



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

Directorate of Private Schools & Kindergartens Reviews Review Report

**Modern Knowledge Schools
Al Ghuraifa – Capital Governorate
Kingdom of Bahrain**

Date of Review: 25-27 March 2019

SP004-C3-R004

Introduction

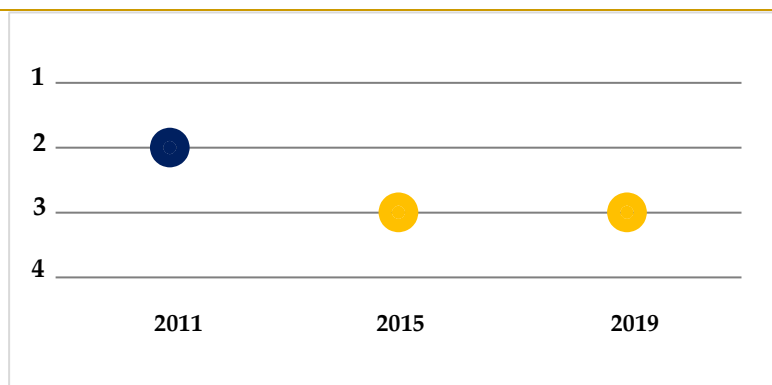
The Directorate of Private Schools & Kindergartens Reviews (DPS), which is a part of the Education & Training Quality Authority (BQA), conducted this review over three days by a team of ten reviewers. During the review, reviewers observed lessons and other activities, scrutinized students' written work and analysed 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	4	3	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	4	3	3
Quality assurance of outcomes and processes	Leadership, management and governance	3	4	3	3
Capacity to improve		4			
The school's overall effectiveness		3			

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



School Report

□ School's overall effectiveness 'Satisfactory'

Judgement justifications

- Despite the high pass rates, students demonstrate satisfactory standards across the school apart from their underdeveloped standards in mathematics and Arabic and inadequate standards and progress in Middle School.
- Most students have a good sense of awareness and behave well. They participate enthusiastically in the various school extracurricular activities and clubs. However, in the less effective lessons leadership roles are few and students' self-confidence is not well developed.
- Various teaching and learning strategies and resources are used. However, students' engagement in their learning is inconsistent and the impact of these strategies is not constantly effective. Managing learning time varies across the school which affects lessons' efficiency, and assessment methods such as verbal and written, are used inconsistently to cater for and support students by informing planning and teaching.
- The school provides a broad range of extracurricular activities to meet students' different interests and needs. It has a system in place to adequately use MAP data to monitor students' academic progress. The effectiveness of the support provided varies, mainly on the progress made by the low achieving students and on improving students' Arabic and mathematical skills, particularly in Middle School.
- The strategic plan is outdated with unclear performance indicators, but the annual action plans focus appropriately on schoolwork priorities. Regular performance monitoring is conducted, as are professional development workshops; however, data analysis is not used effectively in planning, and training has not yet had an appreciable impact on student outcomes, particularly in Middle School.

Main positive features

- Most students are self-disciplined and enthusiastic towards participating in school activities and events.
- A broad range of extracurricular activities is provided to students which broadens their experiences and meets their interests.

Recommendations

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership, management and governance, particularly in Middle School by:
 - ensuring effective use of data to inform planning based on improvement priorities and embedding clear monitoring mechanisms
 - updating the strategic plan and including clear performance indicators
 - providing targeted professional development programmes for teachers and monitoring their impact on students' academic achievement and progress in lessons.
- Raise students' academic achievement in Arabic and mathematics, particularly in Middle School.
- Improve the effectiveness of teaching, learning and assessment with a focus on:
 - implementing more engaging teaching and learning strategies that develop students' learning skills
 - managing learning time effectively
 - better use of assessment results to support students and meet their different learning needs.
- Improve the effectiveness of academic support programmes provided to different categories of students, mainly the low achievers, particularly in Middle School.

