally well to the school's programmes of study. This is particularly the case in the elementary school where the

activities lead to exceptional personal and academic outcomes for all students. The modern school accommodation and the varied resources for learning create a vibrant and colourful learning environment where students develop well.

□ How well are students guided and supported?

Grade: 1 Outstanding

The comprehensive and highly effective induction system for new students across different stages, enables them to settle exceptionally well. The programme also involves parents and includes meeting staff and older.

There is a highly structured and rigorous system for the monitoring of both the students' academic progress and personal development. This has a significantly positive impact on their learning and achievement. Students with special educational needs receive sensitive support which enables them to progress.

There are well-developed systems which provide a wide range of opportunities for students to gain help from staff as necessary. Any potential difficulties are solved swiftly with care and respect of the students' privacy. In addition, a comprehensive guidance programme is provided for students, and their parents, when applying to university. Their well-being is further secured by the clear behaviour and discipline policy and anti-bullying code.

The school has effective relationships with parents. They are informed well about their children's progress through a variety of secure links such as the school 'Power Book' portal programme.

Students and staff are kept safe and secure as the facilities benefit from the latest fire fighting systems. Furthermore, gathering points are clearly indicated and there are regular evacuation drills. The school's experienced medical team provides a wide range of support as well as preventive medical and health services.

Leadership, management and governance

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

Grade: 1 Outstanding

There is a strong sense of unity, which is shared by all and there is a deep commitment to securing the school's aims and aspirations in this high quality bilingual national school. This creates a learning environment model for students and is a key reason for their outstanding level of achievement. The senior management inspires, motivates and constantly supports all members of staff. The president and principals have the skills to establish a real sense of community.

The well-established school policies and Teaching Framework successfully ensures consistency both in classroom practice and better learning outcomes. The excellence of the strategic planning stems from focussed and effective action plans that are based on rigorous whole-school self-evaluation. This is supported by the close monitoring of performance and quality management. They measure the levels of success of the four main development objectives set by the school which are embedded in the five year strategic plan. Regular meetings are conducted and constructive decisions are reached.

Teachers' performance is evaluated against a very structured model framework of best practices and expectations. New teachers are intensively inducted into the school and a wide range of professional development programmes are offered to all. Training needs are identified through regular class visits and the impact of subsequent training sessions is evaluated. However, the teaching in high school is less well developed.

Students' and parents' views are highly sought through different means such as the online questionnaire. Suggestions are taken into careful consideration and acted upon such as the establishment of the new sports building and offering a wider range of options to fit all needs of high school students.

Students enjoy different links with the local community and conduct events by themselves such as organizing a day for students from the Hope Institute for special needs. The school provides different up-to-date facilities and a very extensive range of resources, such as the ICT laboratories which successfully enrich students' learning experience.

The Board of Trustees plays a significant role in guiding the school. They are organised well, for example in the establishment of the three committees that check the school's performance and provision. Roles and responsibilities are clearly respected with members of the board efficiently holding the school's senior management to account through regular and urgent meetings.

The school's main strengths

- The school's ethos of collaboration and dedication to achieve high quality outcomes and meet the school's aims and aspirations
- The highly supportive Board of Trustees which contributes significantly to the school's strategic planning and their highly organized accountability structure which successfully secures continuous improvement
- The rigorous review of the school's performance, in particular the curriculum review to raise students' achievement
- The outstandingly effective support system provided to students both academically and personally which enables them to thrive in their learning
- The impressive range of extracurricular activities which strongly contributes to students' learning experiences and successfully enables them to be actively involved in the community.

Recommendations

In order to improve, the school should:

- further enable all students of different abilities to make continuous progress by:
 - Spreading best practices
 - Consistently Supporting and challenging students.
- continue to plan for meaningful cross curricula links so that students are experiencing a coherent curriculum.