



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

# **Schools Review Unit**

## **Review Report**

**Al-Belad Al-Qadeem Primary Girls School**  
**Al-Belad Al-Qadeem - Capital Governorate**  
**Kingdom of Bahrain**

**Date of Review: 30-31 December 2012 - 2 January 2013**

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## The Schools Review Unit

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The Schools Review Unit (SRU) is part of the National Authority for Qualifications and Quality Assurance of Education and Training (NAQQAET) 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 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 eight 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-Belad Al-Qadeem Primary Girls School											
<b>School's type</b>		Government											
<b>Year of establishment</b>		1968											
<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>			
		24				-				-			
<b>Number of students</b>		<b>Boys</b>	-	<b>Girls</b>	645				<b>Total</b>	645			
<b>Students' social background</b>		The majority of students come from low to middle 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>	4	4	4	4	4	4	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Town /Village</b>		Al-Belad Al-Qadeem											
<b>Governorate</b>		Capital											
<b>Number of administrative staff</b>		11 administrative and 2 technicians											
<b>Number of teaching staff</b>		61											
<b>Curriculum</b>		Ministry of Education (MoE)											
<b>Main language(s) of instruction</b>		Arabic											
<b>Principal's tenure</b>		1 year											
<b>External assessment and examinations</b>		NAQQAET'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>	
		261				24			1			50	
<b>Major recent changes in the school</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The assistant principal was promoted to school principal in the academic year 2012-13</li> <li>Appointment of two assistant principals in the academic year 2012-13.</li> </ul>											

## Table of review judgements awarded

Aspect	Grade: Description			
The school's overall effectiveness	2: Good			
The school's capacity to improve	1: Outstanding			
	Elementary / Primary	Middle / Intermediate	High / Secondary	Overall
Students' academic achievement	2	-	-	2
Students' personal development	1	-	-	1
The quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning	2	-	-	2
The quality of the curriculum implementation	1	-	-	1
The quality of support and guidance for students	1	-	-	1
The quality and effectiveness of leadership, management and governance	1	-	-	1

### 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: 2 Good

The school's overall performance is judged good, as it was in the previous review in March 2010. It is judged as outstanding in most aspects and good in the particularly important areas of students' academic achievement and teaching and learning. Development plans based on accurate self-evaluation are implemented well and according to correct school priorities and the recommendations of the previous review, especially the development of higher order thinking skills and the use of varied assessment methods. The school has implemented varied and effective teaching and learning strategies, which reflect positively on the students' good achievement standards. The environment is used effectively to enrich the curriculum. Opportunities for students to confidently and enthusiastically assume leadership roles and responsibilities are well provided. Therefore, the school gains outstanding approval by students and parents.

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

#### Grade: 1 Outstanding

The school's capacity to improve has changed from good in the previous review to outstanding in this one. Due to the leadership's awareness and the members' consolidated efforts, the school has succeeded in improving most areas of its work to outstanding levels. This is attributed mainly to the implementation of the comprehensive strategic plan that includes accurate and clear performance indicators. The plan emphasises development and improvement priorities based on the findings of thorough self-evaluation. The school develops teaching and learning strategies and makes outstanding efforts to achieve consistent technical and field improvements in all educational practices, activities and programmes. Furthermore, it accurately measures their impact, especially in areas relating to improving students' academic achievement, personal development and support, which makes the school highly capable of achieving outstanding performance in the future.

## Students' achievement

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

#### Grade: 2 Good

Grade 3 students attained standards that are above average in Arabic and mathematics in the national examinations from 2010 to 2012. In 2011 their attainment was well above average in Arabic. Grade 6 students attained even better standards in all core subjects, especially in Arabic and English in 2012. These results reflect the standards of most students' achievement in lessons, especially Arabic lessons.

Most students attained high pass rates in school examinations in all core subjects in 2011-12, which are commensurate with their competency rates in both cycles and reflect students' standards of high achievement in outstanding and good lessons, which comprise 75% of core subject lessons, most of which are Arabic and mathematics lessons. This is attributed to students' motivation towards learning and the effectiveness of teaching methods. Most students master the main linguistic skills in Arabic, such as reading and writing, well in the second cycle, and very well in the first. They also master mathematical skills such as addition, subtraction, multiplication, division and IT skills in both cycles. However, students' acquisition of linguistic skills in English, such as speaking, reading and writing, and scientific research skills in science is more generally only adequate.

