



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

Directorate of Private Schools & Kindergartens Reviews

Review Report

**Pakistan School - Manama
Manama - Capital Governorate
Kingdom of Bahrain**

Date of Review: 20-22 January 2014

SP046-C1-R046

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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 eight 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		Pakistan School, Manama											
School's type		Private											
Year of establishment		1968											
Age range of students		6 -12 Years											
Grades (e.g. 1 to 12)		Primary				Middle				High			
		1-6				-				-			
Number of students		Boys	154	Girls	155	Total			309				
Students' social background		Most come from lower income families											
Classes per grade	Grade	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
	Classes	2	2	2	2	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
Town /Village		Manama											
Governorate		Capital											
Number of administrative staff		5											
Number of teaching staff		20											
Curriculum		Pakistani National Curriculum (Oxford Syllabus for Pakistan)											
Main language(s) of instruction		English											
Principal's tenure		26 years											
External assessment and examinations		-											
Accreditation (if applicable)		-											
Number of students in the following categories according to the school's classification		Outstanding			Gifted & Talented			Physical Disabilities			Learning Difficulties		
		89			2			1			1		
Major recent changes in the school		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> introduction of Oxford Syllabus from kindergarten to Grade 5 since 2011. 											

Table of review judgements awarded

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

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: 4 Inadequate

Students behave well and show respect to colleagues and teachers. They have adequate understanding of the heritage and culture of Bahrain and the values of Islam. However, they are less confident in working independently. Their enthusiastic participation in school life is limited. Measures to ensure the safety and security of students and staff are insufficient. In most lessons teaching is highly focused on factual recall insufficiently promoting the development of understanding and skills, nor does it cater for students of different abilities. Consequently, students' academic standards are weak and progress is limited. Self-evaluation is not rigorous or systematic and does not involve all stakeholders. Curriculum implementation does not develop students' life-long learning skills effectively. Although parents have a few issues, most of them and the students are satisfied with the school.

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

Grade: 4 Inadequate

The school informally seeks parents' suggestions through regular parent-teacher meetings. However, the voice of parents is limited in the school's evaluation and improvement. Self-evaluation is not sufficiently rigorous and does not involve all stakeholders, it is not effectively embedded in all aspects of the school, with limited links to strategic planning. Strategic planning lacks focus on academic achievement and personal development of students of all abilities. Consequently, both have limited impact on improving the quality of teaching and learning. Main challenges are the poor safety and security environment for students and staff, teachers' less secure pedagogical understanding, poor resources and lack of sufficient awareness about curriculum expectations. All of these limit the school's capacity to improve without effective external and technical support.

Students' achievement

□ How well do students achieve in their academic work?

Grade: 4 Inadequate

Most students across all grades consistently achieve high pass rates in internal examinations. The percentage of students securing 80% and above marks is high in Arabic throughout the school. However, it significantly fluctuates between 38% and 81% in other core subjects. These results are not moderated against any external benchmarks.

Across the school, lesson observations and scrutiny of students' work indicate that, in core subjects, most students' standards are below their age-related expectations. Nevertheless, in Arabic and English students demonstrate satisfactory standards in listening and reading and make adequate use of vocabulary. In Urdu, although students' standards in speaking are adequate and they can speak with fluency, their reading with understanding is weak due to limited opportunities to read and comprehend independently. In mathematics, the majority of students acquire age-appropriate knowledge and understanding of basic arithmetic and geometrical concepts. However, they rely on memory recall and have difficulties when applying their knowledge and understanding to solve problems. For example, in Grade 3 the majority of students can distinguish between numerator and denominator but could not compare simple fractions. In science, students' standards are weak with insufficient understanding of key scientific concepts. For example, in Grade 6, students could not explain food chain and pollination concepts with age-related understanding and scientific vocabulary.

The school's internal examination results generally show progress in students' attainment over the past three years in all core subjects. However, in lessons and in their independent work, students' progress is limited due to whole-class teaching that does not sufficiently provide opportunities to develop their understanding and skills. Students of all abilities are not making sufficient progress due to ineffective support, limited challenge and lack of enrichment programmes in the school.

