



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

# **Directorate of Vocational Reviews**

## **Review Report**

**Kumon Bahrain**

**Three Branches (Mahooz, Janabiya, Sanad)**

**Kingdom of Bahrain**

**Date Reviewed: 22-25 April 2019**

VO034-C4-R006

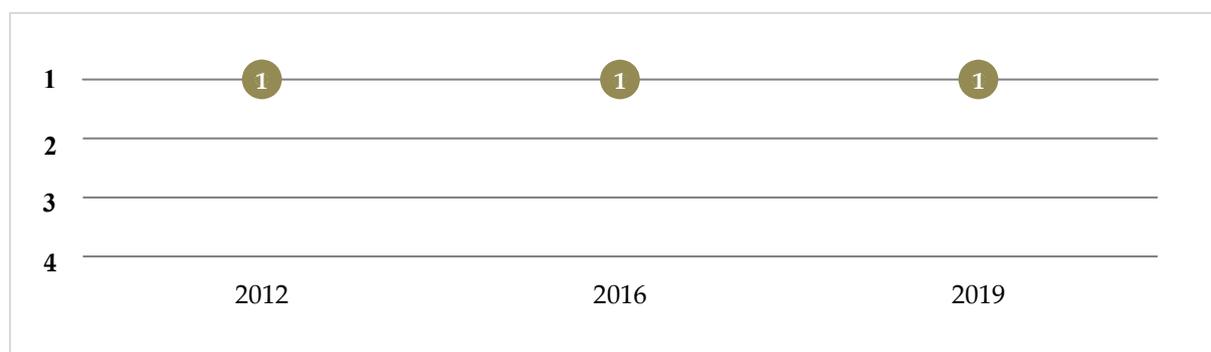
## Introduction

The Directorate of Vocational Reviews (DVR) of the Education & Training Quality Authority (BQA), conducted this review over four days by a team of five reviewers. For this review, reviewers observed lessons and other related activities, analysed data about the programmes and qualifications learners achieve, examined learners' written and other work, examined documents and the materials provided by Kumon Bahrain (Kumon) and collected feedback from learners, parents, teachers, management and support staff.

This Report summarises the review team's findings and their recommendations about what the provider should do to improve.

Summary of review judgements		
Aspect		Judgement
Outcomes	Learners' achievement	1
Programmes and processes	Effectiveness of teaching/training and assessment	1
	Quality of Programmes/Programmes	1
	Learners' support and guidance	1
Management and governance	Effectiveness of leadership, management and governance	1
<b>Capacity to improve</b>		<b>1</b>
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>		<b>1</b>

### Provider's overall effectiveness throughout the last three reviews



<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>Satisfactory</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>Inadequate</b>	<b>4</b>
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## Overall effectiveness 'Outstanding'

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### Judgement justifications

- Kumon Bahrain (Kumon) is 'Outstanding' across the board. The Institute has a clear strategic direction that enables the achievement of its vision and mission. The strategic plan is informed by a rigorous self-evaluation that focuses on learners' achievement and the quality of the provision. Learners and staff performance is closely monitored and utilised to inform decision making and improvement. Effective quality assurance measures are in place.
- Learners at Kumon develop knowledge and skills at their individual pace, achieve their course level Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs), and make significant progress from their entry level. Most of them are able to meet Kumon International Standards (KIS), and a significant minority are able to go beyond that, achieving Advance Student Honour Roll (ASHR) awards particularly in mathematics. Kumon learners are self-directed and show high confidence when working independently.
- Teachers and class assistants effectively implement Kumon principles to support self-learning. Since most of the work is done at home, parents are well guided on these principles, which stipulate how to monitor learners' performance while completing their homework and how to mark the homework. Rigorous assessment methods are used to measure learners' achievement of the course ILOs. Worksheets, Achievement Tests (AT), and other assessment tools such as checkpoints and checklists are well-mapped to the course ILOs. Detailed rubrics and model answers are in place.
- Kumon offers a wide range of progressive levels in native English Reading and mathematics programmes founded on the principle of self-learning for a niche market of school-going learners to meet specific academic needs. Programmes are clearly planned and well-structured with comprehensive course outlines that stipulate the ILOs, which are suitable for the course level.
- Learners at Kumon are well-supported and guided to achieve better outcomes and reach their full potential. There is a significant number of learners where the support provided helped them to successfully achieve their set targets and make outstanding progress.

