



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

Directorate of Private Schools & Kindergartens Reviews Review Report

**Arabian Pearl Gulf School
Bilad Al Qadeem – Capital Governorate
Kingdom of Bahrain**

**Date of Review: 5-7 March 2019
SP006-C3-R002**

Introduction

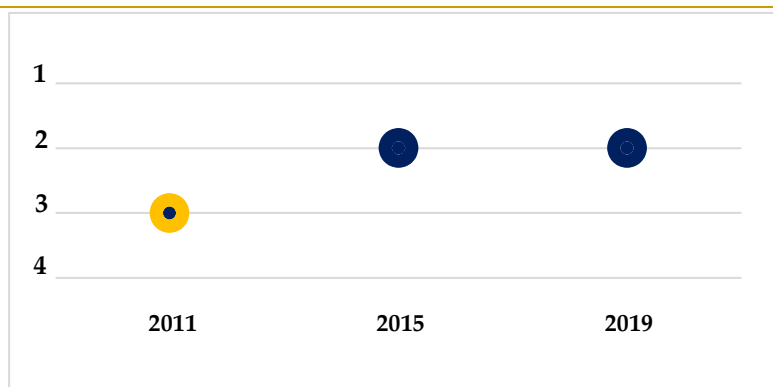
The Directorate of Private Schools & Kindergartens Reviews (DPS), which is a part of the Education & Training Quality Authority (BQA), conducted this review over three days by a team of eight reviewers. During the review, reviewers observed lessons and other activities, scrutinised students' written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

The chart demonstrates the school's overall effectiveness throughout the review cycles.



School Report

□ School's overall effectiveness: 'Good'

Judgement justifications

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|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students' pass and proficiency rates are high in internal examinations. Their standards, progress and learning skills are good overall, though satisfactory in the Primary School.• Most students are aware of their rights and responsibilities and are committed to work ethics. They embrace local citizenship and develop environmental awareness and social responsibility through various voluntary contributions.• The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good overall, though it varies in the Primary School. This is due to the inconsistent use of learning time and insufficient support being provided for low achievers. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students' academic and personal needs are met well through enrichment and remedial programmes for high achievers and those with special educational needs and a wide range of extracurricular activities that enhances students' talents and experiences.• The school carries out rigorous self - evaluation of its performance and the school plans are systematically updated.• There is a positive ethos of collaboration and loyalty amongst the school community, driven by an ambitious Board of Directors which contributes effectively to improvement planning. |
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Main positive features

- Students' embracement of citizenship values, development of environmental awareness and their handling of social responsibility through various voluntary contributions.
- Academic support provided to students of different abilities, particularly high achievers and those with special educational needs, and the provision of extracurricular activities that enhances students' talents and experiences.
- The ethos of collaboration and loyalty amongst the school community, driven by an ambitious Board of Directors and a determined and encouraging school leadership team.

Recommendations

- Secure a safe school environment by:
 - providing suitable alternative exits for High School students

- reviewing the end of the school day dismissal procedure.
- Strengthen the impact of the professional development programmes on the effectiveness of teaching and learning, particularly in the Primary School, with a focus on:
 - students' progress in lessons
 - managing learning time productively
 - using assessment results effectively to meet students' learning needs, particularly low achievers.

□ Capacity to improve: 'Good'

Judgement justifications

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|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school's self-evaluation processes are rigorous and effectively involve stakeholders. The strategic and action plans are linked well to the self-evaluation results and the identified work priorities, with clear success criteria and monitoring mechanisms. • The school's judgements on its performance in the Self-Evaluation Form (SEF) matches the judgements reached by the review team in the majority of aspects in the Middle and High Schools. • There is an openness in the school's culture, trust amongst the staff and a shared vision for change. This is driven by an ambitious Board of Directors and determined school leaders. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Various resources and facilities such as laboratories, library, playgrounds and SIMS (School Information Management System) are utilised well. The school carries out adequate maintenance of its facilities. However, the procedure in relation to student's dismissal at the end of the day is not sufficiently well organised. • The school provides professional development programmes and leaders monitor teachers' performance through systematic class visits. The impact of these procedures is evident in the good standards and learning skills of most students, particularly in the Middle and High Schools. |
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Quality of outcomes