□ Capacity to improve 'Inadequate'

Judgement justifications

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Plans are not sufficiently focused on raising students' standards in necessary areas such as mathematics. Therefore, students' standards are weak in mathematics and Arabic, they make inadequate progress in Middle School.• Recent improvements in the school include constructing a new building for Middle School and introducing technology resources such as Chrome Books and Google Classroom.• The school's support programmes are not effective enough to cater for the learning needs of the low achieving students, particularly in mathematics and Arabic. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The school faces the challenge of the instability in the senior leadership, as in the Elementary and High Schools, and despite the improved mentoring and support to staff, the high staff turnover continues to hinder the impact of professional development programmes.• The school performance has declined since the last review in 2015, with the aspects of students' personal development and social responsibility being satisfactory in the current review, and students' standards and progress in Middle School being inadequate. |
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Quality of outcomes

□ Academic achievement 'Satisfactory'

Judgement justifications

- Students' pass rates are consistently high across all grades and subjects in the 2017-2018 internal examinations. Pass rates range between 97% in Grade 11 social studies to 100% in the majority of subjects across all grades.
- In Elementary School, students achieve very high proficiency rates that range from 78% in Grade 3 Arabic to 100% in Grade 4 social studies. In Middle School, students achieve inconsistent proficiency rates ranging between 42% in Grade 8 Arabic to 86% in Grade 6 social studies. However, students under-achieve in mathematics and rates are between 29% in Grade 6 and 39% in Grade 8. In High School, rates are between 50% in Grade 10 science to 92% in Grade 12 English. However, students achieve average rates in mathematics in all grades, ranging from 31% in Grade 11 to 39% in Grade 12.
- Students' cohorts achieved consistently high pass rates in all core subjects between the years 2015-2016 and 2017-2018.
- In the 2018 International Baccalaureate (IB) results the percentage rates of students achieving 5 and above are high in the majority of subjects and range from 50% in 'Physics SL' and 'English A Lit SL' to 100% in 'ITGS SL'. They achieve average rates in 'Chemistry HL' at 31% and 'mathematics SL' at 30%. IB subjects are opted by a third of students.
- The high proficiency rates reflect students' standards in the good lessons, mainly in English. However, students show inconsistent standards in mathematics and Arabic across the school, particularly in Middle School where the majority of students make inadequate progress because of their weak standards.
- In English, most students have secure communication skills, with good reading comprehension skills across the school.
- In Arabic, the better students show understanding when analysing texts. However, the reading comprehension skills of the majority of students are below curriculum expectations in many grades.
- In both languages, writing skills are underdeveloped due to lack of focus in lessons and written work, particularly in Arabic.
- In science, the majority of students show age-expected knowledge of scientific concepts such as being able to explain Newton's Law, and develop their experimental inquiry skills adequately, particularly in High School.
- Students understanding of mathematical concepts is appropriate in the better lessons. However, students show weak skills, for example they find difficulty in equations, adding and subtracting integers.
- Students make better progress in the good lessons, particularly the high achievers. Students with learning difficulties show adequate progress in the support programme. However, the low achievers make inadequate progress in most lessons and in their written work.

- Students' development of their learning skills is inconsistent. In the better lessons, the majority of students show adequate critical thinking and independent

learning skills. However, students' problem solving is insufficiently developed across the school.

Areas for improvement

- Students' standards in Arabic and mathematics, particularly in Middle School.
- The progress made by low achieving students.
- Students' learning skills, particularly problem solving.

□ Personal development & social responsibility 'Satisfactory'

Judgement justifications

- Most students are self-disciplined and adhere to positive behaviour, acting with a good sense of awareness. Students feel safe at school as they work together in harmony, showing respect to their teachers and peers. Most students attend school regularly and punctually.
- Most students embrace and show good understanding of the culture of Bahrain. They participate in Bahrain celebrations like 'In love of King and the Kingdom of Bahrain'. Students participate in educational trips locally and internationally. An atmosphere of respect and tolerance of other cultures prevails in the school despite students' different backgrounds.
- The Students' Council carries out awareness programmes and events across the school about health and environmental awareness, such as recycling and organising for example 'Health and Fitness Fair'. Most students attend sessions held by guest speakers on topics like 'First Aid'.

