



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

# **Directorate of Private Schools & Kindergartens Reviews Review Report**

**The New Horizon School  
Jannusan – Northern Governorate  
Suqaya – Capital Governorate  
Kingdom of Bahrain**

**Date of Review: 22-24 May 2017  
SP040-C2-R041**

## 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, 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

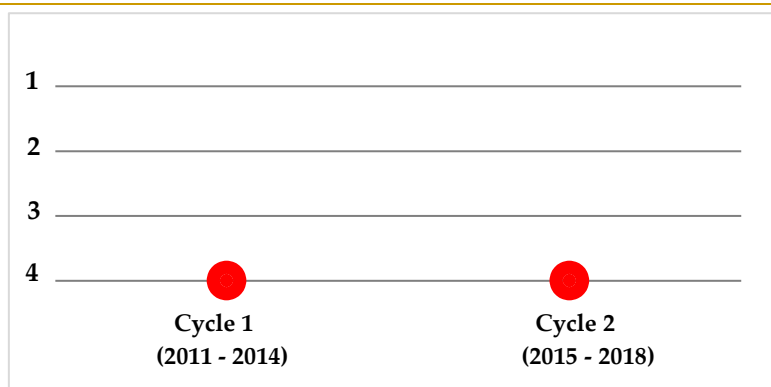
Good 2

Satisfactory 3

Inadequate 4

Aspect	Grade				
	Elementary / Primary	Middle / Intermediate	High / Secondary	Overall	
Quality of outcomes	Students' academic achievement	4	-	-	4
	Students' personal development	3	-	-	3
Quality of processes	Teaching and learning	4	-	-	4
	Students' support and guidance	3	-	-	3
Quality assurance of outcomes and processes	Leadership, management and governance	4	-	-	4
Capacity to improve		4			
The school's overall effectiveness		4			

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



1 Outstanding 2 Good 3 Satisfactory 4 Inadequate

## School Report

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### Percentile words used in relation to different judgements

Grade	Relative words used	Interpretation
Outstanding	All / Almost all	Indicates completeness and comprehensiveness/about to reach completeness and comprehensiveness.
	The vast majority	Indicates an amount that exceeds most.
Good	Most	Indicates an amount that exceeds majority.
Satisfactory	Majority / Adequate / Suitable / Variable	Indicates more than average.
Inadequate	Minority / Few	Indicates less than average.
	Limited	Indicates less than minority.
	Very limited	Indicates scarcity/rarity.
	None	Indicates unavailability/nothing.

### School's overall effectiveness 'Inadequate'

#### Judgement justifications

- The standards of a significant proportion of students, across the school, are below their age-related curriculum expectations, particularly in mathematics and Arabic. The progress made by the majority of students, in developing their understanding and skills is limited. Students' performance in external examinations is also weak.
- Students generally behave well and show respect to others' views, feelings and beliefs, with secure understanding of Bahraini culture and values.
- The effectiveness of teaching and learning is very limited. There is insufficient challenge to students of different abilities, with no clear impact on their progress. Teaching is mostly directed at one ability group of students, thus, the learning needs of all students are not sufficiently met. Formative assessment results are not effectively used to inform teaching and support the students of all abilities.
- The school adequately meets students' personal needs and supports them sensitively whenever they face problems. The learning needs of less able students are adequately met through remedial programmes in all core subjects.

- The school provides an adequate range of extracurricular activities to cater to students' interests.
- The self-evaluation lacks sufficient rigour and does not involve all the stakeholders of the school. Strategic planning does not have sufficient links to the self-evaluation

results. The operational plans do not specify precise timeframes, accountability and success criteria for monitoring the implementation.

- Parents and students are satisfied with the school's provision.

## Main positive features

- Students' commitment to positive behaviour and respect for others' views, feelings and beliefs.
- Development of students' different interests through extracurricular activities.

## Recommendations

- Raise students' standards, particularly in Arabic and mathematics.
- Improve the effectiveness of teaching and learning by:
  - implementing a range of teaching and learning strategies
  - challenging students of all abilities
  - using the assessment results to inform teaching and meet the needs of all students.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership, management and governance by:
  - developing a rigorous self-evaluation system
  - providing customised professional development programmes to teachers and monitoring their impact on classroom practices.

## □ Capacity to improve 'Inadequate'

### Judgement justifications

- The school does not show significant improvement in the key areas of students' academic achievement, the quality of teaching and learning and the effectiveness of leadership, management and governance, identified in the previous review.