The students' high standards in English and science have been stable over the past three years. Their standards in Arabic and mathematics improved in the first cycle and their standards in all core subjects in the second cycle have been stable. Most students progress well in outstanding and good lessons such as in Arabic in the first cycle and mathematics in the second cycle, and achieve remarkable progress in most core subjects, which is attributed to the varied curricular activities which meet their educational needs.

Most outstanding and talented students make good progress in relation to their abilities and starting points both in lessons and other school programmes, due mainly to systematic challenge of their different abilities and effective enriching programmes. Students with learning difficulties make good progress considering their abilities in the special education programme due to effective educational support. However, low achievers do not achieve similar rates of progress in lessons due to variation in the educational support this group receive.

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

### **Grade: 1 Outstanding**

Students participate enthusiastically in most lessons and the different committees and councils, such as the well-organised morning broadcast and the Students' Council and Learning Resources Committee. They demonstrate high self-confidence when assuming leadership roles, such as in the 'student teacher' activities and when participating in contests such as Arabic language contests and other activities, both local and international.

The vast majority of students behave maturely and responsibly. They preserve the school environment and property, follow school rules and regulations to the letter, and attend school and lessons regularly and punctually. This is attributed to their sense of commitment and the several programmes that aim to motivate and encourage them to be punctual, which limit cases of absence and lateness.

Students feel safe at school and the vast majority show great levels of comfort as they share good relations among themselves and with their teachers. The students' good behaviour is reinforced with guidance and lectures that are organised in cooperation with the community police.

Students observe Islamic values and demonstrate deep understanding of Bahrain's history and culture, which is reflected in their effective participation in national events and the citizenship committee. These establish the students' Bahraini identity very well. The school environment is rich with cultural paintings and traditional corners which develop a sense of patriotism.

## **The quality of provision**

### □ How effective are teaching and learning?

### **Grade: 2 Good**

The vast majority of teachers are familiar with their study material and its content, which is reflected in their clear presentation and great enthusiasm during lessons. Varied and effective teaching and learning strategies are used, such as cooperative learning, debate, discussion, learning through play, brainstorming and the student-as-teacher activities. Various educational resources and teaching aids, such as flashcards, smart boards, projectors and blackboards motivate students towards learning and facilitate their acquisition of skills, knowledge and concepts well in most core subjects in both cycles,



especially the first cycle and in Arabic in both cycles. However, teaching is not outstanding because the use of these strategies and resources is less effective in satisfactory lessons in both cycles, especially English lessons.

Class management is mostly effective with regard to planning, organisation, motivation, support and offering sufficient opportunities to challenge most students' abilities and develop their higher order thinking skills according to their abilities. This is achieved through introductory and supporting activities in most lessons in both cycles, especially Arabic and mathematics lessons, such as analysis and breakdown of words, creating sentences, drawing inference and justification in Arabic and identifying the types of equations, analyzing algebraic expressions and justifying answers in mathematics. All of this facilitates students' participation in the learning process and their achievement of lesson objectives. However, such opportunities are fewer in most science and English lessons due to less effective educational support and time management than in other subjects and especially for low achievers. Consequently, the rate of progress of these students dips to some extent.

Students are assigned an adequate amount of homework which mostly takes account of their individual differences and is stated in lesson plans. Homework assignments are corrected by teachers and feedback is provided for students on a regular basis in order to improve their performance. Moreover, teachers used varied and effective assessment methods which meet the students' needs, such as regular observation and oral and written assessments, both individually and collectively, which have a substantial impact on their progress over time.

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

**Grade: 1 Outstanding**

The school offers a wide range of extra-curricular activities which meet the students' different educational needs. It offers students many choices to meet their interests, such as different programmes, internal and external contests, and school committees. These enrich their experiences and develop a spirit of cooperation and competition among them very well.

The curriculum in English is particularly well analysed and supported with booklets, which is also the case in Arabic in both cycles. The curriculum is presented by linking academic subjects and real life situations logically in many lessons in ways which facilitate the students' acquisition of basic skills. It prepares them well for the next stage of education,

such as reading and speaking in Arabic. It is supported by enrichment and remedial programmes for students with learning difficulties, such as one-on-one tutoring.

