



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

Directorate of Private Schools & Kindergartens Reviews Review Report

**New Millennium School
Manama – Capital Governorate
Kingdom of Bahrain**

**Date of Review: 21-23 October 2013
SP040-C1-R040**

Table of Contents

The Directorate of Private Schools & Kindergartens Reviews	1
Introduction	2
Characteristics of the school	2
Table of review judgements awarded	4
Review judgements	4
Overall effectiveness	5
Students' achievement.....	6
The quality of provision	7
Leadership, management and governance	9
The school's main strengths	11
Recommendations	12

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 nine 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		New Millennium School											
School's type		Private											
Year of establishment		2004											
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	808	Girls	753	Total			1,561				
Students' social background		Middle income											
Classes per grade	Grade	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
	Classes	8	8	7	7	7	6	5	4	3	2	2	1
Town /Village		Manama											
Governorate		Capital Governorate											
Number of administrative staff		30											
Number of teaching staff		116											
Curriculum		Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), India											
Main language(s) of instruction		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> English Hindi Arabic 											
Principal's tenure		6 years											
External assessment and examinations		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All India Secondary School Examination (AISSE) Grade 10 All India Senior School Certificate Examination (AISSCE) Grade 12 											
Accreditation (if applicable)		-											
Number of students in the following categories according to the school's classification		Outstanding			Gifted & Talented			Physical Disabilities			Learning Difficulties		
		307			107			2			93		

Major recent changes in the school	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Moved to new campus in April 2013
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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	3	2	3
Students' personal development	1	1	1	1
The quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning	3	3	2	3
The quality of the curriculum implementation	2	2	2	2
The quality of support and guidance for students	2	2	2	2
The quality and effectiveness of leadership, management and governance	3	3	2	3

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: 3 Satisfactory

The school's overall effectiveness is satisfactory, with key aspects such as students' standards and progress being within expectations in the primary and middle schools, while good in the secondary school. Most teachers embed positive values in lessons. However, there is limited planning for challenge to all abilities and use of assessment results to meet all students' needs. Curriculum implementation is good, being broad, balanced and enriched with various activities. All students take immense pride in, and show great loyalty towards, the school vision and mission which contributes to their outstanding personal development. Students are well supported. The school responds well to parents' and students' views. It evaluates its performance against international standards. However, strategic planning lacks clear performance indicators to measure success. Parents and students express satisfaction with the school.

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

Grade: 3 Satisfactory

The school has an appropriate administrative and teaching structure in place with the senior leaders committed to school improvement. The leadership possess sufficient knowledge of strengths and areas for improvement, which are reflected in on-going developments such as the introduction of new learning resources, facility upgrades and professional development programmes. It also plans for progress and monitors its activities which have impacted positively on good curriculum improvement and student support. However, self-evaluation results are not used effectively to bring about change and strategic planning lacks clear performance indicators to measure success in achieving goals and improving both teaching and academic achievement. The school board and leadership are fully committed to the improvement of school resources, evident in the move to the new well equipped campus.

Students' achievement

□ How well do students achieve in their academic work?

Grade: 3 Satisfactory

Levels of attainment by students in AISSCE and in the AISSE conducted by the CBSE for grades 12 and 10 are significantly and consistently high. In most subjects, for example, a significant cohort of students has obtained grades A2 or equivalent and above. However, performance in AISSCE English is significantly lower compared to other subjects and past performances, with only a minority of students securing grades A2 or equivalent and above.

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 standards of excellence fluctuates between subjects and age groups.

In the primary school, in English, students demonstrate above average standards in lessons. In mathematics, science and class teaching students' demonstrate standards in line with their age-related expectations. In the middle school, students perform well in English. The majority of students exhibit good standards in other subjects. In the secondary school, students' achievement in lessons are at least good. However, in Arabic, across the school, students' standards are weak.

The progress made by secondary school students in their knowledge and understanding is good. However, in the primary and middle schools the progress made by most students in lessons and in their academic work is no better than satisfactory, due to less effective teaching.

Throughout the school, in English most students have strong and well developed listening, speaking and reading skills. However, across the whole curriculum, students' creative and extended writing skills in English and in Hindi are under-developed. In the primary and middle school, students' problem-solving and practical skills are weak. Arabic language skills, across the school, are also below age-related expectations.

□ How good is the students' personal development?

Grade: 1 Outstanding

Students across the school are respectful and courteous at all times and behaviour is exemplary. Almost all students are punctual for school, ready for classes and eager to learn. They demonstrate high levels of enthusiasm and enjoyment in school activities, though this is not consistently visible in lessons due to lack of opportunities provided. Most students are highly motivated, self-directed and take responsibility. This is evident in school events like science exhibitions and quiz competitions that they themselves organise. They passionately participate in external events such as the CBSE cluster athletics meet, the Gavels club, and fund raisers to support 'Rehabilitation Institute of Active Learning', a local special institute.

There is a very strong ethos of care and support within the student community: high school students support each other academically through peer teaching, and older children are sensitive to the needs of younger ones. The student council demonstrates leadership skills and provides a voice to the student community. All students take immense pride in, and show great loyalty towards, the school vision and mission. Commitment to their school motto "Service before Self" is impressive. They exhibit good understanding of Islamic values and local traditions and joyously experience the culture of Bahrain by celebrating the national day and events such as 'thanksgiving Bahrain'.

The quality of provision

□ How effective are teaching and learning?

