



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

Directorate of Vocational Reviews

Review Report

Kunooz Allugha Centre
Saar
Kingdom of Bahrain

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VO125-C3-R081

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Introduction

The Directorate of Vocational Reviews (DVR), which is a part of the Education & Training Quality Authority (BQA), conducted this review over three days by a team of five reviewers. For this review, reviewers observed training sessions and other related activities, analysed data about the courses and qualifications learners achieve, examined learners' written and other work, examined documents and the materials provided by the provider and met with learners, parents, teachers, management and support staff.

It is worth mentioning that this is the first review for this Centre. This Report summarises reviewers' findings and their recommendations about what the provider should do to improve.

Grading scale

Outstanding	1	Good	2	Satisfactory	3	Inadequate	4
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Table of review judgements awarded

Main Question	Judgement
Learners' achievement	Outstanding (1)
Quality of teaching / training and assessment	Good (2)
Quality of programmes	Outstanding (1)
Quality of support and guidance	Outstanding (1)
Leadership, management and governance	Outstanding (1)
Capacity to improve	Outstanding (1)
Overall effectiveness	Outstanding (1)

Review judgements

Overall effectiveness

How effective is the provision in raising learners' achievement and meeting the range of learners' and stakeholders' needs?

Grade: Outstanding (1)

The overall effectiveness of Kunooz Allugha Centre (Kunooz) is outstanding, as are all aspects of its provision except for the training and assessment which is good. This is as a result of the exemplary and comprehensive support and guidance provided by teachers and management of Kunooz Centre for learners who come with little or no Arabic language skills and are ultimately supported to achieve remarkable grades and further improve their communication skills in Arabic. Courses are taught by teachers who have vast experience in both theoretical and practical teaching of Arabic to young learners and are effective in using a range of leading edge and carefully selected educational sensibility teaching methods, games and storytelling to promote effective learning. The vast majority of learners achieve high proficiency rates, shown by the standards of knowledge and understanding reached. This was evident during the review in the observed lessons and seen on learners' written work, and is reflected in the very positive testimonies of parents. During the well-structured and planned, and highly interactive, courses learners acquire and develop effective self-learning skills that help them with their school learning, and most make significant progress from their starting point. Courses are based on the in-depth, indeed vast, experience of the management team and supplemented by very useful input from local and international Arabic experts. Teachers use a range of continuous and rigorous assessment throughout the learning journey, with effective focus on learners' specific individual needs to meet course objectives.

The management team is guided by a highly systematic and inclusive approach to the self-evaluation process in order to foster continuous improvement of learners' achievement and the performance of the staff. An effective range of quality assurance procedures are implemented in the areas of teaching and assessment, development of programme structures and monitoring of learners' achievement. However, although the Centre uses suitable internal verification and moderation arrangements to ensure the quality of learning and teaching, these are not fully disseminated throughout its operations. The management maintains a wide range of data about learners' achievements, from their starting point and throughout their

learning journey. The data is analysed on a continuous basis and outcomes are shared with teachers and parents in order to instigate improvement actions.

Capacity to improve

How strong is the provider's capacity to improve the quality of learning?

Grade: Outstanding (1)

Kunooz has an outstanding capacity to expand and improve the quality of its provision. The managements' strategic direction is fully driven towards developing Arabic courses for young learners based on a range of educational sensibilities teaching methods and games to meet learners' and patents' needs. Since its commencement the management has successfully completed the implementation of most of its key strategic objectives, including improving the learning environment, developing the range of industry-standard games and educational sensibilities teaching methods and finalising most of its internal quality assurance policies and procedures. Currently the Centre has a plan to move to another bigger location within the same area. The Centre follows a firm and highly structured approach towards maintaining high learners' achievement rates, this being evident from the records since 2015 since when detailed notes have been kept for each individual learner. Enrolment has rapidly increased year on year and has totalled 412 since 2015. Kunooz has sufficient physical and human resources to implement its improvement plans. Staff are highly competent in the field of teaching and learning. Additionally, the management uses a highly systematic and critical self-evaluation process to ensure its continuous improvement. The Self-Evaluation Form (SEF) provided for this review is detailed, informative and critically identifies areas for improvement. The management networks very effectively with local and international stakeholders to broaden its offering and introduce new and innovative ideas.

Learners' achievement

How well do learners achieve?