Across the school, students' independent and creative writing and comprehension skills in English and in Urdu are not sufficiently developed. In mathematics, students' application skills are limited. In science, students' enquiry and practical skills are under-developed.

□ How good is the students' personal development?

Grade: 4 Inadequate

Most students attend school regularly and are punctual to lessons, showing that they love to learn and appreciate the care they receive from their teachers. They attend morning assembly on time. The majority of students work in an atmosphere of cultural harmony as a result of the good relationships among each other and with their teachers. However, students' productive participation in school life and extra-curricular activities is limited due to lack of sufficient activities catering to their wide ranging interests. In better lessons a limited number of students enthusiastically participate, though they are not effectively motivated to learn due to insufficient opportunities provided, which has an adverse impact on their self-confidence and ability to work independently during lessons. This reflects negatively on their ability to take leading roles and initiative-taking responsibility except during the morning assembly.

The majority of students feel safe and secure in the classrooms and around the school, showing responsible behaviour during morning assembly and recess. Instances of inappropriate behaviour are rare and adequately dealt with by the school. The majority of students demonstrate adequate understanding of Bahrain's culture and Islamic values through celebration of national occasions and their enthusiastic intonation of the National Anthem and reciting of the holy Quran during morning assembly.

The quality of provision

□ How effective are teaching and learning?

Grade: 4 Inadequate

Although the teachers have secure subject knowledge, this is only reflected in enthusiastic teaching in a limited number of lessons. Mostly, teaching lacks sufficient understanding of appropriate teaching techniques to satisfy the learning needs of students of different standards and abilities.

Most lessons begin with warm-up sessions and almost all teachers adequately share the lesson objectives with students. However, in all subjects, lessons lack planning and do not focus on the progress of different ability groups. Consequently, lessons are teacher-centred, strictly focusing on the acquisition of factual knowledge, constant repetition and memorisation. This limits students' opportunities to participate in a range of activities to enhance learning.

In better lessons, particularly in English and Urdu, teaching uses challenging questions to promote students' understanding. However, in almost all lessons teaching does not adequately develop students' critical thinking skills. Consequently, the individual learning needs of a significant proportion of students are not adequately satisfied.

Lessons start and end on time, behaviour management is generally appropriate as lessons are orderly and well supported by self-disciplined students. In better lessons, teaching involves students in group activities and provides a few opportunities to work independently. However, low expectations in lessons, along with limited challenge and less effective support, leads to ineffective use of time and low productivity.

The limited range of teaching aids does not support teaching or attract students' interest. Resources are not effective, nor sufficiently engaged to motivate students toward learning. Although homework is regularly assigned it is almost always limited to consolidating and practicing work done in lessons, with limited opportunities to develop students' research skills. Students' work is regularly checked, yet constructive feedback to help students to improve in their work is lacking. Assessment in lessons is continuous but with limited effectiveness, usually including closed questions and expecting choral replies based on factual recall. Assessment results are not sufficiently used to diagnose and meet students' diverse learning needs and to inform teaching accordingly.

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

Grade: 4 Inadequate

The school provides a satisfactory range of subjects in Grades 1 to 6, based on the Pakistani National Curriculum designed by Oxford University Press for Pakistani schools in the Middle East. Subjects are mostly text-book driven, with insufficient attention given to modifications and additional planning by teachers to cater for students' interests and diverse abilities. Cross curricular links are limited, with insufficient attention to developing students' lifelong skills to prepare them for next stage of their education. Although the subjects have schemes of work, these are insufficiently developed to ensure enrichment, progression and continuity across all grades. Review of the curriculum is rare and lacks imagination. The school adequately develops students' understanding of community rights and responsibilities by delegating authority to older students to discipline and take care of younger ones. The school organises a few extra-curricular activities that enhance students' experience in a satisfactory manner, though participation is limited and they do not sufficiently promote students' wide ranging interests. The spirit of citizenship is enriched through participation in school assembly. National day celebrations support their integration with Bahraini culture. Students' work is adequately celebrated in class. However, enrichment of the curriculum by the use of the school environment and resources available in the local community is minimal and ineffective in enhancing learning.

