



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

Directorate of Private Schools & Kindergartens Reviews Review Report

Ahlia School
Al Qurraya – Northern Governorate
Kingdom of Bahrain

Date of Review: 31st October – 2nd November 2022
SP060-C3-R021

Introduction

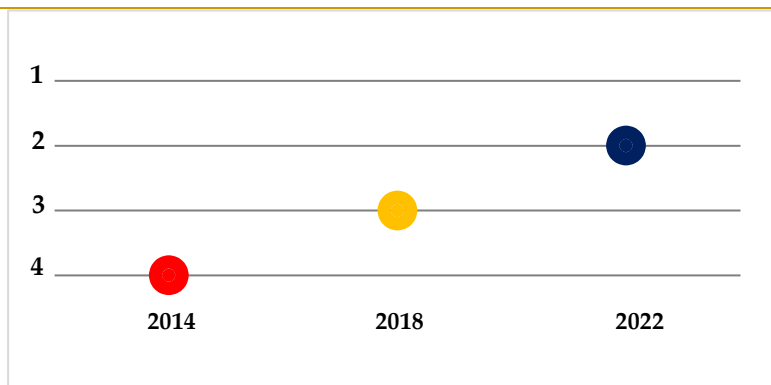
The Directorate of Private Schools & Kindergartens Reviews (DPS), which is a part of the Education & Training Quality Authority (BQA), conducted this review over three days by a team of seven reviewers. During the review, reviewers observed lessons and other activities, scrutinised students' written works 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	2	2	3	2
	Personal development and social responsibility	2	2	3	2
Quality of processes	Teaching, learning and assessment	2	2	3	2
	Empowerment and meeting special needs	2	2	3	2
Quality assurance of outcomes and processes	Leadership, management and governance	2	2	3	2
Capacity to improve		2			
The school's overall effectiveness		2			

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



School Report

□ School's overall effectiveness 'Good'

Judgement justifications

- Students achieve high proficiency rates, which align with their standards in good lessons, particularly in Elementary and Middle Schools. However, they are inconsistent with standards in High School that need further development.
- Students are self-disciplined, confident and show great enthusiasm when participating in most lessons and school life activities. They communicate well and take pride in embracing Bahrain's culture. However, students need to further develop their self-confidence and assumption of leadership roles in lessons.
- Most lessons are well planned, and various teaching and learning strategies and resources are used to engage students, particularly in English and science. However, in some lessons, particularly in High school, the impact of professional development programmes on teachers' performance is inconsistent in terms of time management and use of assessment results to better support students.
- Students are well supported personally, and academically through the morning sessions, and the dedicated special educational programme 'SPED'.
- Self-evaluation is both rigorous and comprehensive, involving different stakeholders. Results are effectively embedded in strategic and operational planning through clear strategic objectives.

Main positive features:

- Comprehensive and accurate self-evaluation involving different school stakeholders, that is embedded in the detailed strategic and operational planning.
- Good progress made by students in most lessons in Elementary and Middle Schools.
- Students' self-discipline, commitment to citizenship values and enthusiastic participation in school life.

Recommendations:

- Further develop students' standards, especially in High School.
- Further enhance students' self-confidence and their assumption of leadership roles in lessons.

- Ensure consistent impact of professional development programmes on teachers' performance in terms of time management and use of assessment results to better support students, particularly in High School.

□ Capacity to improve 'Good'

Judgement justifications

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school's performance has improved since the last review in 2018, in most aspects and the overall effectiveness including the capacity to improve. • Rigorous and comprehensive self-evaluation is implemented, curriculum plans are reviewed, and clear strategic objectives are set with accurate follow-up mechanisms. However, the school's judgements in the Self-Evaluation Form (SEF) still differ from the judgements reached by the team by one point. • Several professional training workshops are provided, which positively impacts | <p>most teachers' performance in Elementary and Middle Schools, but to a lesser extent in High School, particularly in time management and use of assessment results to support students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recent improvements in the school include providing more options for High School students by introducing the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IBDP). However, the school still faces a challenge in further improving students' standards in High School in general, particularly in Arabic. |
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Quality of outcomes