Grade: 3 Satisfactory

Teachers have good subject knowledge, evident in the clear explanations of lessons and the examples given to extend students' knowledge of material studied. This is notable in the more effective lessons, particularly in high school, when students' understanding and skills are well-developed through the various teaching strategies that successfully engage them, such as brainstorming in science or role play in English. However, in other lessons the focus is on relaying knowledge, dominated by teachers' explanations and instructions. Learning resources are scarcely used to facilitate learning, except for a very few lessons when real objects are used to help students' understanding. Nevertheless, students are always encouraged, motivated and praised when answering direct questions. Too few opportunities are taken to challenge or support differing student abilities in the vast majority of lessons. Consequently, students' critical, investigative and analytical skills are underdeveloped. However, in high school grades 11 and 12, appropriate support and challenging, prompting

questions are successfully used to extend students' abilities. Class management is strong in the vast majority of lessons, except for a very few lessons in elementary school when activities failed to actively engage or interest students. Lessons are appropriately paced in general, with activities introduced in an orderly manner. However, in less effective lessons, the pace tends to be slow with activities dragging and adversely affecting students' engagement.

Homework successfully reinforces work done in lessons, but the quality of tasks set is usually at the same level, focus is on practice, and students' differing needs are not targeted. This limits extension of students' understanding. The school has rigorous formative and summative assessment systems in place, yet the results do not feed into planning to improve students' performance in lessons. Students' written work is almost always marked and mistakes corrected, but feedback provided to help students' improve their work is very limited. On-going assessment is evident in the vast majority of lessons, though this is limited to verbal questions that only target certain groups of students.

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

Grade: 2 Good

The school curriculum is broad and balanced with a good range of indoor and outdoor activities that are accessible to all students. These activities add value to the core courses offered by providing opportunities for developing various skills needed for holistic growth. For instance, public speaking, dramatics and role-plays help students develop good communication skills, confidence and self-esteem while the music, dance and art classes enhance their artistic and creative sensibilities. All students have ample opportunities to practice civic responsibility and play leadership roles, this being reflected in the exemplary behaviour observed across the school. The schemes of work and syllabi are regularly reviewed and meticulously planned; however they do not always address the needs of all students. The curriculum is often compartmentalised into subjects and activities, a conscious effort to establish links between subjects and co-curricular areas not often being made, even when connections naturally exist. High school students in particular have a variety of courses to choose from which cater to their aptitudes and interest. They are also well guided and prepared for higher education and appropriate vocations through aptitude testing, career guidance and grooming workshops. However, there is underutilisation of resources within the school to optimise curriculum delivery and enhance its efficacy.

□ How well are students guided and supported?

Grade: 2 Good

Induction of students is highly effective, with a programme of lectures and tours of the school's facilities for them and their parents. Students moving to middle and high school meet with teachers and guidance is provided on curriculum requirements. The academic progress of all students is monitored, effectively profiling their strengths, weaknesses and necessary remedial measures. Remedial classes are provided to meet most students' needs. Personal development is equally monitored and needs are met through a variety of activities, especially during the zero period.

Students are well supported and receive effective care and assistance from counsellors and teaching staff, such as providing extra classes for slow learners. Students with special educational needs, however, are not identified well and known cases receive limited care for lack of a specialist to identify and cater for their needs.

Extensive guidance is provided for Grade 12 students to help them make well informed decisions about their future. Speakers from various universities are invited and seminars are held such as a "college life" seminar. Parents are promptly updated about their children's progress through letters, monthly meetings and e-mails. Risk assessment is in place and a yearly fire drill is conducted. Smoke detectors and fire fighting equipment are well positioned and students' medical conditions are closely monitored by staff and the school nurse.

Leadership, management and governance

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

Grade: 3 Satisfactory

School leaders and staff work to a clear set of aims reflecting the values of the school vision. It focuses on nurturing responsible global citizens and is implemented outside classrooms more than in lessons.

The school evaluates its performance against both internal and international examination results and comparative analysis is mostly made against results within the regional and

international Delhi Public School society network. The school's strategic plan to 2018 includes some goals and assigned responsibilities but lacks performance indicators to help measure the extent of success in achieving its goals. This reduces the degree to which the school can respond to the identified needs of its students and staff.

New teachers are trained through the Delhi Public School educational system. However, the impact of such training is inconsistent as levels of pedagogical skill vary widely amongst staff. Subject coordinators regularly evaluate teachers' performance against organisational expectations. They also gauge teachers' performance against students' performance in tests and examinations and regularly update the school's director. The school inspires its staff with personal development opportunities in and outside Bahrain, with appropriate support by the heads of department, but the impact of such efforts are not equally felt in the majority of lessons.

The school ensures allocation of budget for the purpose of professional development and facilities, as well as resources such as the science laboratories. However, the resources in classroom are insufficiently used by teachers to enrich students' learning experiences. The views of students and parents are sought. Feedback received is acted on, such as changing the students' waiting area at the end of the day to be the school auditorium. There are very good links with the local community, such as providing the school courts for other teams from the community and the auditorium for social events. The director and governing body have clear roles and responsibilities mandated by the central organisation. The school is firmly held accountable for its overall performance and particularly for its students' academic results.

The school's main strengths

- Highly motivated students with strong, independent learning abilities
- The wide range of extracurricular activities
- The safe and well equipped school facilities.

Recommendations

In order to improve, the school should:

- improve the formative assessment system and use its results to enhance learning
- improve teaching and learning by:
 - identifying and sharing best teaching practices
 - increasing the range and effective use of teaching and learning strategies in order to meet the needs of all students
 - ensuring that lessons provide effective challenge.
- develop leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that planning includes clear and measurable performance indicators to measure success
 - providing further professional development which is clearly linked to the improvement of teaching and learning strategies.