



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

Directorate of Private Schools & Kindergartens Reviews Review Report

Confidential

**French School
Busaiteen - Muharraq Governorate
Kingdom of Bahrain**

Date of Review: 1 – 3 April 2013

SP031-C1-R031

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The Directorate of Private Schools & Kindergartens Reviews

The Directorate of Private Schools & Kindergartens Reviews (DPS) is part of the National Authority for Qualifications and Quality Assurance of Education and Training (QQA) that was officially set up in 2008 as an independent body governed and supervised by the Council of Ministers. It is established to raise standards in education and training.

The DPS is responsible for:

- evaluating and reporting on the quality of provision in all private schools and kindergartens
- establishing success measures
- spreading best practice
- making recommendations for private school/kindergarten improvements.

Review involves monitoring standards and evaluating the quality of provision against a clear set of indicators. The reviews are independent, objective and transparent. They provide important information for private schools and kindergartens about their strengths and areas for improvement to assist in focusing efforts and resources as part of the cycle of school improvement in order to raise standards.

Review grades are awarded a four-point scale:

Grade description	Interpretation
Outstanding (1)	Outcomes or provision are at least good in all areas and outstanding in the majority.
Good (2)	Outcomes or provision are at least satisfactory in all areas and good in the majority.
Satisfactory (3)	A basic level of adequacy. There are no major weaknesses, or the majority of areas are satisfactory. Some areas may be good.
Inadequate (4)	There are major weaknesses or the majority of areas are inadequate.

Introduction

This review was conducted over three days, by a team of seven reviewers. During the review, reviewers observed lessons and other activities, examined students' written and other work, analysed data concerning the school's performance and other documents, and talked with staff, students and parents. This report summarises their findings and recommendations.

Characteristics of the school

School's name		French School Lycée Français Mission laïque Française (MLF)											
School's type		Private											
Year of establishment		2008											
Age range of students		3-17 years											
Grades (e.g. 1 to 12)		Primary				Middle				High			
		1 to 5				-				6 to 11			
Number of students		Boys	140	Girls	160	Total		300					
Students' social background		Students come from multiple nationalities and cultures with middle income families.											
Classes per grade	Grade	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
	Classes	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	-
Town /Village		Busaiteen											
Governorate		Muharraq											
Number of administrative staff		12											
Number of teaching staff		33											
Curriculum		French Ministry of Education											
Main language(s) of instruction		French											
Principal's tenure		4 years											
External assessment and examinations		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> French national assessment (Grades 2 & 5) French Brevet examination (Grade 9). 											
Accreditation (if applicable)		French Ministry of Education											
Number of students in the following categories according to the school's classification		Outstanding			Gifted & Talented			Physical Disabilities			Learning Difficulties		
		-			-			-			3		
Major recent changes in the school		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school has moved to new premises and has plans to develop its building so that all levels of studies can 											

	<p>be taught</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The 'classe de seconde' (Year 10) was approved by the French Ministry of Education in 2013. The next step is to get the approval for the terminal years (Years 11 & 12).
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Provisional

Table of review judgements awarded

Aspect	Grade: Description			
The school's overall effectiveness	2: Good			
The school's capacity to improve	2: Good			
	Elementary / Primary	Middle / Intermediate	High / Secondary	Overall
Students' academic achievement	1	-	1	1
Students' personal development	1	-	1	1
The quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning	2	-	2	2
The quality of the curriculum implementation	2	-	2	2
The quality of support and guidance for students	1	-	1	1
The quality and effectiveness of leadership, management and governance	2	-	2	2

Key:

- 1: Outstanding
- 2: Good
- 3: Satisfactory
- 4: Inadequate

Review judgements

Overall effectiveness

- How effective is the school in meeting the needs of students and their parents?**

Grade: 2 Good

This is a good school which secures outstanding outcomes for its students both in terms of their academic achievement and personal development. Whilst progress is consistently outstanding, groups of students who find learning difficult do not do as well as they might in a few lessons. Progress in Arabic is satisfactory. Nevertheless, the school's overall attainment by successive cohorts of students when examined in Grades 2, 5 and 9 is well above average. Good leadership and teaching ensures students' high levels of success and provides excellent guidance, which utilises strong support from families. The school is not outstanding due to only satisfactory accommodation and resources for secondary school students at this time, and because some adjustments are necessary to bring the curriculum and teaching to exemplary standards.

- How strong is the school's capacity to improve?**

Grade: 2 Good

The school is highly successful in ensuring excellent outcomes for its students and is well set to continue to be so. It has a good capacity to improve because of this consistent record and focused planning. Parents and students are pleased with the school and appreciate the highly reliable educational outcomes that are secured year on year. Significant to the school's capacity to improve is securing the completion of the school's new buildings. The staff and school community members have the attributes needed to make the necessary adjustments to bring teaching and curriculum implementation to match those of the highest quality in international education. Secondary school students' accommodation is currently a limiting factor in the quality of the educational experiences these students receive.

