



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

Schools Review Unit Review Report

**Al Salam Primary Girls School
Jidhafs - Northern Governorate
Kingdom of Bahrain**

Date reviewed: 10 - 12 January 2011

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The Schools Review Unit

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

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 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: 456

Age range: 6-12 years

Characteristics of the school

Al Salam Primary Girls School, located in Jidhafs, Northern Governorate, was founded in 2009. The age range in the school is from 6 to 12 years. The school's 456 students are distributed across 15 classes: nine classes in the first cycle and six classes in the second. Most students come from middle-income backgrounds. The school categorises 44 students as talented and gifted and 88 as outstanding; one student has special learning needs and another has a physical disability. The principal is in her second academic year at the school. There are 48 administrative and teaching staff. The school is one of King Hamad's Schools of the Future and is part of the Intermediate Education Development Project.

Overall effectiveness

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

Grade: 2 (Good)

The overall effectiveness of Al Salam Primary Girls School is good. It has some outstanding aspects, in students' personal development, curriculum delivery, leadership and management, and its capacity to improve. Students are exceptionally satisfied with the school and their parents satisfaction is good.

The students' level of academic achievement is good. Most students achieve high success rates in most subjects, although grade 5 students' proficiency rates are slightly lower. This achievement was reflected in the outstanding and good lessons, which represented more than two-thirds of the lessons observed. Students also make good progress in most lessons, where effective teaching strategies and assessment methods are used; students' progress in written work, however, is inconsistent. The various categories of students make progress that matches their abilities: outstanding and talented students, for example, benefit from enrichment programmes that cater for their abilities and make good progress; students with learning difficulties also make clear progress under the care of the learning difficulties specialist; special tutorials and remedial programmes for lower achievers which led them to achieve more progress.

Students' personal development is outstanding. Students are generally punctual as a result to their awareness of the school's procedures. The vast majority of students play a full part in the school's excellent range of extracurricular activities and on committees that meet their needs and interests. Most students are very enthusiastic and motivated towards learning in lessons; due to the varied learning strategies and educational practices used. Analytical thinking skills are well developed. Most students are given opportunities to develop their self-confidence by taking on leadership roles and responsibilities in school life, through the formation of a discipline committee and the students' council; however, these opportunities are slightly less frequent than those in the classroom. Students show mutual respect for each other and their teachers, responding well to the school's efforts to promote good behaviour in an outstanding way and raise their awareness. Students feel safe and secure in the school environment; exceptionally good relationships exist between everyone in the school.

The effectiveness of teaching and learning is good. Most teachers have good subject knowledge, which they reflect in their use of various and effective teaching methods, such as deduction and role-playing. The teachers' good use of learning resources and information and communications technology (ICT) helps to encourage students and keep their interest.

Students are given good support and challenged effectively, particularly in English. Most lessons are effectively managed overall but time management is not as strong. Students are given chances to work together and learn from each other but in some learning situations the allocation of roles and responsibilities was not planned for. Students are given various assignments and homework activities as indicated in lesson plans and this work is accurately marked by teachers; some assignments, however, do not cater for students' individual differences. The results of assessment are used to plan work and programmes to support students in lessons and address their learning needs; in the satisfactory lessons observed, however, the assessment methods were ineffective.

The delivery of the curriculum are outstanding. The school develops a strong spirit of citizenship in students by providing special activities and programmes through its citizenship committee and morning assembly committee, such as Principles Week, various role-plays and competitions. The school also runs a wide and interesting range of extracurricular activities and makes use of its effective different committees. Students developing good basic skills in most subjects, although their writing skills in Arabic and English, and verbal problem-solving skills in mathematics, are not as strong. Most lessons link effectively between core subjects in the first cycle. Good use is made of the school's walls, corners, corridors and classrooms to enrich the curriculum. Students' work is celebrated well throughout the school, which helps motivate them to learn and boosts their self-confidence.

