



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

Directorate of Private Schools & Kindergartens Reviews Review Report

**Al Mahd School - Saar Branch
Saar – Northern Governorate
Kingdom of Bahrain**

**Date of Review: 13–15 March 2023
SP028-C3-R030**

Introduction

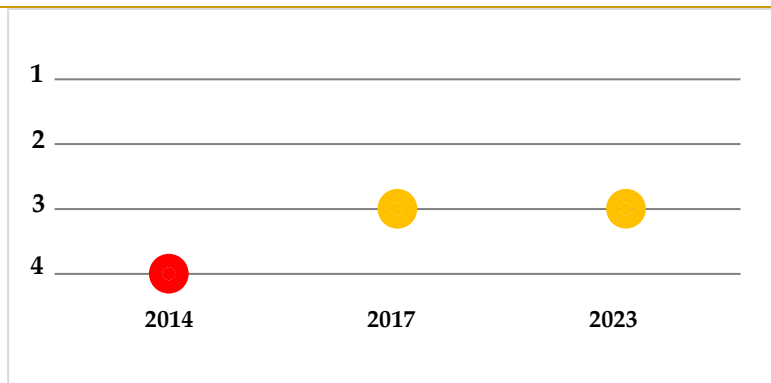
The Directorate of Private Schools & Kindergartens Reviews (DPS), which is a part of the Education & Training Quality Authority (BQA), conducted this review over three days by a team of seven reviewers. During the review, reviewers observed lessons and other activities, scrutinised students' written 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	3	3	4	3
	Personal development and social responsibility	3	3	3	3
Quality of processes	Teaching, learning and assessment	3	3	3	3
	Empowerment and meeting special needs	3	3	4	3
Quality assurance of outcomes and processes	Leadership, management and governance	3	3	4	3
Capacity to improve		3			
The school's overall effectiveness		3			

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



School Report

□ School's overall effectiveness 'Satisfactory'

Judgement justifications

- Students achieve high pass and proficiency rates in 2021-2022 internal examinations, however, their attainment in the International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) is low. Students' standards are generally secure in core subjects except for Arabic, where majority of students' basic skills are weak.
- Students are self-disciplined and show awareness of their rights and responsibilities. However, they need to further develop their self-confidence and assumption of leadership roles in lessons.
- Professional development programmes positively impact the performance of the majority of teachers, as teaching and learning processes are appropriate in the majority of core subjects, however, in Arabic and the less effective lessons, teachers vary in their implementation of engaging strategies, productive use of learning time, as well as use of assessment results to support and challenge students of different abilities, particularly the low achievers.
- Adequate academic support programmes are provided, but they have insufficient impact on improving students' standards in Arabic and High School.
- There is a positive work atmosphere among school leadership and staff, that supports the shared self-evaluation process, however, this is yet to be more comprehensive to inform planning and set more accurate performance indicators.

Main positive features

- Students' proper behaviour, self-discipline and awareness of their rights and responsibilities.
- The positive relationship and collaboration between school's leadership and staff.

Recommendations

- Further monitor the implementation of the curriculum in High School, and raise students' academic achievement, particularly in Arabic across the school.
- Develop the effectiveness of leadership, management and governance by:
 - implementing a more comprehensive self-evaluation that is embedded in planning, with more accurate performance indicators

- ensuring consistent impact of professional development programmes on teachers' performance in lessons, particularly in Arabic.
- Improve teaching, learning and assessment with more focus on:
 - implementing effective teaching and learning strategies that engage students and further develop their self-confidence
 - using learning time productively
 - utilising assessment results to support and challenge students of different abilities, particularly the low achievers.
- Further improve the provision and effectiveness of academic support programmes provided across all stages, particularly in Arabic and in High School core subjects.

