



هيئة جودة التعليم والتدريب
Education & Training Quality Authority
Kingdom of Bahrain - مملكة البحرين

Directorate of Private Schools & Kindergartens Reviews Review Report

**Talent International and The Infant School –
Riffa Branch
East Riffa – Southern Governorate
Kingdom of Bahrain**

**Date of Review: 3-5 February 2020
SP022-C3-R016**

Introduction

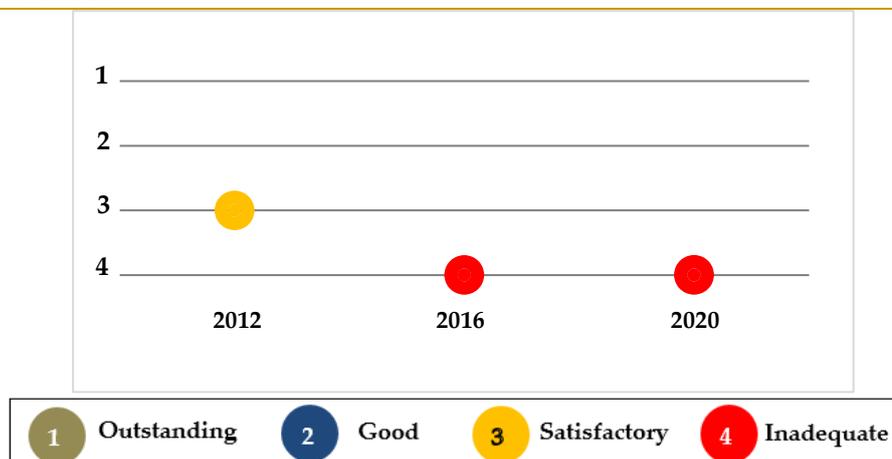
The Directorate of Private Schools & Kindergartens Reviews (DPS), which is a part of the Education & Training Quality Authority (BQA), conducted this review over three days by a team of five reviewers. During the review, reviewers observed lessons and other activities, scrutinised students' written work and analysed the school's performance data and other documents. They met with the staff, students and parents. This report summarises their findings and recommendations.

Summary of review judgements

Outstanding	1	Good	2	Satisfactory	3	Inadequate	4
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Aspect		Grade			
		Elementary / Primary	Middle / Intermediate	High / Secondary	Overall
Quality of outcomes	Academic achievement	4	4	4	4
	Personal development and social responsibility	4	4	4	4
Quality of processes	Teaching, learning and assessment	4	4	4	4
	Empowerment and meeting special needs	4	4	4	4
Quality assurance of outcomes and processes	Leadership, management and governance	4	4	4	4
Capacity to improve		4			
The school's overall effectiveness		4			

The chart demonstrates the school's overall effectiveness throughout the last three reviews.



School Report

□ School's overall effectiveness 'Inadequate'

Judgement justifications

- Self-evaluation lacks rigour and strategic planning is not closely linked to improvement priorities. The impact of the professional development programmes on teaching practices and students' attainment in lessons is limited, and analysis of teachers' training needs is not rigorous. There is no moderation of examinations and assessments and they are not consistently aligned with curriculum standards and expectations.
- Students' standards, progress and learning skills are inadequate in all core subjects, which does not align with the high pass rates in most subjects.
- Teaching and learning strategies are ineffective in engaging students or allowing them opportunities for active participation and leading roles in lessons. Lessons are negatively affected by the unproductive management of learning time and limited use of assessment results to inform teaching and meet the learning needs of all groups of students.
- Diagnosis of students' academic needs is not sufficiently rigorous and the support programmes provided are ineffective in developing students' standards and skills. There are insufficient extracurricular activities to enrich students' interests, talents and learning experiences.
- Students have adequate citizenship values and feel secure at school. Students and their parents are satisfied with the school's provision.

Main positive features

- Students' citizenship values and feeling safe at school.

Recommendations

- Develop leadership, management and governance through:
 - rigorous self-evaluation to develop school planning with a focus on improvement priorities
 - rigorous analysis of teachers' training needs and monitoring the impact of professional development programmes on students' attainment in lessons
 - alignment and moderation of internal examinations as per curriculum expectations.
- Raise students' standards and basic skills in core subjects by improving teaching and learning focussing on:

- implementing effective teaching and learning strategies that provide students with leading and active roles in lessons and engage them in their learning
- managing learning time effectively
- using assessment results to inform teaching and support students’ learning needs.
- Provide effective support programmes and extracurricular activities to meet students’ academic needs, interests and talents.