## Capacity to improve 'Outstanding'

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### Judgement justifications

- Kumon Bahrain maintained the 'Outstanding' judgement over the last three cycles, which is due to the systematic approach to strategic planning. Strategic plans are based on a rigorous and regular self-evaluation process that focuses on learners' achievement and the quality of the provision.
- Significant improvements to the provision have been carried out since the last review. These include recruitment of six full-time teachers - three mathematics and three English teachers, development of a child protection policy and relevant referral forms, development of Kumon Students Information System (KSIS) in 2017 and training staff on the system. This system provides detailed analysis on learners' enrolment, achievement and progress for the use of the management. Improvements carried out also include access control to ensure the safety of young learners, and establishment of the internal quality team who is in-charge of monitoring the implementation of the quality assurance policies and procedures and ensuring that it is done systematically across the three branches of the Institute. In addition, levels E, F, and G for mathematics programme are updated, new I1, and I2 levels are developed for English programme, and the institute has developed other supplementary materials. Furthermore, Kumon is planning to introduce Kumon Japan 'English as a Foreign Language' programme in the near future.
- Kumon has sufficient and appropriate human and physical resources to enable improvement to be carried out. The previous review recommendations were actioned and sufficiently addressed.

## **The provider's key strengths**

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- Learners' development of knowledge and skills, and the progress they make from their entry level which help them to achieve higher than their school grade levels.
- Implementation of the most recent Kumon principles and assessment methods that is based on individualised study plans which measure learners' achievement reliably.
- The range of progressive levels in native English reading and mathematics programmes which meet the needs of learners.
- Planning and structuring of programmes with comprehensive course outlines that stipulate the Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs) for different levels.
- Support and guidance provided to learners that enable them to achieve better outcomes and reach their full potential.
- The strategic planning and the effectiveness of the monitoring of learners and staff performance.

## **Recommendations**

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### **In order to further improve, Kumon should:**

- revise individual slots arrangements to ensure that learners do not wait to be addressed with their session needs
- develop a formal policy to identify and support learners with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

## Learners' achievement 'Outstanding'

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### Judgement justifications

- Learners develop effective knowledge, skills and competences at their own pace in mathematics and English programmes. A few learners in level B of the English programme, which is a transitional level, are slower in developing the required skills and achieving the level ILOs.
- Most learners are able to meet KIS and a significant minority of them are able to achieve ASHR, which are awards higher than the KIS, particularly in the mathematics programme. These awards include learners who are one, two, or even three years higher than their school grade level.
- Learners successfully achieve their course ILOs. Kumon Principle heavily rely on assessment as a tool for learning. Well-structured assessment process is in place, and assessment tools are clearly mapped to the programme ILOs. Kumon ensures that every learner masters the programme level skills and competences before they proceed to the next level.
- The vast majority of learners make significant progress compared to their prior attainment and proceed well to the next programme level. Learners' progress is continuously and effectively monitored through different methods, including the utilisation of a 'Study Projection Graph' which clearly shows the learner's progress and compares it to their school actual level.
- Learners are committed and have positive attitude towards their learning. This is evidenced by their regular attendance to classes, the set of worksheets they complete, and their ability to correct their own mistakes.
- Learners at advanced levels have the ability to reflect on their learning experience through the 'Student Survey' where they evaluate the complexity level of their worksheets and the amount of homework provided.
- Learners develop their critical thinking skills particularly in the English programme, through reading comprehension, compiling ideas, inferencing and implied questions.
- Kumon learners are self-directed and show high confidence when working independently. The vast majority of learners complete their classwork in a timely manner.

