



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

# **Schools Review Unit Review Report**

**Al Khamees Primary Boys School  
Al Khamees - Capital Governorate  
Kingdom of Bahrain**

**Date of Review: 23 - 25 April 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 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

<b>School's name</b>		Al Khamees Primary Boys School											
<b>School's type</b>		Government											
<b>Year of establishment</b>		1926											
<b>Age range of students</b>		6-12 years											
<b>Grades (e.g. 1 to 12)</b>		<b>Primary</b>				<b>Middle</b>				<b>High</b>			
		1-6				-				-			
<b>Number of students</b>		<b>Boys</b>	415	<b>Girls</b>	-				<b>Total</b>	415			
<b>Students' social background</b>		limited 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>	3	3	3	2	3	4	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Town /Village</b>		Al Khamees											
<b>Governorate</b>		Capital											
<b>Number of administrative staff</b>		8											
<b>Number of teaching staff</b>		49											
<b>Curriculum</b>		Ministry of Education (MoE)											
<b>Main language(s) of instruction</b>		Arabic											
<b>Principal's tenure</b>		Two years											
<b>External assessment and examinations</b>		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>	
		105				10			-			42	
<b>Major recent changes in the school</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The school joined the School Improvement Project in the current academic year 2011-12.</li> </ul>											

## Table of review judgements awarded

Aspect	Grade: Description			
The school's overall effectiveness	4: Inadequate			
The school's capacity to improve	3: Satisfactory			
	Elementary / Primary	Middle / Intermediate	High / Secondary	Overall
Students' academic achievement	4	-	-	4
Students' personal development	3	-	-	3
The quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning	4	-	-	4
The quality of the curriculum implementation	4	-	-	4
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: 4 Inadequate

The school's performance changed from being judged as 'satisfactory' in the previous review in April 2009 to inadequate in this one. This is attributed to poor achievement in Grades 4 to 6 compared to that of students in Grades 1 to 3 which is mostly at expected levels. Attainment is well below average in recent national examinations, which is commensurate with students' poor achievement, especially in English and science, due largely to ineffective teaching in Grades 4 to 6 and poor implementation of the curriculum. Nonetheless, the school has a strategic plan that reflects the development of the students' awareness, good conduct and attendance. In addition, good efforts are made in solving students' problems and meeting their personal needs. Students' and parents' appreciation of the school are good and satisfactory, respectively.

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

#### Grade: 3 Satisfactory

The school's capacity to improve is judged satisfactory, as it was at the previous review. The school has made use of its evaluation of its provision. The priorities in the strategic plan have been successful in maintaining students' satisfactory personal development and support. However, the mechanisms for monitoring and implementing action plans are not effective enough. In addition, the school provides professional development programmes by way of workshops and exchange visits, however these are not effectively improving teaching at the top of the school. Some improvements are evident in the school environment, its maintenance and the good teaching practices in Grades 1 to 3, and in the support provided to students with learning difficulties. The involvement of the School Improvement Team is significant to the school's satisfactory capacity to improve.

## Students' achievement

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

#### Grade: 4 Inadequate

The students in Grade 3 and Grade 6 attained pass rates that were close to the national average in all core subjects in 2009. However, the rates declined to below and well below average in the years 2010 and 2011, with a slight improvement in mathematics in Grade 3 in 2011. The Grade 6 students' levels regressed in all core subjects and are well below the national average in Arabic, English, mathematics and science, which is commensurate with their low achievement in the majority of their lessons, mainly as a result of ineffective teaching.

The students achieved high pass rates that ranged between 85% and 100% in the school examinations in the first semester of 2011-12. The highest rates were in English; however, these rates did not reflect the students' actual levels in most lessons and written work. The exception is for the majority of students in Grades 1 to 3, especially in good lessons, because of good learning opportunities provided. The proficiency rates are commensurate with the pass rates but not good in English and science in Grades 4 to 6.

The students' acquisition of the basic skills in Arabic and mathematics is varied. Only a small number of students acquire the English and scientific skills they need, which is due to the variation in the teaching methods used which do not focus enough on students' acquisition of these skills.

