



الهيئة الوطنية

للمؤهلات وضمان جودة التعليم والتدريب

National Authority for Qualifications &
Quality Assurance of Education & Training

Schools Review Unit

Review Report

Al-Eman Schools - Boys Section
Isa Town - Central Governorate
Kingdom of Bahrain

Date of Review: 3 – 5 December 2012

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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 seven 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		Al-Eman Schools - Boys Section															
School's type		Private															
Year of establishment		1992															
Age range of students		6-18 years															
Grades (e.g. 1 to 12)		Primary				Middle				High							
		1-6				7-9				10-12							
Number of students		Boys	671	Girls	-				Total	671							
Students' social background		Most students come from good income families.															
Classes per grade	Grade	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12				
	Classes	4	4	4	3	3	3	2	2	3	3	3	2				
Town /Village		Isa Town															
Governorate		Central															
Number of administrative staff		20 administrative and 6 technicians															
Number of teaching staff		70															
Curriculum		Ministry of Education (MoE) curricula for mathematics and science, Saudi curricula for Islamic studies and Arabic and British curricula for English language.															
Main language(s) of instruction		Arabic															
Principal's tenure		3 years															
External assessment and examinations		NAQQET's national examinations for mathematics and science.															
Accreditation (if applicable)		-															
Number of students in the following categories according to the school's classification		Outstanding				Gifted & Talented				Physical Disabilities				Learning Difficulties			
		150				40				-				11			
Major recent changes in the school		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appointing a technical supervisor in the current academic year 2012-13. 															

Table of review judgements 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	3	3
Students' personal development	3	3	3	3
The quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning	3	3	3	3
The quality of the curriculum implementation	3	3	3	3
The quality of support and guidance for students	3	3	3	3
The quality and effectiveness of leadership, management and governance	3	3	3	3

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 is characterised by the students' discipline and observance of Islamic ethics and moralities. Aspects of planning, assessment of students' progress and improvement in teachers' professional competency are reflected adequately in the school's overall performance. All aspects are satisfactory. This is attributed directly to the students' varied standards of academic achievement in core subjects, especially in English, mathematics and science which are taught in English with varied levels of effectiveness. Teaching usually centres on the teachers' performance rather than the students' and there is a lack of effective support for low achievers. Opportunities for students to participate in school life and to develop their scientific and personal abilities in lessons and extra-curricular activities are satisfactory. The school received adequate approval from students, whilst good from their parents.

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

Grade: 3 Satisfactory

The school's capacity to improve is satisfactory, although it has taken early steps to improve with the formulation of a strategic plan which includes priorities for the majority of aspects of the school's work, but importantly focuses on improving students' academic achievement and teachers' professional competency. The school has worked effectively to spread a culture of quality among its members, which is reflected most clearly in improving the administrative and teaching staffs' professional competency and the school's environment. However, the challenges the school faces, represented mainly in the variation of students' achievement and their acquisition of basic skills, especially in English, currently indicates the school's capacity to improve to be satisfactory. This judgement is supported by the significant variations in teachers' performance and motivation.

Students' achievement

□ How well do students achieve in their academic work?

Grade: 3 Satisfactory

Students attained widely varying standards in the 2012 national examinations. Grade 3 students attained results that were below the average in mathematics. Grade 6 students attained results that were slightly above average in mathematics and average in science. Grade 9 students attained well above average results in mathematics and slightly above in science. These results reflect the varied standards in the majority of lessons and the satisfactory progress made by students.

Students attained high pass rates in all subjects in the school examinations in the academic year 2011-12. These ranged between 93.1% and 100%, among which the lowest rates were in science in Grade 7. Competency rates are commensurate with the pass rates in core subjects in Grades 1 to 3 and Grade 12; however, it varies in the rest, especially in the intermediate level for English. High pass rates reflect the students' standards in good lessons, such as secondary level mathematics and science, while they reflect students' standards at a lower level in other lessons, of which two-thirds were satisfactory. This is attributed to the varied effectiveness of class management and teaching methods.

Most students' acquisition of Arabic reading skills and reading Quran is good; however, their acquisition of English and Arabic writing skills, and English speaking, listening and reading skills are less well developed. The majority of students acquire scientific inference skills and calculation skills in mathematics and IT adequately, while Grades 2 and 4 students' acquisition of scientific and mathematical skills are taught in English less well. Students' acquisition of skills in Islamic studies is too varied.

