



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

# **Schools Review Unit**

## **Review Report**

**Arad Primary Boys School**  
**Arad - Muharraq Governorate**  
**Kingdom of Bahrain**

**Date of Review: 24-26 September 2012**

## Table of Contents

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<b>The Schools Review Unit .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>2</b>
Characteristics of the school .....	2
<b>Table of review judgements awarded.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Review judgements .....</b>	<b>4</b>
Overall effectiveness.....	4
Students' achievement.....	5
The quality of provision.....	6
Leadership, management and governance .....	9
<b>The school's main strengths.....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Recommendations.....</b>	<b>12</b>

## 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 seven 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>		Arad Primary Boys School															
<b>School's type</b>		Government															
<b>Year of establishment</b>		1957															
<b>Age range of students</b>		6-11 Years															
<b>Grades (e.g. 1 to 12)</b>		<b>Primary</b>				<b>Middle</b>				<b>High</b>							
		1-5				-				-							
<b>Number of students</b>		<b>Boys</b>	217	<b>Girls</b>	-				<b>Total</b>	217							
<b>Students' social background</b>		Most students are from middle class 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>	2	2	2	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-				
<b>Town /Village</b>		Arad															
<b>Governorate</b>		Muharraq															
<b>Number of administrative staff</b>		16															
<b>Number of teaching staff</b>		29															
<b>Curriculum</b>		Ministry of Education (MoE)															
<b>Main language(s) of instruction</b>		Arabic															
<b>Principal's tenure</b>		4 months															
<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>			
		69				40				1				50			
<b>Major recent changes in the school</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The school's senior management was changed at the school year 2011-12.</li> </ul>															

## Table of review judgements awarded

Aspect	Grade: Description			
The school's overall effectiveness	4: Inadequate			
The school's capacity to improve	4: Inadequate			
	Elementary / Primary	Middle / Intermediate	High / Secondary	Overall
Students' academic achievement	4	-	-	4
Students' personal development	3	-	-	3
The quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning	4	-	-	4
The quality of the curriculum implementation	4	-	-	4
The quality of support and guidance for students	3	-	-	3
The quality and effectiveness of leadership, management and governance	4	-	-	4

### 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: 4 Inadequate**

The school's overall effectiveness has changed from good in the previous review in April 2009 to inadequate in this current review. This is because of the drop in students' achievement in lessons, particularly in English, and the ineffectiveness of the teaching and learning processes as a result of weak class and time management and insufficient assessment. In-class support is often less than satisfactory with poor curriculum implementation and enrichment activities. The school makes some efforts to motivate staff and provides students with opportunities to work together outside classrooms. These contribute to satisfactory personal development. Most students attend regularly and feel safe at school as a result of the support given when they face problems. Students in the special integrated class receive good support. Students and parents are well satisfied with the school.

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

#### **Grade: 4 Inadequate**

The school's capacity to improve has changed since the last review from good to inadequate. This is due to a number of new challenges, such as the instability of the senior management, insufficient effective activity by middle management, fluctuation in teachers' performance and insufficient management follow-up on these pressing issues. These factors have negatively affected the students' achievement and their acquisition of basic skills. Although the leadership seeks to change and develop through setting up a strategic plan, it has not used accurate self-evaluation to identify improvement priorities nor developed sufficient follow-up mechanisms, including the analysis of performance levels and consequent action to assure the quality of provision. These factors necessitate the need for external support.

## Students' achievement

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

#### Grade: 4 Inadequate

In national examinations in 2010, Grade 3 students achieved results that are higher than the national average, but subsequently in 2011 results dropped to lower than the national average in Arabic and only slightly higher in mathematics., Both were lower than the national average in 2012. This decline reflects the students' low achievement in lessons.

Students achieve pass rates ranging between 84% - 100% in the school's examinations in the 2011-12 in core subjects. This high achievement is combined with very high levels of proficiency in the first cycle of education and lower in the second cycle. However, such rates are not reflected in the students' performance in most lessons due to the ineffective teaching and learning strategies used and inappropriate assessment, which fail to meet students' needs in classes and so affect their acquisition of basic skills and progress. The majority of students acquire reading and writing skills in Arabic inconsistently, and skills in English are inadequate in both cycles. Levels of achievement have declined in mathematics and science, especially in Grade 5. Students gain scientific knowledge to a lower level than expected, as a result of their weak core skills in science and mathematics. Results from 2010 to 2012 show consistent pass rates in all core subjects in the first cycle of education and higher in the second cycle, particularly in mathematics.