Students are made aware of their rights and duties. Concepts of citizenship are raised through the morning broadcast activities, 'belonging club' programmes, national festivals, folklore events and field visits, such as visiting the 'pottery centre' and the school theatre activities. These have a very positive impact on students' personal development.

The environment celebrates students' work. It is rich with aids which motivate learning, promote values and stimulate good behaviour. Hallways are decorated with murals and guidance boards, and excellent educational corners are assembled in classrooms.

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

### **Grade: 1 Outstanding**

The school inducts new students outstandingly well starting from pre-school and organises introductory activities for them and for their parents which help them settle quickly. It prepares students for the next stage of education by organising lectures and visits to their future schools.

Students' personal needs are met effectively through the provision of financial and in-kind assistance, such as breakfasts and stationery. Their educational needs are identified through diagnostic tests so they can be enrolled on appropriate programmes, whether remedial lessons or the learning difficulties programme. This is reflected greatly in their academic progress in most core subjects.

The social guidance and the administrative supervision departments provide students with the necessary advice and guidance to solve their problems through class visits and guidance programmes. These have an effective impact on students' behaviour and boosted their motivation towards learning tremendously. The school regularly communicates with parents to inform them of their daughters' academic and personal development using varied and helpful channels.

The school regularly and accurately monitors all aspects of safety and security. It maintains buildings and teaching facilities well, carries out regular evacuation drills, identifies students with chronic illnesses and keeps track of their medical reports. It organises dental care lectures in coordination with the health centre. It provides a safe and healthy school environment.

## **Leadership, management and governance**

- How effective are leadership, management and governance in promoting high achievement, strong personal development and school improvement?**

### **Grade: 1 Outstanding**

The school has a participatory vision based on achievement and outstanding performance, which has been transformed into objectives that guide the school's work. The school's leadership follows a comprehensive strategic plan which has specific and accurate performance indicators. The plan is based on rigorous self-evaluation conducted by the internal improvement team using various tools and modeled on the templates of Bahrain's Outstanding Education Project. From this evaluation have emerged operational plans that consider priorities, which focus on developing teaching and learning and improving students' achievement further.

The school effectively embraces the concept of participatory leadership and motivates the staff well. It adopts their initiatives and projects, distributes rewards and incentives, and delegates authority effectively. For example, one of the teachers was appointed to chair the computer committee, which greatly increased their motivation and participation. The school pays attention to improving the teachers' professional competence through various programmes. Checks are made by measuring their impact on the students' academic achievement and assessing the teachers' performances. This helps teachers improve their performance and use effective teaching strategies in most academic subjects.

The school seeks the opinions of students and parents and responds to their suggestion in a distinct manner, such as to improve the canteen, conduct more school trips and implement guidance projects. This is highly commended by students and parents. The school effectively communicates with the local community, such as cooperating with Al-Belad Al-Qadeem Health Centre and the community police to organise lectures on health and behaviour issues to raise students' awareness. These enrich their life chances, including using the financial assistance provided by the National Bank of Bahrain to help students.

The school uses its resources very well. Teaching facilities include the smart classroom and the training room, and the sheltered squares for sports classes. The technical committee, the administrative board and other regulatory committees participate in planning and realising the school's vision and each body clearly understands its role. Furthermore, joining the improvement projects at the beginning of the current academic year has had a significant role in supporting the leadership's efforts to achieve the expected improvement and therefore in improving the school's performance overall.

## The school's main strengths

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- Effective strategic planning based on accurate and comprehensive self-evaluation, and its benefits in improving the overall performance of the school
- Students' achievement and attainment that exceeded expectations in the national examinations due to effective teaching
- The students' high self-confidence and their ability to take responsibility and assume leadership roles

Effective use of the school environment to enrich the curriculum, the variety of extra-curricular activities and the celebration of students' work.

## Recommendations

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

- benefit from spreading the outstanding and good educational practices to continue the development of teaching and learning by placing more emphasis on:
  - developing basic English skills
  - supporting low achieving students more during lessons
  - investing lesson time more carefully for all groups of students.