



هيئة ضمان جودة التعليم و التدريب
Quality Assurance Authority for Education & Training

Schools Review Unit Review Report

**Gudhaibiya Intermediate Boys School
Manama – Capital Governorate
Kingdom of Bahrain**

Date of Review: 21 - 23 November 2011

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The Schools Review Unit

The Schools Review Unit (SRU) is part of the Quality Assurance Authority for Education and Training (QAAET), an independent national authority, attached to the Cabinet and set up under Royal Decree No. 32 of 2008, amended by the Royal Decree No. 6 of 2009. It is established to raise standards in education and training.

The SRU is responsible for:

- evaluating and reporting on the quality of provision in all schools and kindergartens
- establishing success measures
- spreading best practice
- making recommendations for 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 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 nine 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		Gudhaibiya Intermediate Boys School													
School's type		Government													
Year of establishment		1954													
Age range of students		13 -15 years													
Grades (e.g. 1 to 12)		Primary				Middle				High					
		-				7 – 9				-					
Number of students		Boys		254		Girls		-		Total		254			
Students' social background		Various social and economic backgrounds													
Classes per grade	Grade	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12		
	Classes	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	3	4	-	-	-		
Town /Village		Manama													
Governorate		Capital Governorate													
Number of administrative staff		8													
Number of teaching staff		33													
Curriculum		Ministry of Education (MoE)													
Main language(s) of instruction		Arabic													
Principal's tenure		Two and a half months													
External assessment and examination		MoE's examinations and QAAET's national examinations													
Accreditation (if applicable)		-													
Number of students in the following categories according to the School's classification		Outstanding				Gifted & Talented				Physical Disabilities				Learning Difficulties	
		39				11				-				11	
Major recent changes in the school		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As of school year 2008-09, the school was transformed from a primary and intermediate to an intermediate school only • A principal and two assistant principals have been appointed for the school year 2011-12 • Total number of classes dropped from 11 to 9. 													

Table of review judgements awarded

Aspect	Grade: Description			
The school's overall effectiveness	3: Satisfactory			
The school's capacity to improve	3: Satisfactory			
	Elementary / Primary	Middle / Intermediate	High / Secondary	Overall
Students' academic achievement	-	3	-	3
Students' personal development	-	3	-	3
The quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning	-	3	-	3
The quality of the curriculum implementation	-	3	-	3
The quality of support and guidance for students	-	3	-	3
The quality and effectiveness of leadership, management and governance	-	3	-	3

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: 3 Satisfactory

The school received the same grade of satisfactory in the previous review in December 2008. It has undergone several changes, the most important of which are in senior leadership, despite the stability of middle leadership and the vast majority of teachers. It is judged as satisfactory in all areas, marking a regression in performance with respect to curriculum implementation and enrichment, support and guidance, leadership and management and capacity to improve. The current senior leadership has taken actions to regulate work, focus on class observations in order to assess practices and obtain the cooperation of performance improvement teams. Workshops have been organised, the impact of which is evident in mathematics and some English lessons, the progress of students with learning difficulties and the overall behaviour of most students.

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

Grade: 3 Satisfactory

The current senior leadership has only been leading the school for two and half months and has demonstrated unity and coherence, which has contributed to the development of a three-year strategic plan to 2013. This plan includes fundamental aspects based on a diagnosis of school's situation using SWOT analysis. Despite the lack of performance indicators and more accurate evaluation mechanisms, it is a useful guide for improvement. The plan has caused the monitoring and development of students' behaviour and has had a positive impact on it. The school has had four different principals during the last three years. The main improvements at school have been concentrated on developing better mechanisms to organise and document work, focusing on class observations to monitor teachers, conducting training workshops, developing self-evaluation procedures and managing students' behaviour.

Students' achievement

□ How well do students achieve in their academic work?

Grade: 3 Satisfactory

Students achieved high pass rates in the MoE's examinations for the school year 2010 – 2011, ranging from 79% to 96% in core subjects. Proficiency rates vary and so do pass rates, particularly in mathematics and Arabic. High pass rates reflect the levels of most students in good lessons, particularly in mathematics, as a result of effective teaching methods. Yet, students do not demonstrate the same levels in inadequate lessons which represent a significant proportion of lessons, especially in science. Most students do not achieve well enough in their written work because their individual differences in activities are not catered for well. Most students acquire good arithmetic skills in Grades 7 and 9. Most students demonstrate satisfactory levels in speaking and reading aloud both in Arabic and English in all grades. Only a limited number of students show good practical skills in science, particularly in Grade 8, due to teaching methods which do not provide their peers with sufficient opportunities to experiment and apply what they learn.

