



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

School Review Unit

Review Report

Aamna Bint Wahab Primary Girls School
Muharraq - Muharraq Governorate
Kingdom of Bahrain

Date Reviewed: 6 – 8 April 2009

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The School Review Unit

The School 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 drive up 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 ways.
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, students and parents. This report summarises their findings and recommendations.

Information about the school

Gender of students: Girls

Number of students: 714

Age range: 6 – 12 years

Characteristics of the school

Aamna Bint Wahab Primary Girls School is located in the Muharraq Governorate, and it was founded in 1979. It has 714 students enrolled, aged between 6 and 12 years, most of which come from limited income families. More than a quarter of the students don't have the Arabic language as their first language. The school has 24 classrooms in the first and second cycles, each cycle has three academic levels, and each level is comprised of four classes. In addition, there is a merged class for students with special needs. Approximately 6% of the students have learning difficulties, 29% are high achievers, 11% are gifted and talented and one student suffers from a physical disability. The school employs 72 teachers, 8 of whom are substitutes. It has a joint hall with the neighbouring school. It is one of the schools currently at stage four of the implementation of His Majesty 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: 1 (Outstanding)

The overall effectiveness of Aamna bint Wahab Primary Girls School is an outstanding school. Most students and their parents are satisfied with the quality of education provided.

Students' achievement is outstanding. The majority of students achieve higher standards than expected of them as a result of effective and varied teaching strategies that focus on students as the centre of the learning process. Due to the teaching strategies used, students now play a bigger part in helping each other academically, which has led to reaching higher levels of academic attainment. Many students show great progress because of the success the school has had in raising their interest during lessons, using different methods such as storytelling. The progress of students who do not have Arabic as their first language and special needs students is good, due to the care they receive through programmes that are appropriate to their abilities.

Students' personal development is good. Most students participate in school life with enthusiasm. This is evident in the way they learn from each other and their use of "independent-learning corners". In addition to participation in sports activities, students take on a variety of roles of responsibility and leadership which help to develop their sense of responsibility. However, there is no mechanism for assessing the impact of all of this on their personal development.

Teaching and learning are outstanding. Most teachers generally use diverse and effective teaching strategies such as group work, directed discovery, use of educational aids, storytelling and role-playing. Some teachers effectively develop students' higher level thinking skills but this is not consistent in all lessons. All this reflected positively on the students' engagement during lessons and enjoyment of learning. Other strategies used include mind mapping, puppet shows, and electronic projectors.

Curriculum enrichment programmes are outstanding. The school has established programmes aimed at developing the spirit of citizenship. Students' extracurricular interests are met in the weekly designated activities period, and there are various committees such as the theatre and agriculture committees. The curriculum is well enriched by good use of educational boards. Basic skills are well developed but IT skills are not developed to the same extent.

Support and guidance programmes are good. The school provides induction programmes to ease the students' integration into the school. Personal and educational needs are effectively identified and met. The school offers many guidance programmes to reinforce moral values such as the "my prayer first" programme which has guidance boards around the school. The guidance boards have a positive impact on students, and this was commended by parents. The school works very effectively to keep parents well informed of the progress of their daughters. However, the overall effectiveness of remedial classes for low achievers was hindered because they were not organized consistently on a regular basis.

Leadership and management are outstanding. The principal had most of the school staff participate in setting the school's vision, which is recited daily in the morning assembly. Self-evaluation is very effectively used to identify the school's strengths and areas for improvement in terms of performance. This is used in the three-year strategic plan to address different aspects of the school that need improvement. The school has limited resources. Despite this, the school makes highly effective use of its available resources, for example a room was transformed into a small theatre with some audio-visual effects which served as a place for the theatre group to perform plays.

□ *Does the school have the capacity to improve?*

Grade: 1 (Outstanding)

The school has an outstanding capacity to improve. The most important recent improvements have evidently played a part in unifying the school's vision for most members of staff including the adoption of self-evaluation to improve performance in a successful strategic plan and the focus on extracurricular activities to meet various interests and needs of students.

The school's self-evaluation process is accurate at defining strengths and weaknesses in performance. The school also uses mutual evaluation techniques which make the school capable of identifying priorities effectively in each phase to improve performance. The school employs suitable programmes for improvement in its strategic plans which were very successful in many aspects.

The leadership and management play a highly effective part in developing and improving performance and most teachers' readiness to change has greatly helped and this has been positively reflected in classroom practices. The impact of training was evident in cooperative learning which was the focus of recent professional development programmes.

Priorities for the school in the next phase are: establishing an organised mechanism to cater for individual differences in written work and extracurricular activities along with developing the information technology (IT) skills of students.

The school's main strengths and areas for development

Main strengths

- Students' achievement
- Leadership and management
- Self evaluation and strategic planning
- Teaching and learning strategies
- Co-operative learning
- Communication with parents
- Development of students sense of responsibility
- Impact of professional development programme

Areas for development

- Students' IT skills
- Higher order thinking skills
- Catering for individual differences more systematically and monitoring personal development

What the school needs to do to improve

In order to improve further, the school should:

- Further develop teaching and learning strategies so that:
 - A well organized mechanism is in place for all teachers to benefit from best practices.
 - Higher order thinking skills can be developed more systemically.
 - IT skills can be developed more effectively.

- Systematically address students' individual differences in:
 - Lesson planning
 - Extracurricular activities that suits the pupils' various educational needs
 - Written homework
 - Regular sessions for low achievers

Overall judgements

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