



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

# **School Review Unit**

## **Review Report**

**Zallaq Primary Intermediate Boys School**

**Zallaq-Southern Governorate**

**Kingdom of Bahrain**

**Date reviewed: 17-19 November 2008**

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## The School Review Unit

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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 a four point scale:

1- Outstanding	1
2- Good	2
3- Satisfactory	3
4- Inadequate	4

## **Introduction**

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This Review was conducted over three days, by a team of eight Reviewers led by a Lead Reviewer.

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: 688

Age range: 6-15 years

### **Characteristics of the school**

Zallaq Primary Intermediate School for Boys lies in the village of Zallaq within the Southern Governorate. It was established as a primary school in 1953 and in 2003 the intermediate stage was added to it. The school comprises one new administrative and academic building and another old one, as well as an electronics classroom. It has no sports gym, science laboratory or workshops for practical courses but has access to some of these facilities in an adjoining school. The school has 688 students from Zallaq and Dar Kolaib and come from low-income families. Students are divided into 23 classes: six in the first cycle, seven in the second and ten in the third. Two of the students have physical disabilities and 45 have learning difficulties.

## Overall effectiveness

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

#### **Grade: 3 (Satisfactory)**

Zallaq Primary Intermediate School for Boys is a satisfactory school. Students and their parents are satisfied with their experience of the school. Most reviewed areas proved satisfactory.

Students generally achieve to a satisfactory level in their final results. Success rates are not, however, representative of students' levels of attainment in classes which are sometimes low. First cycles students achieve better results compared with those in the second and third cycle. Students with learning difficulties achieve good progress with the effective support of learning disorder specialists. Traditional teaching methods, which do not take account of individual ability or differences, are contributing to students not achieving to their full potential.

Students' personal development is generally satisfactory. Most students maintain a good attendance record. Students usually act with awareness and responsibility, listening to their teachers' guidance and instructions. A few students behave inappropriately by fighting, and littering the school yard. There are satisfactory opportunities for students to contribute to school life in and outside classes. Teachers do not develop students' analytical thinking skills adequately.

Teaching and learning are generally satisfactory. Teachers know their subjects sufficiently well but most rely on traditional teaching methods that do not fully meet students' educational needs, particularly in the second and third cycles. Students are not sufficiently involved in their learning and are given limited opportunities to learn from each other. The evaluation methods used and the homework assigned do not sufficiently challenge most students. The outcomes of evaluations are not used properly to raise achievement.

The school presents and enriches the curriculum satisfactorily. Students have an appropriate understanding of their rights, duties and responsibilities and the school develops their basic skills in a satisfactory manner. The school environment is used appropriately to enrich the curriculum. There is not enough integration of subjects across the curriculum. Extra-curricular activities do not reinforce students' experiences and interests well.

Support and guidance for students are satisfactory overall. The school prepares new students well and gives good support and guidance when students have problems. The evaluation of students' needs and methods of meeting them are adequate. The school makes appropriate efforts to make sure its students and teachers work in a healthy and safe environment and that it listens to students' and parents' views.

Leadership and management are generally satisfactory. The school's vision and its development plan focus on improvement and development but they were not based on an accurate assessment of areas of weakness and strength when they were prepared three years ago. The management and development of teachers and administrative staff are generally satisfactory although the school adequately assesses the effectiveness of training and development activities.

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

#### **Grade: 3 (Satisfactory)**

The school has a satisfactory capacity to develop and improve, despite some shortcomings in its current vision and mission and the lack of some appropriate buildings and facilities. The school's principal, assistant principal and some good teachers are showing commitment to moving the school forward through their actions. A self-evaluation committee has recently been set up and are developing an appropriate new strategic plan and objectives for the school.

## The school's main strengths and weaknesses

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### Students' achievement

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

##### Grade: 3

##### **Students' achievement in academic work is generally satisfactory.**

Students generally achieve satisfactory results in tests. Performance has improved slightly over the past three years. The school regularly analyses and compares the results of mid-term and final examinations and its Academic Achievement Committee and develops remedial plans for areas of weakness. First cycle students achieve relatively better levels than those in the second and third cycles. Success rates over the past three years do not reflect the true levels of students' performance in classes, where proficiency levels are generally lower. The work given to students is generally too easy and focuses mostly on knowledge rather than skills, particularly in the second and third cycles. In good lessons teachers do provide the right challenge which helps students make good progress in those lessons.

