



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

# **Schools Review Unit**

## **Review Report**

**A'Ali Intermediate Boys School**  
**A'Ali - Central Governorate**  
**Kingdom of Bahrain**

**Date Reviewed: 15 - 17 March 2010**

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## The Schools Review Unit

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

The SRU is responsible for:

- Evaluating and reporting on the quality of provision in schools
- Establishing success measures
- Spreading best practice
- Making recommendations for school improvement

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

Review grades are awarded on a four point scale:

Grade description	Interpretation
Outstanding (1)	This describes provision or outcomes that is/are at least good in all or nearly all respects and is/are exemplary or exceptional in many.
Good (2)	This is the norm which is expected and describes provision or outcomes that is/are better than the basic level. Practice will be at least sound and there may be some particularly successful approaches or outcomes.
Satisfactory (3)	This describes a basic level of adequacy, there are no major areas of weakness which substantially affect what students, or significant groups of students, achieve. Some features may be good.
Inadequate (4)	This describes situations where there are major weaknesses which affect the outcomes for students.

## **Introduction**

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### **Scope of the Review**

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

### **Information about the school**

Gender of students: Boys

Number of students: 552

Age range: 13-15 years

### **Characteristics of the school**

A'Ali Intermediate School for Boys is one of the Central governorate's schools and was established in 1976. Its 552 students are aged between 13 and 15 years. The students are distributed across 17 classes: six classes for each of the first and third grades, and five for the second. The school categorises 97 of its students as outstanding and eight as having special educational needs. Most students come from middle-income families. There are 58 teaching staff. The school Principal is in his second year at the school. The school lacks some facilities, such as staffrooms and some toilets; it also has some staffing shortages, such as a school nurse, a special education specialist, a specialist and technician for the learning resources centre. The school is part of King Hamad's Schools of the Future project.

## Overall effectiveness

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### □ How effective is the school in meeting the needs of students and their parents?

#### Grade: 4 (Inadequate)

The overall effectiveness of A'Ali Intermediate School for Boys is inadequate, although there are some satisfactory aspects in students' personal development and the support and guidance they are given. Students and their parents are very satisfied with the school.

The students' academic achievement is inadequate. Although students achieve high examination pass rates in basic subjects their levels of attainment in lessons, especially the inadequate lessons, are not high. Most students make limited progress during lessons, where effective teaching and assessment strategies and techniques are seldom used. Students do not show clear progress in their written work; the activities provided are mainly considered as supplementary to the lessons and do not consider individual differences. Outstanding, talented and low-achieving students, and those with special educational needs, are not given sufficient support and guidance in most lessons and make little progress.

Students' personal development is satisfactory. Most students attend school regularly and punctually. Some students enthusiastically participate in school life and show self-confidence, and the ability to work independently and take on responsibility, by participating in extra-curricular activities, committees, Scout groups and sports competitions. Students do not, however, participate effectively and enthusiastically in lessons, where class activities are not stimulating. Their higher thinking skills are not sufficiently developed; most class discussions focus on memorisation, which limits students' ability to explain their answers or think in a critical way. Students have good relationships with each other and their teachers, which helps create a harmonious atmosphere. Most students show appropriate awareness in classes and around the school, which has had a positive effect in reducing behavioural problems among students.

The overall effectiveness of teaching and learning processes is inadequate. Some teachers, in the good and satisfactory lessons observed, knew their study materials well and applied good teaching techniques and strategies to present the material. In the inadequate lessons, which represent more than one-third of lessons observed, the teaching did not aid students' acquisition of basic skills, concepts or knowledge. A few teachers manage lessons effectively, which stimulates students' motivation and enthusiasm towards learning. Most teaching does not challenge students' abilities enough and cooperative learning is not used effectively

to encourage students to learn from each other. Some teachers assign students activities and homework, as indicated in most lesson plans. The homework does not take into consideration individual differences. Assessment results are not effectively used to meet students' needs or direct them to areas they need to develop, which limits students' progress in most lessons.

