



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

Schools Review Unit Review Report

**Al-Noaim Secondary Boys School
Manama - Capital Governorate
Kingdom of Bahrain**

Date of Review: 12 – 14 November 2012

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The Schools Review Unit

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:

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 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

School's name	Al-Noaim Secondary Boys School												
School's type	Government												
Year of establishment	1965												
Age range of students	16 – 18 years												
Grades (e.g. 1 to 12)	Primary				Middle				High				
	-				-				10 – 12				
Number of students	Boys	829	Girls	-					Total	829			
Students' social background	Most of the students come from limited income families.												
Classes per grade	Grade	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
	Classes	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	9	10	10
	Level 2: Scientific stream (chemistry and biology: 3 classes, physics and mathematics: 2 classes), literary stream: 1 class, commercial sciences stream: 4 classes. Level 3: scientific stream (chemistry and biology: 2 classes, physics and mathematics: 2 classes), literary stream: 2 classes, commercial sciences stream: 4 classes.												
Town /Village	Manama												
Governorate	Capital												
Number of administrative staff	7 administrative and 5 technicians												
Number of teaching staff	90												
Curriculum	Ministry of Education (MoE)												
Main language(s) of instruction	Arabic												
Principal's tenure	2 months												
External assessment and examinations	MoE examinations												
Accreditation (if applicable)	-												

Number of students in the following categories according to the school's classification	Outstanding	Gifted & Talented	Physical Disabilities	Learning Difficulties
Major recent changes in the school	170	576	5	1
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appointment of a new principal in the academic year 2012-13 • Appointment of a senior mathematics teacher in the previous academic year. 			

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	-	-	2	2
The quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning	-	-	2	2
The quality of the curriculum implementation	-	-	2	2
The quality of support and guidance for students	-	-	2	2
The quality and effectiveness of leadership, management and governance	-	-	2	2

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: 2 Good

The school's overall performance has changed from satisfactory in the previous review in April 2010 to good in this one. It is good in all aspects and shows an outstanding capacity to improve further. Students attain high pass rates in the MoE's examinations and show achievement rates slightly higher than expected in most lessons. This is attributed to effective and motivating teaching and learning. Most students are highly self-confident; they behave maturely and responsibly and participate enthusiastically. They are provided with creative programmes that support their learning. Teaching resources are used outstandingly well in enriching the curriculum. The school's administration is well organised and makes great efforts to achieve the strategic plan objectives to a distinctive level, which satisfies parents to an outstanding level and to a good level for students.

- 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. This is attributed to strategic planning based on accurate, comprehensive self-assessment supported by performance indicators based on the school's key priorities. The ambitious administration has adopted improvement projects in its endeavour to achieve an outstanding teaching output based on cooperation, continuous improvement of competency and delegation of authority to keep things running smoothly. The school's efforts are focused on improving teaching and learning and academic achievement, which has resulted in clear and gradual progress of the students' performance in the MoE's examinations, where they scored first level among secondary schools. The personal development of students is good, as is the school's stimulating and attractive environment for learning. All this contributed to improving school performance in all areas.

Students' achievement

□ How well do students achieve in their academic work?

Grade: 2 Good

Students attained high pass rates in all streams and core subjects in 2011-12. The school achieved a 93% pass rate which ranked it on top of 32 secondary schools. Students attained standards that were above Bahrain's average in the MoE's examinations over five semesters in science, mathematics and English, but below average in Arabic. The pass rates commensurate with the high competency rates in most of the main streams, such as in chemistry and biology in the scientific and commercial streams. However, they are slightly more varied in Arabic, English and mathematics. The pass and competency rates reflect the students' achievement in most lessons and similarly in their written work, especially the scientific stream and third level lessons, as a result of effective teaching methods.

Scientific skills are good for most scientific stream students, especially in the second and third levels in biology, chemistry and mathematics lessons. Topics such as anatomy, writing chemical formulae and graphical representations of functions show typically good achievement. However, first level students' gain of scientific skills is not as good, while their gains in physical science skills are varied. Third level students' gains in Arabic and English skills, such as reading, writing and poetry analysis are well developed. Second level literary and commercial streams students' acquisition of these skills is only satisfactory and because first level students do not acquire English writing and speaking skills sufficiently well. Students' use of computer skills is good, while their use of commercial skills such as handling electronic spreadsheets in budget preparation is satisfactory.

