



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

Directorate of Private Schools & Kindergartens Reviews Review Report

**Al-Noor International School
Sitra – Capital Governorate
Kingdom of Bahrain**

Date of Review: 18-21 February 2018
SP047-C2-R050

Introduction

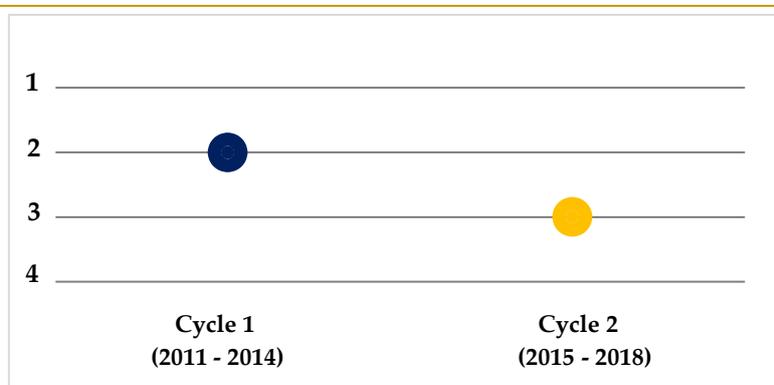
The Directorate of Private Schools & Kindergartens Reviews (DPS), which is a part of the Education & Training Quality Authority (BQA), conducted this review over four days by a team of nineteen reviewers. During the review, reviewers observed lessons and other activities, scrutinised students' written 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

Outstanding	1	Good	2	Satisfactory	3	Inadequate	4
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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	2	2	2	2
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		3			
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

- Students' standards and progress are satisfactory overall. In internal and external examinations, their pass and proficiency rates are inconsistent across the different sections and stages, particularly in the Bahraini Section and the British Primary and Middle Schools where students' progress is inconsistent.
- Self-evaluation is regular and strategic and action plans reflect the school's vision and mission. However, the school's procedures and monitoring mechanisms are not consistent across the different school sections and stages.
- The quality of teaching and learning is adequate. However, management of learning time, assessment for learning and using its results to support students is inconsistent across the majority of lessons.
- The educational support and enrichment opportunities provided to all categories of students are not systematic, nor carefully customised to meet the specific needs of all students as most lack clear mechanisms for tracking and monitoring progress.
- Students are respectful and work together in harmony. Most of them feel safe and participate effectively in the good range of

extracurricular activities provided. However, many students do not take on leadership roles and are not engaged in their learning, particularly in the British Primary School.

- The Board of Directors plays an important role in financial matters. It provides

appropriate support to the Principal and the Director, though its current structure is not adequately diversified to ensure greater accountability and contribution towards the school's strategic direction.

- Parents and students are satisfied with the school.

Main positive features

- The range of extracurricular activities provided to students.
- Students' harmonious relationships.
- Most students feel safe and secure at school.

Recommendations

- Improve leadership, management and governance, focussing on:
 - ensuring consistency in procedures and monitoring mechanisms across the different Schools and sections
 - expanding and diversifying the Board of Directors' membership to ensure greater accountability and contribution towards the school's strategic direction.
- Raise students' academic achievement, particularly in the Bahraini Section and the British Primary and Middle Schools.
- Improve teaching and learning strategies, focussing on:
 - effective management of learning time
 - assessment for learning and using the results to support students of all abilities through targeted programmes and activities
 - engaging students in their learning and motivating them to take leadership roles, particularly in the British Primary School.

□ Capacity to improve 'Satisfactory'

Judgement justifications

- The school's performance has declined from good across all aspects in the previous review to satisfactory in most aspects reviewed in this visit, while

maintaining the good judgement in students' personal development.

- Self-evaluation is regular, priorities for development are identified and strategic

and action plans reflect the school's vision and mission statements.

- Systems are in place for monitoring the school's performance through the internal quality assurance team. However, the school's sections and stages lack consistency in the procedures and monitoring mechanisms used.
- Students' attainment in the Bahraini Section and the British Primary and Middle Schools is inconsistent.

- Professional development training is regularly provided, but its impact on teachers' performance in the majority of lessons is inconsistent.
- Relationships among staff are positive. However, turnover rates are high and stability of staff is a major challenge.
- None of the school's judgements in the Self-Evaluation Form (SEF) match the review team's judgements.

