



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

# **Schools Review Unit Review Report**

**Zubaidah Primary Girls School  
Muharraq- Muharraq Governorate  
Kingdom of Bahrain**

**Date of Review: 19-21 November 2012**

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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 six 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>		Zubaidah Primary Girls School															
<b>School's type</b>		Government															
<b>Year of establishment</b>		1983															
<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>							
		1-6				-				-							
<b>Number of students</b>		<b>Boys</b>	-	<b>Girls</b>	547				<b>Total</b>	547							
<b>Students' social background</b>		Most students belong to average 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>	3	3	3	3	3	3	-	-	-	-	-	-				
<b>Town /Village</b>		Muharraq															
<b>Governorate</b>		Muharraq															
<b>Number of administrative staff</b>		12 administrators and 14 technicians															
<b>Number of teaching staff</b>		59															
<b>Curriculum</b>		Ministry of Education (MoE)															
<b>Main language(s) of instruction</b>		Arabic															
<b>Principal's tenure</b>		One 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>			
		258				67				-				42			
<b>Major recent changes in the school</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New major appointments in 2011-12 are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The principal and her assistant</li> <li>The social advisor</li> <li>The supervisor of administration and resources, and the information technician.</li> </ul> </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 good performance is in line with its performance in the previous review in April 2009. It has concentrated on implementing its strategic plan based on priorities drawn from accurate self-assessment. Success is demonstrated by the students' self-confidence and their ability to take responsibility through leadership roles in most lessons, committees and extra-curricular activities. Activities enhance students' experiences and their various interests well and support the educational and personal needs for the different groups of students effectively. Most teachers employ effective teaching methods, such as brainstorming, which help students master the basic skills. Nevertheless, poor time management, and the weak support for the low achieving students in some lessons affect adversely the second cycle students' acquisition of writing skills in English. Students and their parents are very well satisfied with the school.

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

#### **Grade: 1 Outstanding**

The school's capacity to improve has improved from good in the previous review to outstanding in this one. The school's leadership works with its staff well. A team spirit has been generated in applying the comprehensive strategic plan, which includes accurate performance indicators. The plan is focused on appropriate priorities, which help in particular developing personal aspects of the students. The school is also capable of dealing with the challenges it faces, such as providing alternatives to meeting the shortages in facilities and the teachers' current commitment to apply more effective strategies to raise students' academic achievement to outstanding; strategies such as collaborative learning, those that raise students' higher order thinking skills and the adoption of closer linkages across different subjects.

## Students' achievement

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

#### Grade: 2 Good

Students in Grade 3 attained results above the national average in national examinations from 2010 to 2012, except in mathematics in 2010, where results were close to the national average. Students in Grade 6 attained results above the national average in most subjects in 2010 and 2011, but their results in English were within the average range in 2011. However, students' results in 2012 were above and well above the national average in most of the core subjects. These results reflect students' good standards and achievement in most lessons.

Students attained high pass rates in school examination's in 2011-12, ranging between 85% and 100% in the core subjects, where the lowest were in English in Grade 5. The proficiency rates correspond with the pass rates in most core subjects, especially in the first cycle. The success and proficiency rates reflect students' abilities in the excellent and good lessons, which represent more than a third of the lessons in both cycles, especially in science lessons in the second cycle, due to the effective teaching methods and the consideration of differentiation in the evaluation activities. However, they do not correspond with their satisfactory standards in many of the other lessons, due to inconsistent time management and weak support provided to the low achieving students.

Most students have competent reading and speaking skills in Arabic and in English, and writing skills in Arabic. They have skills of addition and subtraction in mathematics, classification and deduction in science and good information technology skills in most grades. Writing skills in English are inconsistent in the second cycle.