□ Academic achievement: 'Good'

Judgement justifications

- In internal examinations, attainment across the school has been consistently high in the past three years. In the 2017-2018 examinations, in the Primary School, the pass rates range between 98% in Grade 4 mathematics and 100% in almost all other grades and subjects. Proficiency rates range between 65% in Grade 6 mathematics and 100% in Grades 1 and 2 science. In the Middle and High schools pass rates are 100% in all grades and subjects. Proficiency rates in the Middle School range between 71% in Grade 8 mathematics and 98% in Grade 7 science. In the High School, proficiency rates range between 51% in International mathematics in Grade 9 and 100% in most subjects in Grades 11 and 12.
- In the International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) examinations results are inconsistent. In 2018, the percentages of students attaining A* to C ranged between 46% in accounting and 76% in biology. The percentages of students attaining A* to B ranged between 18% in accounting and 57% in biology. There has been good improvement in IGCSE in recent years, with the percentage of students attaining A* to C improving in most subjects.
- Over the past three years achievement in the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IBDP) has been consistently high, with the school's average results being above the world average in most subjects. For example, the school's averages in English B HL, business and management HL and biology HL were 5.95, 5.55 and 5.25 respectively, which exceed the world averages of 5.74, 4.69 and 4.34. The number of students attaining 5 or above is high in almost all subjects.
- In the National examinations in 2017, the performance of students in Grade 9 was well above the national average in both Arabic and English. In 2018 in Grade 6, attainment in Arabic was at the National average and in English above the National average. In Grade 12 the pass percentages are 100% in English and 73.8% in Arabic. However, the percentage is lower in problem solving, being 26.2%.
- In lessons and written work students' standards and progress in the core subjects are better in both the Middle and High Schools than in the Primary School, where it is satisfactory. Across the school, more attention is paid to the learning needs of average and high achieving students, which enabled them to make better progress than low achievers.
- Students' learning skills are developed well, particularly in the Middle and High Schools due to the many opportunities provided. Most students successfully develop skills of independent learning, critical thinking, gathering data, analysis, and experimentation.
- In English and Arabic, while students' listening, speaking and reading skills are good across the school, their writing skills are less well-developed in the Primary School.

- In science, most students successfully apply their knowledge to develop good understanding. For example, in High School they explain how temperature, fluids, salts and exercise affect the concentration of urine in the kidneys. In mathematics, students' standards and

progress are better in the Middle and High Schools than in the Primary. For example, students in the Middle School work out the exterior angle of a triangle with confidence. However, their problem-solving skills are not well-developed across the school.

Areas for improvement

- Standards, progress and learning skills in core subjects in the Primary School
- Progress made by low achievers in lessons across the school.

□ Personal development & social responsibility: 'Good'

Judgement justifications

- Most students are aware of their rights and responsibilities and are committed to work ethics. They behave well, are self-disciplined and show respect for their teachers and peers. Students, particularly in High School, show an ability to deal with learning pressures, and they use educational resources such as the science laboratory equipment ethically and take responsibility for their learning. Most students feel psychologically comfortable and safe at school. They attend school regularly and are punctual. However, absence rates are high on days close to public holidays.
- Students successfully embrace local and global citizenship and Islamic values. They take pride in Bahrain's leadership, heritage and culture. Most students, particularly in the Middle and High Schools are well aware of social and global issues through participating in MUN (Model United Nations) activities and

being involved in voluntary activities through Nidda group and visits to a home for the elderly and an oncology centre in the locality.

