



الهيئة الوطنية
للمؤهلات وضمان جودة التعليم والتدريب
National Authority for Qualifications &
Quality Assurance of Education & Training

Directorate of Private Schools & Kindergartens Reviews Review Report

**Al Wisam School
Abu Saybaa – Northern Governorate
Kingdom of Bahrain**

Date of Review: 23-25 November 2015

SP017-C2-R009

Introduction

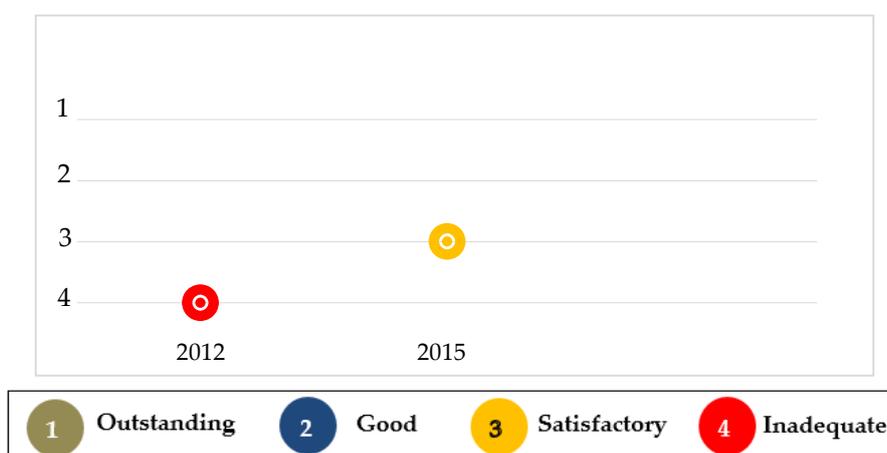
The Directorate of Private Schools & Kindergartens Reviews (DPS), which is a part of the National Authority for Qualifications and Quality Assurance of Education and Training (QQA), conducted this review over three days by a team of seven reviewers. During the review, reviewers observed lessons and other activities, scrutinised students' written works and analysed 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	Students' academic achievement	2	3	3	3
	Students' personal development	1	1	1	1
Quality of processes	Teaching and learning	2	2	2	2
	Students' support and guidance	2	2	2	2
Quality assurance of outcomes and processes	Leadership, management and governance	2	2	2	2
Capacity to improve		2			
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

- The school's overall performance has improved in all aspects since the previous review.
- Although students' academic achievement is satisfactory, their personal development is outstanding and all the remaining aspects are judged to be good.
- Students' achievement is satisfactory overall. Students in the primary school make good progress in lessons and in their written work and internal examinations. However, students' achievement in middle and high school is only satisfactory, as they progress better in lessons than they do in their written work and in internal and external examinations in most subjects. In science and problem solving, students' skills are only satisfactory.
- Students' personal development is outstanding. Students participate enthusiastically and actively with high confidence in lessons and in the wide range of school activities. They also show exemplary behaviour and commitment to Islamic values and understanding of the Bahraini culture and heritage.
- A good range of effective teaching and learning strategies and resources are used

in most lessons. This results in students' good progress and understanding. Effective assessment is used to measure students' progress in lessons and support and challenge students accordingly. However, opportunities for developing students' higher order thinking skills vary in the different lessons.

- Students are well supported academically through effective programmes that are provided for the different groups of students. Students' interests and experiences are enriched by the wide range of extracurricular activities and clubs provided. When students face any problems they are

sensitively and carefully supported. The school provides a healthy and safe environment.

- Leadership, management and governance are good. Rigorous self-evaluation processes are implemented in all aspects of the school with a particular focus on the quality of teaching. The results are used well to set strategic and action plans. These are monitored rigorously by the senior and middle leadership for impact on students' academic and personal progress. Excellent professional relationships prevail among the staff, which provides the drive towards improvements.
- Parents and students are highly satisfied with the school's provision.

Main positive features

- The rigorous self-evaluation and monitoring of performance which are linked to well-developed strategic and action plans.
- The strong interpersonal and professional relationships that prevail between all staff. This helps to build and sustain the drive and ambition for overall improvement.
- The effective teaching and learning strategies and use of learning resources, which leads to the good progress in students' achievement especially in lessons.
- Students' outstanding personal development reflected in their high self-confidence, enthusiasm and highly active participation in school life in and out of lessons.