□ Academic achievement 'Good'

Judgement justifications

- Students' pass rates are consistently high in all subjects across the school over the past three academic years. In 2021-2022 internal examinations, students pass rates reached 100% in all subjects across all grades.
- Proficiency rates are high in all subjects across, ranging between 96% in Grade 5 English to 100% in most core subjects in the Elementary School. In the Middle School, rates range between 81% in Grade 8 mathematics and 100% in Grade 8 Arabic, while in High School, it ranges between 84% in Grade 9 science and 100% in Grades 11 and 12 Arabic and mathematics, as well as Grade 12 Accounting and Economics. These results are consistent with students' standards in most lessons of Elementary and Middle Schools. However, they differ from some students' actual standards in High School, particularly in developing practical skills in science and linguistic skills in Arabic.
- In most lessons and written work, students' standards and progress in core subjects is good, particularly in Elementary and Middle Schools. Outstanding students make evident progress across most grades, as well as students with learning difficulties within the 'SPED' programme. Meanwhile, low achieving students progress to a lesser extent, which is due to the inconsistent support provided by some teachers and the effectiveness of time management.
- Students' linguistic skills are well-developed across the school, except in Arabic. In English, students speak and read fluently, demonstrate good skills in analysing literary texts and using vocabulary and grammatical rules particularly in Elementary and Middle Schools. However, in Arabic, students' skills in writing and literary analysis are less developed, particularly in High School.
- In mathematics, most students show proper comprehension of mathematical concepts and operations, such as addition with regrouping and identifying factor pairs in Elementary School, solving linear equations in Middle School and showing better attainment in solving word problems in High School.
- In science, students' standards are secure in identifying digestive track organs and their functions in the Elementary School, and effectively develop experimental skills in separating chemical mixtures in Middle School. Meanwhile, development of practical skills is inconsistent in High School, such as connecting an electric circuit.
- Students' learning skills are well-developed as most are independent in learning, use their own devices and show critical thinking such as literary analysis in English.

Areas for improvement

- Standards of students in Arabic and in High School.
- Progress made by low achieving students in the less effective lessons.

□ Personal development & social responsibility 'Good'

Judgement justifications

- Most students exhibit positive attitudes towards learning. They are self-disciplined and aware of their rights and responsibilities, attend school regularly and work together in harmony, which promote their sense of feeling safe and secure in school.
- Students show pride in singing the National Anthem, and embrace citizenship and Islamic values, through participating in 'National Day walkathon', and charity activities like hosting a day in school for the elderly people from 'Dar Al-Manar Association for Parental Care', and participating in external events to raise awareness of food loss and waste.
- Most students show great confidence and enthusiasm when participating in the diverse lesson activities, and develop leadership skills, particularly through being group leaders and little teachers. However, such development is inconsistent in High School, particularly in the less effective lessons.
- Students are positively engaged in extracurricular activities such as 'STEAM' and weekly clubs, like 'Minecraft'. In addition, they assume leadership roles like participating in school's 'Scouts', Ahlia Model United Nations (MUN) and Business fairs.
- Most students communicate together effectively in lessons, exchanging opinions during group work and supporting each other, however its inconsistent in High School depending on opportunities provided. Outside lessons, they participate in activities like 'Reading Buddies', 'Maths Wizards' to teach and interact with preschool students, as well as celebrating annual days like 'World Peace Day'.
- Students show good interest in their health and personal hygiene, as they participate in 'Healthy Week', and awareness programmes such as 'Healthy Food'. Moreover, they pay great attention towards keeping their environment clean.
- Most students have a competitive spirit as they participate in various programmes internally and externally, such as the 'Arabic Reading Challenge', and 'Early Bird' for early attendance. They participate in different competitions like 'Math Olympiad'. However, their competitive and innovation skills are less evident in lessons.