- Although strategic planning is in place it is not based on the results of a rigorous self-evaluation process.
- Due to high turnover of teaching and middle leadership staff in 2016-2017, the professional development training provided to teaching staff lacks significant impact on classroom practices.

- The facilities and available resources, including laboratory and library, are not utilised regularly and effectively to support learning.
- The support to Special Educational Need (SEN) students inside the mainstream classes is limited, due to the lack of

sufficient training for the teaching fraternity.

- There is a significant mismatch between the judgements in the school's self-evaluation form (SEF) and the review team's judgements of school's performance.

## Quality of outcomes

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### □ Students' academic achievement 'Inadequate'

#### Judgement justifications

- Students achieve consistently high pass rates in the internal examinations, except in Arabic in 2016-2017, which are low.
- Students' proficiency rates in 2016-2017 are low in Arabic, English and Hindi in Grades 1 to 3 and very low in all the core subjects in Grades 4 to 6, ranging between 10% in Arabic and 53% in science.
- Students' performance in International Benchmark Test (IBT), Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) and Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) is low. Only a few students take up the BQA national examinations, and their performance is low in Arabic. However, students' performance is better in English.
- Tracking data of the same cohort over three years shows that students' performance is declining across the school, particularly in Arabic and mathematics.
- In lessons and in their independent work, other than in English, the standards of a significant proportion of students are below their age-related expectations, particularly in mathematics and Arabic.
- Students' standards in English are better than in other subjects being in line with their age-related expectations across the school. Oral communication skills are secure, with students being able to use a range of vocabulary while speaking and comprehending a text. However, their extended writing skills are underdeveloped.
- In science, students demonstrate age appropriate standards with an adequate grasp on key scientific concepts. However, across the school, their investigative skills are underdeveloped.
- Across the school, the standards demonstrated by students in Arabic are weak. Most students have weak reading, grammar and writing skills.
- In mathematics, most students across all grades have standards that are below their age related curriculum expectations. Their basic arithmetic skills are weak and problem-solving skills are insufficiently developed.
- In lessons and in their written work, the majority of students make limited progress in developing understanding and skills, particularly the low achievers. Adequate progress is achieved only by a small minority of students, mainly the high achievers.

#### Areas for improvement

- Students' standards, particularly in Arabic and mathematics.
- Writing skills in languages.
- Investigative skills in science and problem-solving skills in mathematics.
- The progress of students of all abilities, particularly the low achievers.

## □ Students' personal development 'Satisfactory'

### Judgement justifications

- The majority of students participate adequately in school life, both inside and outside the classroom. In the small minority of the better lessons, particularly in English, they participate in the learning activities enthusiastically. Students demonstrate adequate self-confidence while justifying, asking questions, discussing and interacting within groups. They participate actively in extracurricular activities, assume leadership roles in the school's effective assembly and Students' Council and in competitions like educational talks and the Lego contest.
- In general, students are committed to positive behaviour and act with an adequate sense of awareness about their responsibilities. They show respect to teachers, peers and visitors, as well as to others' views, feelings and beliefs.
- Students feel safe and secure, which shows in their positive attitudes and respectful conduct. Consequently, there are very few incidents of unacceptable behaviour across the school, and where required, appropriate actions are taken by the social counsellor.
- Students show adequate understanding of Bahraini heritage and culture and the values of Islam. These are developed and demonstrated through celebration of Bahrain National Day, religious occasions, Citizenship and Bahrain History and geography lessons and trips to historical sites in Bahrain.
- In general, students attend the school regularly and punctually. However, in the period before examinations, there is a significant decrease in attendance rates.
- Students' independent learning skills and their ability to take responsibility for their own learning are inconsistently developed. In the few better lessons, students demonstrate learning through observation, enquiry in English, report writing, creating posters and presenting the results in front of their classmates.
- In the majority of lessons, and in extracurricular activities, students communicate well and work collaboratively. In the better lessons, students' communication and collaborative working skills are evident in managing discussions, leading group activities and presentations in the morning assembly. However, in the less effective lessons, due to limited opportunities, the development of students' communication and collaborative working skills is limited.

### Areas for improvement

- Students' active participation in lessons.
- Students' ability to learn independently and take more responsibility for their own learning.
- Students' communication skills and ability to work collaboratively, particularly in lessons.

