



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

Schools Review Unit

Review Report

Al Sehla Primary Intermediate Boys School
Buquwah - North Governorate
Kingdom of Bahrain

Date Reviewed: 29 November - 1 December 2010

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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 six 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: Boys

Number of students: 840

Age range: 6-15 years

Characteristics of the school

Al Sehla Primary Intermediate School is one of the North Governorate schools, located in Buquwah, and was founded in 1988. The age range in the school is from 6 to 15 years, and there are 840 students. Most students come from middle-income families. The school classifies 28 of its students as talented, 274 as outstanding and 27 as having learning disabilities. Students are distributed across 27 classes: six classes for the first cycle, seven for the second and 14 for the third. The principal is in his first year at the school. There are 59 teachers and 11 administrative and technical staff. The school is part of the second stage of King Hamad's Schools of the Future project.

Overall effectiveness

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

Grade: 3 (Satisfactory)

The overall effectiveness of Al Sehla Primary Intermediate Boys School is satisfactory. Most aspects of the school are satisfactory and its leadership and management are good. Students and their parents are satisfied with the school.

Students' academic achievement is satisfactory. Students achieve high pass rates in school and ministry examinations in most core subjects for most levels, except in English and mathematics at intermediate level. The proficiency rate of students is in line with the pass rates. Students' attainment levels are good in most of the first cycle lessons, where effective teaching strategies are used; they are satisfactory in the second and third cycles. Students' progress over time in Arabic, science and mathematics remains stable but has fallen back in English. Outstanding students and those with special educational needs make progress in line with their abilities; the support they are provided with is appropriate. However, few programmes are provided for lower achievers, who make limited progress.

Students' personal development is satisfactory. Most students attend school regularly. Some students show their loyalty to the school by their effective contribution to school life. Participation in school committees and internal and external competitions helps to broaden the experiences and interests of those who take part, although most students are not involved. Most students showed enthusiasm in the good lessons observed, where effective teaching methods were used, but they were less engaged in satisfactory and inadequate lessons. Some students, given appropriate opportunities, can analyse and explain in mathematics and science lessons; students are not given the same opportunities in other lessons. Students show awareness and responsibility, respecting each other and their teachers. They feel safe and secure at the school. The school deals swiftly with minor instances of poor behaviour.

The effectiveness of the teaching and learning is satisfactory. Most teachers have good subject knowledge, which was reflected in the clear explanations they gave in good observed lessons but was less evident in satisfactory lessons. Lessons are managed appropriately but teachers manage time less effectively. Some teachers use a variety of strategies, such as discussion and dialogue, in some lessons. Most lessons, however, rely on instructional teaching methods and students' individual differences are insufficiently considered; students' attainment is inconsistent in these lessons. Although teachers use

cooperative learning in some good lessons it is not planned in a way that effectively identifies their roles and responsibilities. Students are given homework in most lessons but it is the same for all students in a class, except in the first cycle; appropriate feedback is not provided. Most teachers rely on verbal and written assessment methods to measure students' achievement and progress. This helps to identify some students' strengths and areas for improvement, in some lessons, but is less effective in most of the Arabic and English lessons; this hampers students progress during these lessons.

The quality of curriculum delivery is satisfactory. The school develops students' sense of nationalism by encouraging effective participation in national events and the morning assembly. The school makes its environment more attractive by displaying paintings relevant to the curriculum and celebrating students' work inside classrooms. It reinforces students' experiences and develops their abilities through committees and extracurricular activities such as cultural competitions; however, these activities do not meet the needs of most students. The school makes links between subjects in only a few lessons of the first cycle. Second and third cycle students gain appropriate basic skills in mathematics and science, especially skills related to multiplication, summation and deduction. Their Arabic and English skills are weaker, especially in reading and writing.

