



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

# **Schools Review Unit Review Report**

**Al Busaiteen Intermediate Girls School  
Al Busaiteen – Muharraq Governorate  
Kingdom of Bahrain**

**Date of Review: 26-28 March 2012**

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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 national authority, attached to the Cabinet and set up under Royal Decree No. 32 of 2008, amended by the Royal Decree No. 6 of 2009. 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:

<b>Grade description</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
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 eight 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

<b>School's name</b>		Al Busaiteen Intermediate Girls School															
<b>School's type</b>		Government															
<b>Year of establishment</b>		2003															
<b>Age range of students</b>		13-15 years															
<b>Grades (e.g. 1 to 12)</b>		<b>Primary</b>				<b>Middle</b>				<b>High</b>							
		-				7-9				-							
<b>Number of students</b>		<b>Boys</b>	-	<b>Girls</b>	497				<b>Total</b>	497							
<b>Students' social background</b>		Most students are from low-middle income families															
<b>Classes per grade</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>				
	<b>Classes</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	5	5	-	-	-				
<b>Town /Village</b>		Al Busaiteen															
<b>Governorate</b>		Muharraq															
<b>Number of administrative staff</b>		7 administrative members and 9 technicians															
<b>Number of teaching staff</b>		56															
<b>Curriculum</b>		Ministry of Education (MOE)															
<b>Main language(s) of instruction</b>		Arabic Language															
<b>Principal's tenure</b>		4 years															
<b>External assessment and examinations</b>		MOE's examinations, and QAAET's national examinations															
<b>Accreditation (if applicable)</b>		-															
<b>Number of students in the following categories according to the school's classification</b>		<b>Outstanding</b>				<b>Gifted &amp; Talented</b>				<b>Physical Disabilities</b>				<b>Learning Difficulties</b>			
		42				65				2				25			

<b>Major recent changes in the school</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Transfer of senior teachers of core subjects in Arabic, science, and English, and the mathematics coordinator, in addition to the academic counsellor, in the current academic year 2011-12</li><li>• Appointment of a teacher for creativity and talent and a design and technology teacher in the current academic year.</li></ul>
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## Table of review judgments awarded

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

### Key:

- 1: Outstanding
- 2: Good
- 3: Satisfactory
- 4: Inadequate

## Review judgements

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### Overall effectiveness

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

#### **Grade: 3 Satisfactory**

The school's performance is satisfactory, which is in line with that in the previous review of March 2009. Students' personal development remains good. Provision is no better than satisfactory overall because of inconsistent teaching, learning and support in lessons. Efforts are exerted in supporting students outside lessons, especially for those with learning difficulties. Extra-curricular activities are provided with talented and cultural contests for outstanding students. Students show good discipline in most lessons. Monitoring the implementation of the strategic plan is not effective enough. This is due to the lack of clear performance indicators and mechanisms to measure its impact, especially of teaching and learning and students' achievement, particularly in mathematics and science. The students' and their parents' satisfaction levels when surveyed showed these to be 'good' and 'satisfactory' respectively.

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

#### **Grade: 3 Satisfactory**

The school's strategic plan is based on a self-assessment which is comprehensive and is focused on improving the school's environment into one which is an inviting and motivating place for learning. Actions taken have helped students maintain their good level of personal development and their effective participation in the extra-curricular activities. However, the solutions proposed for those areas in need of development are not sufficient to upgrade the level of the school to good. The school faces some challenges, mainly the lack of senior teachers for the core subjects. Despite the fact that some teachers are assigned as coordinators, the availability of professional development programmes and exchange visits to share good practice are too limited. The implementation of better strategies in lessons is inconsistent and restricts students' academic improvement.

## Students' achievement

### □ How well do students achieve in their academic work?

#### Grade: 3 Satisfactory

Students in Grade 9 attained results in national examinations that are very close to the average in most core subjects in 2010-11, except in Arabic where their grades are slightly above. Their results in mathematics were slightly below in 2010. These results reflect the students' performance levels in lessons, especially in mathematics.