Grade: Outstanding (1)

Learners' achievement at Kunooz is outstanding overall. The vast majority of learners achieve high proficiency rates, reflected in the standards of knowledge and understanding reached by learners as seen in the lessons observed and learners' written work. A significant number of them achieve a very high level of competency. Learners consistently develop highly effective Arabic language skills and competencies relevant to their course level, particularly in the

comprehension skills of writing sentences and paragraphs. Additionally, they acquire and develop effective self-learning skills that help them with their school work. However, a few learners still need to further improve their dictation skills. Various assessment methods used by the Centre show the high level of knowledge gained by the learners. Almost all parents interviewed acknowledge that they are very satisfied with the learning outcomes of their children and find the programmes extremely beneficial in helping the children improve their level of achievement at their schools. Learners achieve their course objectives in a timely manner and successfully proceed to the next level. The overall success and retention rates are high at 100% across almost all courses and different levels.

Learners make significant progress from their prior attainment and continuously maintain their progress over the programme levels. This is clearly evident from learners' class activities and competency ratios. Learners' records analyses indicate that their performance is noticeably improved from one year to another, particularly learners in Year 2 and Year 3 who make even more remarkable progress than the other classes. Management and teachers follow up learners' achievement very closely, and provide comprehensive support to different groups of learners to ensure that they progress and reach their full potential. There are a number of success stories of learners who have succeeded in improving their language skills over the years and levels.

Learners have positive attitudes towards their learning and most of them are keen to demonstrate their understanding and maintain high levels of enthusiasm. In some cases, learners reflect on their answers and the answers of their colleagues. They are able to work both independently and collaboratively within class activities and display high levels of confidence. However, a few learners still need further support from teachers inside classrooms.

Kunooz has a clear attendance and punctuality policy and the attendance records are systematically maintained. Almost all learners attend their lessons regularly and on time, with high attendance rates over the last three years. Only very rare incidences of lateness occur. The Centre administration staff make follow-up calls to absent or late-comers.

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching/training and assessment in promoting learning?

Grade: Good (2)

The effectiveness of teaching, training and assessment at Kunooz is good overall. Teachers are experienced in both theoretical and practical terms in teaching Arabic to young learners. This

is evident from the highly effective and detailed lessons plans and wide range of teaching strategies which include examples and activities to maintain interactive lessons and productive learning. Teachers deliver a range of activity-based lessons through carefully selected and high quality of educational sensibilities teaching methods, games and storytelling to promote effective learning and participation by the vast majority of learners. However, in the less successful lessons teaching methods are not sufficiently effective to engage and motivate learners, with a few teachers moving swiftly between topics without ensuring the full understanding of learners. Most lessons are managed well, with effective recapitulation to link the topics of previous lessons and the vast majority of lessons end with an appropriate summary.

In the vast majority of the lessons observed, teachers stimulate learners' higher order thinking through provoking critical discussion and seeking feedback from individual learners, as well as using challenging activities to promote self-learning while paying close attention to learners' specific needs. Teachers use rigorous assessment methods to evaluate learners' understanding and standards of achievement throughout the course. During lessons, learners are exposed to activities covering all language skills, including verbal questioning techniques, games and educational sensibilities teaching methods, written activities and a range of activities in pairs, groups or as individuals. Learners are given a few class activities to complete at home, which are relevant to the topic being studied, though the marking rubric to evaluate learners at the end of a course is not sufficiently detailed. Teachers maintain very useful learners' performance records on a continuous basis and provide learners with effective instant verbal feedback during the lessons, on their completed activities to inform them on how to improve further.

How well do programmes meet the needs and interests of learners and stakeholders?

Grade: Outstanding (1)

The effectiveness of programmes in meeting the needs and interests of learners and stakeholders is outstanding overall. The Centre offers three levels of Arabic language courses for native and non-native speakers from the ages of 5-12 years old. The courses offered are for grades one to six, kindergarten/reception level, and non-native speakers. Each course level ascends through three sub-levels of difficulty. Before its inception in 2014, Kunooz conducted a detailed visibility study to determine and precisely understand the emerging needs for Arabic language improvement for a niche of learners who face difficulties in their Arabic learning and particularly for those in private schools. The Centre uses the in-depth knowledge of the management team with the support of highly qualified local and international experts in the field of Arabic teaching for young learners. It is clearly evident from the feedback

gathered from learners and their parents that the courses offered for the different levels have tremendously improved learners' Arabic language knowledge and skills. Where required, Kunooz also offers private one-to-one customised courses based on learners' special requirements and needs.