□ Capacity to improve ‘Inadequate’

Judgement justifications

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school is unable to make sufficient improvement in its overall performance, particularly with respect to academic achievement and developing teaching and learning processes. There is a decline in the aspects of students’ personal development and empowerment and meeting students’ needs, from satisfactory in the previous review to inadequate this time. • The school leaderships’ awareness of the strengths and areas for development varies, which adversely affects strategic planning and school plans. Self-evaluation does not accurately identify schoolwork improvement priorities. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring the impact of professional development programmes on the improvement of teaching and learning and students’ progress in lessons is insufficient. • Unsettling challenges are faced by the school, particularly with regard to its old building, students’ weak academic standards and their inadequate basic skills. • There is variation between the school’s assessment of its situation as provided in the Self-Evaluation Form (SEF) and the judgements reached by the review team by two points in most aspects. |
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Quality of outcomes

□ Academic achievement 'Inadequate'

Judgement justifications

- In the 2018-2019 internal examinations, students achieved high pass rates in most core subjects, ranging between 83% and 100% except for the average pass rates in English Grade 6 at 70% and mathematics Grade 7 at 75%. However, the marking of internal examinations lacks sufficient rigour.
- Proficiency rates vary. In Primary School, they range between 50% in Grade 5 Arabic and science and high at 100% in Grade 3 mathematics. In the Middle School, rates are low in mathematics and science across the different grades. Rates range between very low at 25% in Grade 7 mathematics and high at 79% in Grade 8 Arabic. In the High School, the rates range between very low at 17% in physics and chemistry and 92% in Arabic all in Grade 9.
- Tracking the performance of students over the past three years from 2016-2017 to 2018-2019 indicates stability in the high pass rates in most core subjects. However, there is a decline in English and mathematics in Primary School, mathematics in Middle School and Arabic in Grade 9.
- In the 2019 Cambridge Lower Secondary Checkpoint, students' performance is low. Percentage of students attaining 2 or above is 23% in English and mathematics and 67% in science. The percentage of students attaining 4 or above is 0% in mathematics, 8% in English and 17% in science.
- In lessons and written work, students' standards and progress are below age and curriculum expectations across the school. In a few lessons, the more able students show adequate progress. However, students make limited progress, particularly in science and a significant proportion of lessons in all other core subjects across the school.
- Students' language skills in both English and Arabic are underdeveloped. Few students are able to analyse texts adequately in Arabic in High School, while most students in the Primary and Middle Schools show weak comprehension and reading skills. Their grasp of grammar and writing skills is limited across the school.
- In English, students in the lower Primary are able to identify different sounds in words. However, in the Middle and High Schools students' reading and writing skills are weak.
- Students' basic arithmetic skills are weak and below curriculum expectations, particularly in the Middle and High Schools. For example, in the Middle School, students face difficulties in simplifying ratios and in the High School their standards in algebra are weak.
- Students across the school show weak knowledge and understanding of scientific concepts. For example, they face difficulties in comprehending irreversible change in the Primary School, solutes and solvents in the Middle School, and balancing chemical equations in the High School.

- Students' learning skills are inadequate in most lessons. Only in a few lessons do they use iPads and dictionaries adequately and develop adequate

learning skills by finding meanings of new vocabulary using a dictionary. Students' technological skills and critical thinking are underdeveloped.

Areas for improvement

- Students' performance in internal and external examinations, particularly in the Middle and High Schools.
- Students' language skills in both English and Arabic, their understanding of scientific concepts, and development of basic arithmetic skills.
- The progress made by students according to their different abilities in lessons and in their written work.
- Students' learning skills across the school.

□ Personal development & social responsibility 'Inadequate'