Students' achievement

□ How well do students achieve in their academic work?

Grade: 1 Outstanding

Students' achievement in core subjects shows outstanding standards in French national evaluations in Grades 2, 5 and 9. The school's scores are consistently 20% higher than the French national average and when aligned to other similar MLF schools. Results in each phase are similarly well above average. Students' standards are high on entry and sustained throughout the grades from primary into secondary. This high achievement on entry and through the school is atypical. Bahraini students, who constitute a significant proportion of the school population, also achieve high standards and make excellent progress.

Although standards in mathematics, English, science and French are consistently high, they are only satisfactory in Arabic where the different levels and linguistic needs of students within the same age range are not as well catered for. In English and French, students demonstrate strong oral communication skills as they have the intellectual rigour to adapt their language to various situations. In science and mathematics, students' analytical and problem-solving skills are high and improve quickly through the educational phases. The well above average standards demonstrated by students in key subjects are supported by the school's focus on vocabulary acquisition, creative writing, geometry and data handling, areas where students obtain lower but still good scores in external examinations. Low achievers and students with special educational needs, who constitute a minority of the school population, demonstrate lower levels of attainment and rates of progress. Their performance remains good in the external examinations but this is less than their peers during lessons.

Overall, students' progress is outstanding. The school's analysis of the students' performance of different cohorts over the past three years shows an upwards trend in attainment and progress. This is particularly the case for primary French and mathematics where progress between Grades 2 and 5 is fast. In a few lessons, less able students make slower progress compared to their peers due to the limited range of differentiated approaches to ensure their needs are consistently well met. In Arabic, students' progress is satisfactory. Better progress is hindered by too few teaching strategies that meet the needs of students' different linguistic competences within classes and then challenge them.

How good is the students' personal development?

Grade: 1 Outstanding

Students are well-mannered, keen to study and have exemplary behaviour. Their excellent conduct is evident across the school and in the multi-national harmony which pervades. Students typically say that they feel safe in school and enjoy excellent relations with their peers and teachers. In many cases, older students help younger students, both personally and in appropriate ways with their work. They show very high respect for others and, when given the opportunity, they work well together and demonstrate leadership skills, such as on the students' council and when organizing school events. Students' initiative in asking questions for further learning and enriching discussions during lessons reflect very high self-confidence and independence in their school work and in deepening understanding. They develop good understanding of Bahraini culture and heritage through school courses and field trip assignments, for example with visits to the Tree of Life and cultural centres.

In the vast most lessons, students are very willing to participate and eager to learn, particularly when they take on responsibility for their own learning, such as in project lessons. Primary students participate well in a wide range of extra-curricular activities. However, the number of senior students who do the same is low, although they are more involved in sports activities. Attendance is high and students are punctual.

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning?

Grade: 2 Good

Teachers' subject knowledge impacts well on students' learning. In most subjects and in the majority of lessons, teaching focuses on understanding and skill development. It provides opportunities for students to apply their knowledge in meaningful activities, for example through carefully monitored whole-class discussions in English and history, and inquiry-based learning in science.

In most lessons, class teachers use a range of questioning techniques. This includes open and probing questions which encourage students to share opinions and justify their responses, and helps to strengthen their ability to explain confidently their thinking. Effective classroom management leads to well-ordered, purposeful and calm lessons. In most lessons, teachers maintain motivating pace and use the available time well.

Teachers' enthusiasm for their subjects, and encouraging relationships with students, produce high levels of motivation in most lessons. Teachers use a variety of means, ranging from whole-class discussion to interactive whiteboards (IWB), to engage students so that they enjoy participating in lessons. Teaching demonstrates high expectations and challenges the majority of students, especially high achievers. While in the most effective lessons effective support is given to low achievers, in a minority of lessons, only limited support is given to students who experience difficulties.

The school's predominantly whole-class teaching has a mostly-positive impact on students' learning, particularly when questioning is well used to stimulate students' interactions. In a highly effective science lesson, for example, cooperative group-work was used well to support differentiated learning. However, opportunities for students to work collaboratively during lessons do not feature enough in the teaching. Teachers make supportive use of available resources, such as individual student whiteboards and data show, to facilitate student learning. Nevertheless, in some lessons resource use is limited to workbooks, IWBs and worksheets. Well-monitored and regularly assigned homework consolidates work in lessons and encourages research.

Oral and written assessment is used effectively in most lessons to evaluate student progress and clarify misunderstandings, for example through the use of individual whiteboards for students to demonstrate skills in elementary mathematics. It is used less effectively by teachers to adjust their teaching during lessons to better meet the needs of students experiencing difficulties. Correction of students' written work is regular, yet the use of constructive teacher comments to help students make improvements is inconsistent-across subjects.

□ How well does the implementation and enrichment of the curriculum meet the educational needs of the students?