Students do not achieve at levels appropriate to their abilities. Individual differences between students are not taken into account in the teaching and learning process. Teaching strategies, written work, classroom activities and homework are the same for all students regardless of their ability. The school has a mechanism to identify students with learning disabilities and a learning disability specialist who ensures that these students make good progress. The school does not, however, develop the abilities of gifted students adequately. The few internal and external activities and competitions provided to these students do not actively develop their talents.

#### □ What progress do students make in their personal development?

##### Grade: 3

##### **Students' personal development is satisfactory**

Students are good at attending school regularly and punctually, which is reflected in daily attendance sheets kept by the social worker and administrative supervisors for all cycles. The few cases of late arrival in the morning are noted and followed up by the school well.

Students play an active role in the morning assembly and participate satisfactorily in school life. They are not given enough opportunities to take on responsibility, and

have limited opportunities to take part in internal and external activities and competitions.

Teachers do not develop students' analytical thinking skills adequately. Most activities and exercises in classes focus on lower thinking skills. In observed teaching sessions, the few occasions when teachers gave more in-depth answers to questions did not occur as part of a planned lesson.

Students work together and respect each other's feelings and beliefs satisfactorily. This was seen on the few occasions that teachers asked students to work in groups or pairs to plan or carry out activities in the classroom. Students are generally keen to participate in classes, paying good attention to guidance and instruction from teachers. Most students behave with satisfactory awareness and responsibility around the school although there are a few instances of fighting, using inappropriate language and littering, Students generally feel secure and safe but there is a small number of cases of aggressive behavior which caused concern to some parents. It was found that the school investigates any complaint from a student or parent and takes appropriate action.



## The Quality of Provision

### □ How effective is the teaching and learning?

#### Grade: 3

#### Teaching and learning is generally satisfactory.

Teachers showed good knowledge of their teaching materials during observed lessons, particularly in the good ones such as class order lessons. Here, teachers showed enthusiasm for their students and responded positively to their questions and answers. Overall, teachers manage classes satisfactorily and create an appropriate learning environment. Some lessons, however, start late. Some teachers find it hard to manage large classes and resort to mistreating students.

Although there were some good examples of varied teaching strategies being used and overall this is a satisfactory, teaching plans are often insufficiently focused on learning. Students are not involved in setting learning objectives. Most lessons are not sufficiently focused on the student as the centre of the teaching and learning process. Much of the teaching relies too heavily on traditional methods that do not adequately motivate students to participate and learn. Teachers concentrate too much on conveying facts and asking questions that require students only to have memorised information. Students are not given sufficient opportunities to work together and learn from each other, despite being divided into groups in first cycle and some second cycle lessons. Teaching resources are used satisfactorily but are not used to their full potential.

Students' abilities are not properly challenged in order for them to achieve the progress expected of them, except in few classes such as mathematics for fifth grade and class order. Activities are often confined to writing lesson summaries in notebooks. Exercises and homework are easy and often taken directly from textbooks or final examinations. Although evaluation methods are satisfactory overall, they rely too heavily on verbal and a few written questions. Some teachers do not mark work accurately and provide insufficient feedback to students to help them remedy their areas of weakness and build on their strengths.

## □ How well is the curriculum enriched and presented to students?

### Grade: 3

#### **The effectiveness of curriculum reinforcement and presentation is satisfactory**

The school develops students' understanding of their rights and responsibilities satisfactorily. Students' patriotism is developed by participation in national events and festivals and through the morning assembly programme, in which first cycle students take part more enthusiastically than those in the second or third cycle. Students and teachers participate in various programmes to identify and encourage students' talents, this particularly helps enhance special needs students' self-confidence and prepares them for active learning. The traditional presentation of the curriculum, however, does not develop students' understanding of their rights, duties and responsibilities. This method reduces the opportunities for students to take on responsibility and leadership roles. It fails to promote the principle of cooperation and does not allow them to express and discuss their opinions.

Subjects are not adequately integrated, except in a very few classes in the first cycle. The methods of presenting lessons do not enable students to understand how they can use skills they have learnt across subjects.

Extra-curricular activities are used adequately to enhance students' experiences. The school provides and encourages students to use several regular sport activities in line with students' preferences and interests. The school does not, however, follow up on these activities to measure their effect on students' performance. Other internal and external activities are limited and only a few students take part. The school makes adequate use of its environment to enrich the curriculum. In the first cycle classrooms, the walls are used to attractively display educational and guidance materials as well as celebratory displays of students' work. None of the third cycle classrooms and only some of the second have such materials on display.