□ Capacity to improve 'Satisfactory'

Judgement justifications

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the overall effectiveness and all review aspects, the school performance remains 'Satisfactory' similar to the last review. • There is a one-point difference higher in the judgements given by the school in the Self-Evaluation Form (SEF), and that reached by the review team in all aspects. • School's strategic and operational plans focus on developing students' standards and preparing them for Cambridge external benchmarks. However, some key performance indicators are generic, and planning is | <p>not clearly addressing the inconsistency in full curriculum implementation in High School, as the Advanced Subsidiary (AS) is currently offered, without the Advanced (A) levels.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school faces challenges represented in students' basic skills in Arabic across the school, and teachers' high turnover, particularly in Arabic, which hinders the impact of professional development programmes on their performance in lessons. |
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Quality of outcomes

□ Academic achievement 'Satisfactory'

Judgement justifications

- In the 2021-2022 internal examinations, students achieved high pass rates ranging between 95% in Grade 8 science to 100% in the majority of core subjects across all grades.
 - Students achieve high proficiency rates in Primary School as they range between 68% in Grade 6 mathematics to 100% in Grade 3 mathematics and science. In Middle School, rates range from 56% in Grade 9 English to 99% in Grade 7 Arabic, except for being adequate at 41% in Grade 9 physics. In High School, they range from 47% in Grade 10 mathematics and physics, to 100% in Grade 12 mathematics, biology, physics and chemistry.
 - Students steadily achieved high pass rates throughout the past three academic years from 2019-2020 to 2021-2022.
 - In 2022 IGCSE examinations, the performance of students attaining B or above is low ranging between 5% in mathematics and 24% in Information and communication technology (ICT), except for being positive at 43% in English as a Second Language. Moreover, their attainment is below world average in most subjects, which affects students' standards in High School.
 - Generally, the standards demonstrated by students in English, science and mathematics are secure in the majority of lessons. However, the standards of students in Arabic are below age related expectations across the school.
- Students adequately acquire knowledge, concepts, and skills as follows:
 - In English, students show secure speaking and reading skills. In High School, students are appropriately able to generate ideas and analyse literary texts. However, writing skills are less developed across the school.
 - In Arabic, students show weak basic skills across the school, such as comprehending new vocabulary in Primary School or analysing poems in High School.
 - In mathematics, the majority of students have adequate basic arithmetic and geometric skills, such as finding perimeter of irregular shapes in Primary School, drawing and interpreting stem-and-leaf diagram in Middle School and evaluating definite integrals in High School.
 - In science, students show appropriate knowledge of scientific concepts as they can determine solutes and solvents in Primary School and calculate the density of materials with compression with water in High School. However, students in Middle School face difficulties in distinguishing between endothermic and exothermic reactions.

- High achievers make evident progress in the majority of lessons and in their written work. However, low achievers make less progress due to insufficient support provided across the school.
- Students appropriately acquire learning skills, such as reading charts in mathematics, analysing a story in English and conducting scientific experimentations.

Areas for improvement

- Students' standards in Arabic across the school.
- Students' attainment in the external examinations.
- The progress made by the low achieving students in lessons and written work.

□ Personal development & social responsibility 'Satisfactory'

Judgement justifications

- Students across the school behave appropriately and respectfully with their teachers and colleagues. Majority of them take responsibility for their own learning, are aware of their rights, school's policies and procedures and attend school regularly.
- Students show appropriate knowledge of Bahrain's heritage and culture through 'Danat al Khaleej' programme, celebrating 'National Day', and participating in competitions, such as 'Our National Monument'. They show respect for the National Anthem and Holy Quran recitation in morning assembly, and awareness of global issues, such as fundraising campaigns to support earthquake victims.
- Majority of students are self-confident and participate properly in class activities. In the better lessons, they assume leadership roles, such as group leaders. However, such opportunities are provided to a lesser extent in the other lessons. Students adequately participate in school extracurricular activities, such as 'Art Crafts' and the 'Science Exhibition', as well as playing an active role in the 'Students' Council'.
- Students enjoy working in groups during lessons, showing adequate collaborative skills. Their communication skills are clearly shown while discussing and supporting each other in lessons and activities, such as 'Al Mahd Sport Team'.
- Students show suitable awareness of health and environmental issues as they are conscious of their personal appearance and keep classrooms adequately clean. They participate in relevant activities through the 'Sahati w Salamati' programme such as, 'My Healthy Meal' to raise awareness about healthy food. Students participate in the school's 'Recycling' project, and in Primary School, they create

presentations on 'World Environment Day'.