The quality of student guidance and support programmes is satisfactory. The induction programmes prepared for first cycle students on the first day of the study year help them settle in easily. The third intermediate students are prepared appropriately for the next educational stage by lectures, guidance brochures and visits to secondary schools. The school meets students' personal needs appropriately. It meets some of their educational needs through a learning difficulties programme and by involving some of them in extracurricular activities; it does not, however, meet the needs of all different groups adequately. The school uses many channels to communicate with parents, which parents appreciate. The school evaluates health and safety risks well; all staff and students feel safe and secure in the school.

The effectiveness and quality of leadership and management are good. The school's current leadership has shaped its shared vision and mission to suit its most important and recent developments, and continuously works on developing the vision and mission of the school. The school's leadership is well aware of its strengths and areas for development. It has set appropriate priorities: raising the achievement level; improving teachers' professional competency; and applying new learning strategies. It monitors and evaluates its plans and programmes, which is reflected in improvements in the school's overall performance. The school identifies teachers' training needs through regular classroom visits by the higher and middle leadership; although it provides training accordingly, the impact on teachers' performance in lessons is not clear. The school uses most of its resources well to maintain the school buildings and serve the educational process but does not make best use of educational resources in the classroom. The school makes clear efforts to seek and respond

to the views and suggestions of students and their parents. It also involves parents in evaluating aspects of the school's work, which contributes to the satisfaction of most parents with the school's performance.

□ Does the school have the capacity to improve?

Grade: 2 (Good)

The school's capacity to develop and improve is good. The school has a clear mechanism to unify the efforts of all staff to implement the priorities of the comprehensive strategic plan. It has carried out comprehensive self-evaluation of all aspects of its work that relate to the educational services it provides. Its concentration on introducing different education strategies has helped to improve students' academic achievement levels and personal development. Most recently, it has successfully identified the roles and tasks of staff members, which has reinforced harmony among staff, as well as their sense of working together to develop the school. Some challenges remain, such as the school being small for the number of students, and the variation in the use of teaching strategies by the teachers.

The school's main strengths and areas for development

Main Strengths

- Students' progress in first cycle lessons
- Students with learning difficulties achieve a level of progress in line with their abilities
- Most teachers have good subject knowledge
- Meeting students' personal needs
- Communicating with parents about their sons' progress
- Providing a healthy and safety environment for staff and students
- Self-evaluation of all aspects of performance and regular follow up to ensure improvement and development
- Strategic planning that focuses on improvement; the suitability of the recent updates
- The inspiration of senior staff to motivate all staff to develop their performance, and the effective delegation of authority in the best interests of the school's work.

Areas for development

- Diverse teaching strategies
- Catering for individual differences in lesson plans, writing activities and homework
- Developing basic skills in Arabic and English
- Using cooperative learning
- Diversifying assessment methods during lessons
- Analytical thinking skills and challenging students' abilities
- Monitoring the impact of teachers' training in lessons
- The participation of all student groups in extracurricular activities
- Providing support for all student groups to ensure their educational needs are met.

What the school needs to do to improve

In order to improve further, the school should:

- Improve and develop the teaching strategies to ensure:
 - Individual differences are considered in lesson plans, writing activities and homework
 - Better basic skills in Arabic and English are developed
 - Cooperative learning is used
 - A variety of assessment methods is used during lessons
 - Analytical thinking skills are developed and students' abilities challenged
 - Subjects in the first cycle are linked.
- Monitor more effectively the impact of teachers' training on lessons.
- Ensure all student categories have opportunities to take part in curricular and extracurricular activities.
- Coordinate with relevant parties to accommodate the increasing number of students at the school.

Overall judgements

| Aspect | Grade: Description |
|--|------------------------|
| The school's overall effectiveness | 3: Satisfactory |
| The school's capacity to improve | 2: Good |
| Students' academic achievement | 3: Satisfactory |
| Students' progress in their personal development | 3: Satisfactory |
| The quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning | 3: Satisfactory |
| 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 | 2: Good |