## Quality of processes

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### □ Teaching and learning 'Inadequate'

#### Judgement justifications

- In a very small minority of lessons, a student-centred approach with role-playing, brainstorming and group discussions is implemented effectively. However, the majority of teaching strategies have limited impact due to whole-class teaching being the predominant strategy, along with teacher-led explanation and closed questions and answers, with students mainly being passive observers. The range and effectiveness of these strategies is highly inconsistent and limited, particularly in Arabic and mathematics. The effective use of available resources is limited to a small minority of the better lessons.
- In the majority of lessons, the behaviour management of students is appropriate, due to respectful conduct of students and positive teacher-student relationships. In general, the lessons start on time. However, the weak management of learning time limits the productivity of a significant proportion of lessons, particularly in Arabic, mathematics and science.
- In few better lessons, students are appropriately encouraged to actively participate in lessons through praising words and rewards. However, in the majority of lessons, opportunities for active participation are limited and students merely repeat information conveyed by the teacher.
- In most lessons, the students are assessed individually as well as in groups, by verbal and written enquiry. In a significant number of lessons, assessment is ineffective due to an excessive focus on volunteers' replies and the limited thinking time for less able students. In most lessons, the results of formative assessments are not effectively used to inform teaching and thereby support and meet students' different learning needs. Students' written work lacks constructive feedback to improve its quality.
- In most lessons, the teaching focuses on transmission of knowledge rather than the provision of sufficient opportunities to students to justify, reason and interpret their replies and solve problems. Thus, the opportunities for students to develop their higher order thinking skills in such lessons are limited.
- In the majority of lessons, teaching is mostly directed at one ability level, being either the middle or high ability students. Consequently, students of all abilities are not sufficiently catered for. In lessons, the support to students of different abilities, particularly the non-native Arabic speakers and students with special educational needs in the mainstream classes, is also limited, resulting in their limited progress.



## Areas for improvement

- The range of teaching and learning strategies and resources that promote students' learning.
- Productive use of learning time.
- Use of formative assessment results to inform teaching and meet students' different needs.

### Students' support and guidance 'Satisfactory'

#### Judgement justifications

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The school adequately meets the learning needs of students by assessing and reviewing their attainment data regularly across all levels. The progress made by students is reported to the parents.</li><li>• Remedial classes are offered to low achieving students in all the core subjects. However, the support to non-native Arabic speaking students within lessons is limited.</li><li>• Outstanding students are provided with opportunities to represent the school in external contests such as 'Sastra Prathibha Contest' and events like 'Science India Forum', and 'Students' Innovation Congress'.</li><li>• Talented and gifted students are provided with opportunities to participate in assemblies and inter-school competitions such as debate and Lego competitions.</li><li>• The school provides adequate support to students to enhance their personal development through the provision of lessons on value education, participation in morning assembly programmes and provision of leadership opportunities. These have a positive impact on students' behaviour across the school. The school supports students sensitively whenever</li></ul> | <p>they face problems. Financial support is also extended to support the students in need.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The school provides an adequate range of extracurricular activities to cater for students' interests. These activities include freehand drawing, clay modelling, solo singing in their own mother-tongue, poster competitions on various themes, and celebrations of 'Earth Day', 'Gurgaon', and 'Gandhi Jayanti festival'.</li><li>• The school is adequately successful in the provision of a healthy and safe environment to the students and staff. Regular fire evacuation drills are conducted and students' arrival and dismissal are monitored by support staff. A school nurse is available and fire extinguishers are maintained. However, the maintenance of infrastructure and ventilation in a few toilets is erratic.</li><li>• The induction of new students is highly informal and ineffective, with limited impact on the adaptation of new students to all aspects of school life. Similarly, the advice and guidance given to students regarding the next stage of their education is also limited.</li></ul> |
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- Students with disabilities and with SEN are sensitively supported and are followed up adequately by the SEN specialist to better meet their educational needs. They are segregated from the mainstream students in Sugaya Branch. However, the support to the limited number of students with special educational needs, who are included in mainstream classes, is inadequate due to lack of training to the teaching staff to support such students. Consequently, their academic performance is adversely affected, due to neglect by the mainstream teaching.
- Students are provided with appropriate opportunities to develop life skills through a range of extracurricular activities. In the better lessons, there are sufficient opportunities for peer coaching and presentation. 'Zero periods' and morning assembly programmes are adequately used in promoting presentation and public speaking skills.