Recommendations

- Raise students' achievement in the middle and high schools, particularly in science and problem solving.
- Further improve teaching and learning with a focus on:
 - using assessment for learning to support students in lessons and in their written work
 - providing sufficient challenge suitable for all students of all levels
 - developing higher order thinking skills.
- Review the school's assessment policy as a contribution to improvement in students' achievements.

□ Capacity to improve 'Good'

Judgement justifications

- The school monitors and reviews its performance rigorously. There is a strong focus on monitoring teaching and curriculum review to check outcomes. These have a positive impact on students' achievements and personal development and are key to the resulting overall improvement in school performance. However, further review of the students' assessment policy remains one of the challenges that the school has yet to work on.
 - The school has established a strong leadership team through developing and supporting a middle leadership to monitor performance and establish a professional ethos that focuses well on improvement and teamwork.
- Strategic and action plans are based on self-evaluation results and on awareness of the school's areas for improvements. They are periodically followed up and updated according to school needs.
 - Professional development programmes focus well on improvement priorities based on needs. They are efficiently followed up to achieve an impact on classroom practices.
 - There is improvement in students' achievement, in particular the good progress students are making in primary school, and their outstanding personal development.

Quality of outcomes

□ Students' academic achievement 'Satisfactory'

Judgement justifications

- In internal examinations, in lessons and in their academic work, primary school students demonstrate standards that are above their age-related expectations.
- In all the core subjects, across the school, students' attain high pass rates in internal examinations. However, their proficiency rates are low in science, in the middle and high school, such as 43% in Grade 7 and 8, around 38% in physics and chemistry in Grade 10, and 34% in physics in Grade 11.
- In external benchmarks, students' attainment in Arabic is high. However, in English, mathematics, business studies and information and communication technology (ICT) students' attainment is weak, with the majority of students only securing very low grades.
- Tracking the academic performance of students over the past three years indicates that the majority of students are either maintaining their standards or making an adequate improvement.
- Across the school, students' standards are high in English and their communication skills are well-developed. For example, in primary school, students can pronounce difficult words and accurately answer questions related to text. They can accurately identify and use connectors to write long sentences. In middle school, students can explain text with a range of vocabulary and good levels of understanding.
- Across the school, students demonstrate strong speaking skills in Arabic, with a secure use of Classical Arabic. Students have secure basic arithmetic and algebraic skills. However, their problem solving skills are less developed.
- Primary school students are making strong progress in lessons and in their academic work in all the core subjects. Additionally, middle school students make good progress in Arabic and English lessons.
- In science, the majority of students, particularly in the middle and high schools, demonstrate standards in line with their age related expectations. For example, middle school students can identify different nutrients, and the majority can explain their role, sources and related deficiency diseases. In high school, the majority of students can explain energy transfer and describe Sankey diagrams. Students also show age-appropriate knowledge about proteins and nucleic acids.
- Middle and high school students demonstrate age appropriate standards in their academic work, particularly in Arabic and science.

Areas for improvement

- The standards and progress of students in lessons in middle and high school, particularly in science.
- The standards and progress achieved by middle and high school students in their written work, particularly in Arabic and science.
- Students' problem-solving skills.

□ Students' personal development 'Outstanding'

Judgement justifications

- Students demonstrate high self-confidence in the vast majority of lessons and express their views freely. They participate with great enthusiasm in class activities, discussions and cooperative groups, taking leading roles in many lessons through role-play and presentations.
- Almost all students participate enthusiastically in school events, exhibitions, field trips and other extracurricular activities. These are well-founded and their variety meets students' needs exceptionally well. Activities are available at break times within clubs such as Quran, music, sports, ICT and art.
- Students show excellent levels of respect to their teachers and each other. They work in harmony and demonstrate positive attitudes towards others' feelings, particularly those from different cultures and nationalities.
- Students are self-driven to take care of themselves and the school's property. This is evident from their mature behaviour during break times and their care of school fabric and belongings.
- Students feel extremely safe and secure in a friendly, supportive and family environment. This is reflected in both their sense of belonging to the school and expressing their needs freely, as well as confidently asking for support in and out of lessons.
- Students have deep understanding of Bahraini heritage and culture which is thoroughly encouraged through the curriculum, school cultural corners and celebrating National events such as National Day. Students show a strong commitment to Islamic values that is reflected through their behaviour and personalities.
- Students' attendance and punctuality to school is very high, and they have a clear understanding of the school's policies and procedures. They are punctual to lessons and are encouraged through interesting homeroom lessons and school events.
- Most students develop independent learning skills when opportunities are provided, for example by using dictionaries and analysing texts, learning mathematics through online games and conducting research in science lessons.

