



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

Schools Review Unit Review Report

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

Date Reviewed: 2 – 4 November 2009

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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 body set up under Royal Decree No. 32 of 2008 as 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 student

Introduction

Scope of the Review

This Review was conducted over three days, by a team of eight 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: Girls

Number of students: 368

Age range: 6 -12 years

Characteristics of the school

A'ali Primary Girls School, located in A'ali village, is one of the Central Governorate's schools. It was established in 1987. The students' age in the school range between 6 to 12 years. Most students come from mid-level income backgrounds. The number of students in the school is 368. The students are divided into 13 classrooms (6 classrooms for first cycle and 7 classrooms for second cycle). The school classified 178 students as outstanding based on their school's examinations results, 39 students as gifted and talented, and 54 students as having learning difficulties. There are 51 teachers in the school. The school has recently joined the King Hamad's Schools of the Future Project. The Principal has been in the school for six years and the assistant principal for four years.

Overall effectiveness

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

Grade: 2 (Good)

The overall effectiveness of A'ali Primary Girls School is good. The school gains good satisfaction from parents and students for its services.

Students achieve good standards in their academic attainment, which is a result of good teaching, taking students' individual differences into account and challenging their abilities during lessons. This has helped students achieve progress according to their different academic abilities and acquire good basic skills in Arabic, Mathematics and Computer Studies. The general high success rates are in proportion with the proficiency rates overall, which reflects the real levels of understanding and knowledge in the classrooms in all basic subjects. Nevertheless, this is lower in Science and English. Furthermore, students with special needs achieve steady progress in their academic attainment; this is largely attributed to the support they have inside and outside the classrooms.

Students' personal development is good. Students show good behaviour inside and outside classrooms and with respect to each other. This contributes to creating an environment of harmony and coherence, and consolidates students' feeling of security and belongingness to the school. Moreover, students take part in activities and events inside and outside the school which help to foster their self-confidence; ability to express their opinions freely; and raise their motivation to learn. However, students are not given sufficient opportunities to develop their analytical thinking skills or expand their knowledge in some lessons.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers' subject knowledge is reflected in their use of varied teaching strategies that challenge students' abilities and motivate them to learn in the majority of good lessons. This has contributed to raising students' academic progress except for satisfactory lessons where individual differences are not taken into account during lessons. Teachers show enthusiasm during presenting lessons and effective class and time management. However, there are not enough opportunities provided for students to learn from each other except in a few good lessons. Moreover, the effective use of various assessment methods has impact on meeting students' academic needs but homework is the same for all academic groups.

The quality of curriculum provision and enrichment is good. The curriculum is achieved through a number of class and extra-curricular activities, various committees, internal and external competitions that enhance students' experiences and their various interests. All of this is clearly reflected in students' self-confidence and their ability to take responsibility through the roles assigned to them whether inside or outside the classroom. In addition, the enrichment of classrooms and the school environment through educational landscaping and displays creates a motivating learning environment and contributes to developing a spirit of citizenship in students. However, opportunities to link between subjects are very limited inside the classrooms.

Students receive a good level of support and guidance from teachers. The school diagnoses students' personal and educational needs and fulfils them through a variety of activities that take individual differences into account, particularly for those with special needs. Moreover, the school provides students with appropriate induction programmes to help students settle in the school at the beginning of the academic year, yet this is done to a lesser extent in the transition to the next level. The school has effective mechanisms to ensure that it is free of risks, and to maintain a safe environment for the school's staff and students.

Leadership and management are good. Management at all levels work as a team to achieve the school's vision and mission. This is reflected in the good students' academic achievement and personal development. The school engages in strategic planning and follows up the achieved goals. Nevertheless, performance indicators in the plan are not accurate. The school regularly evaluates all its aspects, which has a positive impact on the general performance of the school. The school also organizes various workshops for teachers in line with their training needs.

□ Does the school have the capacity to improve?

Grade: 2 (Good)

The school has good capacity to develop and improve. This is due to the school's effective management team that is well-aware of the school's strengths and areas of improvement. The management is committed to the need of change and development. In this, the management is well supported by well-qualified and experienced administrative and teaching staff members who work side-by-side to develop the strategic plan and various programmes to raise overall performance. In addition, the school's management carry out self-evaluation, and bring about improvements in the learning areas, such as English Language, Mathematics, and Citizenship, which create a motivating learning environment. This contributes to raising students' motivation, academic attainment and personal

development. The impact is obvious in the majority of the lessons. Further, the school provides support to students with special needs inside and outside the classroom and across the school, which has led to noticeable academic progress and some have been placed in the regular classrooms. Moreover, students make good progress in their academic achievement throughout the last three years of schooling.

The school's main strengths and Areas of development

Main Strengths

- Relations between the school's staff
- Students achieve progress consistent with their individual differences
- Students' conduct inside and outside the classroom
- Various teaching strategies
- Enriching school environment
- Extra-curricular activities
- Self-evaluation
- Support for students with learning difficulties inside and outside the classroom.

Areas for development

- Performance indicators
- Analytical thinking
- Cooperative learning
- Linkage across subjects
- Homework
- Follow-up the impact of professional development for teachers.

What the school needs to do to improve

In order to improve, the school should:

- Ensure that the school's strategic plan contains accurate and measurable indicators of performance.
- Develop teaching and learning strategies taking the following into consideration:
 - Providing students with more opportunities to work together and learn from each other
 - Considering individual differences when assigning homework
 - Developing students' analytical thinking skills
 - Linking between subjects.

Overall judgements

Aspect	Grade
The school's overall effectiveness	2: Good
The school's capacity to improve.	2: Good
Students' academic achievement	2: Good
Students' progress in their personal development	2: Good
The quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning	2: Good
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