Although in Arabic students' progress according to their abilities in lessons and in their written work in both cycles, in mathematics and science it varies, especially in Grade 4. Students do not make sufficient progress in English lessons in either cycle and in mathematics and science, in Grade 5 especially, due to ineffective teaching and limited differentiation.

Students with learning difficulties make satisfactory progress in relation to their abilities as a result of the support given to them in the special education programmes. However, low achievers not designated with special needs, make less progress. A very limited group of high achievers and talented students make satisfactory progress that matches their abilities through their participation in the morning broadcast and some competitions, but poor educational support for different categories of students in classes is limiting. The scarcity of enrichment programmes affects their progress adversely in lessons.

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

### **Grade: 3 Satisfactory**

The majority of students participate enthusiastically in school life through morning assembly activities, for example by reciting the vision statement and doing physical exercises. In addition they enjoy the weekly activity classes and some extra-curricular activities and competitions such as 'The Creative Pens in the Love of the Country'. They take on leadership roles in the discipline group and as prefects. However, such participation and enthusiasm varies, especially during learning. Having to answer questions on the spot negatively affects the development of students' self-confidence and deters them from assuming responsibilities, especially in inadequate lessons. The majority of students enjoy good relationships with their teachers and classmates and work together during break time and activity classes. They behave responsibly and maintain the school's property. Nevertheless, there is some unsatisfactory behaviour due to poor class management and the school seeks to limit this by the application of projects designed to enhance positive behaviour values. This is reflected in the majority of students feeling safe and secure and commitment to regular attendance.

The majority of students show a satisfactory understanding of Bahrain's heritage and culture, which is enhanced by the school's activities such as 'The Bahrain's Breakfast' and decorating the school with Bahrain's heritage displays. Students also adhere to Islamic values, which are reflected in their good behaviour and enthusiasm in repeating morning prayers.

## **The quality of provision**

### □ How effective are teaching and learning?

#### **Grade: 4 Inadequate**

Although the majority of teachers have adequate subject knowledge, this is not reflected in their performance in most lessons that are overly teacher-centred. This negatively impacts on the students' participation and acquisition of skills, knowledge and concepts.

Some teachers use teaching and learning strategies, for example question-answer methods, that are ineffective in meeting the students' various educational needs, particularly in English, mathematics and science. This limits the students' motivation towards learning, except for a very small group of students in good and satisfactory lessons. The use of cooperative learning is ineffective in terms of the distribution of roles and responsibilities.



Despite the fact that teachers use the available resources, such as the interactive whiteboards and blackboards in Arabic lessons in both cycles and mathematics in the first cycle, the impact of their use in other subjects is too limited.

The majority of teachers focus on the development of students' basic skills in most lessons, for example the knowledge of numbers in Grade 2, while in few good lessons, they focus on the development of students' higher thinking skills such as comparison and justification in Grades 3 and 5 mathematics and science lessons. The majority of teachers depend on conveying facts and closed oral questions that do not challenge students' abilities enough and greatly limit their horizons. Class management frequently lacks systematic planning of learning situations. Hence, most lessons are generally monotonous and lack interest, except for some teachers in the first cycle who encourage and motivate students by praising them and distributing gifts and sweets. Moreover, teachers do not support the various categories of students effectively, particularly students with special needs, which impacts negatively on their enthusiasm. Teaching fails to meeting their educational needs. Teachers give students too little homework, though what is given is marked regularly. They provide students with feedback that leads to improvement. However it is insufficient in meeting their various learning needs and limits the achievement of most students.

Teachers use different assessment approaches, for example oral, written, individual and group questions to measure students' learning. Results are not used to inform teaching so lessons lack differentiation with a focus on developing basic skills only. Systems are ineffective in diagnosing and meeting the students learning needs accurately.

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

#### **Grade: 4 Inadequate**

Although the school uses its environment to implement and enrich the curriculum through displaying learning aids in classes, and posting displays and signs around the school, there is insufficient celebration of students' work in classes, especially in the second cycle.