- The majority of students participate enthusiastically in various school activities like, 'MKS Model United Nations (MUN)' and carnivals. In lessons the majority of students work independently and take responsibility for their own learning. In the less effective lessons, leadership roles are limited and students' self-confidence is not sufficiently developed.
- The majority of students work in harmony. However, their communication skills, contribution to others' learning and building on each other's ideas are less effectively developed in lessons.
- High School students have greater opportunities to demonstrate their competitive and innovative skills through presenting their various projects and explaining in depth the themes of the 'IB Visual Arts' and 'Science Fair'. This is further enhanced through the various extracurricular activities. Fewer opportunities are provided in lessons however.

Areas for improvement

- Students' self-confidence and leadership roles in lessons.
- Students' communication skills and contribution to others' learning.
- Students' initiative in developing ideas into innovation and their sense of competitiveness in lessons.

Quality of processes

□ Teaching, learning & assessment 'Satisfactory'

Judgement justifications

- In the majority of lessons, teachers implement a range of student-centred teaching strategies such as discussions, group work and role-play. However, students' engagement in their learning is inconsistent, particularly so when these strategies are less effective in having an impact on developing students' learning skills which is particularly evident in Arabic and mathematics lessons.
 - Learning resources such as videos and educational charts are utilised effectively in a majority of lessons. The integrations of technology and students' use of iPads and their own devices are used well in developing students' experiences and learning.
 - Lessons are generally structured to deliver introductory activities, guided and independent learning and plenary sessions. However, in a few lessons, particularly in mathematics, the objectives set are of low expectations which do not match curriculum requirements.
 - Managing learning time varies across the school. In the less successful lessons introductory activities are mostly too lengthy, minimising overall productivity.
 - Various assessment methods such as verbal and written, for both individuals and groups, are used though in the less effective lessons the results are not used sufficiently to identify students' academic needs or inform teaching. Learning support provided to low achievers is insufficient in most lessons, particularly in Arabic and mathematics.
- Students' written work is checked regularly in the Elementary School and some teachers provide constructive feedback to help students improve their work. However, in the Middle and High Schools correction, marking and feedback are inconsistent.
 - In the better lessons, teachers challenge the students' different abilities well. For example, in science and English lessons they help students in developing reasoning, critical thinking and presentation skills. However, teachers' development of students' concepts and problem-solving in the majority of lessons is less effective and objectives are below curriculum expectations in a significant number of lessons, particularly in Arabic and mathematics.
 - In a majority of Middle and High Schools' lessons teachers enable students to develop their abilities to use modern technology. For example, in social studies lessons, as a part of project-based learning, students develop articles related to the French revolution and ancient countries through accessing digital applications.
 - In the better lessons learning is differentiated by task and outcomes. However, in the less effective lessons, particularly in the Middle School, there is insufficient attention to differentiation, where activities and tasks are not challenging for students of different abilities nor are students supported sufficiently.

Areas for improvement

- Productive use of learning time.
- Effective use of assessment results to challenge and support students of different abilities.
- Support provided to low achieving students.

□ Empowerment & meeting needs 'Satisfactory'

Judgement justifications

- The school uses Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) software data tracking records adequately to diagnose and monitor the academic progress of different groups of students. The data is shared with teachers and parents through the 'Parents Portal'.
- Outstanding students are honoured by the school and have leadership roles in helping their peers and preparing presentations in lessons. They are also involved in school activities such as inter-school competitions and fairs such as the science fair.
- Students with learning difficulties are appropriately supported in their programme. However, the programme is still in the initial stage and does not include all students that are in need of support.
- Low achieving students are not sufficiently supported in lessons. Although they are provided with after-school support sessions, the impact of these sessions is not evidently effective in developing students' basic skills in Arabic and mathematics, particularly in Middle School.
- The school promotes students' personal development well by addressing their personal and behavioural problems and providing moral and emotional support through various counselling initiatives such as 'Stop and Think', as well as studying and monitoring special cases. New students are inducted effectively through the orientation programme and meeting with parents.
- The school enriches the experiences, talents and creativity of most students with various extracurricular activities and clubs which meet their interests, such as literary, scientific, technology, art, theatre and recycling clubs. Students thoroughly enjoy participating in competitions like 'Talent show' and 'Art zone', as well as being involved effectively in the Creativity Action Service (CAS) and Model United Nation (MUN) programmes.
- The school ensures the provision of a healthy and safe environment through the periodic assessment of risks, maintenance of facilities and regular evacuation drills, in addition to raising students' awareness about adolescence and the importance of personal and dental hygiene. The nurse monitors students' health conditions effectively. However, a more organised system is needed to monitor students'

dismissal due to the large student population.

