



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

Directorate of Private Schools & Kindergartens Reviews Review Report

**Al Raja School
Manama – Capital Governorate
Kingdom of Bahrain**

**Date of Review: 20-22 March 2017
SP049-C2-R035**

Introduction

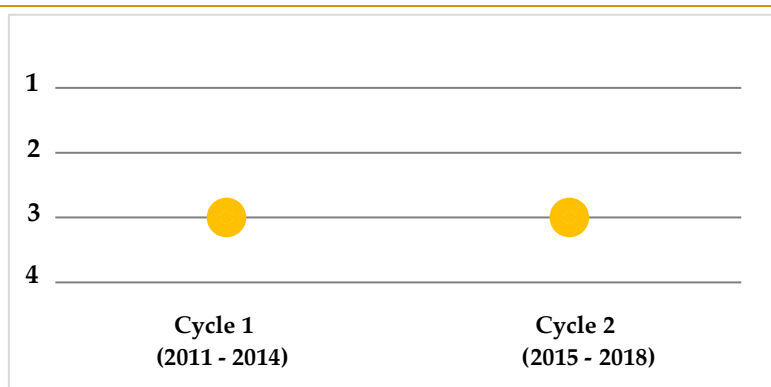
The Directorate of Private Schools & Kindergartens Reviews (DPS), which is a part of the Education & Training Quality Authority (BQA), conducted this review over three days by a team of eight reviewers. During the review, reviewers observed lessons and other activities, scrutinised students' written works 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	Middle	High	Overall
Quality of outcomes	Students' academic achievement	3	2	3	3
	Students' personal development	3	3	3	3
Quality of processes	Teaching and learning	3	2	3	3
	Students' support and guidance	3	3	3	3
Quality assurance of outcomes and processes	Leadership, management and governance	3	2	3	3
Capacity to improve		3			
The school's overall effectiveness		3			

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



School Report

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 'Satisfactory'

Judgement justifications

- Across the school, the standards achieved by most students are satisfactory in Arabic and in mathematics, but better in English and science. The standards of Middle School students are good.
- Students are punctual, though their effective and confident participation in lessons, particularly in the Elementary and High Schools, is inconsistent. They display noticeable commitment to positive behaviour and respect for others' views and feelings. Consequently, students feel safe and secure, and free from any intimidation.
- The effective use of resources and facilities with impact on students' active participation in school life and on their learning is satisfactory, though it is better in Middle School. There is limited challenge to students of all abilities, which in many cases limits their progress. Although assessment for learning is adequately implemented, effective use of the results to provide support to the different groups of students, especially to low achievers is inconsistent. In the Middle School, the interactive teaching has a better impact on students' achievement.

- Although the school is effective in meeting students' needs to enhance their personal development and support them sensitively whenever they face problems, the support to meet the learning needs of different groups of students is erratic.
- Students' different interests and experiences are reinforced through the provision of a good range of extracurricular activities. However, the opportunities for students to promote life skills vary. Across the school, the learning needs of different groups of students are adequately met.
- Strategic and improvement planning is in place and is adequately linked to the school's self-evaluation, vision and mission, but the implementation of planning and monitoring its impact on school's outcomes is inconsistent.
- A range of professional development programmes is provided, with adequate impact only on the majority of classroom practices.
- Parents and students are very satisfied with the school's provisions and outcomes.

Main positive features

- Students' behaviour and respect for others' views and feelings.
- Students' feeling safe and secure, and free from intimidation.
- Provision of extracurricular activities to enhance students' experiences.

Recommendations

- Raise students' academic achievement by improving the effectiveness of teaching and learning, focusing on:
 - use of teaching and learning strategies and resources
 - rigorous use of assessment for learning to support the students of all abilities, particularly the low achievers
 - challenging students of all abilities.
- Provide more systematic and rigorous support programmes to students to meet their different learning needs.
- Increase the effectiveness of leadership, management and governance by:
 - ensuring the effective execution and monitoring of the school's plans
 - rigorous implementation of teachers' professional development programmes into productive practices to have a clear impact on students' achievement.