The Centre follows highly structured practices and approaches to design, approve, update and regularly review the courses on offer. Kunooz has recently introduced the 'Academic Advisory Committee', beside a set of approved policies and procedures to deliver the courses in a consistent manner, and details the roles and responsibilities of members involved. Additionally, the Centre involves external subject matter experts at key stages of courses' development. Courses are designed based on an effective and reliable system which includes meticulous planning, delivering, assessing and verifying learners' achievement as well as managing and staffing the courses.

Courses are well planned and structured, with detailed course objectives, competencies, teaching and assessment methods that assess learners' achievements. A wide-range of supporting materials and highly relevant learner-centered educational games and educational sensibilities teaching strategies are used to positively impact the acquisition of knowledge, skills and support practical and theoretical learning in a gradual manner, through clear progression and acquisition of knowledge that meets the needs of learners and stakeholders.

Kunooz provides sufficient resources to deliver courses effectively and which suit learners and stakeholders' requirements and needs. The Centre's environment is inspiring and well equipped with contemporary and carefully selected high-quality educational resources, relevant to the learners' educational backgrounds. Courses are continually supported with a wide range of well-planned extra-curricular activities, to reinforce and promote life-long learning.

Kunooz has efficient procedures for the access and entry level measures to all courses on offer. Based on the learners' assessment results, the Centre places learners on a suitable course level that accurately matches their abilities, regardless of the learner's other irrelevant characteristics such as gender, religion and nationality.

How well are learners supported and guided?

Grade: Outstanding (1)

Support and guidance provided to learners to help them achieve better outcomes is outstanding overall. In order to ensure learners, have every opportunity to reach their full potential and achieve better learning outcomes Kunooz implements a comprehensive and systematic mechanism to support and guide learners throughout their learning journey. Prior

to commencement of a course, parents are provided with a highly effective induction about the Kunooz overall teaching and learning approach and assessment methods. Teachers and staff are friendly, supportive and caring, and maintain high rapport with the learners and parents. Teachers and administration staff are continually supporting learners to help them overcome their learning difficulties and guide them to achieve their learning goals. Kunooz celebrates learners' performance through a well devised reward system, such as by recognising good performers with medals and trophies. A noticeable number of success stories were cited to the review team, such as learners who come with little or no Arabic skills and ultimately achieved remarkable grades and further improve their communication skills in Arabic.

On course entry, highly useful information is shared with learners and parents about courses on offer, objectives, progression pathways, learning outcomes, and teaching and assessment methods. The Centre additionally has a user-friendly website, informative brochures and uses social media. Very flexible arrangements are in place for scheduling of classes and compensation lessons, these being discussed with parents to meet their specific needs. Parents are kept informed about the results of the placement test and free trial classes.

The Centre monitors every individual learner's progress and achievements closely. Detailed notes on initial assessment, learning goals and progress is maintained and tracked by the management team. The ongoing assessment is also used to track learners' daily progress and the outcomes are shared with parents on a regular basis. Very prompt and effective communication is maintained by the Centre management to keep parents updated about learners' performance, attendance or any behavioral or personal issues. The Centre's Open Day is held at the end of the academic year to provide parents with detailed report about each learner. However, the written comments sections are generic and do not sufficiently indicate the areas for further improvement.

The Kunooz premises and facilities provide an inspiring learning environment with a range of high quality and carefully selected educational games and activities which are used to deliver its courses. There is a comfortable waiting area for learners and parents. To ensure that all learners are comfortable and able to focus on their learning, Kunooz maintains a sufficient number of classes, specially designed furniture. Learners' work, teaching aids and games are displayed. Additionally, learners have access to a wide range of picture stories available for reading in the class or to borrow. Practices are in place to identify, accommodate and support learners with special educational needs to help them achieve their learning goals, though Kunooz does not have a formal policy in this regard.

Leadership, management and governance

How effective are leadership, management and governance in raising achievement and improving the quality of the provision?

