



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

# School Review Unit

## Review Report

**Safra Primary Intermediate Girls School**

Safra - Southern Governorate

Kingdom of Bahrain

**Date reviewed: ١٠ ١٢ March ٢٠٠٩**

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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. ٣٢ of ٢٠٠٨ amended by Royal Decree No. ٦ of ٢٠٠٩. 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 (١)	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.
Good (٢)	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 (٣)	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 (٤)	This describes situations where there are major weaknesses which affect the outcomes for students.

## Introduction

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### 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, pupils and parents. This report summarises their findings and recommendations.

### Information about the school

Gender of students: Girls

Number of students: ٦٧٣

Age range: ٦ - ١٥ years

### Characteristics of the school

Safra Primary-Intermediate Girls School is one of the schools in King Hamad's future schools project. It is located in the Southern Governorate. It was founded in ١٩٩٨. It has ٦٧٣ students on roll, aged between ٦ and ١٥ years, a large number of whom do not have Arabic as their mother tongue. These students belonging to a variety of different social and cultural backgrounds and are often from families with limited incomes. It has ٣٧ classes in three cycles (first, second and third) and each cycle has three levels: there are nine classes in each cycle. The school has approximately ١٠% of its students with learning difficulties; around ٣٠% are classed as high attainers; around ٥% gifted and talented and two are diagnosed with disabilities. There are ٦٠ teachers, seven of whom are substitutes.

## Overall effectiveness

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

#### **Grade: 3 (Good)**

The overall effectiveness of Safra Primary-Intermediate Girls School is good. Parents and students are on the whole satisfied with the quality of education the school provides and praised many aspects.

Students' achievement is good. Most of them make good progress in their academic achievement, especially because of their low levels of attainment on entry to the school. This is particularly true in Arabic, for students who do not speak it as their mother tongue. However, due to the limited nature of activities set in class, students' abilities are not developed as well as they could be. Support programmes for low attainers and those with learning difficulties are effective in improving their academic achievement.

Personal development is good. Most students contribute enthusiastically to school life. Their good behaviour is evident around school, and particularly in the care they take of the school environment and their classroom surroundings. Students say that they feel safe and secure in school. However, their opportunities to work independently and also to think analytically are limited, especially in the satisfactory lessons.

Teaching and learning are good. Almost half the lessons were good. This is because of the generally effective teaching methods used. These lessons were successful because they maintained students' interests and employed techniques such as role play and working in groups. In one successful lesson, traditional folk costumes and traditional games of several Arab countries were used. Assessment information is not used effectively enough in the classroom to meet the needs of different groups of students, especially the high attainers.

Curriculum enrichment and presentation are good. Students' understanding of their rights and responsibilities is developed well. The school's environment is used well to help enrich the curriculum. Pictures of political leaders are in every classroom, along with special educational corners located around the school to enhance learning. The development of basic skills varies between classes. Some extra-curricular activities are offered and are effective in developing students' interests such as sports, traditional and folk presentations and involvement in the morning broadcast.

Support and guidance programmes are good. Students' personal needs are met well through the provision of material assistance such as free meals, Eid money and winter aid. Support and coaching programmes are provided for low attainers. Their progress is monitored by the special education needs specialist, and these programmes have a positive effect on their attainment. However, support for and tracking of high attainers are insufficient. Information

for parents is effectively given through many different methods such as scheduled weekly meetings.

Leadership and management are good. The school has a vision and mission focusing on raising achievement. A successful strategic plan is in place which focuses on self-evaluation and improvement. However, not all staff are equally motivated and professional development has not had enough impact on some classroom practice.

## Does the school have the capacity to improve?

### **Grade: 3 (Good)**

The school's capacity to improve is good. Recent improvements are evident in many areas such as the behaviour of students, developing their values and a sense of national identity. All of these issues have reflected positively on their personal development. The school's environment is another improving area. It is now a place that stimulates learning and contributes well to reviving the national culture and encouraging patriotism.

The school is well aware of its strengths and weaknesses in performance, as a result of the self-evaluation that it conducts across many areas of school life. An example of this is the improvement of support and coaching programs for low attainers. All of this reflects the good leadership and management of the principal and the two deputies.

Raising standards and improving students' academic achievement, particularly for high attainers, as well as meeting more effectively, the professional development needs of teachers are the two main challenges facing the school in the next year.

## **The school's main strengths and areas for development**

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### **Main Strengths**

- Leadership and management.
- Self-evaluation.
- Strategic planning.
- Achievement in Arabic.
- Attendance and punctuality.
- Behaviour and relationship between students.
- Rich and motivating educational environment.
- Communication with parents.
- Development of citizenship.
- Support for student whose mother tongue is not Arabic.
- Extracurricular activities.

### **Areas for development**

- Planning for differentiation.
- Higher order thinking skills.
- Use of assessment.
- Basic skills in English.
- Collaborative learning.
- Homework.
- Cross curriculum links.

## What the school needs to do to improve

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In order to improve further, the school should:

- Employ diverse and effective teaching methods that:
  - Focus on the student as the centre of learning.
  - Provide enough opportunities for students to work together effectively and learn from each other.
  - Develop higher level thinking skills
  
- Assessing and meeting the needs of different groups of students, especially high attainers, in a more organized way in the classroom and providing work and homework that takes accounts of individual differences.
  
- Assessing and meeting training needs of the administrative and teaching staff more accurately, and ensuring the effective transfer of professional development and new skills into the classroom.



## Overall judgements

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Aspect	Grade
<b>The school's overall effectiveness</b>	<b>۲: Good</b>
The school's capacity to improve	۲: Good
Students' academic achievement	۲: Good
Students' progress in their personal development	۲: Good
The quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning	۲: Good
The quality of the curriculum	۲: Good
The quality of guidance and support for students	۲: Good
The quality and effectiveness of leadership and management	۲: Good