The quality of support and guidance for students is good. Appropriate induction programmes are run for new students. Students are also well prepared for the next phases of their education. The school addresses most students' personal needs in an outstanding way by providing subsidies. It diagnoses most students' learning needs well and is good at meeting these learning needs in classes by using varied teaching strategies and written work; this is of clear benefit to most students' academic achievement and progress. Parents are informed about their daughters' progress through many channels but the school does not always do this regularly. The school provides a safe learning environment: it monitors safety and security procedures thoroughly, has formed a security and safety committee, has taken students' views about the school's canteen into account, and organised competitions about healthy nutritional habits.

The effectiveness of leadership and management is outstanding. The school has developed a vision and mission statement focused on achievement that was shared with all staff within a short period of time. The school is characterised by its accurate self-evaluation; its careful monitoring of the impact of self-evaluation on all educational practices, development projects, events, classroom and extracurricular activities; and its use of evaluation results in planning. The school has a strong strategic plan focused on improvement and development, as well as departmental and committee action plans. The school's leadership creates a productive atmosphere and motivates and encourages its staff, which contributes to

achieving the school's objectives. Senior and middle managers cooperate to develop all the school's staff effectively by running training programmes and workshops. They carry out classroom visits and continuously monitor activities to see how well such programmes are reflected in the performance of all teachers. The school employs all its resources and buildings exceptionally well to serve the educational process. It also seeks, and responds to, students' and their parents' proposals by constant use of surveys; students and their parents are full of praise for the services provided by the school.

□ Does the school have the capacity to improve?

Grade: 1 (Outstanding)

The school has an outstanding capacity to improve. Since the establishment of the school one year ago, the school leaders have created a highly effective management system focused on collaborative decision-making, team work, a realistic diagnosis of the school's situation, flexible planning, and effective use of resources to address all the needs of school staff. The school has a flexible, comprehensive strategic plan based on accurate self-evaluation and self-evaluation results are effectively used in determining priorities. The school's staff play their part effectively in the planning and implementation stages, which contributes to developing the school's performance in general. The school's management is fully aware of the school's main strengths and areas for development. This helps it to focus on raising the quality of provision in most subjects, as well as helping it to use resources effectively. The school also focuses on targeting training and applying its results in the classroom. The school is at the forefront of many leading projects, such as 'Distinguished Bahraini School', which contribute to the school's significant progress in all aspects.

The school's main strengths and areas for development

Main Strengths

- Strategic plan
- Self-evaluation
- Awareness and aspiration of the school's leadership, including its awareness of the latest educational developments and how to apply them in the school
- Success and proficiency rates in the first cycle
- The diagnosis of students' levels of ability
- Students' behaviour inside and outside classrooms
- Students' sense of safety and security in the school
- Teaching and learning strategies
- Linking between subjects in the first cycle
- Extracurricular activities
- Assessment of students' personal and learning needs
- Making use of resources to serve the learning process.

Areas for development

- Considering individual differences in lessons in the second cycle
- Helping students to acquire stronger basic skills in writing in Arabic and English and verbal problem-solving in mathematics
- Developing analytical thinking skills to a greater extent
- Closer monitoring of the impact of professional competency programmes on practices in lessons.

What the school needs to do to improve

In order to improve further, the school should:

- Make use of existing distinguished practices to focus on:
 - Helping students to acquire stronger basic skills in writing in Arabic and English and verbal problem-solving in mathematics
 - Considering individual differences in the second cycle
 - Developing analytical thinking skills
 - Better planning for students to assume leadership roles in lessons.
- Monitor more closely the impact of professional competency programmes on lessons.

Overall judgements

Aspect	Grade: Description
The school's overall effectiveness	2: Good
The school's capacity to improve	1: Outstanding
Students' academic achievement	2: Good
Students' progress in their personal development	1: Outstanding
The quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning	2: Good
The quality of the curriculum delivery	1: Outstanding
The quality of guidance and support for students	2: Good
The quality and effectiveness of leadership and management	1: Outstanding