Quality of outcomes

□ Students' academic achievement 'Satisfactory'

Judgement justifications

- Students' pass and proficiency rates were inconsistent in the internal examinations in the year 2016-2017.
- In internal examinations:
 - In the British Section, students pass rates were high across all subjects in Grades 1 to 7. However, the percentages were low in Grade 8 mathematics and Grade 9 mathematics, biology and physics. Students' proficiency rates varied, being high in Grades 1 to 3, ranging from 53% in Grade 3 English to 86% in Grade 1 science, but low in all subjects at Grade 8 and in mathematics, science and English at Grades 7 and 9.
 - In the Bahraini Section, pass rates were high, except for Grades 3 and 4 English. Proficiency rates were inconsistent, ranging from 29% in Grade 8 Arabic to 94% in Grade 1 English.
 - In the Indian Section, pass and proficiency rates were inconsistent. Pass rates ranged from 9% in Grade 11 Economics to 100% in Grades 7 and 11 Arabic and Grade 9 English and Hindi. Proficiency rates also varied, ranging between 0% in the majority of subjects in Grade 11 to 88% in Grade 2 Hindi.
- In external examinations:
 - In the Cambridge Examinations, students consistently attained high pass and proficiency rates in most subjects at the International General Certificate for Secondary Education (IGCSE), Advanced Subsidiary Levels (AS), and in a majority of subjects at the Advanced (A) Level.
 - In the Ministry of Education (MoE) examinations, students attained high pass and proficiency rates in most subjects in Grade 10 and in a majority of subjects in Grades 11 and 12.
 - In the Central Board of Secondary Education Examinations (CBSE), students' attainment was high in most subjects of the All India Secondary School Examinations (AISSE) and in a majority of subjects of the All India Senior School Certificate Examinations (AISSCE).
- In the Trends in Mathematics and Science Studies Examination (TIMSS) 2015, the school's scores were higher than the world averages in Grade 8 mathematics and science in the British Section, but below that in the other two sections. The scores were average in numeracy, maths and science at Grade 4 in all sections. In the BQA National examinations, students' performance was well above the National Averages in Grade 6 English in 2016 and in Grade 9 English in 2017. In Arabic, mathematics and science, students' performance was close to the National Averages. In Grade 12, students' pass percentages declined in Arabic, English and problem solving in 2017.

- Students' standards in lessons and written work in core subjects are good in High School, particularly in the British and Indian sections, though only satisfactory in the Primary and Middle Schools of all sections.
- Students' progress in lessons in the Primary and Middle Schools is satisfactory overall. However, progress in core subjects where the lessons are less effective, particularly in the Bahraini Section and in the British Primary and Middle Schools, is inconsistent. Low-achievers do not progress well due to insufficient support being provided to them. High School students make good progress in lessons and in their written work, particularly in the British Section.
- In English, students in the British and Indian Sections have good oral skills and range of vocabulary, while the language skills of the Bahraini Section students are satisfactory throughout.
- In Arabic, students' reading and speaking skills are good in the Bahraini Primary

School, while their writing skills are satisfactory. Reading, speaking and writing skills are satisfactory in all other stages and sections.

- In Hindi, although students demonstrate good speaking and reading comprehension skills, their extended and creative writing skills are underdeveloped.
- In mathematics, most students have good basic skills. However, their ability to apply reasoning and problem solving are underdeveloped, particularly in the Primary and Middle Schools of the British and Bahraini Sections.
- In science, most students develop a good understanding of scientific concepts. High School students in the British and Indian Sections demonstrate adequate experimental skills. However, students' research-based, scientific enquiry and investigation skills are underdeveloped in the Bahraini Section and in the Primary and Middle Schools of all sections.

Areas for improvement

- Students' low proficiency rates in internal examinations, particularly in the Middle School and in Grade 12 National Examinations.
- Students' progress in core subjects in the less effective lessons, particularly in the Bahraini Section and in the Primary and Middle British Section.
- Students' problem solving, research-based, scientific enquiry and experimentation skills in the Primary and Middle Schools.

□ Students' personal development 'Good'

Judgement justifications

- Students participate enthusiastically in school activities, including morning assemblies, competitions, debates and field trips. Committees such as the Students' Council are involved in fundraising campaigns to support multiple humanitarian purposes like breast cancer. Students also take part in external competitions and have won first places, including in the Mini-Olympics and the Drama Festival.
- Most students are self-confident, particularly when participating in activities within the better lessons as they carry out discussions and make presentations. Leadership roles such as class monitor are assumed. However, self-confidence and leadership skills are inconsistently developed, particularly in the British Primary School.
- Attitudes are positive as students demonstrate a good sense of responsibility and show self-discipline through their adherence to rules. They enjoy strong relationships, as noted in their interactions in lessons, recess and assemblies.
- Most students feel safe, secure and can express themselves freely. The few incidents of misbehaviour are dealt with effectively, which positively affects students' psychological safety.
- Most students are committed to the values of citizenship and show a good understanding of Bahraini culture through participating in activities such as the production of a video clip at a national level 'Shams Al-Nahar' and celebrating Bahrain National Day. Islamic values are respected as students attentively listen to the recitation of the Holy Quran before assemblies and some of them are awarded prizes in Holy Quran competitions.
- Attendance levels are good and students are punctual for most lessons. Late arrivals are carefully monitored and followed up.
- Primary and Middle School students show an adequate ability to learn independently as they write simple persuasive essays and use conceptual maps. High School students demonstrate better ability when conducting research and presenting projects' results.
- Students work together in harmony and show good communication skills when expressing opinions, exchanging views and planning for activities. In the Robotics Club, for example, they successfully work in groups to design and build robots.