Areas for improvement

- Students' self-confidence and assumption of leadership roles particularly in High School.
- The development of students' creativity and innovation skills in lessons.

Quality of processes

□ Teaching, learning & assessment 'Good'

Judgement justifications

- In most lessons, teachers implement effective teaching and learning strategies to engage students in learning tasks, particularly in Elementary and Middle Schools, such as play-based learning, collaborative work, scientific practical and 'Total Physical Response'. However, in the less effective lessons, particularly in High School and in Arabic, these strategies are less effective in promoting students' progress.
- Learning resources such as worksheets, tangible materials and mind maps are effectively utilised in most lessons. School library is facilitated to enhance students' learning skills and develop their knowledge, particularly in English and Arabic.
- Most lessons are well planned, in accordance with curriculum expectations, which is accompanied with clear instructions and specific plenary activities. Good behaviour management is implemented through applying effective motivational tools, particularly in Elementary School, such as 'ClassDojo', the 'Treasure Box' and 'Class Point'. However, in the less effective lessons, particularly in High school, productivity of time management is inconsistent. Those lessons are either slow or fast paced that affects the achievement of objectives and the time set for written assessment, all of which hinders students' progress and the effectiveness of attention and support provided.
- Various assessment methods are used effectively in most lessons, such as verbal, written and digital ones, using applications like 'Kahoot' and 'Quizizz', while providing most students with assistance, support and feedback during the monitoring of their work. However, in few Arabic lessons, assessment used is set below curriculum expectations, and in the less effective lessons, the support provided for students is not sufficient, which affects their progress.
- Technology is well utilised in most lessons by teachers projecting lesson slides and activities as well as playing learning videos, on topics like 'Adverbs and Adjectives' in English Middle School. Additionally, students use their own devices to work on various digital tools, such as 'Nearpod' and 'Padlet'.
- In most lessons, particularly in Elementary and Middle Schools, teachers cater for students' different educational needs by challenging them and fostering their higher order thinking skills, like discussing plants' survival in science, and analysing literary text in English. They also differentiate learning by task and outcomes to meet students' different abilities, however, in High School, catering for students' different educational needs is less effective.

Areas for improvement

- Further management and productivity of learning time, particularly in High School lessons.
- Use of assessment results to further challenge and support students.

□ Empowerment & meeting needs 'Good'

Judgement justifications

- Diagnostic tests are conducted in core subjects and students are classified into three categories namely 'Enrichment', 'Reinforcement', 'Remedial' and 'Gifted and talented'. Students of all categories are supported through differentiated activities during the morning support sessions. Non-native speakers of Arabic receive sufficient support in pull-out sessions. Gifted and talented students are identified through the 'Creative Thinking Test' and supported through enrichment and special club activities, such as 'Drama' and 'Music'. However, the identification of students' academic needs, and the effectiveness of support provided are inconsistent in High School, as they have lesser impact on enhancing some students' standards, particularly in Arabic.
- Students' personal needs are well addressed. Behaviour management programmes such as 'Superhero', 'Behaviour for Learning' and school's workshops are regularly conducted. Financial support is provided to students in terms of fee reduction during Covid-19 pandemic, and even after.
- The school efficiently reinforces students' experience and talents by providing a good range of extracurricular activities which meet most of their needs and interests. This includes diverse club activities such as 'Recycling' for Elementary School, 'Origami' for Middle School, and 'Abacus' for High School. Additionally, students are given opportunities to participate in 'Injaz', and competitions such as 'Arabic Reading Challenge', and 'Prepared Speech contest'. Induction for all stages is organised, and High School students are familiarised with the requirements of the IB programme and supported on career plans through visits to local universities.
- The provision of a safe and healthy environment is ensured through regular maintenance of school's facilities, evacuation drills and follow-up on students with chronic diseases. Students' arrival and dismissal procedures are well organised; health related programmes such as 'Hygiene week', and lectures on 'Cancer Awareness' are regularly conducted.
- Students with special education needs 'SPED' are effectively supported through providing pull-out lessons and programmes such as 'Take the Bear Home'.