Judgement justifications

- The majority of students are well behaved. This is evident in the positive relationships between most students and their feeling safe and secure in school. However, there are a few cases of behavioural problems and unacceptable conduct in a few lessons such as causing disruption or lack of respect for instructions, particularly in Middle School. The majority of students have adequate awareness of work ethics, apart from a few students who have limited respect for the ethical use of information as they tend to copy answers from their peers rather than attempt to work independently.
- Students have an appropriate commitment to citizenship values, celebrating national events such as 'National Day', visiting historical sites such as the 'Military Museum', having knowledge of traditional costumes and taking part in the 'Cleanliness Campaign'.
- Students' participation in most lessons is limited to the more able ones. Meanwhile, the rest of the students show low self-confidence and enthusiasm, with limited ability to assume leadership roles or take responsibility for their own learning, particularly in the inadequate lessons, due to the teacher-centred strategies.
- Leadership roles out of lessons are scarce as very few students take part in activities such as the morning assembly or, for Middle and High School students, being members of the Student Council or Discipline Committee.
- In most lessons, students do not develop their communication skills sufficiently due to the lack of opportunities to engage in discussions, debates, interaction or persuasion. Outside lessons, students enjoy a few opportunities to work together through the weekly activity period.
- Students show appropriate interest in their physical health and personal appearance and participate in a few awareness events such as 'Think Pink' to raise donations to the Breast Cancer Society. However, most students demonstrate unhealthy practices such as adopting poor diets during break time and not maintaining hygiene and cleanliness in some classes and toilets.
- A few opportunities are provided to students to compete internally, such as in the Robotics classes, Abacus and Spelling Competition. However, their sense of competitiveness and innovation is less evident in lessons.

Areas for improvement

- Students' confident participation in school life, taking responsibility for their own learning and assuming leadership roles.
- Students' ability to work collaboratively and develop communication skills.
- Students' sense of competitiveness and innovation.

Quality of processes

□ Teaching, learning & assessment 'Inadequate'

Judgement justifications

- In approximately two thirds of the observed lessons, teaching strategies were ineffective. These lessons tended to be mostly teacher-centred and lecture-based, negatively affecting students' engagement, progress and development of skills in all core subjects, particularly in science. In the few better lessons, such as Arabic in High School and mathematics in Primary School, teachers use adequate strategies such as discussion and role play.
- Available resources are used adequately in a few lessons, such as flash cards, educational videos and smartboards. However, resources are insufficiently utilised in most lessons to promote quality learning.
- In the few better lessons, teachers manage student's behaviour appropriately and share learning objectives. However, in most lessons, a significant proportion of students are passive and are not provided with sufficient opportunities for active learning, while others are distracted from the learning process. Time is not effectively utilised, with the pace of lessons being either too slow or too fast.
- Assessment methods are not effectively used to measure students' learning or inform teaching as assessment activities focus on group and verbal assessment, targeting the few volunteers who participate. Moreover, teachers' constructive feedback is limited and does not always identify the next steps for learning or provide support to all categories of students, thus copying answers is noted in many lessons. Although correction of students' work is mostly regular, it is sometimes inaccurate and mistakes are overlooked, particularly in Arabic and English. Inflated marking is also apparent in the end of semester examination papers.
- In a very few lessons, students are given opportunities to think critically, such as analysis of Arabic texts. However, in most lessons, opportunities are too few and a significant number of students are insufficiently challenged to think analytically and justify their views, with very little focus on developing inquiry and problem-solving skills. Most lessons, written activities and homework lack sufficient and effective differentiation to cater to students' varying needs.
- In the few adequate lessons, teachers use iPads and projectors, such as in the Middle and High Schools. However, students' abilities to use modern technology is not sufficiently developed across the school.

Areas for improvement

- Effective teaching and learning strategies, and resources that engage students and develop their leadership roles and develop their skills.
- Effective use of assessment results to inform teaching and support students of all categories.
- Productive use of learning time.

Empowerment & meeting needs 'Inadequate'

Judgement justifications

- The school carries out diagnostic tests to classify students into different categories. However, there is a lack of rigour in the identification of different abilities and the subsequent implementation of support programmes that meet students' individual needs.
- Low achieving students are supported through remedial classes. However, these sessions have limited impact on students' standards and progress. High achieving students are not challenged to reach their potentials in classrooms, while there is a lack of appropriate enrichment programmes to enhance the different skills. Likewise, the support provided to the very few non-native Arabic speakers is unsystematic.
- The school supports students personally through sharing a clear behaviour policy, while the 'House Point' system promotes positive behaviour which is evident in the generally adequate conduct of most students. Parents are informed through the 'Moodle' application of their children's personal progress.
- Gifted and talented students are not identified accurately and limited opportunities are provided to develop their skills and talents. Apart from the elected Student Council, whose role is mainly organisational and focuses on a few students in the Middle and High Schools, provisions for students to partake in school life and extracurricular activities are limited.
- The school holds an 'Open House' to induct new students adequately. However, there is a lack of effective transition programmes to provide guidance for the next stage of education. Support is not provided to students to fill the gap between the curriculum and their own standards.
- The school provides a healthy and safe learning environment through annual fire drills, maintaining the safety of students' attendance and departure, training a number of staff on first aid, and the availability of a school nurse. However, the school building is old and rigorous quality control mechanisms to ensure safety are inconsistent.
- Students with physical disabilities are appropriately supported through providing the necessary services, like a shadow helper.