- Majority of students participate in annual inter-houses competitions, like

'Debate' and 'Athletics'. However, students' creativity and innovation are less developed across the school.

Areas for improvement

- Students' self-confidence and assumption of leadership roles in the lessons.
- Students' creativity and innovation.

Quality of processes

□ Teaching, learning & assessment 'Satisfactory'

Judgement justifications

- In the majority of lessons, adequate teaching and learning strategies are implemented, including questions for learning, discussions and group activities. Resources are adequately used, such as worksheets, individual whiteboards and 'Geoboard' in mathematics, that engage the majority of students in learning. In the few better lessons, further strategies such as 'Think, Pair, Share' and practical experimentation are implemented which engage most students. In some lessons, links to real life experiences are made, like calculating classroom area in Primary School mathematics. However, in the less effective lessons, particularly in Arabic, strategies implemented are not effective in engaging students' and facilitating their acquisition of knowledge.
- Across the school, teachers adequately manage students' behaviour through verbal reinforcement and 'Dollar Cards' in Primary School. In the majority of lessons, transition between activities is generally smooth and instructions are clear. However, learning time is inconsistently managed, which affects the productivity of lessons, students' completion of assessment and the quality of feedback provided, particularly in the less effective lessons.
- In the majority of lessons and students' work, adequate verbal and written assessment is implemented, that match curriculum expectations. Feedback and support are inconsistent with better practices in utilising assessment results to support students and providing feedback that aids students' progress. However, less effective practices, particularly in Arabic lessons and students' work, assessment is ineffective, and feedback is generic with a tendency to overlook mistakes, adversely affecting students' progress, particularly the low achieving ones.
- In the few better lessons, students are effectively challenged such as examining change in density with change in mass and volume in High School science and predicting story events in Primary School. However, in the majority of lessons, assessment is either set to meet basic expectations, or implementation of challenging task is hindered by time management.
- In most lessons, technology is adequately utilised to support learning such as using Interactive Whiteboards to display PowerPoint presentations and share educational videos on topics like chemical reactions in Middle School science and film reviews in Primary School. Some engaging educational tools are also used such as 'Wordwall' and 'Nearpod'.
- In the majority of lessons, learning is differentiated through tiered worksheets and consideration of different learning styles, like students writing and drawing about their

emotions in Middle School English. However, differentiated activities in some lessons are not adequately

implemented due to limitations in time.

Areas for improvement

- Use of strategies in the less effective lesson, particularly in Arabic.
- More productive use of learning time.
- Use of assessment results to support and challenge students of different abilities, in lessons and students' work, particularly the low achieving ones.

Empowerment & meeting special needs 'Satisfactory'

Judgement justifications

- The school conducts diagnostic tests and classifies students into three categories. Differentiated activities such as 'SEE' for high achieving students, 'Climbing New Heights' for average students and 'Help Me Climb' for low achieving students are provided, particularly during 'Reinforcement Period' for grades 1 to 7. Students with learning difficulties in the Primary School are adequately supported through 'Hold My Hand' programme where they are supported in small groups. Students in grades 8 to 10 are supported academically through after school remedial sessions and on Saturdays as required. However, students are not sufficiently supported to improve their basic skills in Arabic, and the impact of the provided programmes is not sufficient in High School across core subjects.
 - The school adequately meets students' personal needs through providing them counselling when needed.
- Psychological care is offered through special programmes such as 'I Can Change' to reduce repeated behaviour problems, and counselling sessions such as 'Anger Management' and 'Positive Values' are offered through 'Al Shameat Al Mudaiya', which impacted students' positive behaviour across the school.
- An adequate range of extracurricular activities is provided to enrich students' experiences. These include weekly scheduled activities and competitions such as 'Art', 'Creative Writing', and 'Spelling Bee'. Students participate in inter-school competitions conducted by MoE such as 'Holy Quran and Sunnah recitation' and 'Bahrain Heritage Exhibition'. Gifted and talented students are provided opportunities to participate in programmes such as 'Marathon' by American University of Bahrain.
 - The provision of a safe and healthy environment is appropriately ensured

through regular maintenance of school's facilities, evacuation drills and medical attention for students. As well

as health lectures on topics such as 'Healthy Mind, Healthy Body' to raise students' health awareness.