- Students work exceptionally well in pairs and small groups during lessons and in the different activities. They show excellent collaborative and discussion skills, such as preparing for Model United Nations assembly

(MUNA) and INJAZ entrepreneurship programme. They also communicate well when they play together during recess, and older students take good care of younger ones.

Areas for improvement

- Opportunities provided for students to further develop their independent learning skills.

Quality of processes

□ Teaching and learning 'Good'

Judgement justifications

- In most lessons teachers use a wide range of effective teaching and learning strategies such as discussion and collaborative work. These are successfully amended to suit students, such as learning through games in the primary school and role-play in the middle and high school.
- Most teachers use different educational resources such as interactive boards, video clips, flash cards and worksheets. These help to engage students and increase their enjoyment and involvement in the lesson activities.
- In the most successful lessons students are highly productive and make excellent progress. Students are encouraged to display their knowledge, either through short presentations from their desks or by demonstrations on the white boards.
- In the vast majority of lessons teachers manage students' behaviour well. Most lessons are orderly and productive and are characterised by good introductions, clear instructions and effective assessment. However, in a few satisfactory lessons time management is less successful.
- Effective on-going verbal and written assessment is used to measure students' progress in lessons. This is mostly done through group and individual activities with constructive feedback usually provided. In the best lessons, peer-assessment and self-assessment are effectively used to promote independent learning skills.
- Most teachers mark students' work well, with positive and encouraging comments sometimes being made. Some teachers provide constructive comments about how students could improve and move to the next stage.
- In good and outstanding lessons students of different abilities are challenged through open activities that cater for most students' interests and abilities. Support is provided to low achievers to help them overcome their difficulties. Nevertheless, in most science lessons in middle and high school high achievers are not challenged sufficiently as tasks are set to meet the needs of middle-ability students. In consequence, students who find learning hard are not given the understanding that they need.
- Differentiation is successfully implemented in most lessons, for example in Arabic and English when they are differentiated by the tasks given.
- In better lessons, students' higher order thinking skills are developed adequately and they are encouraged to think critically through questions, brain storming and expressing their views. This is particularly the case in Arabic, English and some mathematics lessons. However, overall the promotion of higher-order thinking skills is inconsistent.

Areas for improvement

- Developing higher order thinking skills across the school.
- Time management in a few satisfactory lessons.

□ Students' support and guidance 'Good'

Judgement justifications

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The school successfully identifies students with different learning needs and provides effective support programmes. Gifted and talented students are supported through their participation in different clubs and programmes. Students with learning difficulties are supported with additional sessions during breaks. This contributes well to their overall academic achievement.• The school rigorously tracks and monitors students' personal development. Where required, behaviour management programmes are implemented effectively. Students receive special care and sensitive support when facing problems. This has a significant positive impact on enhancing students' personal attributes when facing problems.• An extensive range of co-curricular activities are provided including field trips, club activities and science fairs. These successfully meet the needs and interests of students. Students also have opportunities to participate in activities such as 'MUNA', 'Trade Quest' entrepreneurship programme, charitable activities, committees such as anti-bullying and anti-littering, talent | <p>shows and various inter-school competitions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The school provides an attractive and supportive learning environment that ensures the health and well-being of all students. This includes the excellent supervision of students and well-rehearsed evacuation procedures. The school canteen snacks provide healthy choices.• The school provides a high level of care to students with special educational needs and disabilities. The learning support teachers sensitively help them and excellent modified learning activities, such as provision of a speech therapist, match their different learning styles very well.• Effective induction and transition procedures at different levels enable students to settle easily and successfully as well as being adequately prepared with basic skills for the next stage of their education.• The school's provision to promote students' life skills is effective. This includes relevant lessons on a regular basis and exposure to AJYAL and INJAZ leadership programmes. These promote students' social intelligence and help to develop their confidence. |
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Areas for improvement

- Monitoring of academic progress in the various support programmes to ensure that students' varying learning needs are met.