- Across the school, students participate enthusiastically in class assemblies, school events such as 'Voices' and the 'Idea Show' contest, and in club activities such as drama and photography. They take leadership roles through the Students' Council responsibilities. High School students participate in Hamdan contest, INJAZ, ELT central's young writers' competition, and they provide academic support for the younger students.
- Students enjoy working together in lessons and school events like coffee day and establish good social relationships.
- Across the school, most students show a good awareness of health issues and the environment. They keep their school clean and participate in activities and

programmes such as tree planting and 'Green APG Clean APG'.

- Most students have a competitive spirit and take the initiative in presenting their innovative ideas. For example, the novel

'Ahlam' was written by a student and another one secured second place in the Shaikha Latifa Award 2018 for childhood creativity.

Areas for improvement

- Students' greater innovation and ability to make decisions.
- Attendance rate on days prior to and post public holidays.

Quality of processes

□ Teaching, learning & assessment: 'Good'

Judgement justifications

- In most lessons, teachers implement a wide variety of student-centred teaching strategies effectively, such as discussions, group work and experimentation. However, this is not a consistent feature, particularly in the Primary School, resulting in these lessons being less productive. Learning resources and facilities such as posters, activity sheets, smart boards and science laboratories are utilised effectively in most lessons, particularly in science and English.
- Teachers plan lessons well and share lesson objectives. In most lessons, they provide clear guidelines, ensuring smooth and gradual progress in lessons. However, managing learning time varies. When lessons are less successful, transition from one activity to another is too time consuming which minimises productivity.
- Various assessment methods, such as verbal and written for both individuals and groups, are used in lessons. In the better lessons, teachers use these assessment methods well to secure the achievement of lesson objectives and to provide feedback to help students improve their work. However, in a minority of lessons across the school verbal assessment focuses on the more able students. This adversely affects the progress of the rest of the class. Learning support provided to low achievers is insufficient in the majority of lessons. Correction and marking are mostly accurate, except for a few cases where mistakes are overlooked.
- In the better lessons, particularly in the Middle and High Schools, teachers challenge the students' different abilities well. For example, in science lessons they aid students in developing reasoning, interpretation and critical thinking skills. However, teachers' development of students' creative problem solving in mathematics lessons is not so effective.
- In almost all lessons across the school teachers use smart boards very well to secure the students' interest in learning. Teachers, in the High School in particular, make use of online resources to provide enrichment activities. However, teaching does not sufficiently enable students to use modern technology in learning.
- There is a system in place to identify and categorise students into different ability groups. Students with special educational needs are provided with separate one-to-one lessons. In the better lessons, learning is differentiated by task and outcomes. However, in the less effective lessons, particularly in the Primary School, insufficient attention to differentiation results in fewer opportunities for low achievers to participate in class activities.

Areas for improvement

- Productive use of learning time and effective use of assessment results to challenge students of different abilities and support low achievers.
- Use of differentiation in lessons, particularly in the Primary School.

Empowerment & meeting special needs: 'Satisfactory'

Judgement justifications

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The school systematically monitors, tracks and analyses students' academic progress and behaviour through the school's e-management system and SIMS Learning Gateway (SLG). The academic support mechanisms include enrichment activities for the more able students and in school and after school remedial classes for low achievers.• Outstanding students participate in the ALFHA programme (Advance Learning for High Achievers), where they are challenged with enrichment activities. Gifted students are encouraged to showcase their talents through the 'Glowing Pearls' programme and art exhibitions.• Students' personal needs are addressed well. Behaviour management and safety awareness programmes such as 'I care', and 'STOP' for Primary School students, and workshops by school counsellors for Middle and High Schools, are conducted regularly. These have resulted in a significant reduction in behavioural issues. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The school efficiently reinforces students' experiences, talents and creativity by providing a good range of extracurricular activities which meet their different needs and interests. This includes diverse club activities, department-wide special activities such as spin and win, and Arabic reading challenge. Middle and High Schools' students are prepared well for their next stage of education and are supported well through career counselling and expert talks.• The school conducts regular fire drills and carries out adequate maintenance of its facilities. Students' arrival is monitored well. However, procedures around student's dismissal at the end of the day are not sufficiently organised. Also, there is no provision for an alternative exit from the first floor of the High School building.• The school effectively integrates students with disabilities into school life and supports them well. The 'Special Education Department' (SPED) provides pull-out lessons for those who are in need and supports them well in their learning process. |
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Areas for improvement

- The school's procedures in relation to students' dismissal at the end of the school day and the provision of an alternative exit in the High School building.