Students' performance in reading and writing is satisfactory overall. Some teachers encourage their students well to use language properly and write well. Some students, however, show obvious weaknesses in reading and writing, particularly in English.

## □ How well are students supported and guided?

### Grade: 3

#### **The quality of student support and guidance is satisfactory.**

The school prepares students well at the beginning of the year. It helps new first cycle students to settle well in school, introduces them to school facilities and then allocates them to classes at the end of the school day. It also conducts a variety of programmes for them in the following days. It prepares students adequately for moving from the second to third cycle through field trips to vocational institutions and appropriate induction programmes. It makes no such provision for students moving between the second and third cycles.

The school satisfactorily identifies and meets students' personal and educational needs. It provides them with daily meals, clothes and spectacles if necessary. A specialist in learning disorders provides remedial programmes for students with identified difficulties; students who take part in these programmes make good educational progress. The school supports students well if they have personal problems. It deals firmly and appropriately with behavioural problems.

The school satisfactorily ensures that its teachers and students have a healthy and safe environment. The Health and Safety Committee appropriately evaluates hazards threatening the school environment. The school has conducted evacuation drills in previous years, as well as running some health activities and programmes. An open door to the electricity room, and some discarded furniture and uneven floors in the school yard could be hazardous to students.

## Leadership and Management

- **How effective are leadership and management in promoting good achievement and personal development and in bringing about improvement in the school?**

### Grade: 3

**The leadership and management of the school are generally satisfactory.**

The school has a satisfactory vision and mission that focus on the school's development and improvement. The vision and mission were developed in collaboration with some members of the school staff three years ago. The principles contained in the vision and the mission is not applied across the school. The school's three-year strategic plan comes to an end by the end of this year. It has satisfactorily achieved some of its objectives, such as raising the achievement of students with learning difficulties, particularly in the third cycle. The plan did not cover certain areas essential to raising the achievement levels of gifted students.

The school's recently formed self-evaluation committee will start its work shortly looking at all aspects of the educational process and using the results to prepare a new strategic plan, objectives and indicators.

Teachers and administration staff are managed and developed adequately. Senior and middle managers provide good support to teachers to raise their professional competency, as well as giving them the opportunity to determine the training workshops they need. The school takes part in training courses provided by the Ministry of Education and keeps record of teachers' professional development needs. The effectiveness of these training courses and their effect on improving teachers' performance are not adequately measured. Some teachers are not using the skills acquired at these courses, particularly those related to teaching and learning strategies and in-class support.

The school makes adequate use of available learning resources. Teachers use the Learning Resources Centre effectively but it is not used much by students as it is often in use for workshops and lectures. There is no science lab but a small space allocated for the science in a shared room is too small and lacks sufficient

equipment. The indoor sports and facilities are inadequate as they belong to the neighboring school which has first priority for use. The electronics classroom has only recently been set up and is not used enough yet.

The school's attempts to elicit the views of parents and students are generally satisfactory. The school listens to suggestions parents make through the parents' Council and does its best to implement them where possible. It keeps parents satisfactorily informed about their sons' progress through educational meetings and allocating office hours when parents can meet teachers. Although parents do not always make use of the opportunities offered to them they have confidence in the school's management and the way it welcomes and responds to them.

## What the school needs to do to improve

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In order to improve, the school should:

- Make more use of assessment during lessons and use the results to plan lessons accordingly so that the needs of individuals are met. Reinforce the support for gifted students
- Use a variety of teaching strategies that place students at the centre of the educational process and encourage them to think analytically
- Monitor the quality of teaching and particularly the impact of teaching on learning and achievement.
- Make better links between subjects to provide a more co-ordinated curriculum
- Provide more effective support in class to ensure that all students acquire basic skills, particularly in reading and writing English
- Conduct a comprehensive evaluation of all aspects of the school's work and use the results to devise an effective strategic plan with clear objectives and measurable and targets.

## Overall judgement

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Aspect	Grade
<b>The school's overall effectiveness</b>	<b>3: Satisfactory</b>
The school's capacity to improve	3: Satisfactory
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	3: Satisfactory
The quality of guidance and support for students	3: Satisfactory
The quality and effectiveness of leadership and management	3: Satisfactory