Areas for improvement

- Further development of students' confidence and leadership skills, particularly in the British Primary School's lessons.
- Further strengthening students' independent learning skills across the school.

Quality of processes

□ Teaching and learning 'Satisfactory'

Judgement justifications

- Teaching and learning strategies such as discussions, questions for learning, collaborative work, and 'Think, Pair, Share' are inconsistently implemented across the school, and their impact is uneven. These are used effectively in the better lessons, particularly in science and mathematics in the British High School and in English across the Indian Section. However, their effectiveness varies in almost half of the lessons, being least effective in the Bahraini Section, where most lessons pay less attention to students' different learning needs.
- An adequate range of learning resources is used to enrich learning in the majority of lessons, including textbooks, video clips, worksheets and white boards. However, they have a varied impact.
- Students are encouraged to participate actively in most lessons through the awarding of stars, peer clapping and verbal praise. Such encouragement is more effective in the Middle and High British and Indian Sections.
- Learning time is managed adequately as class activities are logically sequenced. However, the productivity of satisfactory lessons is affected negatively either by the slow pace or rapid transition from one activity to the next without ensuring achievement of the lessons' objectives. In the inadequate lessons, productivity is badly influenced by the poor management of learning time.
- Assessment for learning is successfully used in the better lessons with a variety of oral, written, individual, collective, and peer assessments being evident. However, in the satisfactory lessons assessment is inconsistent in meeting the needs of all categories of students, particularly the low achievers. In the inadequate lessons, assessment is not effective in ensuring the identification of standards, progress, providing feedback or meeting students' needs.
- Students are assigned appropriate class activities and homework, most of which are unified. Accuracy of correction and quality of feedback provided are inconsistent. However, assessment of students' work is of better quality in mathematics and English in the Indian Section.
- Higher order thinking skills are developed adequately, particularly in the better lessons, including analysis, interpretation, inquiry in science and critical thinking in English. However, in a majority of lessons teaching is mostly directed towards the higher achievers, with inconsistency in the implementation of differentiation across the school. The support provided to students who are experiencing difficulties during lessons is not always sufficient.

Areas for improvement

- Implementation of effective teaching and learning strategies, including student-centred strategies, particularly in the Bahraini Section.
- Assessment for learning, to better meet the different academic needs of students, particularly low achievers.
- Managing learning time more effectively.

□ Students' support and guidance 'Satisfactory'

Judgement justifications

- Students' different abilities are identified based on the results of diagnostic tests and students' grades. Outstanding and gifted students are supported adequately through some enrichment activities and provided with leadership roles. They participate in competitions and clubs such as the Science Club. Students who speak Arabic as a second language are offered special classes to help develop their basic skills. Academic Development Plans 'ADP' are prepared for low achievers and students with learning difficulties. Special Education Needs (SEN) students and those with physical disabilities receive inconsistent basic support. Mechanisms for tracking and monitoring students' progress in these programmes are not clear. The educational support and enrichment provided are not systematic and are not clearly targeted to meet the specific needs of all students, particularly those of the low achievers and students with disabilities.
- Students are supported well when facing personal problems. The school's guidance that is provided enables most of them to build their character and overcome many challenges including the diversity of cultural and social backgrounds among them. Values enhancement talks on topics such as 'Respect' and 'Citizenship' are provided and a clear behaviour policy is shared.
- Students' experiences are enriched through a good range of extracurricular activities such as the 'Maths Olympics' and 'Creative Writing Competition'. Students are involved in educational field trips to sites such as Bahrain Financial Harbour.
- Evacuation drills are regularly conducted and essential infirmary services are provided. Nevertheless, safety procedures on buses require further attention.
- New students are inducted well through the school's buddy system, helping them get acquainted with available facilities. High School students take part in welcoming new students and sharing school rules and policies. However, career guidance provided is not well focused on the specific needs of High School students.
- Life skills are adequately promoted through leadership roles in the better lessons, scientific practical and

presentation skills in High School. However, other essential life skills such as problem solving and investigative skills

are inconsistently promoted, particularly in the Primary and Middle Schools.