The quality of presenting and enriching the curriculum is inadequate. Most students lack basic skills; in observed lessons, students clearly faced difficulties in using their skills, especially in Arabic, English, Mathematics, and IT. Teaching techniques do not directly focus on teaching students these skills, which limit their ability to acquire skills and understand concepts. Students' spirit of citizenship and community is developed through some extra-curricular activities, which help to develop students' understanding of their rights, duties, and responsibilities in a satisfactory way. The curriculum is enriched through some extra-curricular activities and by giving some students opportunities to participate in activity programmes, committees such as the students' council, Scout groups, and in the school's morning broadcast, all of which have an adequate effect on students' personal development.

The quality of guidance and support for students is satisfactory. The school appropriately inducts new students to help them settle down at the school. It also inducts students of the third intermediate grade for the secondary stage through vocational guidance programmes; these students are not, however, taught the basic skills needed to prepare them for their next educational stage. The school appropriately evaluates and meets students' personal needs. Students' varied educational needs, however, are not appropriately met by the activities provided to them in lessons. Parents are often informed about their sons' academic achievement. The school assesses health and safety risks satisfactorily.

The effectiveness of leadership and management is inadequate. The school has a vision and mission that focus on achievement, but these aspirations are not effectively translated into everyday practices inside the classroom. The school has set a general plan, but it has not been built on an accurate self-evaluation or defined priorities. The plan lacks clear monitoring mechanisms. The school has made some efforts to evaluate some aspects of its work, but the mechanisms for self-evaluation are unclear. The school managers make satisfactory use of encouragement and incentives to inspire the staff and spread a spirit of enthusiasm and motivation among them. The school provides some programmes to raise teachers' professional competency, but has no clear mechanisms to gauge the effect of these programmes on teachers' professional development or their performance in the classroom. The school uses its resources and educational facilities adequately to serve the educational process. It seeks to keep open communication channels with parents. The school has responded to the suggestions of some students and their parents, such as organising evening remedial classes and changing the examinations timetable at the request of the students' council.

**□ Does the school have the capacity to improve?**

**Grade: 4 (Inadequate)**

The capacity of the school to improve and develop is inadequate. The school has a general annual plan, but this is not based on effective self-evaluation and lacks clear mechanisms to monitor progress. Neither does the school have clear mechanisms to measure the effect of professional development programmes on teachers' performance; this has affected the capacity of the school to raise students' academic achievement in the past years. The school's judgement of its own position as set out in its self-evaluation form is contrary to the findings of this Review in all aspects. All these factors show that the school cannot improve without external support.

## **The school's main strengths and areas for development**

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### **Main Strengths**

- Punctuality and attendance
- Extra-curricular activities
- Induction programmes
- Communicating with parents.

### **Areas for development**

- Self-evaluation
- Strategic planning
- Teaching and learning strategies
- Basic skills acquisition
- Professional development programmes
- Effective use of evaluation and using its findings
- Considering individual differences in lessons and homework
- Higher thinking skills
- Challenging students' abilities
- Cooperative learning
- Support provided to students, especially those with special educational needs
- Diagnosing and meeting educational needs.



## What the school needs to do to improve

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### In order to improve further, the school should:

- Be provided with external support and guidance to boost its overall performance
- Prepare a strategic plan with defined objectives and procedures based on the findings of self-evaluation; include clear and accurate performance indicators that focus on students' academic achievement
- Develop teaching and learning strategies, taking into consideration:
  - Teaching students the basic skills of Arabic, English, Mathematics and IT
  - Considering individual differences in lessons and homework
  - Developing students' higher thinking skills
  - Providing students with more challenging opportunities
  - Giving students the opportunity to learn from each other.
- Use assessment effectively and make use of its findings for lesson planning
- Raise teachers' professional competency through programmes that enhance their classroom performance; monitor the impact of these programmes on raising students' academic achievement.

## Overall judgements

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Aspect	Grade: Description
<b>The school's overall effectiveness</b>	<b>4: Inadequate</b>
The school's capacity to improve	4: Inadequate
Students' academic achievement	4: Inadequate
Students' progress in their personal development	3: Satisfactory
The quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning	4: Inadequate
The quality of the curriculum delivery	4: Inadequate
The quality of guidance and support for students	3: Satisfactory
The quality and effectiveness of leadership and management	4: Inadequate