Students have progressed well in most core and commercial subjects, but have regressed in accounting subjects. Third level students in general and the scientific stream in particular show better progress than the commercial, literary and vocational streams in most lessons and in their written work in Arabic, in mathematics and science. Their progress varies in English and commercial subjects according to the effectiveness of the teaching methods used.

Students of different categories exceed academic expectations, especially in outstanding and good lessons which constituted two-thirds of the lessons observed. These lessons were the result of good support and teaching which considers differentiation among the students' levels of prior learning. Opportunities to learn from one another in class and in enriching activities improve students' performance in lessons.

□ How good is the students' personal development?

Grade: 2 Good

Most students participate enthusiastically in school life and lessons and they are well motivated to learn. This is attributed to the various teaching strategies, educational practices and school events and activities, such as the school broadcast, the literature and poetry committee, and school and external competitions. Students show self-confidence and responsibility while assuming leadership roles in the Students' Council and creativity centres and while working together during lessons and school activities.

Most students behave maturely and in a responsible manner. They take care of the school environment and property and work to improve it. Positive values are promoted and students respond well. They observe school rules and attend lessons and the morning assembly regularly and punctually. Procedures and counselling programmes support students in this, but occasionally dips in the behaviour of a few students occur. Generally they show respect for their colleagues and teachers' opinions and feelings, which is attributed to the harmony among students and the good treatment they received from their teachers. This reflects well on their sense of security and safety.

Students show pride in their country which is reflected in their participation in numerous events and activities. Special attention is paid to Islamic values, traditions and Bahraini culture as well as the promotion of citizenship.

The quality of provision

□ How effective are teaching and learning?

Grade: 2 Good

Teachers are familiar with their subjects, which is apparent in their enthusiasm and confidence. They utilise effective and motivating methods, such as cooperative learning, role-plays, debates and discussions. Educational resources, such as projectors and flash cards provide most students with good learning opportunities and stimulate enthusiasm and participation. These help them to acquire knowledge, concepts and skills, especially in outstanding and good lessons such as mathematics, science, Arabic and scientific subjects, as well as third level lessons in general. However, some lessons are less effective such as commercial subjects and English, which is attributed to teaching methods which give insufficient support for students, especially low achievers.

Teachers focus on developing higher order thinking skills in most lessons, such as finding main ideas, analysing texts in Arabic and brainstorming and problem-solving in mathematics and science. In addition to challenging students' abilities with oral questions and activities, which consider differentiation across their standards, exercises such as writing chemical formulae and solving challenging geometry problems are set within time limits for their completion. These bring pace and excitement.

Class management is effective in most lessons. Students' maturity and discipline help lessons to run smoothly. Teachers use exciting teaching methods, move from examples to activities in an organised way, and manage time well in individual and group activities. Students are provided with educational support according to their categories in most lessons, which helps the majority to make progress. The teaching assistants play an important role in the support provided for students in some of the lessons. However, the support is insufficient in others, especially for low achievers which results in too little progress, as is the case in first and second level English.

Teachers consider individual differences in homework and assignments and usually grade written work appropriately and provide students with adequate feedback, so they learn from their mistakes. Assessment methods vary in most lessons appropriately, such as oral and written, individual and collective, which meet the students' needs. The time assigned for assessment helps in assessing the impact of learning on students' progress.

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

Grade: 2 Good

The school has analysed the content of the curriculum and supported it with teaching booklets that consider the different students' levels and meets their needs, which enables them to raise their academic achievement. The school celebrates outstanding and talented students' successes through various activities. They participate in local and international competitions. They scored second place in the International Mathematical Olympiad. The school has worked on developing and improving their knowledge and talents through several creative centres, although some creativity lessons were not good.

The school environment is attractive and educationally motivating as walls are decorated with Quran verses which instil Islamic values in students. Students pride themselves in their accomplishments as their artistic, literary and scientific works are celebrated in and outside classrooms. The school enhances most students' experiences and develops their knowledge through extra-curricular activities such as poetry contests, field such as the trip to the

'Constitutional Court' and school and external sports competitions. Students' performance in sport is good beyond the school as they ranked third in wider tennis and volleyball tournaments.