The students' academic achievement over the past three years is inadequate. Although students attain high rates in core subjects, the majority do not make enough progress in written work in satisfactory and inadequate lessons which account for about two thirds of the lessons. Students achieve noticeable progress in those good lessons where teachers give consideration to students' individual differences, most commonly the case in Grades 1 to 3. Outstanding students only make limited progress as a result of the inadequate support they received in most lessons and in internal and external contests, while students with learning difficulties make adequate progress on the whole as a result of the support programmes that generally suit their needs and levels of achievement.

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

### **Grade: 3 Satisfactory**

Students' participation in school life is satisfactory, mainly because of their involvement in activities such as IT, Arabic calligraphy, the scout committee, sports and games. Students participate well in good lessons due to teaching strategies that provide opportunities for them to take part, express their opinions and take responsibility. They lead events during break-times and through the School's Council. However, their self-confidence and independence in coming up with ideas are too limited because of variations in the quality of teaching, especially in Grades 4 to 6. Students are harmonious during break-times although occasional fighting inhibits students feeling totally safe.

The majority of students show good understanding and cooperation, however, distribution of responsibility for activities is not clear in most lessons. They show respect to their teachers and other students and attend school and lessons on time, despite some cases of being late in the morning. The 'You are lucky this morning' programme, contributes to increasing students' punctuality.

Most students show an understanding of the Bahraini culture and Islamic values through their participation in the school broadcast programmes that include games, cultural activities and reciting the Quran. The social committee organises field visits to the Bahrain National Museum and Ein Athari Park, to better familiarise students with their history and traditions.

## **The quality of provision**

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

#### **Grade: 4 Inadequate**

Teachers are familiar with their study material in lessons in Grades 1 to 3, but less so in those for Grades 4 to 6. Most teachers in Grades 1 to 3 use effective teaching strategies such as learning by playing and brainstorming and utilise teaching aids, such as interactive boards, kites and shapes, to make learning more attractive and interesting. Students are motivated to learn and develop their skills of reading in Arabic to a good level. However, their acquisition of the skills of writing, composition and listening and their English skills in general and in science are not a similar level. Too much teaching in Grades 4 to 6 relies on teachers giving instructions with only limited use of teaching aids, thus resulting in a negative impact on these students' academic achievement.



Most teachers managed their lessons adequately in terms of sharing lesson goals and encouraging students verbally and through body language, which is reflected in students' motivation to learn in good lessons. However, class management in satisfactory and inadequate lessons dips in quality due to ineffective investment of time, especially in science and mathematics.

This affects the achievement of the lessons' goals and the quality support adversely preventing students' various educational needs being met. The students' abilities are sometimes challenged through critical thinking, analysis and problem solving in some of the lessons in Grade 1 to 3. These lessons are often, pitched at a higher level than those in Grades 4 to 6, despite some of these methods being referred to in the lesson plans. The quality of class activities and homework given to students are too varied because too often they do not consider students' individual differences. Homework is not regularly or accurately corrected, which prevents the older students from learning from their mistakes.

The school performs diagnostic and formative tests. However the findings of these are not used to identify the different student groups in order to prepare proper remedial or extension programmes based on their different achievement levels. The teachers in Grades 1 to 3 use various effective assessment methods such as through watching play, individual assessment and continuous observation, while most teachers in Grades 4 to 6 only use verbal questions and take group answers, which did not help achieve the learning goals for many students.

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

#### **Grade: 4 Inadequate**

Curriculum implementation and enrichment suit the students' levels in Grades 1 to 3, where most acquire necessary basic skills. However, this is not so for students in Grades 4 to 6 because they are not prepared for their next educational stage. Links between subjects and daily life situations are good in the lower classes, but not in the upper classes.

The students' experiences are developed through their participation in different committees such as the IT, art, library friends and school broadcasts. Sports activities, such as soccer and table tennis, and contests such as the 'Grammar Contest' and 'The Mathematics Olympics' also contribute.