Areas for improvement

- Meeting and supporting the different learning needs of all categories of students, especially low achievers and students with disabilities.
- Enhancing the procedures to ensure the safety of students on the school's buses.
- Promoting students' life skills and increasing the focus and importance of career guidance to prepare them for their future.

Quality assurance of outcomes and processes

□ Leadership, management and governance ‘Satisfactory’

Judgement justifications

- Regular self-evaluation processes are in place and developmental priorities are identified. The strategic plan and annual action plans support the vision and mission statements. The school’s performance monitoring systems are robust through a quality assurance team. Curriculum schemes are reviewed regularly, but policy making and reviewing procedures are less systematic.
- In a context of a high staff turnover, leaders aim to raise staff competency through a system of regular performance evaluation and by providing access to professional development training, including that offered by Cambridge International Examinations. However, the impact of training on teachers’ performance in the majority of lessons varies.
- Leadership’s appreciation of staff is evident through practices such as promoting some of them to senior roles and distribution of awards including golden certificates, personalised letters and emails.
- Leaders and staff communicate regularly and enjoy positive relationships, but there is a lack of consistency in procedures and in monitoring mechanisms across the sections. In organising staff, leaders rely heavily on the loyalty and long service of the middle managers, specifically the head teachers, grade coordinators and subject coordinators in the different sections.
- Resources such as interactive white boards are deployed to enhance students’ engagement. The library is well used for class lessons and by individual borrowers. The library stock is sizeable but many books are worn and outdated. By contrast, the science laboratories are not utilised optimally. The school places little focus on the use of computers as learning tools, and there is little observable commitment to a digital future.
- The school has no parents’ council but students’ views are expressed through an elected Students’ Council. The school makes sufficient use of national institutions and community events. It often invites professionals from public services to present seminars and workshops.
- The Education Committee and the Quality Assurance Team have oversight of the school’s strategic plan and share an explicit commitment to continuous improvement. This shows in the regular assessment of students’ outcomes.
- The Board of Directors maintains strong control over financial matters. It is on hand to provide support to the Principal and the Director. However, the Board lacks a sufficiently diversified

membership to ensure greater accountability and a better contribution

towards the school's strategic direction and future plans.

Areas for improvement

- The consistency of procedures and monitoring mechanisms across the different sections and schools, and the school-wide procedures for initiating, monitoring and reviewing policies.
- Expansion and diversification of the Board of Directors' membership for greater accountability and contribution towards the school's strategic direction.

Appendix: Characteristics of the school

Name of the school (Arabic)	مدرسة النور العالمية														
Name of the school (English)	Al-Noor International School														
Year of establishment	1993														
Address	Building 108, Road 1104, Block 611														
Town / Village / Governorate	Sitra / Capital														
School's Contacts	17736773				Fax				17735650						
School's e-mail	roonlasc@batelco.co.bh														
School's website	www.alnischool.com														
Age range of students	6-18 years														
Grades (e.g. 1 to 12)	Section	Primary				Middle				High					
	British	1-4				5-7				8-12					
	Bahraini	1-6				7-9				10-12					
	Indian	1-4				5-7				8-12					
Number of students	Boys	3,357				Girls	2,706				Total	6,063			
Students' social background	Students are from a broad and mixed social background and middle-income families.														
Classes per grade	Grade	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12		
	Classes	31	36	33	29	25	22	21	20	15	14	11	10		
Number of administrative staff	29														
Number of teaching staff	475														
Curriculum	Cambridge for the British Section Ministry of Education (MoE) for the Bahraini Section Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) for the Indian Section														
Main language(s) of instruction	English, Arabic (in Bahraini Section)														
Principal's tenure in the school	Two years														
External assessment and examinations	The Cambridge exams up to the International General Certificate for Secondary Education(IGCSE), Advanced Subsidiary Levels (AS) and Advance A Level.														

	<p>Bahrain Section – Ministry of Education (MoE) Certificate for G9, 10, 11 and 12</p> <p>Indian Section – Central Board of Secondary Education Examinations (CBSE) for G10 and G12</p> <p>BQA National Examinations</p>
Accreditation (if applicable)	The school is an accredited training centre for the Cambridge International Examinations (CIE)
Major recent changes in the school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Head of Quality Assurance was appointed in January 2018. • A number of newly appointed or promoted staff in the year 2016-2017 include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Head teacher in the Bahraini High School – Arabic Language Coordinators in the British High and Middle Schools – Stages coordinators in the Indian Section – Two career counsellors. • A new campus was opened in March 2016 adjacent to the main school to house Grades 1-8 of the Indian Section. • All classes from Grade 5 and above are equipped with interactive white boards (IWB).