□ Capacity to improve 'Satisfactory'

Judgement justifications

- Middle School students show high standards in lessons, in their academic work and in the examinations, but the standards of the Elementary and High School students are only satisfactory.
 - Improvement procedures are adequately in place to support the students, particularly in personal development, induction of students and preparing them for the next stage, and supporting students with disabilities.
 - Strategic and action planning are in place, addressing the strategic goals and with clear links to the self-evaluation, but
- the implementation of planning and monitoring its impact is inconsistent.
- Professional development is adequately linked to teachers' appraisals, with a better impact in the Middle School. The facilities and available resources, including laboratories and library, are adequately utilised to support learning.
 - The positive working environment and professional relationships between the school leadership, staff and students has a clear impact on teacher retention, with low turnover.

Quality of outcomes

□ Students' academic achievement 'Satisfactory'

Judgement justifications

- In the internal examinations, students have achieved high pass rates in core subjects consistently over the last three years.
 - In the 2015-2016 internal examinations, across the school, students achieved high proficiency rates ranging between 48% in the High School and 98% in the Elementary School. The better rates are in Arabic and in English, but they are comparatively low in mathematics being just 23% for Grade 12.
 - The tracking data of the same cohort since 2013-2014 shows that in internal assessments most students are maintaining their high performance.
 - Although a very small minority of High School students take the Advanced Placement examinations, students' performance in 2016 is generally high with the proficiency rates ranging between 50% in physics and 100% in chemistry. However, these rates are low in microeconomics and psychology where only 33% and 25% of students attained the proficiency rates respectively.
 - In the 2016 Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT), Grade 11 students performed better in Evidence Based Reading and Writing than in mathematics, with only a minority of students attaining scores at or above the international mean.
 - In TIMSS 2015, the school's scores were in the satisfactory range for Grade 8.
- However, in Grade 4 the scores were well below 500, yet in the satisfactory range.
- In Measures of Academic Progress (MAP), the difference between the students' performance in fall and spring 2015-2016 indicates average progress.
 - The standards demonstrated by Middle School students in core subjects are good. However, across the school, the standards demonstrated by most students are better in English and science but only satisfactory in Arabic and mathematics.
 - In lessons and written work, the Middle School students are making good progress. However, progress is only satisfactory in the Elementary and High schools. The progress made by the less able students, particularly in the Elementary and High Schools, is less effective.
 - In English and Arabic, students of all age groups show good listening, speaking and reading comprehension skills. However, students' extended and creative writing skills are insufficiently developed.
 - In mathematics, most students have adequate basic arithmetic and geometrical skills. Nevertheless, students' problem solving skills, particularly of the less able students, are underdeveloped.
 - In science, most students develop adequate understanding of scientific concepts. High School students

demonstrate good practical skills. However, students' inquiry skills are inconsistent, and in the case of the less

able students these skills are underdeveloped.

Areas for improvement

- Students' creative and extended writing skills, both in Arabic and English across the school.
- Students' inquiry and problem solving skills, particularly for those who are less able.

□ Students' personal development 'Satisfactory'

Judgement justifications

- The majority of students across the school participate confidently in activities and events outside the lessons, including drama, friend's club activities, sports day and family day celebrations. Elementary School students enjoy leadership roles through the 'Little Social Counsellor', and the Middle and High School students through the Model United Nations, Students' Council and VIP committees.
- Students' active and enthusiastic participation in lessons is good in the Middle School, though only satisfactory in the Elementary and High Schools. In lessons, the opportunities for students to effectively participate and handle leadership roles are inconsistent. In the better lessons, students take part in leading their group, initiating ideas, justifying replies and presenting their work.
- Students show high self-discipline, maturity and respectful behaviour in lessons and around the school. They have a high respect for the opinions and feelings of others. They also contribute effectively to increasing awareness about the environment and related issues through the Eco-Rangers Club activities.
- Students enjoy good relationships with each other and with their teachers, which is showing in their feeling safe and secure in the school and evident in the scarcity of misbehaviour incidents.
- Students show appropriate understanding of Bahraini culture, citizenship and Islamic values, evident in a week of National Day celebrations and visits to historical sites including different forts and Bait Al-Quran.
- Most students attend the school regularly and are punctual to lessons.
- In lessons, the opportunities for students to develop independent learning skills are inconsistent. In successful lessons, students' highly secure independent learning skills are evident from their self-study, creating posters and using dictionaries, particularly in the Middle School, but they are inconsistent in the rest of the school.
- In the majority of lessons across the school, whenever the opportunities are