### Areas for improvement

- None of significance.

## Effectiveness of teaching/training and assessment 'Outstanding'

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### Judgement justifications

- Teachers and class assistants effectively implement Kumon principles during the sessions. Since Kumon programmes are guided self-learning, teachers train and guide learners on how to self-learn from their worksheets using the most recent Kumon practices. Class assistants monitor learners' performance during the class and mark their completed worksheets. Teachers and class assistants are continuously trained on the most recent Kumon principles and practices which is reflected effectively in the observed lessons. Relevant learning resources and materials are utilised to engage learners productively throughout lessons. Parents are guided on Kumon principles, specifically on how to monitor learners' performance while completing their homework and how to mark their work.
- Rigorous and systematic assessment methods are used to measure learners' achievement of the programme ILOs. These vary between summative assessment which is their weekly worksheets, and formative assessment which include checklists and checkpoints tests and end of level achievement tests. Assessments are effectively mapped to the programme level set ILOs. Detailed rubrics and model answers are in place for the use of teachers, class assistants, parents and learners.
- Individualised study plans are effectively developed based on learners' prior attainment as indicated by the outcomes of the diagnostic test. These plans are modified weekly according to the outcomes of the continuous assessment accommodating learners' individual needs and capabilities. Lesson and homework worksheets and all needed learning resources are planned and prepared accordingly, where the ILOs are kept in view all the time. Although teachers and class assistants manage time carefully during lessons, slots are arranged back to back in a way that does not allow for any leeway, which results in some learners having to wait before being attended to.
- Kumon study is designed to develop independent learners through guiding them on how to study and learn from their worksheets. This promote self-learning and build study skills that positively impact their school study and last further to university and beyond.
- Records of learners' performance are maintained and regularly updated; these include their attendance, achievement test, and checkpoint and checklist tests results, and worksheets outcomes (showing mastery through traffic lights). All these are kept in the individual record book along with useful observation notes on learners' performance, although in a few cases these are not detailed enough.

## Areas for improvement

- Arrangements of the lesson slots.

## Quality of course/programmes 'Outstanding'

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### Judgement justifications

- Kumon Bahrain is a franchise reporting to Kumon Europe and Africa (KEA), which is under Kumon International. It offers a wide range of progressively structured mathematics and native English reading programmes founded on the principle of self-learning for a niche market of school-going learners to meet their specific academic needs. The programmes on offer are designed, approved, updated and reviewed by Kumon International. The Institute systematically interacts with learners and parents and gathers their views on the effectiveness of the programmes on offer and these are analysed and the outcomes are purposefully utilized to improve the quality of the delivered programmes.
- The English programme consists of 18 levels from 7A to L, through which learners systematically develop their reading skills from phonics through repetition and recitation and extend to critical analysis of literary text. The mathematics programme is divided into 21 levels from 6A to O, with the initial levels introducing mental counting skills and progressing to advanced high school mathematics topics. The English and mathematics programmes are clearly planned and carefully structured with comprehensive outlines at each level that specify the ILOs. The levels progress seamlessly, allowing learners to systematically acquire knowledge, skills and competences. Additionally, formative assessments and different achievement tests such as checklists, checkpoints, reading test and end of level test are clearly mapped to the ILOs and scheduled according to individual learner's mastery of the ILOs in each work set. In addition, the learning hours at each level are also determined by individual learner's ability to assimilate and master the level ILOs and are adjusted individually as each learner progresses through the assigned work sets.
- Kumon programmes are designed, approved, updated and reviewed by Kumon International. Recently, specific changes were implemented to mathematics levels E, F and G to help learners improve proficiency. Kumon Bahrain strictly adheres to Kumon International requirements and standards in the implementation of the programmes.
- Based on a clear understanding of the learning needs and requirements of their non-native English language learners, Kumon Bahrain has developed customized learning materials at different levels in the two programmes to enrich the learning experience. These include phonic cards, number boards, supplementary

work sets for some transition levels, a range of assessments and video instructions and information sheets to enable learners and parents to follow Kumon principles for home-based learning. In addition, certain modifications have been made to certain reading passages at Level I in response to some culturally inappropriate content.