The students' understanding of their rights and responsibilities is promoted through guidance boards and by encouraging students to take responsibility in the 'Together for

clean environments' campaigns. A spirit of citizenship is promoted by preparing Bahraini cultural displays and a variety of traditional content in the morning programmes, in addition to organising national celebrations and field visits to the A'ali pottery and Al Areen Wildlife Reserve. The curriculum is enriched through the school environment by displaying students' work, decorating the school corners, and using the science laboratory and e-learning classroom. However, the use of facilities such as the learning resources centre, the English and mathematics clubs are not used to serve the curriculum well enough.

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

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

New students receive satisfactory induction. This is done by implementing an organised programme where students are introduced to school facilities, and where meetings for the parents are held to familiarise them with the school and its rules. Students are helped to feel stable at the school. They also prepared for transfer from Grades 3 to 4 but the preparation of Grade 6 students for transfer is limited to a few guidance lessons.

The monitoring of students' personal development is adequate. The guidance department works on identifying students' basic needs, such as financial aid and other necessities. The department also seeks to solve disciplinary problems facing students, which contribute to their satisfactory personal development. Results of diagnostic tests are used to identify educational needs. Students with learning difficulties are provided with adequate support. However, support for low achieving students is inadequate, due to the ineffectiveness and limited number of intensive lessons provided. Outstanding and talented students do not receive adequate support due to weak challenge and, attention and the absence of an excellence and talent specialist teacher.

The school contacts parents to update them on their children's progress effectively. It puts effort into providing a safe and healthy environment via the health and safety committee. However, one of the school buildings is quite old and is posing some danger to safety.

## 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 an ambitious vision and mission that focus on meeting the comprehensive quality standards in primary teaching and which have been formed collectively with parents. The leadership has assessed the quality of teaching and learning, students' academic work, the school's facilities, the impact of classroom exchange visits and has measured satisfaction levels across the community. However, the use of these findings has not had a clear impact on performance in classes, especially in Grades 4 to 6. The strategic plan is based on accurate analysis and builds on the positive practices in Grades 1 to 3 and variedly on the students' satisfactory personal development and the support and guidance they receive. The mechanisms for monitoring the implementation of the plans against priorities has not been rigorous enough, especially in terms of improving teaching and programmes which aim to raise students' achievement in Grades 4 to 6 and prepare students for their next educational stage. However, there are signs of improvements.

Teachers' needs are identified and workshops arranged to raise professional competency. These have included 'teaching higher order thinking skills', 'remedial teaching' and 'documentary camera'. However, the impact on teaching is not yet reflected in performance, especially in English and science in Grades 4 to 6.

Social events encourage good relationships across the school. The school uses its resources and facilities well, but more use could be made of the learning resources centre.

The school responds to the opinions of parents through the parents' council, such as installing speed breakers in front of the school gate, and changing its location in order to avoid traffic congestion. Students' opinions through the students' council are heard, such as adjusting the examinations schedule and improving the canteen by adding variety to the food it offers.

The school management receives suggestions from the school board and technical committee. The school now has contact with the School Improvement Team regarding the implementation of the strategic plan, improving teaching and the school environment and raising achievement. Although the impact of this involvement is not yet enough, this external support, coupled with the genuine efforts of the senior team, give satisfactory capacity to improve.

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

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- The students' good conduct and punctual attendance to school and lessons
- The efforts made to solve students' problems and meet their personal needs
- Implementation of some effective teaching strategies in most of the lessons in Grades 1 to 3.

## Recommendations

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

- develop more effective mechanisms to implement and monitor strategic planning by using accurate performance indicators to ensure academic achievement is raised through improved teaching and learning
- develop students' basic skills, especially in English across the school and in science in Grades 4 to 6
- implement effective teaching and learning strategies, especially in Grades 4 to 6 that include:
  - the use of findings from evaluation in lesson planning and homework
  - provision of proper support for students to meet their various educational needs
  - good class management to ensure students' participation and time investment to achieve the lesson goals
- ensure the transmission of teachers' learning in professional competency programmes impacts on the academic progress of students.