



Schools Review Unit

Review Report

**Abdul Rahman Al-Nassir Primary Intermediate
Boys School
Muharraq - Muharraq Governorate
Kingdom of Bahrain**

Date of Review: 30-31 December 2012 - 2 January 2013

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The Schools Review Unit

The Schools Review Unit (SRU) is part of the National Authority for Qualifications and Quality Assurance of Education and Training (NAQQAET) that was officially set up in 2008 as an independent body governed and supervised by the Council of Ministers. 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 six 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	Abdul Rahman Al-Nassir Primary Intermediate Boys School														
School's type	Government														
Year of establishment	1960														
Age range of students	12-15 years														
Grades (e.g. 1 to 12)	Primary				Middle				High						
	6				7-9				-						
Number of students	Boys	727			Girls	-			Total	727					
Students' social background	Most students come from middle-level income families.														
Classes per grade	Grade	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12		
	Classes	-	-	-	-	-	7	7	6	4	-	-	-		
Town /Village	Muharraq														
Governorate	Muharraq														
Number of administrative staff	5 administrative and 2 technicians														
Number of teaching staff	65														
Curriculum	Ministry of Education (MoE)														
Main language(s) of instruction	Arabic														
Principal's tenure	One academic semester														
External assessment and examinations	MoE's examinations and NAQQAET's national examinations														
Accreditation (if applicable)	-														
Number of students in the following categories according to the school's classification	Outstanding	40			Gifted & Talented	41			Physical Disabilities	3			Learning Difficulties	66	
		40				41				3				66	

Major recent changes in the school

- Major changes in the current academic year 2012-13:
 - principal and two assistant principals
 - the senior Arabic teacher was transferred to another school
 - the administrative and financial affairs supervisor was transferred to another school
 - the school joint Education Development Programme (7 classes).
- Major changes in the past academic year 2011-12:
 - appointment of a learning difficulties specialist
 - teaching Family Education
 - appointment of a learning resources specialist.

Table of review judgements awarded

Aspect	Grade: Description			
The school's overall effectiveness	3: Satisfactory			
The school's capacity to improve	2: Good			
	Elementary / Primary	Middle / Intermediate	High / Secondary	Overall
Students' academic achievement	3	3	-	3
Students' personal development	2	2	-	2
The quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning	3	3	-	3
The quality of the curriculum implementation	2	2	-	2
The quality of support and guidance for students	2	2	-	2
The quality and effectiveness of leadership, management and governance	2	2	-	2

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 effectiveness has changed from inadequate in the previous review in March 2009 to satisfactory in this one, after receiving two monitoring visits, where it achieved a judgement of 'sufficient progress' in the latter. Students' performance broadly meets expectations in the majority of lessons. Variations in teaching cause inconsistent acquisition by students of basic skills, which are better in Arabic than in English. These variations in quality and in the use of assessment do not help teachers meet the students' different needs consistently, especially the low achievers. Most students are punctual, disciplined and well behaved. They participate confidently in school life due to good support and guidance. The school's leadership works effectively to achieve its goals and priorities. It encourages school members well. Most students and parents commend the school's efforts and express satisfaction with its services.

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

Grade: 2 Good

The school's capacity to improve has changed from satisfactory in the previous review to good. This is attributed to a range of factors, namely awareness of the school's strengths and reinforcing them (whilst developing those areas needing improvement), using the findings of comprehensive and accurate self-evaluation in creating the strategic plan, which is implemented according to operational priorities, and implementing an accurate monitoring system. Monitoring is well managed and reliable. The leadership pays attention to improving the proficiency of staff and encourages them to work as a team. This creates a positive and stimulating environment and is reflected in the improving overall performance of the school, including students' achievement and their personal development. The school environment has been improved and the curriculum well supported, with interesting educational corners and teaching aids.

Students' achievement

□ How well do students achieve in their academic work?

Grade: 3 Satisfactory

Grade 6 students achieved standards that were below average in Arabic in the national examinations and slightly below average in mathematics, science and English from 2010 to 2012. However, results improved in English to become slightly above average in 2012. Grade 9 students attained standards that were below and closely around the national average in all core subjects, except for mathematics where they were above average in 2011- and 2012. These standards are commensurate with the students' varied standards in most lessons in core subjects in both educational stages.