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 reviewing curriculum plans and using feedback from an external consultant, the accreditation body, the previous review report of BQA, and quality surveys of students, parents and staff members.
- The school's three-year strategic plan is linked to the results of the self-evaluation and is based on the identified work priorities and desired improvement areas such as the quality of teaching and students' outcomes. The departmental action plans are aligned to the strategic priorities and have clear key performance indicators and accurate monitoring mechanisms. The school plans are systematically updated.
- There is a positive ethos of collaboration and loyalty amongst the school community. The school's senior leadership team successfully motivates staff and encourages them to work towards a common mission. This is done through acknowledging staff performance through various incentives and promotion which is based on their competencies.
- The school makes good use of the available resources and facilities such as the laboratories, playgrounds and library. The library has a good collection of books catering to a range of interests and the science laboratories are well equipped.
- The senior leaders conduct systematic class observations and provide verbal and written feedback to teachers. Regular staff meetings are held, and teachers are encouraged to share best practices within and across the school departments. A range of professional development opportunities are planned on an annual basis and are provided both internally and externally to all teachers. Various topics focusing on improving teaching are provided. These include differentiation, higher order thinking and classroom management. However, the impact of these sessions on the performance of teachers is inconsistent, particularly in Primary School.
- There is an openness in the school culture, trust amongst the staff and a shared vision for change. This creates positive bonds within the school and the wider community. The school is used by the local community, such as the American embassy, to hold events. Students participate in inter-school competitions, local and overseas educational trips and fundraising programmes. These activities have a positive impact on developing students' social relationships, leadership and decision-making skills, particularly in the High School.

- There is respect between the Board of Directors and the school's leadership and roles are well defined. The Board meets periodically to monitor the school's performance, contribute to future plans

and provide strategic direction to the school's leadership. It holds the senior leaders accountable for the school's performance and students' welfare.

Areas for improvement

- The consistent impact of professional development programmes on classroom practices, particularly in Primary School.

Appendix 1: Characteristics of the school

Name of the school (Arabic)	مدرسة لؤلؤة الخليج العربي												
Name of the school (English)	Arabian Pearl Gulf School												
Year of establishment	1996												
Address	Building 1786, Road 6359, Block 363												
City / Town / Governorate	Bilad AlQadeem / Capital												
School's telephone	17402394	17403666				Fax		17404074					
School's e-mail	info@apgschool.com												
School's website	apgschool.com												
Age range of students	6-18 years												
Grades (e.g. 1 to 12)	Primary				Middle				High				
	1-6				7-8				9-12				
Number of Students	Boys	604			Girls	579			Total	1,183			
Students' social / economical background	Most students come from average income families												
Classes per grade in Primary and Intermediate Stages	Grade	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
	Classes	7	7	6	6	6	6	4	5	4	4	3	3
Number of administrative staff	20												
Number of teaching staff	121												
Curriculum	American, British and IB (International Baccalaureate)												
Main language(s) of instruction	English												
External assessment and examinations	IGCSE (International General Certificate of Secondary Education), IB (International Baccalaureate)												
Accreditation (if applicable)	IGCSE, IB Diploma, CIS (Council of International Schools) Membership												
Major recent changes in the school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appointment of a new Principal for Middle and High Schools in August 2018. Appointment of a new Vice Principal for Arabic in October 2018. 												