Despite the regression in students' pass rates over the last three years in all core subjects, particularly in mathematics, most students progress appropriately in good lessons, such as in Grade 9 mathematics and English lessons. This is due to activities which challenge their abilities. Yet, students' progress in most lessons in Grades 7 and 8 and in their written work is too limited.

Students with learning difficulties make good progress in line with their abilities through special education programmes and as a result of effective educational support. Moreover, most outstanding students often make progress that matches their abilities, especially in good lessons. Those low achieving students not identified with special needs, do not progress as well as others, particularly so in inadequate lessons, due to lack of support and teaching methods which do not vary in pace or approach.

In the school year 2010, Grade 9 students achieved levels that fall within national average in English, and below national average in science, Arabic and mathematics. In the school year 2011, on the other hand, students' levels were slightly higher than national average in both mathematics and English, and just below national average in science and Arabic. On balance students' attainment is within the average range.

□ How good is the students' personal development?

Grade: 3 Satisfactory

Most students attend punctually and the school is diligent in addressing attendance and arrivals issues. Students participate enthusiastically in good lessons due to the use of effective strategies. Their participation in inadequate lessons is limited. Where there is an adverse impact on their self-confidence and accepting leadership roles. Most students take part in school events, such as presenting programmes during morning assembly and sports activities. Students assume leadership roles through the Students' Council and most of them participate in various committees, such as the Friends of the Library, Agricultural Committee and department clubs. Competitions are popular, such as the Mathematical Excellence competition. These have a satisfactory impact on the development of students' self-confidence and their taking of responsibility overall.

Most students have good relationships with their teachers and colleagues, based on mutual respect. Whenever they have a chance to work together during lessons, they do so well. They are quiet both in and out of class and maintain the school's property and cleanliness. Guidance programmes, which seek to develop positive behavioural values in students have a positive impact with the result that most students feel safe and stable at school.

The school develops students' understanding of Bahraini heritage and culture by organising the 'Bahraini Heritage Week' project and visits to various landmarks. It also enhances Islamic values through the 'Noble Qur'an Recitation' project; which helps most students' knowledge of Islamic values and traditions.

The quality of provision

□ How effective are teaching and learning?

Grade: 3 Satisfactory

Most teachers have knowledge of their study material, which is reflected in various levels of students' learning in lessons. In good lessons, of which mathematics lessons account for two thirds, effective strategies are employed, including role play, experts group and assistant teacher. Educational resources are used to attract students and enhanced their effective participation. On the other hand, teachers in inadequate lessons, of which science lessons accounted for half, rely on dictation, where the teacher is the centre of the process focusing on imparting knowledge. Despite some opportunities to implement cooperative learning in lessons, most of this lacks clear instructions and proper definition of roles. This reduces

students' interaction and has an adverse impact on their progress. Teaching and learning is characterised by quietness and good management of the few instances of poor behaviour, whereas time management by few teachers is inadequate. This includes consuming time to carry out repeated exercises already understood by students and letting too much time elapse without students commencing work.

Students are often involved in setting the objectives of lessons and teachers use verbal support to encourage them to participate. Teachers enable students to master arithmetic skills, reading aloud and verbal expression. They do not enable them to master written expression. Moreover, students' practical skills in science and higher level thinking skills, such as analysis and deduction are inadequate, apart from some introductory activities.

Students are assigned appropriate homework and are provided with feedback in most cases. Homework does not challenge students' abilities sufficiently, with the exception of some assigned in the English and mathematics departments. Lack of challenge limits its effectiveness in other subjects.

Most teachers use diagnostic questions properly. In mathematics teachers use diagnostic assessment results to re-explain what students do not understand. They often use a variety of different teaching strategies. Various verbal and written assessment methods are used in most lessons but generally, these results are not adequately utilized to meet students' different needs. This limits the progress made by various groups of students, particularly low-achieving students.

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

Grade: 3 Satisfactory

The school promotes students' rights and responsibilities through guidance boards in most classrooms. Citizenship is enhanced through wall displays and folklore festivals such as: 'Folklore Clothes and Games' and 'Happy Day', in addition to students' seminars such as the 'A Homeland is Rights and Responsibilities'; which helps raise students' awareness.

Most students are equipped with the necessary skills for the next stage of education in varying degrees. The school analyses textbooks, such as the Grade 9 English textbook, and makes suggestions to develop curriculum content from them.