Grade 6 students attained pass rates ranging from 80% to 94% in school examinations in the academic year 2011-12. The highest rates were in science and the lowest were in mathematics, while intermediate level students attained pass rates ranging from 57% to 88%. In the national examinations the highest results were in science in Grade 8 and the lowest were in science and mathematics in Grade 9. These rates are commensurate with the competency rates for most grades in both educational stages, especially in Grade 6 and Grade 7. However, they dropped in Grade 9, especially in mathematics, which are commensurate with the students' satisfactory achievement in written work. Most Grade 6 students master oral, grammatical, reading and analytical skills. However, students' acquisition of mathematical skills, scientific knowledge and basic English linguistic skills varies too much. Their acquisition of writing skills in Arabic and English are poor.

Grade 6 pass rates improved from 2010 to 2012, and so did the results of Grade 7 students in all core subjects, especially in Arabic, as they moved to Grade 8. However, their results fluctuate in most subjects as they moved on to Grade 9 and they dropped notably in science, due to the variations in the quality of teaching and learning as well as the students' lack of acquisition of basic skills.

Outstanding and average students progress in line with their abilities in the majority of lessons and in extra-curricular activities and through the support they receive. Talented students perform extremely well in external contests and came first in the 'English Speech Contest'. However, low achievers make slow progress in most lessons due to variations in the support they receive, but they make good progress in special education lessons.

□ How good is the students' personal development?

Grade: 2 Good

Most students participate enthusiastically in the majority of lessons and school committees such as the 'school broadcast', 'discipline and cleanliness' and 'boy scouts'. The quality of asking and answering questions varies, but is very good in the best lessons. Most students demonstrate self-confidence and the ability to take responsibility as they participate in the student teacher activity and assume leadership roles in the 'Student Administration Day', and the Students' Council in which they express themselves and their opinions with extreme confidence, which helps to develop their personalities.

Students treat each other and their teachers respectfully, which is clear inside the classroom and outside during extra-curricular activities such as football and volleyball. Students feel safe. They behave with awareness and a sense of responsibility towards the school as they care for its environment and property, help decorate its facilities and observe its regulations. This is reflected in their outstanding attendance and punctuality as the school received a thank you letter from the MoE for the highest rate of student attendance in February 2012.

Most students demonstrate loyalty to the country and an understanding of Bahraini history, culture and Islamic values. The school programmes plays a significant role in reinforcing these values and concepts through the organisation of trips to archaeological sites, patriotic activities, plays and religious contests.

The quality of provision

□ How effective are teaching and learning?

Grade: 3 Satisfactory

Most teachers are familiar with their study materials. Their satisfactory performance in the majority of lessons is demonstrated in their good planning, logical progression in achieving learning objectives and linking them with interesting introductory activities. Most teachers use teaching aids such as power point presentations, flashcards and models adequately in most lessons. They use varied teaching strategies, such as cooperative learning, brainstorming, discussion and debate, which provides the majority of students with opportunities to acquire skills, concepts and knowledge. These are particularly effective in helping students in justifying and explaining answers and challenging their abilities, such as deriving grammatical rules and mathematical and geometric laws, especially in good lessons in Arabic and mathematics in Grades 6 and 7. However, opportunities to develop critical

thinking and problem-solving skills are limited. Teaching relies too much on dictation and is too teacher-centered for it to be good. This affects the students' standards of achievement adversely in those lessons, especially English lessons.

Teachers manage classes and the students' behaviour adequately. They motivate and encourage students with phrases, rewards and stimulating cards, which increase their participation. However, time management is not as good as it should be in a few lessons due to the rapid transition between phases without ensuring the achievement of planned lesson objectives. This affects the students' learning and progress in these lessons adversely.

Students are assigned an adequate amount of homework in all core subjects, except for writing, grammar and dictation exercises in Arabic and English in Grade 9. Homework assignments are properly corrected and the 'correction seal' is used to indicate outstanding areas and those needing improvement. Students are given feedback which informs them of their mistakes and helps them learn from them and to achieve the intended progress. However, teachers use varied oral and written, individual and collective assessment methods in the majority of their lessons. The extent to which these assessment findings are used in planning activities and supporting students in meeting their educational needs is too varied. The progress of the different categories of students, especially the low achievers, is not as good as it might be.

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

Grade: 2 Good

The school offers a wide range of activities to support the curriculum. It provides several opportunities for students to participate effectively in scientific exhibitions, in the morning walk activities which are coordinated with the Muharraq Police Station and in academic and artistic internal and external contests which meet their different needs well. Student committees, which have a significant impact on developing the students' personalities, enrich their experiences and broaden their intellectual capacities.