Areas for improvement

- More effective implementation of academic support programmes, particularly in High School.

Quality assurance of outcomes and processes

□ Leadership, management and governance ‘Good’

Judgement justifications

- The school implements a rigorous and comprehensive self-evaluation which involves all stakeholders. This includes recommendations from the last BQA review, surveys of students, parents and staff members, and review reports of curriculum plans.
- The school uses its evaluation results effectively in strategic and operational planning which is characterised by its solid structure, clear strategic objectives and accurate follow-up mechanisms. Departmental plans are linked effectively to the general strategic plan, which is contributing to the improvement of schoolwork aspects to raise expectation levels. However, the success criteria in some strategic objectives are not specific enough to be measured thoroughly.
- The school’s judgements in the SEF differ by one point with the judgements reached by the review team in all aspects.
- The school makes good use of the available resources and facilities such as the laboratories and playgrounds which are used effectively in carrying out extracurricular activities and enriching students’ experiences.
- The senior leadership, head of departments and quality specialists’ team organise and implement regular lesson observation visits, learning walks and give either individual or group feedback to teachers on their performance. Frequent training workshops on topics including ‘Differentiation’ and ‘Features of Good Lessons’ are conducted. The impact of these sessions on most teachers’ performance is good and consistent in Elementary and Middle Schools. However, the impact is inconsistent on teachers’ productive use of learning time and assessment results to support students in the less effective lessons, particularly in High School.
- The school enjoys a positive personal and professional atmosphere among teaching and administrative staff within a family-like ethos. The school encourages staff through initiatives such as ‘Famous Employee of the Week’, issuing appreciation certificates as well as moral and material awards. The ‘Happiness Committee’ is effective in spreading happiness and positivity in the school.
- Good links with the local community are developed through school’s participation in the ‘Model United Nations’ conferences in Ahlia University. Additionally, during career day, professionals such as doctors and engineers lend their expertise to the school to support students in raising their awareness about making career choices.
- The school’s Board of Directors provide strategic direction to the school’s leadership. Regular meetings are conducted to follow-up on plans and the overall performance, where the school director is held accountable.

Areas for improvement

- Setting more specific and measurable success criteria of some strategic objectives.
- The impact of professional development programmes on teachers' performance in some lessons, particularly in High School in terms of the productive use of learning time and assessment results to support students.

Appendix 1: Characteristics of the school

Name of the school (Arabic)	المدرسة الأهلية												
Name of the school (English)	Ahlia School												
Year of establishment	2010												
Address	Building 166, Road 45, Block 545 Al Qurraya												
City/ Town / Governorate	Al Qurraya / Northern												
School's telephone	-	77476666					Fax		77476667				
School's e-mail	ahliaschool@ahlia.edu.bh												
School's website	www.ahliaschool.edu.bh												
Age range of students	6 – 18 years												
Grades (e.g. 1 to 12)	Primary				Middle				High				
	1-5				6-8				9-12				
Number of Students	Boys	529			Girls	446			Total	975			
Students' social/ economical background	Most students come from average to good income families												
Classes per grade in Primary and Intermediate Stages	Grade	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
	Classes	5	5	5	4	3	4	3	2	2	1	2	1
Number of administrative staff	30												
Number of teaching staff	98												
Curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> American Curriculum Common Core State Standards International Baccalaureate (IB). MoE curriculum for Arabic, Islamic studies, social studies, and citizenship. 												
Main language(s) of instruction	English & Arabic												
External assessment and examinations	Trends in International Mathematics & Science Studies (TIMSS)												
Accreditation (if applicable)	-												
Major recent changes in the school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introducing International Baccalaureate (IB) programme in Grade 11 in the current academic year. Recruiting 18 teachers in the academic year 2021-2022. 												