Quality assurance of outcomes and processes

□ Leadership, management and governance 'Good'

Judgement justifications

- The school's self-evaluation processes are rigorous and effective. They result from a wide-ranging review of the school's provision including curriculum delivery, assessment policies and, particularly, the quality of teaching. Information gained is thoroughly vetted and evaluated by middle and senior leaders and is then used to support the preparation of annual development plans. A well-founded and successful continuous professional development programme has been developed and fully integrated into the development plans. Professional development programmes focus well on improvement priorities, being based on needs. They are properly followed up to review their impact on classroom practices. However, there is still the need to focus on students' learning and written work rather than just teaching.
- The strategic plan is of good quality. It was developed with the input of all stakeholders and provides an effective tool to both steer the school over the plan's four-year period and to support the school's vision and mission.
- Performance management procedures are effective. For teaching staff they are the result of the close observation of teaching, including visits from the heads of departments and senior leaders. Non-teaching staff have performance management reviews. Both streams lead to annual individual development plans that are developed in consultation with the member of staff.
- Middle and senior leadership is strong, with all being committed and dedicated to improving the school. Their individual roles are pivotal to the school's improved effectiveness. Middle managers are supported and challenged well by the senior leadership team.
- There are excellent professional relationships amongst the staff, both teaching and non-teaching. Teamwork is strong, commitment to improvement is evident at all levels and the staff enjoy working in the school.
- There have been many improvements in the school's facilities and resources since the previous review. Financial resources have been used carefully and well to enhance the school environment and to improve provision. For example the library, although further development is planned, provides good quality ICT and other resources and a suitable range of texts. In addition there are new buildings and a primary ICT laboratory.
- The school establishes effective links with the local community to enrich students' learning, for example visiting local charities, links with local schools such as St. Christopher's and Riffa Views Schools,

and participating in Ministry of Education competitions.

- Governors play an active role in the strategic management of the school. They successfully hold the Principal and school leadership to account. They

provide good leadership in policy making, goal-setting and checking the school's progress towards securing its vision and mission.

Areas for improvement

- Greater focus is required by middle leadership on learning and scrutiny of students' work when monitoring the quality of teaching.
- Evaluation of the current assessment policies is required to contribute to better students' achievement.

Appendix: Characteristics of the school

Name of the school (Arabic)	مدرسة الوسام													
Name of the school (English)	Al Wisam School													
Year of establishment	2004													
Address	Building 81, Road 54, Block 475, Abu Sayba													
Town / Village / Governorate	Abu Sayba, Northern													
School's Contacts	17699595				Fax				17699883					
School's e-mail	info@awis.edu.bh													
School's website	http://awis.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		264		Girls		200		Total		464			
Students' social background	Limited to middle income families													
Classes per grade	Grade	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
	Classes	4	3	3	3	3	3	2	1	1	1	2	1	
Number of administrative staff	34													
Number of teaching staff	62													
Curriculum	International Cambridge Curriculum Ministry of Education (MoE) for Arabic subjects													
Main language(s) of instruction	English and Arabic													
Principal's tenure in the school	2 years													
External assessment and examinations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • QQA National Examination for Grades 3, 6, 9 and 12. • MoE for Grades 4-12 for citizenship. • Internal General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) Cambridge and Edexcel Boards for Grade 10. • Advanced Subsidiary Level (AS)/Advanced Level (A Level) Optional. 													
Accreditation (if applicable)	-													

Major recent changes in the school	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• New appointments in 2015-2016: a curriculum coordinator, a college counsellor and 23 new teachers.• Changes in 2014-2015:<ul style="list-style-type: none">– appointment of a Vice Principal– allocating periods for life skills– allocating reading classes, learning support and intervention programmes for primary and middle schools.• The addition of a new IT lab for the primary stage.
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