- Kumon programmes are thoroughly and purposefully resourced at all levels to supplement learning and enable learners to achieve the learning outcomes in a timely manner. In addition, class teachers and assistants are also very well-supported with resources such as answer booklets, guidance sheets and instruction manuals to enable them to guide and

support the learners through the Kumon principle of self-learning. In the English programme, learners have access to a Recommended Reading List (RRL) of books for each level and learners in the mathematics programme are supported with multiplication table cards to foster self-learning and the ability to use mathematical functions without using a calculator.

- Kumon Bahrain has a systematic and comprehensive entry and access mechanism to measure learners' language and numerical ability. The outcomes of a detailed diagnostic test are effectively utilised to identify learner's starting level and their expected progress toward their initial mastery target.

#### **Areas for improvement**

- None.

## Learners' support and guidance 'Outstanding'

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### Judgement justifications

- Kumon Bahrain implements a systematic mechanism to support and guide individual learners to achieve better and reach their full potential. Learners are provided with a well-focused and highly effective support and guidance throughout their learning journey which positively impact their achievement of the set targets and the development of knowledge and skills.
- Prior to the start of a course, parents and learners receive a thorough induction through the 'Welcome Wednesday' to familiarise them with aspects related to their learning; including Kumon approach, teachers and the learning environment. This session is conducted for new joiners or those who stopped for long period.
- During sessions, teachers and class assistant provide differentiated support to individual learners to raise their mastery level through systematic adjustment of the given worksheets and effective follow-up and constructive feedback. Further support is offered by providing learners with the opportunity to attend additional classes through a systematic 'visiting learner' arrangement. There is a significant number of learners where the support provided helped them to successfully achieve their set targets and make outstanding progress.
- Learners are motivated through awarding ceremonies where higher achievers (achieving ASHR awards) are celebrated. The Institute has highly flexible arrangements for the delivery of programmes which meet learners' and parents' needs.
- The design and delivery of Kumon programmes provide learners with highly effective opportunity to enhance their personal abilities and become independent learners, build self-confidence and develop their study skills and time management. This gives them needed life skills for their future studies. Furthermore, learners are made fully aware of their targets throughout their learning experience in Kumon.
- Learners and parents have access to comprehensive advice and guidance about programmes. 'Parents Evening' meetings conducted cover Kumon concepts and methodology and help them to inform their decision about programmes. Kumon maintains interactive social media applications, useful newsletter, and informative website.
- Teachers, management and administrative staff are extremely supportive, friendly and maintain close relationships with parents and learners. After each session teachers provide parents with a purposeful feedback on learner performance identifying areas which require further attention.
- Communication with parents is highly effective. Face to face meeting is conducted twice a year *via* parents' communication session, constructive written feedback on learners'

performance is provided through parents counselling form, and numerical end-of-semester report is provided three times a year. Furthermore, purposeful and regular communication is maintained through WhatsApp to follow-up on learners' attendance and other aspect relevant to their performance. Parents who missed the parents meeting, are provided with 'Projected Progress Update' (PPU) through WhatsApp to inform them on their child's progress over levels.

- In practice, Kumon Bahrain effectively deals with and supports learners with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) by adjusting the starting point and level worksheets based on learner's individual abilities. In addition, Kumon has fit for purpose access arrangements to deal with physical disabilities. Nonetheless, the Institute does not have a formal policy and procedure to identify and support SEND learners.