Areas for improvement

- Effective academic support to students of all categories.
- Ensuring the availability of programmes and extracurricular activities to meet students' needs, interests and skills and to broaden their experiences.
- Providing transition programmes.

Quality assurance of outcomes and processes

□ Leadership, management and governance 'Inadequate'

Judgement justifications

- The school's self-evaluation is not rigorous enough to accurately identify strengths and areas for improvement. Results from the self-evaluation tools, including SWOT analyses and results of students' and parents' surveys, are used to identify improvement priorities, but they are not translated into effective plans for improving students' basic skills and proficiency rates, particularly in Middle and High Schools. Moreover, there is no mechanisms to monitor the school plans and measure their effectiveness.
- The school's four-year strategic plan aims for school improvement but is weakly linked to the self-evaluation results. Departmental plans are not consistently aligned to the strategic plan. Leaderships' awareness of the strengths and areas for development varies. Although the curriculum is reviewed, and subject outlines are available, age-appropriate standards are not considered in actual teaching. This affects the development of students' understanding and skills and limits their progress. Moreover, there is no moderation of examinations and assessment, which are not consistently aligned with the curriculum expectations.
- There is a significant mismatch between the judgements in the school's Self-Evaluation Form (SEF) and the review team's judgements of the school's performance.
- There is no systematic approach to assess teachers' specific training needs. The school has provided several professional training workshops to teachers on topics such as 'Time Management' and '21st Century Skills'. However, the effectiveness of these programmes on teaching practices is insufficient, hence ineffective classroom practices are observed in around two third of the lessons.
- The Principal and Heads of Departments conduct lesson observations and feedback is provided. However, the procedure lacks rigour in evaluating the effectiveness of lessons or identifying areas for improvement in a significant proportion of observations, and the impact on teaching and learning is limited in most lessons observed.
- Relations between the staff and leadership are positive. An open-door policy and 'Teachers of the Month' certificate that motivates staff are in place. The staff structure is in place and delegation of responsibilities is as needed. However, the impact of the implementation of improvements is limited.
- The school utilises its available resources and facilities to accommodate students' needs. This includes the computer lab, library and art room. Smartboards and iPads are available for teachers. Despite the availability of these resources, they are

not effectively used to promote students' learning and broaden their learning experiences.

- The school has adequate links with the stakeholders. It seeks parents' opinions and responds to both parent and student suggestions, such as providing Grade 9 with lockers. Students participate in a few charitable events and have visited a number of local landmarks. The school

uses its website and the 'Moodle' system to provide adequate educational services to students.

- Although the Board of Directors provides financial support to the school, the lack of diversity of experiences affects the quality of the Board's contribution to strategic direction. Mechanisms of accountability to the Board by the school's leadership lack clarity.

Areas for improvement

- Rigorous self-evaluation and use of its results to develop school plans according to improvement priorities and monitor the impact on school improvement.
- Professional development programmes and monitoring their impact on actual classroom practices.
- Effective utilisation of learning resources to broaden students' learning experiences.
- Alignment and moderation of internal examinations as per curriculum expectations.

Appendix 1: Characteristics of the school

Name of the school (Arabic)	مدرسة المواهب العالمية والأطفال - فرع الرفاع												
Name of the school (English)	Talent International and the Infant School – Riffa Branch												
Year of establishment	1987												
Address	Building 74, Road 2506, Block 925												
City / Town / Governorate	East Riffa / Southern												
School's telephone	17770078				Fax								
School's e-mail	infant.riffa@talentschools.com												
School's website	www.talentschools.com												
Age range of students	6-15 years												
Grades (e.g. 1 to 12)	Primary			Middle					High				
	1-5			6-8					9				
Number of Students	Boys	79			Girls	47			Total	126			
Students' social/ economical background	Most students come from average income families												
Classes per grade in Primary and Intermediate Stages	Grade	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
	Classes	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	-	-	-
Number of administrative staff	4												
Number of teaching staff	17												
Curriculum	British												
Main language(s) of instruction	English												
External assessment and examinations	Cambridge Lower Secondary Checkpoint for Grade 8.												
Accreditation (if applicable)	-												
Major recent changes in the school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appointment of 2 new teachers in the academic year 2019-2020. Introduction of the use of iPads in the Middle and High Schools in 2019. 												