Monitoring students' results from 2010 to 2012 shows high pass rates in all core subjects in the primary level, which turns into satisfactory progress in the intermediate and secondary levels. Most students progress well in good lessons, such as in science in Grade 11 and mathematics in Grade 12 due to varied activities that consider the students' different standards. However, they do not show similar progress in other lessons and in their written work, especially in English, because of less consideration of students' individual differences.

In the majority of lessons and school activities outstanding and talented students make adequate progress due to support that challenges their abilities, but low achieving students do not make sufficient progress because of the lack of educational support in lessons and school activities which reflect their varied achievement.

□ How good is the students' personal development?

Grade: 3 Satisfactory

Students participate enthusiastically and effectively in good lessons, due to effective teaching methods. However, their participation in the majority is not as good because of the varied opportunities that they are given. These are then reflected in satisfactory commitment and personal development.

Most students demonstrate loyalty to their country and an understanding of Bahraini culture and its Arab and Islamic values. This is attributed to the promoted values through the provision of lectures and awareness programmes, designation of prayer times, the conducive environment and organising fieldtrips to historical attractions and places such as Al-Fateh Islamic Centre. However, the most important factor for developing this understanding is the students' discipline and their pride in Arab traditions and Islamic values, which is reflected in most students' observance of these values.

Most students behave maturely and responsibly. They are punctual and attend well. There were limited late cases which were addressed in line with the students' discipline programme. Most students have good relations that are based on mutual respect among each other and with their teachers. They feel safe and relaxed at school. The majority of students participate confidently and responsibly in school life, especially the outstanding and talented students, through contests and committees such as the Quran memorization contest; the school broadcast committee, the discipline committee and Students' Council.

The quality of provision

□ How effective are teaching and learning?

Grade: 3 Satisfactory

Teachers are familiar with their study material which is reflected in their satisfactory performance in lessons. A variety of interesting teaching strategies, such as brainstorming and learning through exploration are used in good lessons, especially in secondary level science and mathematics. Adequate use of teaching resources, such as projectors and flashcards, enrich the learning process, which increases students' enthusiasm and their acquisition of skills, concepts and knowledge. This happens in mathematics and science where inference skills are gained, however in the rest of lessons strategies place the teacher at the centre of the learning process, especially at the primary level, which reflects adversely on the students' achievement and their acquisition of skills.

Teachers develop students' higher order thinking skills such as scientific inference, analysis and interpretation inconsistently across the majority of lessons, especially in intermediate and secondary science and mathematics. Some teachers challenge the students' abilities with oral and written questions, such as seeking analyses and an expression of opinions that require in-depth thinking. These help broaden the majority of students' intellectual capacities, however developing higher order thinking skills and challenging students' abilities is less effective in other lessons, especially primary level lessons.

Teachers managed good lessons well due to thorough planning and investing time in constructive learning. However, satisfactory lessons lag behind due to inconsistent time management. Introductory activities are often too long and teachers do not stick to the time slots assigned in lesson plans. The majority of teachers encouraged students well, especially in the primary level. However, though outstanding students were provided with adequate support, low achievers are not, which affects their progress adversely in most lessons.

Students are assigned homework in the majority of lessons, but the homework is the same for all students and does not consider their different needs. Correction and encouraging feedback is satisfactory. Diagnostic and screening tests are conducted but using their findings in planning in order to support students in lessons and remedial and enriching programmes is under developed. Assessment methods in good lessons include oral, written, individual and collective assessments. These are especially well done in secondary mathematics. However, students' assessment relies mostly on oral questions in the majority of lessons, which limits support for the different categories of students.

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

Grade: 3 Satisfactory

The school develops the students' sense of citizenship through their participation in national festivals and fieldtrips, such as to the Gulf Petrochemical Industries Company. It develops students' understanding of their rights and responsibilities through the school broadcast and religious programmes, which reflect positively in their behaviour and observance of values. Staff polish the talents of some students through participation in extra-curricular committees, such as the annual scientific event and the Ministry of Education's Holy Quran contest. Lessons and experiments in science also provide good curriculum experiences, but the impact of these activities is not good in developing students' different skills and experiences, especially low achievers. The school attends to the aesthetic aspects of the environment; it decorates corners and cultivates green areas, in addition to celebrating

students' scientific and artistic works. The quality of display of the students' work varies too much across classrooms.