Grade: 2 Good

Curriculum implementation provides breadth and challenge to the majority of students, including teaching Arabic language for all students. However, provision does not cater as well as it might for the learning needs of low achieving students. Regular curriculum review is based on thorough evaluation and is linked to careful consideration of the use of textbooks to ensure best match with curriculum requirements and to the changing needs of the students. For example, there is good use of data to reshape some aspects of the primary curriculum content and effective links are made across subjects to make learning relevant.

Community spirit is a high priority and deliberate actions effectively encourage excellent relationships and highly developed understanding of students' rights and responsibilities.

These include the peer tutor programme and student council membership, which promote citizenship and skills in leadership. Students are well-prepared in basic skills for their ongoing education and employment, particularly communication skills in French and English. Although the school provides a wide range of extra-curricular activities, students' participation is low in secondary. An attractive and extremely supportive learning environment is maintained. Very effective use is made of resources in the local and wider community to enrich the curriculum and there are strong links with families. However, the accommodation and facilities for secondary students, whilst satisfactory, are not sufficiently fit for purpose.

□ How well are students guided and supported?

Grade: 1 Outstanding

Excellent induction and transition procedures at different levels enable students to settle in easily and successfully. The school rigorously tracks and monitors students' academic progress and personal development. Teachers use up-to-date assessment information to set individual academic targets and support students through additional sessions. This has a significant impact on their overall achievement. Students receive highly effective care and assistance when facing problems through individual and group guidance, which is reflected in their well-disciplined behaviour. Additionally, the counselor and teachers sensitively help students with special educational needs and modify learning activities to match their different learning styles.

Extensive guidance is provided to help older students make decisions about their futures. For example, the school provides excellent career guidance and enables good links with universities such as the Sorbonne in UAE. Parents are well informed about their children's progress through a variety of approaches, such as a secure school's website link, monthly meetings, and written communication. The school's arrangements for ensuring the health and safety of students are exemplary. These include excellent supervision of students and well-rehearsed evacuation procedures. Healthy lifestyles and eating habits are actively encouraged and the canteen snacks provide attractive and healthy choices. Furthermore, staff monitor the choices made by students with food allergies, an example of the high quality of care provided.

Leadership, management and governance

- **How effective are leadership, management and governance in promoting high achievement, strong personal development and school improvement?**

Grade: 2 Good

The school leadership has a clear vision for the school in accordance with MLF vision. It is well-focused on improvement and has high aspirations to provide innovative, multilingual and multicultural education based on clear values. This vision is enthusiastically shared with, and by, the academic and administrative staff as well as the students. The staff is very effectively motivated and supported by the leadership with incentives, opportunities for professional development, a transparent and well-defined salary structure, and the consistently sensitive and caring ethos within the school.

Self-evaluation is regular and rigorous, and encompasses all aspects of the school's work. All the stakeholders are involved through the student council, the parent council, MLF visits, and the school board with representation from the French embassy. MLF makes a significant contribution to strategic and financial planning ensuring the firm focus on mastery of language and overall school communication. However, the evaluation of students' assessment in lessons is not consistently monitored with sufficient rigour in order to inform improvement planning to the highest levels. Action planning is more school-based, with well-defined and achievable target-setting at all levels. Although strategic and action planning is firmly committed to improvement, it does not sufficiently focus on improvements in the provision for Arabic and the overall attention to low achieving students to ensure higher rates of student progress.

Planning and budgeting are firmly linked to the provision of teaching and learning resources as well as professional development opportunities, and make a significant impact on the quality of provision and outcomes. The school library has an excellent collection catering to a range of interests and is well-utilised. Nonetheless, the school at this time lacks the appropriate infrastructure and facilities for secondary school students, and specialist resources such as science laboratories and sport facilities.

Outstanding attention is given to seeking the views of parents and students. The school responds well to their feedback, which contributes to parents' and students' high satisfaction. Well-developed links with the local and wider community enrich the students' educational experiences, for example through involvement in competitions, local field trips, and visits overseas. The separate roles and responsibilities of the MLF governing body and

the school's professional leadership are clearly understood and well-respected. The MLF governing body works very effectively with the school's leaders and holds them firmly accountable for the school's performance.

Provisional

The school's main strengths

- Outstanding academic achievement
- Outstanding behaviour and harmony among students
- Consistently sensitive and caring ethos of the school
- Well-developed links at all levels of the community.

Recommendations

In order to improve, the school should:

- further develop the impact of teaching in lessons through:
 - continuous assessment which leads to interventions and support for students who experience difficulty with their learning
 - providing appropriate opportunities in all subjects for students to work together collaboratively
 - ensuring that the best teaching and learning practices are shared across the staff.
- focus improvement planning on securing outstanding provision for all groups of students which:
 - raises the attainment and rates of progress for students in Arabic so these are aligned with their outstanding performance in other key subjects
 - meets the needs of low achieving students so they have similarly rapid rates of progress to other groups of students.
- accelerate the construction of accommodation and resources for secondary students, so that it is fully fit for purpose.