provided, students communicate appropriately and their adequately developed collaborative working skills are evident in activities such as 'Art

Show' and group work. They also creatively participate in media committee activities to design and prepare the school magazine.

Areas for improvement

- Students' effective participation and assuming leadership roles, particularly in lessons.
- Students' better understanding of citizenship values.
- Students' independent learning skills and their effective communication.

Quality of processes

□ Teaching and learning 'Satisfactory'

Judgement justifications

- In the better lessons, teachers use a variety of effective teaching and learning strategies such as games, role play, discussions, think-pair-share, and group work, which contributes to effective learning particularly in the Middle School. However, in the rest of the grades their effective use is varied.
 - In successful lessons, particularly in the Middle School, teachers use a variety of educational resources such as active boards, flash cards, PowerPoint presentations, video clips and worksheets which increase students' productive engagement. However, in the majority of lessons the impact of the resources used is erratic.
 - In the majority of lessons, students are engaged in the teaching and learning process. The lessons are mostly orderly, though the effective use of learning time is inconsistent. This is mostly due to fast transition of activities and inappropriate allocation of thinking time, particularly in the Elementary and High School lessons.
 - Students are generally encouraged and motivated to discuss their views and opinions. They are also provided with opportunities to give short presentations and share their points of view in lessons.
- Assessment methods include verbal, written, individual and group assessments. In the better lessons, assessment results are utilised to meet students' educational needs. However, the effective use of assessment results to provide support to the different groups of students, especially to low achievers, is inconsistent, adversely affecting their progress.
 - In the better lessons, particularly in English and science, teachers provide opportunities for students to develop their higher order thinking skills by brainstorming, creating models, scientifically analysing facts and critically expressing their viewpoints. However, across the school, the opportunities for students to develop higher order thinking skills are not well established.
 - Homework is regularly assigned, and in a small minority of instances, particularly in High School in science and English, it is differentiated. However, the effective implementation of differentiation, and challenging the students of all abilities to broaden their capacity and to improve their academic attainment and progress to the highest level, is limited.

Areas for improvement

- Productive use of learning time, particularly in the Elementary and High Schools.

- The effective use of assessment results to provide support to the different groups of students, especially to low achievers.
- Developing higher order thinking skills and challenge students of all abilities.

□ Students' support and guidance 'Satisfactory'

Judgement justifications

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school has implemented various assessment schemes to monitor students' academic standards and track their progress. However, the effective use of this data to systematically support the low and high achievers is inconsistent. • Although the school doesn't have a systematic approach to identify the gifted and talented students, a few high attaining students are encouraged to participate in after school activities, in addition to celebrating their Art work around the school. • Although the more able students are recognised, honoured and motivated to take Advanced Placement courses, the classroom support given to these students to meet their learning needs and to help them to further improve their in-depth understanding and skills is limited. • The school is very successful in providing sensitive guidance and counselling by supervisors and counsellors, enabling students to build their character and overcome their challenges. The school supports students well through providing value talks and workshops including 'Draw a smile', 'Fly High' and celebrating 'Friendship week'. • The school provides a good range of extracurricular activities to enrich students' experiences, such as student- | <p>led presentations, the Tribes' Group work, field trips and sports events.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school premises are well maintained. Evacuation drills are regularly conducted. The school's very effective infirmary services, first aid boxes and fire extinguishers in all school facilities contribute well to a safe environment. • New students are inducted well through the school buddy system and a general meeting involving students and parents. • Through school counsellors, students are prepared well for moving to senior school. High School students are guided well for the next academic stages through 'Career Café' by the alumni, and seminars by the representatives of various universities. • Students with disabilities and with Special Educational Needs (SEN) are also sensitively supported and are followed up well by the SEN specialist to better meet their educational needs. • Opportunities for the students to develop their life skills, such as through delivering presentations are available only in the better lessons. Outside the lessons, they are supported in developing their leadership skills through the roles of 'Little Social Counsellor', the Students' Council, morning assembly programmes and 'Leadership Week'. |
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Areas for improvement

