



الهيئة الوطنية
للمؤهلات وضمان جودة التعليم والتدريب
National Authority for Qualifications &
Quality Assurance of Education & Training

**Directorate of Government Schools
Reviews
Short Review Report**

**Al-Ma'rafa Secondary Girls School
East Riffa - Central Governorate
Kingdom of Bahrain**

**Date of Review: 21 - 23 April 2014
SG144-C2-R178**

Table of Contents

Directorate of Government Schools Reviews	1
Introduction	2
Characteristics of the school	2
Table of review judgements awarded	4
Review judgements	5
Overall effectiveness	5
The school's main strengths	6
Recommendations	7

Directorate of Government Schools Reviews

The Directorate of Government Schools Reviews (DGS) is part of the National Authority for Qualifications and Quality Assurance of Education and Training (QQA) 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 DGS is responsible for:

- evaluating and reporting on the quality of provision in all government schools
- establishing success measures
- spreading best practice
- making recommendations for government school 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 government schools 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 ten 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-Ma'refa Secondary Girls School											
School's type		Government											
Year of establishment		2004											
Age range of students		16-18 years											
Grades (e.g. 1 to 12)		Primary				Middle				High			
		-				-				10-12			
Number of students		Boys	-	Girls	1099				Total	1099			
Students' social background		Most students come from low-income families											
Classes per grade	Grade	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
	Classes	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	11	13	12
Number of sections in each grade		Grade 10: 11 classes (9 unified track, 2 apprenticeship) Grade 11: 13 classes (4 scientific track, 3 commercial track, 2 literary track, 4 apprenticeship) Grade 12: 12 classes (3 scientific track, 2 commercial track, 3 literary track, 4 apprenticeship).											
Town /Village		East Riffa											
Governorate		Central											
Number of administrative staff		27 administrative and 21 technicians											
Number of teaching staff		157											
Curriculum		Ministry of Education (MoE)											
Main language(s) of instruction		Arabic											
Principal's tenure		1 year											
External assessment and examinations		MoE examinations and QQA national examinations.											
Accreditation (if possible)		-											
Number of students in the following categories according to the school classification		Outstanding				Gifted & Talented			Physical Disabilities			Learning Difficulties	
		195				283			3			33	

Major recent changes in the school	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• New appointments in 2013-2014:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- principal- assistant principal- 18 teachers: 2 for Arabic, 4 for English, 3 for mathematics, 4 for science, 1 for computers, 1 for commercial studies, 3 for apprenticeship.• Previous year's appointments:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- assistant principal.
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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	-	-	3	3
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

Overall effectiveness

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

Grade: 3 Satisfactory

The school's overall performance has changed from 'Good' in the April 2010 review to 'Satisfactory' this time. All aspects are satisfactory. Most students achieve the expected level in lessons. Acquisition of basic skills is satisfactory in most core subjects. However, the majority of technical and vocational students' acquire fewer mathematical and English skills than their peers, due to inconsistencies in teaching and learning strategies, utilisation of assessment techniques and ineffective classroom management. Various induction programmes help students settle at school, while Grade 12 students are familiarised with higher education or labour-market requirements. The school communicates well with the local community and builds good relations with organisations which enhance students' experiences. Most students are committed to Islamic values and understand Bahrain's culture and heritage. Students and parents are generally satisfied with the school's provision.

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

Grade: 3 Satisfactory

The capacity to improve has changed from 'Outstanding' in the previous review to 'Satisfactory' this time. The leadership is aware of the school's strengths and areas that need improvement, and sets a strategic plan based on self-evaluation, according to work priorities. Despite the slight progress in students' standards compared to the last two years and an increased number of outstanding students, the school faces challenges. These include the inconsistent acquisition of basic skills, evident in apprenticeship students who are weak in English and mathematics. Follow-up on the impact of professional development programmes on teachers' performance is inconsistent, particularly for those who are newly appointed, due to the shortage of middle leadership. This also leads to disparity in teaching strategies and ineffectiveness of curriculum enrichment programmes.

The school's main strengths

- Students' commitment to Islamic values and their understanding of Bahrain's culture and heritage
- Induction programmes and provision of a healthy and safe environment
- Communication with the local community to enrich students' educational experiences.

Recommendations

In order to improve, the school should:

- raise students' academic achievement, enabling them to acquire basic skills, especially in mathematics and English in the apprenticeship track
- improve teaching and learning processes, to include:
 - effective use of teaching and learning strategies, focusing on student-centred lessons
 - utilisation of assessment techniques that contribute to diagnosing and meeting students' educational needs
 - effective of time management to ensure achieving learning objectives.
- monitor the impact of teachers' professional development programmes, especially for those who are newly appointed
- address the human resources shortage, mainly senior teachers of most departments especially Arabic, English and science.