### **Areas for improvement**

- Support provided to special educational needs students (SEN) in mainstream lessons.
- The school's infrastructure and maintenance of facilities.
- Induction of new students and guidance given to students regarding the next stage of their education.

## Quality assurance of outcomes and processes

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### □ Leadership, management and governance 'Inadequate'

#### Judgement justifications

- The self-evaluation is informal and lacks the rigorous involvement of the stakeholders. The school's five-year strategic plan aims for school's improvement. However, this planning lacks sufficient links to the self-evaluation results. Additionally, the operational planning lacks accountability, precise timeframes and clear success criteria to measure and monitor the progress of implementation.
  - Although the curriculum review is conducted and subjects' outlines are available, the effective implementation and enrichment of the curriculum to develop understanding and skills and the use of available resources to enrich students' experiences are limited.
  - A number of in-house and external professional development programmes are provided to teachers on various topics including lesson planning, classroom management and life skills. However, the customisation of these professional development programmes and monitoring of their impact on classroom practices lack sufficient rigour. Consequently, the effectiveness of these programmes is limited.
  - Relations between the staff and leadership are positive. An open-door policy and monetary incentives that motivate staff are in place. Staff structure is in place and delegation of responsibilities is as needed.
- However, with a significant proportion of the teaching staff and the middle leadership newly joining in the year 2016-2017, the impact of training programmes and implementation of improvements are limited.
- Heads of departments conduct regular lesson observations, sufficiently focused on students' achievement and sharing of better practices. However, the impact of their feedback to improve the effectiveness of teaching and learning is limited.
  - The school uses its limited resources and facilities, including the computer laboratory and library, to accommodate the increasing number of students. However, these resources are not used regularly and effectively to meet students' needs.
  - The school has developed adequate links with the local community, in addition to parental involvement through meetings, such as with the Royal Charity Organization who extend financial support, and visits to a number of local and international schools to share the better practices and procedures. These links are sufficient in having a positive impact on the quality of support provided to students and on their personal development.
  - The Board of Directors sufficiently supports the school's professional

leadership in financial matters and planning for expansion, and they have clear input to investing in the staff and the learning resources. However, the impact of the Board's efforts in providing high quality outcomes, particularly the students' academic achievement, is limited. Moreover, the effectiveness of the

Board in holding the school leaders accountable for the school's performance lacks sufficient rigour.

- There is a significant mismatch between the judgements in the school's self-evaluation form (SEF) and the review team's judgements of school's performance.

### **Areas for improvement**

- Rigorous self-evaluation and using the results to update planning.
- Strategic and action plans.
- The provision and utilisation of learning resources in line with curriculum needs.
- Customisation of professional development programmes to teachers' needs and monitoring their impact on classroom practices.

## Appendix: Characteristics of the school

Name of the school (Arabic)	مدرسة الأفاق الحديثة ذ.م.													
Name of the school (English)	The New Horizon School W.L.L.													
Year of establishment	2000													
Address	Main Branch: Building 921, Road 431, Block 504 2 <sup>nd</sup> Branch: Building 77, Road 28, Block 328													
Town / Village / Governorate	Jannusan / Northern Suqaya/ Capital													
School's Contacts	17595372				Fax		17595374							
School's e-mail	thenhs.bahrain@gmail.com													
School's website	www.nhsbahrain.com													
Age range of students	6-12 years													
Grades (e.g. 1 to 12)	Primary				Middle				High					
	1-6				-				-					
Number of students	Boys		804		Girls		698		Total		1,502			
Students' social background	Most students are from middle income families													
Classes per grade	Grade	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
	Classes	13	9	9	6	5	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Number of administrative staff	19													
Number of teaching staff	83													
Curriculum	Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE)													
Main language(s) of instruction	English													
Principal's tenure in the school	17 years													
External assessment and examinations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The International Benchmark Test (IBT) by Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER).</li> <li>The Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) Assessment.</li> </ul>													

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BQA national examinations (a very small proportion of students).</li> </ul>
<b>Accreditation (if applicable)</b>	Not applicable
<b>Major recent changes in the school</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grade 1 classes in Sugaya branch have been relocated to Jannusan branch since April 2017.</li> <li>• Special educational needs students (SEN) have been shifted to Suqaya Branch.</li> <li>• A blended education approach initiated in 2016-2017 to integrate technology with project based learning.</li> </ul>