



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

Schools Review Unit Review Report

**Al-Rawabi School
Jablet Habshi - Northern 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 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		Al-Rawabi School													
School's type		Private													
Year of establishment		2003													
Age range of students		5-16													
Grades (e.g. 1 to 12)		Primary				Middle				High					
		1-6				7-9				10					
Number of Students		Boys		475		Girls		386		Total		861			
Students' social background		Middle class													
Classes per grade		Grade		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
		Classes		8	8	5	4	3	2	2	2	2	1	-	-
Town /Village		Jablet Habshi													
Governorate		Northern													
Number of administrative staff		8													
Number of teaching staff		51													
Curriculum		American(English Subjects) – Lebanese / Ministry of Education (Arabic subjects)													
Main language(s) of instruction		English - Arabic													
Principal's tenure		5 years													
External assessment and examination		-													
Accreditation (if applicable)		-													
Number of students in the following categories according to the School's classification		Outstanding				Gifted & Talented				Physical Disabilities				Learning Difficulties	
		-				-				3				48	
Major recent changes in the school		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No special needs specialist currently at the school due to an unexpected resignation at the end of the previous school year 12 new teachers for core subjects at the school. 													

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	3	3
Students' personal development	2	2	2	2
The quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning	3	3	3	3
The quality of the curriculum implementation	3	3	3	3
The quality of support and guidance for students	3	3	3	3
The quality and effectiveness of leadership, management and governance	3	3	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's overall effectiveness is satisfactory as both students' achievement and teaching and learning are satisfactory. The students' personal development is good because of their positive and responsible participation in school life which leads to their developing self-confidence. The implementation and enrichment of the curriculum is satisfactory as is the support and guidance. The school monitors and meets students' personal needs thoroughly, but academic needs less so. Leadership, management and governance are also satisfactory. The school's vision focuses correctly on students' attainment, but more needs to be done in order to realise that vision in practice. The leadership responds promptly and positively to students' and parents' views about its provision, but strategic planning is insufficiently informed by rigorous self-evaluation, which limits accurate prioritising of actions. Parents and students express satisfaction with the school.

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

Grade: 3 Satisfactory

The school has satisfactory capacity to improve. It has an appropriate administrative and teaching structure in place with the senior leaders committed to school improvement. The leadership possess sufficient knowledge of the strengths and areas for improvement, which are reflected in on-going developments, such as the introduction of new learning resources, facility upgrades and professional development programmes. It also plans for its progress and monitors its activities which have impacted positively on the students' good personal development. However, self-evaluation is not sufficiently systematic and generally the planning is not built on clearly prioritised goals to improve teaching to best meet the immediate academic needs of students.

Students' achievement

□ How well do students achieve in their academic work?

Grade: 3 Satisfactory

Students achieved high pass rates in the internal examinations in 2010 and 2011 in all core subjects, ranging between 79% and 100%. These results are based on internally marked tests as the school does not have any external benchmarking. However, in lessons and students written work, students' levels of skills, understanding and knowledge vary according to students' different abilities. This leads to most students achieving the levels that might be generally expected of them in the core subjects, but little beyond that. Higher achievement by some groups of students would appear possible, especially in their written work.

Across the school, the progress of students in most lessons is satisfactory, as the majority acquire basic skills in core subjects. In English, they have good speaking, listening and reading skills. They confidently and clearly express themselves and fluently read texts with good comprehension in the different subjects. In Arabic, although the majority of primary students have good listening and speaking skills and can read and understand a range of texts, students in Grades 7 to 10 do not show similar levels of skill in the correct use of grammar. Across the school, but in the higher grades particularly, the majority of students' written English and Arabic is less well developed with only limited vocabulary chosen in writing.

Students have sound basic mathematical skills and concepts throughout the school. Primary students understand numbers. The majority of students in higher grades develop their mathematical knowledge. However, only a few higher grade students are able to use mathematical concepts and skills to solve problems independently. In science, the majority of students acquire basic skills and concepts. Grade 7 to 10 students understand physical concepts. However, investigative and practical skills are not well developed across the school.

□ How good is the students' personal development?

Grade: 2 Good

Students' attendance is high and punctuality good. Clear procedures to deal with late arrivals are consistently followed, which help students' development. Their attitudes are positive. They participate in both assemblies and as committee members, supervising school cleanliness and managing students at the end of the day very responsibly. Students run

these committees well, which helps to promote their self-confidence and leadership skills. When given the opportunity, students are also keen to participate in activities which develop their independent and study skills.

Students respect each other and work together well, with friendly relationships prevailing, for example they cooperate in cleaning the school during recess and provide help for their friends when leaving school. Behaviour is good. Students feel safe and secure because of the school's effective implementation of its policies. Any rare incidents of misbehaviour are dealt with promptly and students appreciate this.

Bahrain's heritage and culture, including the values of Islam, are well understood. Students enjoy the colourful school displays and talk about them knowledgeably, for example about how baskets and mats are hand-made. They participate enthusiastically and respectfully when singing the National Anthem each day and join celebrations such as National Day and other special events, exemplified in winning the Excellence Shield for the fifth consecutive year for their activities in this area.

The quality of provision

□ How effective are teaching and learning?

Grade: 3 Satisfactory

The majority of teachers have good subject knowledge and respond to students' questions with clear explanations. Teaching methods are often effective, but in too many lessons they are not good enough. In the most effective lessons, students are engaged by the teaching and acquire good levels of skill, knowledge and understanding. In these lessons teachers manage the students well and deliver their lessons at a lively pace and with enthusiasm. In the less effective lessons, the pace is slow and few activities are appealing to students, so, as a result, students make less progress. Students respond well when they are given the opportunity to participate and develop confidence in themselves through answering questions. However there is a minority of lessons that are overly teacher-centred which restricts students' engagement and learning.