Most students possess the basic skills and prepared adequately for the next stage of education. The school links academic subjects to real life applications. It makes clear efforts to develop citizenship and raise students' awareness of their rights and responsibilities which is reflected in their behaviour.

□ How well are students guided and supported?

Grade: 2 Good

The school inducts new students effectively through programmes that acquaint them with the streaming system, codes of discipline and the school's facilities, which reflects clearly in their quick settlement. It uses orientation lectures to help first level students choose the appropriate stream and prepares third level students for their next stage through organised field trips to Arabian Gulf University and the Central Bank of Bahrain.

Students' personal and educational needs are met through comparing their academic achievements over time and analysing the results of diagnostic tests, in order to identify weaknesses and prepare remedial programmes which are implemented in substitute classes. This results in improving low achievers and students of special educational needs achievement. Remedial lessons are satisfactory. Outstanding students participate in creative programmes, school committees and different competitions and courses such as 'Short story'. This is clearly reflected in their good achievement and personal development.

The school regularly provides students' with advice. It works on solving their problems and developing their behavioural values. It communicates with parents effectively and informs them about their children's progress through educational meetings, extended office hours and monthly reports.

A healthy and safe environment is ensured for all. Regular maintenance and cleaning of school buildings, monitoring the school's canteen and inspecting fire extinguishers is effective. However, the car park being next to the academic buildings does present a risk.

Leadership, management and governance

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

Grade: 2 Good

Leadership and administration are considered one of the school's strength areas. The school had shaped its vision which focuses on achievement and the quality of the participation of all its members. It has invested its awareness of strengths and areas needing improvement, drawn from accurate analysis of the school's situation, in shaping an effective strategic plan from which the departments' action plans are derived and implemented. The internal improvement team continues assessing the school's performance based on clear indicators and follows the assessments through with a digital programme that measures their impact on different educational events and activities. This helps improve overall school work, students' achievement and especially the school environment.

The school determines the teachers' training needs through questionnaires and analysis of assessments of class visits and meets them by improving their professional competency through professional improvement sessions. These have focused on developing teaching and learning by organising workshops where the external improvement team has played an effective role. This has resulted in improving the teachers' performance. However, their impact on some of teachers' performance is too little, especially those in the commercial stream.

The school's higher and middle administration encourage the teaching and administrative staff and inspire them to change and improve through varied motivating methods, such as honouring teachers, promoting cooperation among them, involving them in transparent decision making, including the technical committee and the administrative council and the institutional delegation of authorities. This promotes teamwork that improves the school's overall performance.

The school uses its teaching resources effectively to provide a motivating educational environment which enhances students' experiences, such as using yards instead of the gymnasium for activities, using scientific laboratories, the electronic classroom and the learning resources centre. The use of these facilities help improve students' academic and personal achievement.

The school seeks students' and parents' opinions through the Students' and Parents' Council and responds to their suggestions following direct dialogue. It responded to the students'

suggestions regarding changing the drinking water and to the parents' suggestion regarding the open day. Furthermore, the school communicates effectively with the students and their parents, which results in their high approval of the school's efforts. The school nurtures fruitful relationships with the local community through the participation in different events such as with 'Al-Naim Health Centre'

The school's main strengths

- Effective leadership which uses strategic planning and accurate self-assessment, within the principle of participatory involvement
- Effective and motivating teaching and learning strategies, with varied assessment methods that meet the educational needs of most students
- Effective guidance and support for students, in addition to good communication with parents and local community associations
- Optimum enrichment of the academic curriculum across the school environment and the variety of extra-curricular activities.

Recommendations

In order to improve, the school should:

- make sure to benefit from outstanding practices, especially in the mathematics, Arabic and science departments, in improving the overall teaching and learning processes in a manner that includes:
 - making class activities more challenging for students' abilities
 - providing more support for students in general and low achieving students in particular.
- pay more attention to improving the quality of preparation and implementation of remedial classes and creativity lessons.