□ How well are students guided and supported?

Grade: 4 Inadequate

Induction programmes are limited and ineffective in helping students, particularly those who join the school at non-standard times. New students are introduced during morning assembly and are helped by high achievers in the classrooms.

The school monitors students' academic progress through tests and examinations. Reports are regularly sent to parents. However, the school lacks systematic procedures to effectively diagnose students' individual learning needs and extend support to improve their progress. Likewise, the systems to monitor students' personal development are ineffective, being limited to report instances of un-acceptable behaviour to parents. Although the school recognises students with special educational needs, it fails to provide sufficient support to cater for their different needs. Students who face personal problems are given sensitive support. They feel secure and confident in approaching teachers and staff, who delicately help them to resolve issues. Parents are updated about their children's attainment through a variety of approaches such as phone calls, diaries, reports and monthly meetings.

Risk assessment systems are not rigorous. High risk issues are not tackled well enough, particularly in cases of students' arrival and departure, emergency exits, toilets hygiene, tracking of absentees and the playground. Nevertheless, fire drills are conducted and the fire extinguishers are up to date.

Leadership, management and governance

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

Grade: 4 Inadequate

The school has a vision and mission to provide a holistic education to all students in a changing environment. However, this understanding is not shared with all stakeholders so that it is effectively owned by them and can be reflected in better teaching practices in school. Members of the school work in a family-like environment and senior leadership has made efforts to encourage and motivate them. However, the teachers have multiple responsibilities and play different roles in school.

Actions taken by the school to improve performance include a quality assurance coordinator to monitor the school's provisions, gather and analyse data and provide constructive advice to the senior management and Board. However, insufficient impact shows as matters are still in their initial stages. Self-evaluation is not yet systematic, lacking rigour in setting key improvement priorities to be embedded in strategic planning. Recent action planning is based on SWOT analyses, with clear objectives and key performance indicators. However, such planning is still not well comprehended by all stakeholders so that monitoring of progress and better practices in teaching are implemented.

Teachers are periodically evaluated, but existing professional development programmes are insufficient and do not provide them with in-depth understanding of curriculum competencies and effective methods of implementation. Some of the training sessions offered are too general and indicate insecure subject knowledge, covering textbook topics such 'adverbs' in English and 'microorganisms' in science.

Budget allocation does not cater for key requirements of school needs. The school lacks basic facilities such as a science laboratory and essential teaching aids that enrich students learning. The school is unsuccessful in providing a safe and healthy environment for students, as several hazards are not being effectively addressed.

The school seeks parents' views and evaluates their satisfaction through questionnaires and monthly meetings. It responds adequately to their suggestions. Roles between the school's leadership and members of the Board are defined with clear job descriptions. Few members of the Board contribute to strategic planning, though they have regular meetings to discuss school results. However, understanding of responsibilities is inconsistent as roles overlap when it comes to follow-up of action planning and measurement of progress. Support by the Board is not yet sufficiently effective in improving the quality of provisions.

The school's main strengths

- Students' attendance, punctuality and behaviour.

Recommendations

In order to improve, the school should:

- develop and implement rigorous risk assessment procedures to improve the safety and security of students and staff
- improve the effectiveness of teaching and learning by:
 - using a range of effective teaching strategies that ensure students' participation in their learning
 - focusing more on developing students' understanding and skills in line with curriculum expectations
 - using the assessment results to inform teaching, ensuring the progress of students of all abilities.
- improve the effectiveness of leadership, management and governance by:
 - implementing rigorous self-evaluation systems in all aspects of the school
 - linking the results of self-evaluation to prioritise strategic goals, focusing on students' academic achievement and personal development
 - providing extensive and well-targeted professional development programmes to satisfy teachers' needs
 - seeking external support when needed.