Teachers use resources such as the interactive white boards and flash cards that excite students and stimulate their thinking. In some lessons students are engaged in analytical work and are encouraged to justify their views, but in others the development of students' critical thinking is less effective. Where opportunities exist for students to read critically, for example in Arabic and English language classes, students are not encouraged to do so in depth. Most teachers use strategies that provide students with an active role and

opportunities to be involved in their learning, ensuring that students are engaged in discussions and participate. Where teaching is less effective it is insufficiently targeted on the needs of all learners and tasks are not differentiated enough to challenge higher attaining students and support the low achievers.

Opportunities to help students develop their study skills and thus become successful learners for life are provided. However, some teachers limit students from extending their learning beyond the expectations of the syllabus, including carrying their investigations into deeper enquiry or preparing and conducting presentations of what they have found. Formative assessment is not used enough to determine students' needs and often depends on oral questions. Although students' written work is marked regularly, few teachers provide students with critical written feedback that help students improve their work beyond satisfactory levels.

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

Grade: 3 Satisfactory

Schemes of work are well organised and in place for all subjects. Students are offered a broad and balanced range of experiences, however only irregular modifications are made to courses for those who have low levels of English or difficulties in learning, and for high achievers. Knowledge from one subject is sometimes used to inform the work of another, but planned links between subjects are limited. Consequently, students do not see skills as transferable. The school seeks to develop students' understanding of their rights and responsibilities. It actively promotes a spirit of community through the curriculum and takes steps to encourage good relationships. The curriculum is enriched by a variety of school-based activities such as a health awareness day, science fair and a sports day, but there is no programme of extra-curricular activities. The school organises some educational visits and field trips to bring learning to life and uses resources such as the computer and science laboratories to apply students' knowledge and understanding. The school buildings and grounds are conducive to learning. Technology is being upgraded and several classrooms have been enhanced by the provision of interactive whiteboards. The school science laboratories, however are not used regularly or frequently enough to develop experimental skills. The library, although very spacious, does not carry sufficient stock to support the curriculum well.

□ How well are students guided and supported?

Grade: 3 Satisfactory

Induction for new students is through an informal system where class teachers help them become familiar with the school. The school assesses and monitors students' academic progress adequately to inform planning and address the teaching of appropriate knowledge and skills. Parents are well informed about their children's progress through different means, such as parent-teacher meetings, end of semester reports, which include attainment grades from the first and second quarters, and an end of the year report. A well-supported system to promote good behaviour is in place, however, there is limited monitoring and record-keeping of students' personal and academic development to identify their learning difficulties and shape teaching so as to improve their rate of progress significantly. Nevertheless, students are sensitively supported and helped in most classes and feel secure in approaching teachers and social counsellors when they have any problems. Students with special needs receive support; however, the school has yet to appoint a new specialist to replace the one that resigned earlier. The school places high priority on providing a healthy and safe environment and practises effective procedures to deal with health-related incidents. For example, prime importance is given to safety in science laboratories and students with specific medical conditions are closely monitored and well-supported with thorough records maintained.

Leadership, management and governance

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

Grade: 3 Satisfactory

The senior leadership team (SLT) members are dedicated to the school and its community and are enthusiastic about its development. Their vision focuses strongly on student attainment and values and is shared by all the teachers, who themselves developed the new mission statements. Parents have welcoming access to leaders and staff which underpins the caring ethos developed by the senior leaders and is greatly appreciated. Job descriptions for leaders and teachers have clear guiding responsibilities which enable delegation.

Structures are in place to record and analyse student performance but the impact of these has not yet resulted in raising students' achievement enough. Strategic planning is not

sufficiently informed by rigorous self-evaluation of all aspects of provision, such as curriculum review and the performance management of staff. Development planning is improving within departments and at the whole-school level, but it currently lacks prioritised goals and actions and does not make clear who is responsible for different aspects, the budget implications, timelines and monitoring processes. Well-structured performance management involves heads of department in formal lesson observations with oversight by senior leaders. Lesson observations do not sufficiently identify specific areas for improvement in the quality of teaching, with subsequent monitoring and support. Workshops are enthusiastically provided within departments, however there is limited professional development to share good practice within subjects and across the school as a whole. Teachers are effectively deployed with useful support given to and provided by trainees from a local university.

Budgeting is carefully focussed on providing the teaching resources requested by teachers. High priority is given to technology to support learning. The attractive campus and displays provide a motivating learning environment. The school is highly responsive to parent comments and complaints, providing prompt and positive action. It does not yet actively seek the views of all parents and students, such as through parents' and students' councils. There are growing links with the local community which enhance older students' experiences, including helping the elderly and families in need. Additionally, doctors make informative visits during the school's health day. The Board clearly understands and fulfils its advisory role. The principal is held effectively to account for the school's performance through regular meetings to discuss the school's performance. The proprietor, as Chair of the Board, is committed to, and effective in, providing strategic guidance in the school's general development.

The school's main strengths

- Dedication and enthusiasm of the school staff
- The priority given by the school to providing a healthy and safe environment
- Students' confidence and conscientious attitudes towards the roles and responsibility they are given.

Recommendations

In order to improve, the school should:

- raise the academic achievement of students, especially in writing
- develop teaching and learning strategies to ensure:
 - assessment is used effectively to identify needs and inform planning
 - lessons are differentiated to challenge students' abilities
 - opportunities are planned to develop independent and cooperative learning in lessons.
 - increase the pace and appeal of lessons.
- provide support to students with special needs in lessons to meet their educational needs
- develop comprehensive and systematic self-evaluation to guide and prioritise school improvement
- ensure effective links between different subjects are planned so that knowledge can be transferred from one subject to another and common approaches can be promoted.