Students attained inconsistent pass rates in core subjects in the MoE examinations in 2011, the highest of which were in Arabic and English. They achieve low proficiency rates in most of the core subjects especially in mathematics and science. The higher rates reflect the students' levels in good lessons as a result of effective teaching and the appropriateness of the written activities given. However, their performance levels in the rest of the lessons, about two thirds, are not as good, due to the inconsistency in handling the students' individual differences. The majority of students, especially those in Grade 8, are well equipped with the necessary basic linguistic skills in Arabic and English, while they are taught writing skills in a satisfactory manner. Mathematics skills are taught inconsistently in Grades 7 and 8, but teaching is better in Grade 9 with consequently better acquisition of skills by students. Conversely Grade 8 students acquire scientific enquiry skills rather more effectively than those in Grades 7 and 9 because of the inconsistent support and the lack of focus on teaching these skills in Grades 7 and 9.

Tracking students' results over three consecutive years, 2009 to 2011, shows too much variation in their levels of achievement. Where good lessons cater for their individual differences, for example in English in Grade 8 and Arabic in Grades 7 and 9, progress is good. However in many other lessons, particularly in mathematics and science, insufficient attention is paid to students' different levels of ability and progress is only satisfactory overall. This shows also in students' written work.

Outstanding and talented students make good progress in their written work and through some enrichment programmes, acting and sports contests which challenge their abilities. Students with learning difficulties make satisfactory progress through the special education programme, although other low-achieving students are not improving at a similar pace because their needs are not met well enough.



## **□ How good is the students' personal development?**

### **Grade: 2 Good**

Most students contribute effectively and enthusiastically to school life through their participation in committees and different school activities. They show capability when, for example, they lead morning assembly and the Students' Council where they prepare brochures about Islamic values to be used in classes. They participate enthusiastically in contests during break-times and in popular games and art-related activities. Celebrations like National Day and outdoor activities such as 'competitive health-related fitness', 'the basketball tournament' and the 'Maraei' Operetta festival are popular. The students' self-confidence is increased through their enthusiasm, their love of self-learning and their spirit of initiative lessons. Teachers offer real opportunities for them to assume leadership roles, especially in the good lessons. The majority of students are well committed to school, abide by the school's rules and routines, and attend lessons on time.

Compatibility and harmony amongst students reflect the respect they have for their teachers and their good relationships with each other and while engaging in curricular and extra-curricular activities. Students with disabilities get along well due to the support offered to them by their colleagues, which reflects the students' awareness and their good responsibility. School property and its cleanness are well maintained. Furthermore, the students show respect and understanding of Bahraini culture and Islamic values through creating expressive murals and participating in different events.

## **The quality of provision**

### **□ How effective are teaching and learning?**

#### **Grade: 3 Satisfactory**

Teachers have good knowledge of their subject material but this is reflected variedly in their performance in lessons. Effective teaching strategies, such as cooperative learning, discussion, dialogue and role playing are employed in good lessons and provide opportunities to challenge students' abilities. These strategies focus on teaching students essential skills, concepts and knowledge, which is evident in their good achievement in Arabic and English. Teachers encourage and motivate students to participate using different strategies such as verbal reinforcement and practice, which helps almost all students participate in lessons. However, the implementation of these strategies in other lessons is not of the same level, due to ambiguity in the balance between teaching and learning roles.

Educational resources such as data shows and flash cards are adequately used by the majority of teachers. Doing so has helped increase the participation of most students in those lessons.

Outstanding students are highly focused on during most lessons through giving them several opportunities to discuss and express their opinions. As for the other groups of students, the support offered to them is not of the same level, and this has led to an inconsistency in teaching them skills and concepts, especially in science and mathematics. Moreover, the opportunities for students to develop their constructive criticism skills and ability to solve problems are limited to some effective lessons, where students are able to make conclusions and explanations, as well as giving justifications to answers.

Most lessons are organised. Teachers give clear instructions, share common objectives with the students and make sure that they achieve them appropriately. Time management in some lessons however is not in line with the activities prepared, which causes a failure in achieving the learning goals.

Students are assigned homework which is followed up on by regular marking by most teachers. However, the students' different levels of ability are not taken into consideration enough in these assignments, which tend only to focus on them gaining knowledge. A lack of feedback means students do not recognise their mistakes sufficiently to make improvements.

Oral and written evaluation methods are employed, however, benefits from the results of these assessments in new planning is limited. This slows the progress of different groups of students, especially the low-achieving groups.

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

**Grade: 3 Satisfactory**

The implementation of the curriculum, like teaching, is of inconsistent quality. In some situations students gain the skills necessary for the next stage of their education, such as reading in Arabic and some mathematical and life skills, but their acquisition of writing in English is not at a similar level. The curriculum is enriched by support notes that increase the students' pass and proficiency rates, but their impact is less evident in the achievement levels in science and mathematics. Links between subjects, such as mathematics with Islamic education, are good, for example when explaining numerical fractions and which enables students to fully employ their skills in lessons.