#### **Areas for improvement**

- availability of an explicit policy and procedure to identify and support learners with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

### **Effectiveness of leadership, management and governance 'Outstanding'**

#### **Judgement justifications**

- Kumon Bahrain has clear vision and mission statements which are shared with staff. The statements focus on developing learners' abilities to reach their full protentional and become independent learners.
- The institute has developed a strategic plan for the period of (2017-2022) which is informed by a rigorous self-evaluation that focuses on learners' achievement and quality of the provision. This plan is translated to a sufficiently detailed operational plan which sets out priorities and tasks for each strategic objective, timescale and

accountabilities. This plan is monitored by the management bi-annually.

- Kumon management monitors learners' achievement data closely through the Course Management File (CMF) which monitors learners' enrolment and movement, progress map which clearly shows progress of different groups of learners (below KIS, Advance Student Honour Roll (ASHR)1, ASHR2, ASHR3) and the monthly management reports. Learners' achievement data are analysed and the outcomes are effectively utilised to improve the provision. For example, identifying high level standard award learners which are learners in school grade one

doing multiplication, and learners in grade 5 doing algebra. These are milestones/indicators that are utilised to learn from and improve learners' achievement and the quality of the support provided by teacher.

- Staff performance is effectively monitored by the internal quality team using Kumon Quality Standards (KQS) inspection on file updating, and class observations where areas for improvement are identified. Action plans are developed accordingly in collaboration with the training and development department to follow-up and address these issues. Performance appraisals are in place and staff are provided with pertinent continuous training and development opportunities, although these are not always based on the performance appraisal outcomes.
- Kumon has an organisation structure that meets the needs of the three branches and is fit for purpose, considering the number of enrolment and the nature of the programmes on offer. A clear employment policy is in place which covers the recruitment procedure, minimum requirements in terms of qualifications and years of experience. Roles and responsibilities are clearly stated. Staff are provided with sufficient orientation to ensure that they are well-informed about the providers' offerings, services and about their roles and responsibilities.
- Kumon Bahrain has an effective quality assurance system and internal

mechanisms to monitor its implementation and ensure consistent applications of policies and procedures. This is in addition to external inspection performed by Kumon International, which is regularly carried out. All these practices ensure that programmes components particularly assessment are effectively and consistently delivered to meet individual learners' needs.

- The learning environment is fit for purpose, classrooms are suitably furnished, ventilated, lighted and air-conditioned. Health and safety policies, procedures and practices are in place and the premises are free of any obvious hazards.
- Links are well established with parents and relevant sections of the community. Kumon Bahrain is engaged in community services such as sponsoring some private schools' United Nations conferences, another institute events, and health drives with some private hospitals.
- Parents feedback is gathered through frequent verbal communication, and the 'Progress Questionnaire' where they indicate their views about learners' performance on homework and progress. Learners' feedback is gathered *via* 'Student Survey'. Both are aggregated, analysed and where possible utilised to improve the provision.

- Kumon Bahrain has a Board of Governors which plays an advisory role to the management particularly in financial and legal matters. However,

the involvement of the Board in the institute's strategic planning is minimal.

#### **Areas for improvement**

- the involvement of the Board of Governors in the strategic planning of the institute.

## Appendix (1): Provider information

Name of the provider (English)	Kumon Bahrain W.L.L					
Name of the provider (Arabic)	شركة كيومان البحرين ذ.م.م					
Licensing body	Ministry of Education (MoE)					
Year of establishment	2000					
Age range of learners	KG – School leavers					
Number of learners	Male	907	Female	882	Total	1789
Learning areas	Externally accredited	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>English</li> <li>Mathematics</li> </ul> External accreditation: Kumon UK and Ireland. Awarding body: Kumon Europe & Africa				
	Local achievement	Not applicable				
	Local attendance	Not applicable				
Institution's listing status	Not yet listed on the National Qualification Framework (NQF)					