The school analyses the curriculum and enriches and supports its contents with extra-curricular activities, summaries and scientific experiments, in order to meet the students' changing needs. Links across subjects are made logically and comprehensively in the majority of lessons. The way the curriculum is presented helps to develop basic skills. It also helps to develop life skills such as IT and vocational skills, such as carpentry and decorative arts.

The school promotes the students' understanding of their rights and responsibilities through the paintings which are all over the school, and develops their sense of citizenship through different activities such as the morning broadcast and patriotic murals. The school enriches its environment with teaching aids and educational corners in order to motivate students to learn, in addition to celebrating the students' work. This helps the students respect and appreciate what they have.

□ How well are students guided and supported?

Grade: 2 Good

The school inducts new students well. Programmes include tours of the facilities, an introductory meeting with Grade 6 students and their parents, an overview of school regulations and the ways the curriculum is presented, which make the students settle in quickly. The school prepares Grade 9 students for the next stage of education through guidance sessions, class visits and academic lectures, in addition to visiting the Sheikh Khalifa Institute to learn about its different departments.

The school evaluates the students' needs by analysing the findings of diagnostic assessments and comparing the results of different tests, and meets them through remedial lessons and enriching programmes. Students receive advice and guidance when they face problems, and are followed up support sessions. Case studies and lectures promote good behaviour. Low achieving and students other than-native Arabic speakers receive good support in lessons designed especially for them, which include individual remedial programmes and plans. Talented students receive good attention as they participate in activities and contests in where they performed well.

Parents are effectively informed of their children's progress through a variety of modern methods. The school makes its environment healthy and safe. It assesses potential dangers, monitors periodic maintenance, carries out evacuation drills and prohibits unsafe substances in school.

Leadership, management and governance

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

Grade: 2 Good

The school has a vision and a mission which emphasise the provision of outstanding educational and teaching services. They were created collectively and reflect clearly in most aspects of the school's work. The school also has a strategic plan which emphasises improvement priorities and includes clear success criteria which were devised based on the findings of accurate self-evaluation and in line with the Outstanding Bahraini School Project. The school's departments work effectively to carry out their annual operational plans, which are monitored and assessed closely to help improve the school's overall performance.

The leadership inspires school members, motivates and encourages them to adopt the principles of participatory decision making and develop a positive team spirit. Delegation of authorities has assigned subject coordinators for Arabic, science and Islamic studies to accept responsibility and has motivated them towards change and improvement of the school's performance. The school makes huge efforts to improve the teachers' performance through several training programmes and workshops, as well as joint class visits. It monitors the impact of training, which helps improve professional competency. The school monitors academic and technical departments' performance through meetings of the administrative board and the technical committee, as well as through discussion sessions about classroom practices carried out by its improvement partner. These review the students' results and making recommendation to improve them.

The school uses its educational facilities well to enhance students' learning. Practical rooms and the learning resources centre are used well, but the science laboratory is not effectively used because it is in need of comprehensive maintenance. Therefore, some scientific experiments are conducted positively in classrooms, but not ideally.

The school seeks the opinions of students and parents. Through the Students and Parents' Councils, approval questionnaires and the suggestion box, the school receives and responds to the parents' suggestions. For example, evening remedial lessons before the final examinations have been provided and children are enrolled in the learning difficulties programme. The school accepted students' suggestions to modify the examination schedule, which was commended by students and parents. The school communicates well with the local community, such as the coast guard, Muharraaq's Municipality, the police station, fire department and the talented centre, in addition to its coordination with Al Hala Sports Club to sponsor talented athletics. All this helps enrich and develop the students' educational experiences.

The school's main strengths

- The leadership's role in motivating and inspiring school members in using accurate self-evaluation findings to formulate the strategic plan and focus on improvement priorities
- The vast majority of the students' outstanding attendance and punctuality, as well as their discipline and good behaviour
- The students' effective and enthusiastic participation in the various extra-curricular activities which support the curricula, and the provision of guidance and awareness-raising programmes especially when they are in problems.

Recommendations

In order to improve, the school should:

- raise the students' academic achievement by developing teaching and learning in a manner that includes:
 - developing basic skills in most core subjects, especially English
 - using the findings of assessment in order to meet the students' different needs, especially low achievers.

- meet the shortages in human resources, represented in the senior teachers of the Arabic language, science and Islamic studies departments, as well as support positions in the administrative and financial affairs supervision and social counselling.