



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

Schools Review Unit Review Report

**Abu Feras Al Hamadani Primary Boys School
Al Muharraq Governorat
Kingdom of Bahrain**

Date Reviewed: 24-26 May 2010

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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 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 five 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: Boys

Number of students: 282

Age range: 6-9 years

Characteristics of the school

Abu Feras Al Hamdani Primary Boys School is a Muharraq Governorate school, in Al Muharraq town, and was founded in 1968. The age range in the school is from six to nine years and there are 282 students. Most students come from middle-income families. Students are distributed across nine classes for the first cycle only, three classes for each grade. The school categorises 70 of its students as talented and creative, 65 as outstanding and 26 as having special educational needs; three students have a physical disability. There are 20 teaching staff and six administrative and technical staff. The school has no sports hall. The principal is in her fourth year at the school. The school joined King Hamad's Schools of the Future project at the beginning of this year.

Overall effectiveness

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

Grade: 3 (Satisfactory)

The overall effectiveness of Abu Firas Al Hamadani Primary Boys School is satisfactory. It has good aspects in its curriculum enrichment, guidance and support for students, leadership and management and capacity to improve. Students and their parents are exceptionally satisfied with the school.

Students' academic achievement is satisfactory. Most students achieve high pass rates in examinations. Their attainment in the classroom varies according to the quality of teaching methods used and the type of activities presented. Most students have made steady progress over the past three years, although their level of progress during lessons and in written work is no more than satisfactory. Students reach levels appropriate to their abilities, aided by the support they receive in the school's remedial and enrichment programmes. The quality of support students receive during lessons, however, varies.

The students' personal development is satisfactory. Most students attend school regularly and punctually. Most of them participate effectively and enthusiastically in school life through various school committees and activities. Students are given many opportunities to develop self-confidence, work independently and take responsibility, as well as receiving training in taking leadership roles in educational situations. They are also given some opportunities to develop their higher thinking skills. Students' behaviour in and outside the classroom generally reflects their awareness and responsibility. The school's efforts to monitor and control poor conduct and promote good behaviour have helped to limit poor behaviour. Most students feel safe at school, especially in the classroom, where teachers treat students well and everyone shows mutual respect for each other. A few students show aggressive behaviour and disrespect for their fellow students during group activities and breaks.

The effectiveness of teaching and learning processes is satisfactory. Most teachers know the study materials. The outstanding and good lessons observed were characterised by varied teaching strategies and effective use of resources that made sure the student was at the centre of the educational process; this had a positive effect on students' acquisition of skills, understanding and knowledge. Most teachers organise their lessons and class activities effectively, although their time management was less effective in some lessons. Students are given some good opportunities to challenge their abilities, work together and learn from each other but ineffective planning sometimes reduces the effectiveness of these

opportunities. Students are given the right amount of homework but their individual differences are not sufficiently considered and the homework is not corrected regularly. Teachers use various assessment methods during lessons and tests, but the results are not used effectively to meet the educational needs of all students during lessons.

The quality of curriculum enrichment and delivery is good. The school develops students' understanding of their rights, duties and responsibilities well. It promotes values of citizenship, which are reflected in most students' behaviour in and outside lessons. The school provides a range of extra-curricular activities that help to broaden students' experiences and interests. The school environment is used well to increase students' motivation to learn and encourage them to appreciate their surroundings. Students acquire good basic skills in Arabic and Mathematics, but their English and Information Technology (IT) skills are less well developed, especially in the third grade. Links between subjects are made to a varied degree.

The quality of student guidance and support is good. The school inducts new students and their parents effectively, which helps students to settle at school. Students are also prepared well for the next stage of their education. The school diagnoses and meets students' personal needs. It meets students' educational needs effectively through the remedial and enrichment programmes it offers to different groups of students; students are also given good support in some lessons. The school's educational support helps to raise students' academic achievement. The school's guidance and support for students helps to solve or minimise some of their problems and increases their motivation to learn. The school communicates well with parents and informs them about their children's progress. It also ensures that everyone is working in a healthy and safe environment, which reinforces students' feeling of safety and security. The absence of a sports hall and the presence of many stairs in the school could, however, pose a risk to students.

The quality of leadership and management is good. The school has a shared vision that has been clearly translated in some lessons. It also has a comprehensive strategic plan that was shaped after an analysis of the school's situation, although it lacks clear and precise performance indicators. The school has achieved most of its goals, especially those related to reinforcing positive behaviour, improving the school environment and communicating with parents. The school performs self-evaluation of all its educational practices, including teachers' performance, and uses its findings to help achieve the goals of its strategic plan. The higher and middle management inspire the administrative and teaching staff and encourage them to work together as a team. The Principal delegates tasks appropriately and oversees that they are performed well. Teachers are given opportunities to join training courses and workshops to raise their professional competency and improve their planning skills, which has helped to improve the performance of most teachers, especially new ones. The school uses its facilities and financial and educational resources effectively to serve the educational process. It also seeks the opinions of students and their parents, in cooperation

with the Parents' Council, about its performance and services and responds to their suggestions whenever it can.

□ Does the school have the capacity to improve?

Grade: 2 (Good)

The school's capacity to develop and improve is good. The school's leaders and managers work with enthusiasm and motivation towards change and development. They follow a comprehensive strategic plan that was shaped by an analysis of the school's situation. Most of the plan's goals have been achieved and several improvements have been brought about, most notably: improving teachers' planning skills; promoting positive behaviour among students; improving the school environment; and communicating effectively with parents. The school's self-evaluation is comprehensive and accurate; its findings are used to improve performance continuously. Among the challenges the school faces are the small size of its buildings and the absence of a multi-purpose sports hall; the school is working hard in cooperation with the Parents' Council to find solutions to these problems.

The school's main strengths and areas for development

Main Strengths

- Self-evaluation
- Rich and motivating environment for learning
- Students' participation in school life
- Development of rights and duties
- Development of self-confidence
- Communicating with parents
- Guidance and support programmes.

Areas for development

- Developing students' basic skills, especially in English
- Considering individual differences and challenging students' abilities
- Assessment and using its findings
- Higher thinking skills
- Linking between the subjects
- Cooperative learning
- Students' conduct.

What the school needs to do to improve

In order to improve further, the school should:

- Develop teaching and learning strategies, while taking into consideration:
 - Developing basic skills, especially in English
 - Challenging students' abilities
 - Using assessment to meet educational needs of all student groups
 - Developing higher thinking skills
 - Better linking between subjects in the first cycle
 - Using cooperative learning more effectively.
- Include clear performance indicators in the strategic plan
- Work towards building a multi-purpose sports hall and fill vacancies for support positions such as a nurse and an accounting technician.

Overall judgements

Aspect	Grade: Description
The school's overall effectiveness	3: Satisfactory
The school's capacity to improve	2: Good
Students' academic achievement	3: Satisfactory
Students' progress in their personal development	3: Satisfactory
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