Guidance boards, decorations, wall displays and teaching aids promote the curriculum and classrooms have educational corners for core subjects and display students' work,

particularly in English which encourages students and motivates them to learn. Yet, this is not similarly the case for other core subjects, particularly Arabic and science.

The school offers extra-curricular activities and utilises the two enhancement classes and weekly programmes. Most students join subject clubs, particularly the social studies and English clubs. The school also organises events such as the 'Arabic Calligraphy' workshop 'The Three Friends' play in English and football and basketball leagues in different grades, which have varying impact on enriching students' experiences and enhancing their self-confidence.

□ How well are students guided and supported?

Grade: 3 Satisfactory

The school inducts new students by organising a programme that includes parents' meetings and an introductory tour of school's facilities, which helps students settle quickly. Not enough is done to induct those who join mid-year. The school also prepares students for the secondary stage by conducting career guidance programmes that include lectures and visits organised in conjunction with the secondary schools which students are to join.

The school helps students' personal needs by offering financial assistance. It provides group guidance through lectures, such as the 'Together We Raise our Behavioural Values' lectures. Yet only limited support is provided to a number of students who have personal problems. Diagnostic tests are carried out to identify needs. Programmes provided to students with learning difficulties through the 'Knights of the Future' project have obvious impact on their progress, whereas the impact of programmes offered to talented and outstanding students is less evident. Effective enhancement lessons are offered to low-achieving students.

Parents are updated through meetings, open days and newsletters, currently sent only to parents of Grade 7 students.

The school's efforts to create a healthy and safe environment are evident. Evacuation and fire drills are carried out annually. Fire extinguishers in all school's facilities are also checked and health awareness is promoted through lectures such as the Dental Health lecture; which enhanced the sense of safety and security among school's staff and students.

Leadership, management and governance

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

Grade: 3 Satisfactory

Although the current administration is still new, it has been focusing on regulating work by employing effective work mechanisms in most areas of school work in order to monitor overall performance. Most school's staff and students are aware of the school's vision and mission which are developed in a participatory manner, with the involvement of most stakeholders. Staff members are encouraged by adopting various initiatives and projects, most important of which was the 'Gudhaibiya Wall Displays' and 'Small Museum' Projects, along with clear incentives and bonuses mechanisms.

The school has a three-year strategic plan to 2013 and includes all fundamental aspects. The plan was developed in a participatory manner, based on a diagnosis of the school's situation using SWOT analysis by all educational and administrative departments. The plan lacks performance indicators and more accurate mechanisms to assess practices during lessons. From this strategic plan, an action plan has been devised focusing on setting up work teams that strive to improve school's overall performance in accordance with the recommendations provided in the previous review. This includes the Students' Behaviour Development Monitoring Team, which has had a positive impact on students' behaviour. Teachers' in-class performance is monitored and teachers are assessed using several methods such as assessment visits, as a result of which teachers are enrolled in various workshops based on their training needs. The 'Differentiation' and 'Use of Introductory Activities' workshops are examples, which have a positive impact on some teachers' performance. This is evident in good lessons but less so in inadequate lessons, particularly in science, where the impact is limited.

The school seeks and responds to parents' and students' views on its services by activating the students' and parents' councils, where parents' suggestions are adopted with respect to assigning students direct roles during morning assembly, considering their views when developing the school's plan and allowing them the opportunity to draft the mid-term examinations schedule.

The school offers several activities for students in cooperation with the local community such as the visit to a nearby technological institute to attend a lecture on speed, quality and technology.

The school's administration, in cooperation with the external improvement team, strives to develop the school's overall performance, after joining the improvement schools group but, the results are yet to be seen as this only took place recently.

The school's main strengths

- The variety of teaching methods in mathematics and some English lessons
- The progress achieved by students with learning difficulties, due to the quality of support they receive
- Overall behaviour of most students; both in and out of class
- Good planning for curricular activities and the effectiveness of extra-curricular club activities, particularly the social studies and English clubs in helping students achieve.

Recommendations

In order to improve, the school should:

- ensure continuous improvement of the school's overall performance by the adoption of stable development by senior administration
- develop practical skills in science and written expression in Arabic and English
- ensure the development of more effective teaching and learning strategies in order to develop students' higher level thinking skills, such as assessment, analysis and construction
- provide students with more opportunities to develop self-confidence and give them leading roles in lessons
- utilise assessment results to better meet students' educational needs in lessons.