Students' understanding of their rights and duties is developed by providing opportunities to participate in curricular and extra-curricular activities, such as the school broadcasts that aim to promote good behaviour and Islamic values. Participation in national celebrations such as 'Bahrain First' and the National Day festival is good, in addition to art-related activities like 'The princess and the soap bubbles' play, which has helped develop the students' acting skills.

Students' work, such as artistic paintings, Islamic inscriptions and reciting Quranic verses, is celebrated inside and outside the classrooms. This has created an attractive school environment where classrooms include educational displays and corners that are used to support good lessons.

### **□ How well are students guided and supported?**

#### **Grade: 3 Satisfactory**

The school inducts new students by organising educational meetings for students and their parents during the first few weeks of them joining the school and visits for Grade 6 students from linked schools in order to introduce them to the school. Students are prepared for secondary school through professional orientation programmes organised by 'Tamkeen' and Al-Istiqlal Secondary School.

The school evaluates the students' personal needs and meets them through providing financial and in-kind aids. It also offers students advice and guidance through classes and individual meetings. Assistance is offered to outstanding and talented students, as well as students with learning difficulties in programmes tailored to meet their educational needs, such as 'The Short Story Contest' and 'The Electronic Blog'. However, those offered to low-achieving students are not as effective, which is reflected in their varied achievement.

The school communicates with parents through open days, meetings, convenient office hours, text messaging and report cards. Communication is not regular enough, which prevents parents from having full knowledge of their daughters' academic improvement.

Despite the fact that the school building is old, a healthy and safe environment is provided. The safety and security committees are responsible for the building, the entry and departure of students and the fire drills, all of which helps students feel safe and secure.

## Leadership, management and governance

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

### Grade: 3 Satisfactory

The school's vision, which was created with the participation of the school community, is based on knowledge and development of the country. However it is inconsistently reflected in the school's practices and activities, especially with regard to the teachers' performance. The school has a comprehensive strategic plan with specific goals, but it lacks performance indicators and regular evaluation mechanisms, despite the recommendations from the previous review visit regarding these in relation to students' achievement in science and mathematics. The school's management has joined the students and their parents in conducting the self-evaluation, through the application and analysis of questionnaires, in order to determine its strengths and areas for development, but these have not significantly determined the school's priorities.

The school's senior leadership inspires and motivates both the administrative and teaching staff by forming good relationships with them, organising activities such as the 'Co-existence Day' and assigning duties appropriately. However, some teachers lack awareness of how to apply modern teaching strategies, even though the school presents several programmes to raise their professional competency. This is done through organising workshops, such as 'Solving problems with a scientific approach' and exchange visits between classes.

The school uses its financial resources and facilities, such as the electronic classroom and the learning resources centre, to serve the educational achievement of students in a mixed manner. A more consistent use is possible. The school communicates effectively with institutions and the local community, for example the community police, Salman Cultural Centre, The Hope Institute and the home for the elderly. The students' engagement in these institutions has had an evident impact on their personal development. The school offers parents the opportunity to express their opinions and updates them about their daughters' results and achievement levels. It explores the views of students through the Students' Council and responds to their suggestions, for example about the mid-term examinations schedule.

The administrative board and the technical committee discuss and follow up on the operational plans and the implemented projects, however, the focus on the areas in most

need of development, especially those related to teaching science and mathematics is not sufficiently sharp. The improvement partners offer good experiences, such as workshops, that aim to develop effective school systems and practices, but their impact is not evident in the students' performance levels.

## **The school's main strengths**

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- The students' general behaviour, their regular attendance at school, their understanding of the Bahraini heritage and culture and their respect for Islamic values
- Providing a safe and secure environment for all members of the school community
- Communicating with parents and students, and responding to their views
- The effective use of the school environment and educational resources in order to enrich and enhance the curriculum.

## Recommendations

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

- raise students' academic achievement, especially in science and mathematics
- develop more effective mechanisms to monitor the implementation of the strategic plan and to include performance indicators that focus on enhancing the students' achievement levels, as well as promoting more effective teaching and learning
- develop teaching and learning strategies, so as to include:
  - benefitting from the results of assessment to meet the students' needs
  - designing curricular activities that develop the students' higher level thinking and problem solving skills
  - increasing students' skills in self-learning.
- address the shortage in staffing, mainly senior teachers for core subjects.