- Students are prepared for the next stage of education successfully, through effective career guidance and visiting local and

foreign universities such as Royal University and American University of Cairo, in addition to the IB alumni students who share their experiences.

Areas for improvement

- Student targeted academic support to meet their different needs, particularly the low achievers specifically in Middle School.
- Further organising and monitoring of students' dismissal.

Quality assurance of outcomes and processes

□ Leadership, management and governance ‘Satisfactory’

Judgement justifications

- School stakeholders contribute to school self-evaluation. However, the processes linking this to improvement planning lack consistency. The strategic plan is outdated and needs essential updates to be better aligned to the school’s situation.
- Annual action plans focus sufficiently on schoolwork priorities, but there is not enough emphasis on improving mathematics rates in the Middle School. Although curriculum plans are reviewed there is a need for a systematic use of data to drive planning, assessment, and improve student performance.
- The school faces the challenge of the instability in the senior leadership of the schools, and in a context of high staff turnover leaders aim to raise staff competency through regular performance monitoring and by providing access to professional development. Recent initiatives, including the High School ‘Technology Cafes’ and ‘Daily Five’ in the Elementary School are valued, but staff training to date has been heavily reliant on internal providers and has not yet had an appreciable impact on student outcomes, particularly in Middle School.
- New leaders in the Elementary and High Schools are introducing new work mechanisms and aiming to reduce teacher turnover by offering improved mentoring and support to staff and by developing staff social activities. Efforts are also being made to improve communications across the three sections of the school
- Technology resources including Chrome Books and Google Classroom are deployed to enhance student engagement. The school is placing significant focus on the use of computers as learning tools and demonstrates a strong commitment to a digital future. New facilities such as the Middle School building and High School Gymnasium have enhanced the learning environment
- The school has a small Parents’ Council but there is a lack of clarity to both parents and staff on how it operates. Parents’ voice is heard through electronic correspondence, ‘Parent Coffees’, and regular surveys. The school makes good use of local expertise and national institutions, and students are involved in a range of charitable activities such as Think Pink. Community events are hosted annually including a Model United Nations. The individual successes of alumni are publicised to inspire current students.
- The school has a Board of Governors but its composition is unclear to school leaders. The school proprietor is the chairman of the Board and keeps a close eye on the school, holding school leaders accountable. She provides strategic direction and maintains strong control of financial matters.

Areas for improvement

- The use of data to drive improvement in planning and assessment.
- The processes for linking self-evaluation results, strategic planning, schoolwork priorities and professional development opportunities.
- The quality of leadership in the Middle School.

Appendix 1: Characteristics of the school

Name of the school (Arabic)	مدارس المعارف الحديثة												
Name of the school (English)	Modern Knowledge Schools												
Year of establishment	1995												
Address	Building 515, Road 4209, Block 342												
City / Town / Governorate	Al Ghuraifa / Capital												
School's telephone	17812333	17727712					Fax	17827449					
School's e-mail	mksasb@batelco.com.bh												
School's website	http://www.mks.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	1,143			Girls	923			Total	2,066			
Students' social/ economical background	Most students are from middle to high income families												
Classes per grade in Primary and Intermediate Stages	Grade	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
	Classes	8	7	8	9	7	7	7	7	1	1	2	2
Number of administrative staff	44												
Number of teaching staff	136												
Curriculum	American Education Reach Out (AERO standards), International Baccalaureate Diploma Program and Ministry of Education (MoE) for Arabic, Arabic social and Islamic studies												
Main language(s) of instruction	English, Arabic and French												
External assessment and examinations	Northwest Evaluation Association' Measure of Academic Progress (NWEA MAP), The International Baccalaureate (IB), Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS)												
Accreditation (if applicable)	The Commission of Elementary and Secondary Schools of Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools (MSA/CESS), Philadelphia, USA. The International Baccalaureate Organisation (IBO).												

Major recent changes in the school	New appointment in the current academic year 2018-19: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A Principal and Assistant Principal for both Elementary & High Schools.• A gifted and talented coordinator and a special education needs specialist.• Establishing a new Middle School building.• The integration of technology in classrooms.
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