Grade: Outstanding (1)

The Kunooz management is guided by well-structured strategic and operational plans that are fully aligned to the Centre's vision, mission statements and objectives, all focused towards helping learners to improve their Arabic at early age and on the continuous improvement of the quality of its well-developed courses to fulfill parents' needs. Plans are based on in-depth understating of learners' and parents' specific requirements. These clearly stipulated objectives are monitored closely by the executive management team and the Board of Directors. Kunooz has a detailed governance policy and procedures in place, the Board overseas the performance of the Centre and provides on a regular basis constructive advice for the sustainability and growth of the Centre.

The organisational structure is fit-for-purpose and sufficiently meets the nature of its provision, operation and aims. Staff have extensive experience and backgrounds in the field of education for young learners, and are guided by clear targets, responsibilities and accountability. The self-evaluation process is systematic and critical. Management carries out highly constructive self-analysis sessions on an annual basis to continually evaluate operations and improve the quality of the provision, and has lately used an external body to review and assess its organisation. The Self-Evaluation Form (SEF) submitted for the review provides comprehensive information about Kunooz and identifies critical areas for further improvement.

Kunooz management maintains an inspiring learning environment, with essential health and safety procedures and practices which are well implemented. There are sufficient staff trained on first aid for dealing with young learners. In order to maintain consistency and efficiency of its daily learning practices, Kunooz has an effective range of quality assurance procedures in the areas of teaching and assessment, development of programme structure and monitoring of learners' achievements. However, although the Centre has suitable internal verification and moderation arrangements to ensure the quality of learning and teaching, these are not fully disseminated throughout its operations. Effective procedures are in place for assessing, analysing and utilising learners' prior attainment, and learners are placed according to their abilities and talents, this being done with close input from parents. The management maintains wide-ranging data about learners' achievements from their starting points and throughout their learning journey. This data is analysed on a continuous basis and the outcomes are shared with teachers and parents in order to develop improvements.

Kunooz has a firm procedure to select and employ staff and teachers. Once employed, teachers are inducted very effectively through a well devised scheme to settle them into Kunooz's teaching approach, after which they are required to shadow senior teachers for at least three months before becoming independent teachers. They are regularly observed during lessons by senior teachers and peers and provided with critical comments on how to improve further. The outcomes of these visits are used for improvement of performance. A number of professional development opportunities are provided.

The Centre maintains highly productive links with local and regional stakeholders, and the management team uses these to broaden their teaching and programme approach. Additionally, the views of parents are sought through a number of open days and through formal feedback and discussion; the Centre benefits from these views for triggering improvement initiatives.

The provider's key strengths

- The effective skills and competencies developed by the vast majority of learners in the Arabic language, who progress well over the course levels.
- The continuous and rigorous assessment by teachers throughout the learning journey, with an effective focus on learners' specific individual needs.
- The programmes are well structured, with a wide range of carefully selected educational sensibilities teaching strategies to enrich learning.
- The comprehensive support and guidance provided to all learners in an inspiring and safe learning environment. Parents are kept informed of the progress of their children.
- The highly systematic and inclusive approach to continuous self-evaluation which leads to continuous improvement of learners' achievements and the performance of the staff.

Recommendations

In order to maintain its outstanding performance, Kunooz Al Allugha Centre should further enhance the quality of teaching and learning by:

- improving the effectiveness of teaching and learning strategies to ensure more interactive learning
- ensuring the effective implementation of moderation and verification processes, including a detailed rubric for learners' assessment.

Appendix

Description of the provision

Kunooz Allugha Centre was established in 2015 to teach the Arabic language to native and non-native speakers, targeting young learners aged 5 to 12. It is licensed by the Ministry of Education. The courses offered are for Grades 1 to 6, kindergarten/reception level, and non-native speakers. Each course level ascends *via* three sub-levels of difficulty, with course running for a 40 hours over a semester with two days a week, one hour each session. Almost all learners come from the private schools. The Centre offers courses up to Grade 6, each grade having three levels. The Centre uses a range of educational sensibilities teaching resources to conduct its courses. Since its inception, Kunooz has enrolled a total of 412 learners, comprised of 35 in 2015, 115 in 2016 and 262 in 2017.

Kunooz operates from a single Centre located in Saar. It is managed by a Director who is also the co-founder and employs on a full time basis one teacher and three administration staff. There is access to a pool of qualified Arabic teachers for children, these being employed on a part-time basis. The Centre management reports to a Board of Directors.