Standards tend to improve in all core subjects in the first cycle and in Arabic and mathematics in the second, while they remain more constant in English and science. Low achieving students do not progress as well as others, especially in Arabic in Grade 4. Students with learning difficulties make good progress consistent with their abilities, due to effective programmes provided in special education. Outstanding students achieve well, due to the challenge they receive in the enrichment programmes. The low achieving students make satisfactory progress in lessons overall, no better due to the inconsistency in the teaching. Students whose mother language is not Arabic exceed expectations in their achievement in Arabic and mathematics, due to the effectiveness of the support programmes provided.

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

### **Grade: 1 Outstanding**

The vast majority of students participate enthusiastically in school life. They enjoy participating in the morning assembly and the various activities during the recess, such as the Quran recitation, the sport competitions and music. They also participate well in committees, such as 'eco friends' and 'school safety'. They take initiative and show high self-confidence when they express their views and take responsibility in both individual and group work when they get an opportunity to assume leading roles. One such initiative resulted in building a new canteen named 'the Canteen of the Creativity Princesses' which was achieved by students and staff, in cooperation with some major stores.

Students have good relationships with each other; they show great respect for their teachers and colleagues, which is demonstrated in their upright behaviour. They are secure and settled. This is reflected in their high awareness and responsibility inside and outside lessons. They attend well, take good care of the school, and adhere to rules, partly due to the procedures the school takes to encourage them, such as 'The Ideal Student' project.

Students show distinct understanding and appreciation of the Bahraini culture, demonstrated in their participation in national festivals and their contributions to rich displays about citizenship. They are committed to good values and manners, due to the reinforcement of Islamic values through many projects such as 'My Prophet is my Model'.

## **The quality of provision**

### □ How effective are teaching and learning?

### **Grade: 2 Good**

Teachers are well acquainted with their subjects. This is clear in their enthusiasm and ability to enrich the contents of their lessons with different examples and interesting learning and teaching strategies, such as learning through play, role-play, brainstorming, the student-as-teacher and collaborative learning. These provide good opportunities for students' learning, especially in Grades 2 and 3, and in science lessons in the second cycle. Learning is supported by using smart boards and live examples. These contribute to increasing the motivation and interest of most of the students towards active learning, and provide them with good knowledge, concepts and skills in most lessons.



Teachers provide sufficient opportunities to develop higher-level thinking skills and this is clear in most learning situations, such as the skills of scientific deduction and analysis in the first cycle, and the skills of interpretation and justification in mathematics and discovery, creative thinking and problem solving in science in the second. These help expand students' cognitive abilities. The teachers challenge students' abilities by asking various verbal and written questions that require deep thinking, such as analysis and the assembly of ideas, whereas challenging opportunities are less clear in Arabic in Grade 4, which consequently limit students' progress.

Classroom management in most lessons is effective, due to appropriate planning and the clarity of instructions in the different activities, where the personal differences among students are considered. Nevertheless, the long introductory activities in some lessons hinder outstanding teaching. The students are supported in most lessons and are encouraged to participate verbally and through individual and group prizes, such as stars and crowns. The support provided for the low achieving students is less evident.

Though somewhat inconsistent, students are given homework that suits their different needs. This is usually corrected with encouraging phrases and feedback that supports their learning. Effective assessment methods that meet students' needs in most lessons are appropriately varied, including verbal and written evaluation for individuals and groups. The effect of such evaluation helps students deal with their mistakes, resulting in improving their academic progress and performance in lessons.

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

#### **Grade: 1 Outstanding**

The school provides a wide range of experiences that well suit students' different learning needs and ensure their gradual development in learning and skills acquisition. Many and varied options are provided for students to participate in extra-curricular activities that suit their interests, such as the 'English Club', 'e-Learning', 'The Cook' and 'First Aid', committees. Students participate in the external competitions, where they achieve well, such as the first place in the competition of the 'Quran and Traditions of the Prophet', and in gymnastics for several consecutive years.

The school constantly analyses and reviews the school curriculum and its implementation. It enriches schemes by summaries, remedial and extra-curricular activities. These provide most students with life and basic skills that are important to their next educational stage in a very good manner. Linkages across the subjects are appropriately made, enabling students to use knowledge acquired in one subject to enhance their learning in others.