Teachers rely heavily on textbook during lessons and do not refer to other teaching resources. The curriculum is linked to students' life experiences in the majority of subjects, but linking across different subjects is largely ignored, which limits opportunities. It is reviewed, analysed and supported with some enriching activities, however, these are not used sufficiently well to meet all students' needs for their next stage of education.

□ How well are students guided and supported?

Grade: 3 Satisfactory

The school inducts new students by arranging meetings for them with their parents to introduce school members and its regulations. This helps them settle in well. It also prepares students for the next stage of education through lectures, class and guidance visits and fieldtrips, such as those to the University Fair and the University of Bahrain.

The school assesses the students' personal and educational needs after analysing diagnostic tests. It meets their needs adequately. Outstanding and talented students are provided with appropriate support in the majority of lessons, programmes, contests and school activities. However, low achievers do not receive sufficient support, which reflects inconsistently on their personal and academic progress.

The social guidance department has paid significant attention to monitoring discipline and to provide students with effective advice to assist them in overcoming any issues they face. This has contributed to their good discipline, observance of Islamic values and reduced inappropriate behaviour. The school communicates with parents effectively. It also assesses safety and security aspects, maintaining them by, for example monitoring fire extinguishers and the canteen facilities. The nurse provides health and awareness support, which contributes to a safe, healthy environment. However, some precautionary and safety actions, such as the comprehensive assessment of the school environment, and training on evacuation drills, are not carried out frequently enough.

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 has a vision that focuses on academic and educational excellence as well as reinforcing Islamic values. This vision was formulated collectively by its members and is reflected adequately in all aspects of its work. The strategic plan is based on an annual plan with an analysis of different areas of the school's work, but with a correct focus on improving teachers' professional competency. However, it does not focus enough on aspects such as the students' personal development and improving the accuracy of performance indicators such as those of academic achievement. Departments vary as to their effectiveness in implementing the strategic plan and translating it into their operational practices. The school's leadership is aware of the school's strengths and those areas needing improvement, it contributed to spread the culture of quality in educational situations, and made efforts to pursue school work, reflected on improving some aspects of the school.

The school inspires its employees especially in terms of the moral and human relations. However, its efforts do not significantly improve the employees' motivation to work. The school's leadership has improved teacher's professional competency through numerous workshops, assessment, and class visits, which is reflected in the teachers' performance. The internal advisory council and the technical committee hold meetings to improve coordinators' professional competency, where they discussed many aspects of work, such as utilising strategies that consider the different standards of students. However, these are not sufficiently effective to elevate the school's performance to a good standard.

The school properly uses available teaching resources, such as workshops and electronic resources to support students and their work. It seeks the students and parents' opinions through communication with the Student and Parents' Councils and through the distribution of questionnaires, which inform the school about its services. The school responds to their suggestions as in sending monthly performance and behaviour reports and consulting students regarding examination schedules. Furthermore, the school communicates with the local community through programmes such as visiting the library of the University of Bahrain and working with the Discover Islam Centre during the Formula 1 race week. The Board of Trustees supports the school's work with actions such as discussing and evaluating the teachers' performance reports and their advanced training programmes. However, the follow up does not reflect sufficiently on performance levels, especially with regard to inspiring and encouraging employees in order to improve the school's overall performance.

The school's main strengths

- The effectiveness of social guidance in solving students' problems and adjusting their behaviour
- The students' feeling of safety and security at school
- Reinforcing the students' sense of citizenship and Islamic values and concepts.

Recommendations

In order to improve, the school should:

- develop teaching and learning strategies so as to ensure:
 - the students' acquisition of basic skills in core subjects
 - consideration of the students' different standards in lessons and homework, especially low achieving students, in order to promote better progress
 - The use of assessment to diagnose and meet the students' educational needs more precisely.
- adopt a regular, accurate self-evaluation mechanism and use the findings in developing the current strategic plan and the departments' operational plans to accelerate improvements
- provide varied extra-curricular programmes and activities which meet the students' personal and educational needs more closely
- step up the Board of Trustees' and the school leadership's roles in motivating employees in order to ensure improvement in the school's overall performance.