Areas for improvement

- Academic support programmes provided to develop students' skills in Arabic and in all core subjects in High School.

Quality assurance of outcomes and processes

□ Leadership, management and governance ‘Satisfactory’

Judgement justifications

- The school uses different means of self-evaluation, such as academic achievement data, ‘SWOT’ analysis and ‘The Quality Schooling Survey Report’. However, the level of comprehensiveness is inconsistent in identifying areas related to students’ weak standards in Arabic, and the full implementation of Cambridge International Curriculum in High School.
- The school’s strategic and operational plans generally aim towards developing students’ standards and preparing them for Cambridge external benchmarks. However, the impact is inconsistent, and some key performance indicators are generic in measuring the extent of success, as subjects or schools are not specified. Other priorities are not clearly addressed, such as teachers’ high turnover, particularly in Arabic, and the full provision of Cambridge International Curriculum in High School, as the Advanced Subsidiary (AS) is currently offered without Advanced (A) levels.
- Teachers’ training needs are identified through lesson observations that vary in their accuracy. External and internal training workshops are provided, like ‘Collins International Publisher Webinars’, ‘21st Century Skills’ and ‘Classroom Management’. The impact on teachers’ performance is adequate in the majority of subjects, however, it is insufficient in Arabic which is also hindered by students’ weak basic skills.
- The school has a positive and collaborative working environment, with an open-door policy. Teachers are given appreciation certificates and their suggestions are answered, for example, providing them a private teachers’ lounge, which reflected positively on their job satisfaction.
- The school ensures the availability of essential resources and facilities, such as the library, the science and the ICT laboratories, as well as equipping classes with smart screens. In lessons, teachers use a suitable range of resources, such as worksheets, textbooks and tangible materials for scientific practicals.
- The school establishes suitable communication with majority of parents, through ‘Parent-Teacher’ meetings, surveys and school website. Adequate links are maintained with the local community, such as beach clean-ups with the Ministry of Municipalities Affairs and Agriculture.
- The ‘Board of Directors’ provides sufficient guidance to the leadership and holds the General Manager accountable for the school’s

performance. It has a clear vision for the school's future and work

collaboratively with all stakeholders to achieve that.

Areas for improvement

- A more comprehensive self-evaluation that is embedded in planning, with more accurate performance indicators.
- The provision and implementation of the Cambridge International Curriculum in High School.
- The effectiveness of the professional development programmes on teachers' performance, particularly in Arabic.

Appendix 1: Characteristics of the school

Name of the school (Arabic)	مدرسة المهد الخاصة – فرع سار													
Name of the school (English)	Al Mahd School – Saar Branch													
Year of establishment	1997													
Address	Villa 797, Road 1725, Block 517													
City/ Town / Governorate	Saar / Northern													
School's telephone	17792422	-				Fax				17792606				
School's e-mail	almahd.school@gmail.com													
School's website	www.almahdschool.com													
Age range of students	6 - 18													
Grades (e.g. 1 to 12)	Primary				Middle				High					
	1 – 6				7 - 9				10 - 12					
Number of Students	Boys	591				Girls	503				Total	1094		
Students' social/ economical background	Average													
Classes per grade in Primary and Intermediate Stages	Grade	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
	Classes	7	8	6	5	5	3	3	4	3	2	2	2	
Number of administrative staff	23													
Number of teaching staff	75													
Curriculum	British, Ministry of Education (MoE)													
Main language(s) of instruction	English & Arabic													
External assessment and examinations	International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE)													
Accreditation (if applicable)	Cambridge Assessment International Education													
Major recent changes in the school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New appointments in 2022-2023: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Head for Primary School - Arabic Coordinator - Gifted and Talented Supervisor. • Improvements in school's facilities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - new administration block - renovation of computer laboratories. 													