



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

# **Schools Review Unit Review Report**

**A'ali Intermediate Girls School  
A'ali - Central Governorate  
Kingdom of Bahrain**

**Date Reviewed: 17-19 May 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 six Reviewers. During the Review, Reviewers observed lessons and other activities, examined students' written and other work, analysed the school's performance data and other documents, and talked with staff, pupils and parents. This report summarises their findings and recommendations.

### **Information about the school**

Gender of students: Girls

Number of students: 579

Age range: 13-15 years

### **Characteristics of the school**

Aali Intermediate Girls School is a Central Governorate school that was founded in 1981. The age range in the school is from 13 to 15 years, and there are 579 students. Most students come from middle-income families. The school categorises 96 of its students as talented and creative, 125 as outstanding and 50 as students with special educational needs. Students are distributed across 18 classes: five classes for the intermediate first grade, six for each of the second and third intermediate grades and one merged class. The headmistress is in her fifth year at the school. There are 63 staff, of whom 50 are teachers. There is a shortage of some administrative staff, such as a senior information technician, a learning resources technician and a nurse, and of teaching staff, such as a senior teacher of English. 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: 3 (Satisfactory)**

The overall effectiveness of A'ali Intermediate Girls School is satisfactory. It has good aspects in its leadership and management, students' personal development, curriculum delivery, and guidance and support for students. Students and their parents are very satisfied with the school.

Students' academic achievement is satisfactory. Most students achieve high pass rates in some subjects, especially in Arabic, which match their proficiency rates. Students' performance levels in lessons, however, are inconsistent; the teaching methods used do not consider students' individual differences sufficiently. Pass rates for the first semester of the school year 2009-10 also varied in Mathematics and English. Students make clear progress in their examination results in most subjects but their progress in lessons is patchy. The remedial lessons and activities provided for students with special educational needs help them to make suitable progress. Talented and outstanding students make clear progress as a result of the support they are given. Lower-achieving students are not given enough support in lessons.

Students' personal development is good. Most students attend school regularly and punctually; the school has effective mechanisms to monitor these aspects. They also contribute to school life through various committees and clubs that enhance their experiences and interest. In the good and excellent lessons observed, students participated enthusiastically. They are given opportunities to learn from each other and this boosted their self-confidence; not enough of these opportunities are presented in the satisfactory lessons. Students are given many opportunities to take on leading roles and assume responsibility; this has helped to increase their ability to express their opinions. Students show respect for each other and for their teachers. They feel secure and safe in the school. Care is given to developing students' analytical thinking skills in good and excellent lessons, but in the rest of the lessons teachers focus more on providing knowledge than developing thinking skills.

The quality of teaching and learning processes is satisfactory. Teachers know the study materials well and some teachers reflect this in their use of a range of teaching methods and strategies. Many teachers, however, adopt a lecturing style that does not encourage students to participate. Some teachers provide students with skills and knowledge in most of the core subjects while enhancing the learning process with class activities. Most teachers run their lessons effectively in terms of time management and achieving learning goals. Students'

abilities are challenged satisfactorily; the planning of effective lessons took this into account. Homework is assigned to students and mostly it is corrected, but teachers do not always give feedback, which limits how much students benefit from it. Most teachers use varied evaluation methods, although some of them depend on verbal evaluation and fail to diagnose and meet students' educational needs accurately.

The quality of curriculum enrichment and delivery is good. Students' understanding of their rights and responsibilities is developed well through their participation in the Counselling Committee and the school's Guidance Week. The school works effectively in promoting a sense of citizenship in students by encouraging participation in national activities, events and competitions. The school's behavioural values lessons also help to instil the value of patriotism in students. The curriculum is enriched by a wide variety of clubs that give students good opportunities to broaden their experiences and interests. Classrooms are decorated with students' work and provide educational corners; they offer a motivating environment for learning. Students acquire appropriate basic skills in most subjects, but their writing skills in English and Mathematical skills, such as division, are less well developed.

The quality of guidance and support for students is good. The school inducts new students well by holding educational meetings with their parents and familiarising students with the school facilities. Students are also prepared effectively for the move to the next stage of their education. The school is particularly successful at meeting students' personal needs by giving financial aid. It evaluates students' educational needs appropriately through testing, provides group and individual support programmes, and monitors students with special educational needs. The school provides satisfactory support to students in lessons overall, although individual differences are not always sufficiently considered. The school has clear mechanisms to communicate with parents but does not regularly inform them about their daughters' academic achievement. Good attention is paid to assessing health and safety risks, which has helped to raise health awareness among school staff.

The effectiveness of leadership and management is good. The school is well aware of its strengths and areas for development. It has used the results of an analysis of its situation to set a strategic plan that complements the school's improvement priorities. The school also has a self-evaluation committee that assesses and monitors many aspects of the educational process. It measures the extent of parents', students' and staff satisfaction with some of the school's activities and events. The school has plans for raising teachers' professional competency by gauging their educational needs and providing workshops and training courses to improve their performance. The school also seeks the opinions of students and their parents and responds to their suggestions as well as it can; students and their parents appreciate this engagement with the school.

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

**Grade: 2 (Good)**

The school's capacity to develop and improve is good. Its self-evaluation procedures, while relatively new, cover many important aspects of the school's work and have helped in the development of a comprehensive strategic plan and monitoring mechanisms. The school has brought about improvement in the quality of teaching and learning in terms of the significant improvement in educational strategies used and the employment of electronic teaching by some teachers. Senior and middle managers accurately monitor teachers' practices to identify areas in need for development, which has helped to raise students' academic levels and enhance their personal development. The school's leaders promote harmony among staff, which has had a good impact on their ability to work together and on their eagerness to develop despite facing challenges such as shortages in some areas of staffing.

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

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### **Main Strengths**

- Strategic plan
- Managers' inspiration and motivation of staff
- Seeking and responding to students' and parents' views
- Remedial and intensive programmes
- Safety and security
- Extra-curricular activities
- Developing students' confidence
- Developing students' awareness of their rights and duties
- A rich and motivating learning environment
- Inductions for new students and those moving to the next stage of education.

### **Areas for development**

- Students' enthusiasm and participation in lessons
- Developing analytical thinking skills
- Teaching and learning strategies
- Challenging students' abilities
- Considering individual differences in lessons and activities
- Evaluation that aims at measuring the impact of learning
- Some aspects of basic skills in English and Mathematics.



## What the school needs to do to improve

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

- Develop teaching and learning strategies to include:
  - Placing greater emphasis on basic skills, especially in writing in English and some skills in Mathematics
  - Giving students more opportunities to develop higher thinking skills
  - Using assessment more effectively to meet students' educational needs
  - Considering individual differences in lessons and homework
  - Challenging students' abilities
  - Getting students to participate enthusiastically in lessons.
- Share the excellent practices within the school to raise the performance level
- Address the shortages in teaching and administrative staff.

## Overall judgements

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Aspect	Grade: Description
<b>The school's overall effectiveness</b>	<b>3: Satisfactory</b>
The school's capacity to improve	2: Good
Students' academic achievement	3: Satisfactory
Students' progress in their personal development	2: Good
The quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning	3: Satisfactory
The quality of the curriculum delivery	2: Good
The quality of guidance and support for students	2: Good
The quality and effectiveness of leadership and management	2: Good