Morning assembly and related posters reinforce the development of students' understanding of their culture, citizenship rights and responsibilities. These are enhanced through heritage and citizenship corners around the school and by organising field visits to places such as Arad Fort and the local clay factory. Green spaces, well displayed work by students and good decorative order make the school and curriculum appealing in an outstanding manner.

## □ How well are students guided and supported?

### **Grade: 1 Outstanding**

The induction week for the new students includes competitions, activities and presenting, which help students settle quickly and get along with their colleagues. It also prepares students in Grades 3 and 6 for their next educational stages, through high quality guidance and educational programmes, such as 'Recognition at the characteristics of adolescence' and arranging field visits to Zanobia Intermediate School.

The personal and academic needs of students are well met through providing special support and care, such as for those students suffering selective mutism difference. The school has many support programmes that suit the interests and abilities of talented students, such as the 'fun sciences' event. Students with learning difficulties, low achieving students and those whose mother tongue isn't Arabic receive support through the remedial programmes, such as 'My Arabic Letters', and the intensive lessons. The school adopts the 'Student Help' project, and 'I learn to rise' programme. Guidance and awareness programmes are diverse, such as 'I make mistakes! It's my right', and 'How to be an Ideal Daughter'. The quality of provision is reflected in the students' outstanding personal development, and the improvement of their academic achievement.

Parents are well informed about their daughters' progress which helps improve the students' performance. Risks are carefully evaluated such as observing students when leaving school. A healthy and safe environment is maintained.

## 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 shared vision concentrating on achieving excellent performance, which is translated into clear goals. The 'Outstanding Bahraini School' project, and the system of performance management are very effective. These use the results of the evaluation in setting the priorities for the school's work and its strategic plan, with accurate and precise performance measures. Impact on the students' personal development is already clear and their academic achievement is improving.

The school inspires its members and provides them with excellent support and motivation, through adopting projects such as 'the English Café', and arranging the regular meetings 'An Hour of Friendship'. The school members work as a team and adopt the principle of delegation of decision-making. Some teachers act as senior teachers, which has helped in the organisation of the school in an outstanding manner.

Professional needs are well supported through conducting workshops and peer visits to classes to share experiences. The school produces the 'quick gains' leaflet, in cooperation with the external improvement team, which is having a significant impact on the performance of teachers.

The school uses its material resources effectively by operating according to clear schedules, such as deployment of the science laboratory, the learning resources centre, and the design and IT room. Space is well used to provide rooms for nursing programmes and e-learning. Leadership decisions are effectively enriching the quality of the school's provision and outcomes.

The school seeks the views of students and their parents through its 'Suggestions Box', questionnaires and polls. Organised events, such as 'The entertainment day' and the parents' and students' councils, provide opportunities to hear and respond to views and suggestions, such as activating the open day, and organising a workshop on 'How to study science with your daughter?'. The school square is shaded, which is appreciated particularly by students and parents when expressing their high levels of satisfaction with the school.

Communication with the local community is good, such as with the Ministry of Industry and Trade in the free drawing competition, and with the municipality of Muharraq to join in

national events, such as 'Bahrain Deserves'. The school board and the technical committee follow action plans well, which helps the drive to improve the performance of the school further.

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

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- Accurate self-assessment, strategic planning and improvement priorities
- Students' ability to take responsibility and assume leadership roles, and their self-confidence
- The wide range of outstanding activities that support the curriculum and effective linkages across subjects
- Guidance and awareness programmes for students facing problems, in addition to those programmes that meet the different educational needs of students in an outstanding manner outside lessons.

## Recommendations

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

- benefit from the outstanding educational practices in the learning and teaching processes, by concentrating more on:
  - helping students acquire writing skills in English, especially the second cycle students
  - supporting low achieving students in lessons, and meeting their different needs in their homework
  - using time in lessons to ensure better productivity.