- Meeting the different learning needs of all groups of students through more systematic remedial and enrichment programmes.
- Enhancing students' life skills.

Quality assurance of outcomes and processes

□ Leadership, management and governance ‘Satisfactory’

Judgement justifications

- The school’s vision and mission are adequately shared with the students and staff, and have an adequate impact on the school’s general performance, evident from the satisfactory standards achieved by students in academics and in their personal development.
- Self-evaluation is regularly conducted involving all stakeholders, and has clear links to school improvement goals that are annually reviewed. The school’s strategic and improvement planning adequately address the school’s general goals. The curriculum is regularly revised and yearly planning is sufficiently aligned with students’ age related expectations. However, implementation of the school’s planning and monitoring is not rigorous enough to impact the school’s priorities and outcomes.
- In-house development programmes, adequately linked to teachers’ appraisals, are regularly provided to teachers on various topics including ‘Professionalism’, ‘Curriculum Alignment’ and ‘Differentiated Instructions’. External training programmes are also provided, particularly for the High School teachers of Advanced Placement courses. The impact of these programmes is good on the quality of learning in the Middle School, but is less effective in the Elementary and High Schools.
- Though feedback is regularly provided during class observations there is no follow up on this to ensure consistency of productive practices and a high impact on students’ performance.
- The school has a staff structure with clearly defined tasks. Relations among staff and leadership are positive. An open-door policy and non-monetary incentives are in place to motivate staff, which positively impact staff retention overall.
- Resources and facilities are adequately used to meet the learning needs of students. However, the effective use of these to provide a strong impact on students’ active participation in school life and on their learning varies widely. In the better lessons, active boards and video clips are used well to support learning. However, in the majority of lessons active boards are merely used as a source of data show.
- The school maintains good links with the local and wider community, which supports students’ academic and personal development. Educational trips to Malaysia and the United Kingdom enrich students’ experiences and learning.
- The Board of Directors makes positive contributions to the school’s overall development, particularly in financial matters and expansion plans. The roles of

the Board and the school's professional leadership are respected. The Board

holds the school leadership sufficiently accountable for the school's performance.

Areas for improvement

- The implementation of planning, and monitoring its impact on school's priorities and outcomes.
- The impact of the professional development programmes on teachers' performance in Elementary and High Schools.
- Effective use of resources and facilities with impact on students' active participation in school life and on students' learning.

Appendix: Characteristics of the school

Name of the school (Arabic)	مدرسة الرجاء													
Name of the school (English)	Al Raja School													
Year of establishment	1899													
Address	Building 1940, Road 639, Block 306													
Town / Village / Governorate	Manama / Capital													
School's Contacts	17254508				Fax				17273073					
School's e-mail	admin.english@alrajabahrain.org													
School's website	www.alrajabahrain.org													
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		281		Girls		255		Total		536			
Students' social background	Most students are from middle socio-economic backgrounds													
Classes per grade	Grade		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
	Classes		2	2	2	2	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2
Number of administrative staff	16													
Number of teaching staff	53													
Curriculum	American, Ministry of Education, Kingdom of Bahrain and Lebanese													
Main language(s) of instruction	Arabic and English													
Principal's tenure in the school	5 years													
External assessment and examinations	MAP (Measures of Academic Performance) in English and Maths, AP (Advanced Placement) Exams, PSAT (Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test)													
Accreditation (if applicable)	AdvanceED / North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement													
Major recent changes in the school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accreditation awarded in January 2017. 													