



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

# **Schools Review Unit Review Report**

**Al Noor Girls Secondary School  
Isa Town - The Central Governorate  
Kingdom of Bahrain**

**Date Reviewed: 19-21 October 2009**

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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 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 students.

## **Introduction**

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### **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: Girls

Number of students: 762

Age range: 16-18 years

### **Characteristics of the school**

Al Noor Secondary School for Girls is one of the Middle Governorate's schools and was established in 1996. It caters for girls aged between 16 and 18 and there are 762 students, distributed among 25 classes. Most students come from higher- and middle-income families. There are 164 outstanding students, 72 gifted and talented and 5 with special needs. The school has 86 academic staff and 25 administrative staff. The school follows the unified track programme, and joined King Hamad's Schools of the Future project in 2006-2007. The Principal is in her first year at the school and has two assistant principals.

## Overall effectiveness

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

### **Grade: 4 (Inadequate)**

The overall performance of Al Noor Secondary School for Girls is inadequate, although parents and students are generally satisfied with the school.

Students show inadequate standards of achievement. Teaching and learning strategies in the school do not pay attention to individual differences among students. Students do not make enough progress at their various academic levels, which is clearly reflected in most lessons of the basic subjects. Students' proficiency in basic skills is not at the level expected of students in secondary education. Some of the gifted and talented students have chosen to follow a creativity programme, but they are not reaching the expected standards and were not sufficiently catered for in lessons.

The personal development of students is satisfactory. Most students are well-mannered, inside and outside the classroom. Most of them attend school regularly and are punctual. Students participate satisfactorily in school activities, though to a lesser extent in the classroom, particularly in the inadequate lessons. Students show a sense of awareness, self-confidence and the ability to shoulder responsibility whenever they have the chance to do so, but they are given insufficient opportunities to develop higher thinking skills.

Teaching and learning are inadequate. Lessons are ineffectively planned, which leads to students becoming distracted and reduces their chances to participate. Lesson planning is not effectively used to increase students' academic achievements in most subjects, as the goals set for students are either much lower or higher than their own levels. A lesson often ends without its objectives being achieved and there are few pauses built in to allow teachers to check that students are achieving their goals. The evaluation mechanism is ineffective: it does not allow students to recognise and correct their own mistakes. Most lessons do not challenge student's abilities, nor do they motivate or encourage them to learn.

The quality of the provision and the enhancement of the curriculum is satisfactory. The curriculum is reinforced by offering extra-curricular activities handled by various committees, and by holding events aimed at strengthening students' sense of loyalty to the nation, although not all students are involved in such activities and events. The way in which the curriculum is offered does not help students to acquire basic skills, particularly

English language skills. The school environment is enriched with educational boards and pictures around the premises, although they are less evident inside classrooms.

Support and guidance for students are satisfactory. The school diagnoses students' personal and educational needs and addresses them adequately, although to a lesser degree during lessons. The school organises induction programmes for new students to familiarise them with the school facilities, but does not give equal emphasis to transition programmes that guide students through the next stages of education or into the labour market, particularly as regards students' acquisition of basic skills. The school conducts appropriate risk assessments and makes sure the school staff work in a healthy and safe environment.

The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The school has a participatory vision and mission. Its leaders assess all relevant aspects of the school, although there is no accurate follow-up. Recommendations are put on the school's priority agenda, particularly in relation to increasing achievement. The school is keen to communicate with parents and respond to their needs as much as possible within its available resources, but its communication mechanism is ineffective and unsystematic. The school does not measure the impact on students in the classroom of the many educational workshops that are held. The school has made clear efforts to build an appropriate strategic plan based on contributions from the various school departments between the scholastic years 2006-07 and 2011-12. The plan covers some important areas, such as teaching, learning and leadership. The achievement of goals is followed up, but the strategic plan has no clear, measurable performance indicators for improvement, particularly in the area of academic achievement.

## Does the school have the capacity to improve?

### **Grade: 3 (Satisfactory)**

The school's capacity to improve is satisfactory. The school's senior managers are well informed of the school's strengths and of those areas that need to improve. They recognise that the performance of academic staff is currently inconsistent and that this is affecting students' academic achievements. The manager has drawn up plans and programmes to develop teachers' professional proficiency, as well as carrying out self-assessment. In addition, the good practices in the performance of some teachers. Where the school previous principal evaluated all the aspects in the self-evaluation form as good; and excellent in the leadership and management, but their judgments are completely different with the team's as the achievement and teaching and learning are inappropriate and the other aspects are satisfactory.

## **The school's main strengths and areas for development**

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### **Main Strengths**

- Students' regular attendance
- The vision and mission are inclusive
- Induction programmes for new students

### **Areas for development**

- Improve students' basic skills
- Develop higher-order thinking skills
- Pay attention to individual differences in lessons and homework
- Challenge student's abilities, and motivate and encourage them
- Employ effective evaluation and make use of its findings in lesson planning
- Evaluate the impact of training workshops on teaching, learning and student achievement

## What the school needs to do to improve

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In order to improve further, the school should:

- Develop teaching and learning strategies, particularly in basic subjects, taking into consideration the following:
  - Development of higher-order thinking skills
  - challenging students' abilities to achieve progress
  - teaching students basic skills
  - paying attention to individual differences in lessons and homework
- Use evaluation effectively and make use of its findings in lesson planning
- Employ the findings of self-assessment to improve teaching, learning and academic achievements of students
- Assess the impact of training workshops on the quality of teaching and learning and on academic achievement
- Devise a mechanism to communicate regularly with parents.



## Overall judgements

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Aspect	Grade: Description
<b>The school's overall effectiveness</b>	<b>4: Inadequate</b>
The school's capacity to improve	3: Satisfactory
Students' academic achievement	4: Inadequate
Students' progress in their personal development	3: Satisfactory
The quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning	4: Inadequate
The quality of the curriculum delivery	3: Satisfactory
The quality of guidance and support for students	3: Satisfactory
The quality and effectiveness of leadership and management	3: Satisfactory