Students' understanding of their rights and responsibilities and their sense of citizenship are developed by participation in various national activities such as 'Good Caravan', and field visits to heritage sites such as Al Jasra Crafts Centre. However, such extra-curricular activities do not include all students. Competitions such as 'Wahat Holy Quran' and taking part in committees such as the Discipline and School Broadcast Committees are too limited. Although the school provides good experiences for students in the special integrated class such as the organisation of educational and recreational trips, and provides satisfactory

enrichment activities for high achievers such as the 'My Hobbies' project for writing essays in Arabic, most students are not given sufficient opportunities to enhance their learning experiences, especially the lower achievers.

The school depends too heavily on textbooks. Limited analysis is conducted for some of the curricula areas, such as science and mathematics in the first cycle. There are few links between subjects to enhance the use of basic skills across different subjects, for example reading and writing skills, particularly in English, numeracy processes and scientific knowledge.

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

#### **Grade: 3 Satisfactory**

Induction for new students is effective through guidance programmes covering various events such as meetings, competitions, gift presentations and activities designed to help get acquainted with the school's rules and regulations. Students settle quickly. The school inducts Grade 3 students by organising visits to neighbouring schools and for Grade 5 students to prepare them for the next stage of education.

The school helps to meet students' personal needs by providing Eid clothes and stationery. It studies their social needs, and follows up any particular concerns through individual meetings and home visits. Results are positively reflected in the students' satisfactory personal development.

The needs of students in the special integrated class are well met as the school provides all the necessary learning resources, but less so for remedial lessons and in programmes for those with learning difficulties. The enrichment programmes for high achievers and talented students are insufficient.

The majority of students praise the support provided by the school. Generally it is effective in solving their personal and academic problems. The school communicates with the students' parents through different channels such as open days and SMS messages, but not as regularly as it might. It maintains its facilities, such as the canteen, well and provides staff and students with a healthy and secure environment, although evacuation drills have not been conducted regularly.

## Leadership, management and governance

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

### Grade: 4 Inadequate

The school has a vision that focuses on quality and excellence. This is shared by the staff and is consistently reflected in a number of the school's practices and activities, but importantly not in the students' academic achievement as a result of the inadequate performance of the majority of teachers. Self-evaluation mechanisms are inconsistent and limited to oral follow-up. Evaluation reports of training workshops are not used to identify improvement priorities. The school has a new strategic plan which does not take into account the results of analysis. Important areas for improvement, for example weak class management by some teachers, do not feature. Though the plan has goals and performance indicators, it does not contain evaluation and follow-up mechanisms, so its contribution to improving the school's performance is limited.

An 'open door' policy motivates and inspires staff to meet challenges and raises their morale. The formation of work teams and committees motivates leaders and encourages delegation, for example in the appointment of coordinators to follow up on issues in some subjects, such as science, mathematics and English. Despite this, leadership insufficiently impacts on improving teaching practices in classes. Some training programmes and workshops to raise the teachers' professional competency, such as in planning for differentiation and brainstorming workshops are insufficiently reflected in the performance of teachers in most lessons, particularly English. There is insufficient monitoring of teachers' performance, especially by the middle management. The school works with the external improvement partner, but the impact of this is not reflected in the school's overall performance.

The school provides the necessary resources for most academic departments, however, the facilities such as the Learning Resources Centre, e-classroom and science laboratory are not sufficient.

The school seeks the views of parents and students through the open days, questionnaires, and the students' and parents' councils, which are not particularly active. It also responds to a number of parents and students' suggestions, for example the reduction of morning assembly time, the development of the school's environment and in training parents on

teaching approaches, for example mathematics in Grade 4. This contributed to high satisfaction levels.

The school cooperates with local institutions to enhance the community partnership, for example the community police, Muharraq Sports Club and Arad Medical Centre. This cooperation contributes to enriching the students' experiences in these fields.

## **The school's main strengths**

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- Students' attendance and punctuality
- The students' feeling safe and secure
- The support provided to the students in the merged class.

## Recommendations

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

- increase students' achievement in all core subjects and especially in English
- improve teaching and learning strategies to include:
  - use of different teaching and learning strategies, which meets students' different needs, particularly those with low attainment
  - better class and time management
  - utilizing assessment and its results to inform lesson planning and homework.
- develop effective self-evaluation mechanisms and use results to identify priorities for strategic planning and monitor progress towards achievement
- improve the impact of the middle management roles and responsibilities in school.