



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

School Review Unit

Review Report

West Riffa Primary Girls School

West Riffa / Southern Governorate

Kingdom of Bahrain

Date reviewed: 23 -25 February 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.
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 four 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: 512

Age range: 6-12 years

Characteristics of the school

West Riffa Primary Girls' School is in the Southern Governorate. The key objectives of the school are: to build a generation that is proud of its religion, values, customs and traditions; to promote citizenship and enhance the outcome of the learning and teaching process. The school is moderately full with 512 pupils. Most of the students are economically categorized as middle class. Students are distributed in 18 classes (10 in the first cycle and 8 in the second cycle). 7.7% of them are categorized as having learning difficulties and 1.17 are talented and gifted students. The number of both teaching and the administrative staff is 58.

Overall effectiveness

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

Grade: 3 (Satisfactory)

West Riffa Primary Girls School provides a satisfactory education which meets the satisfaction of both parents and students.

Student's academic achievement is satisfactory. Examination pass rates are high in most subjects, with the exception of Maths and Arabic where standards are lower. However, students only make satisfactory progress because most lessons are teacher dominated, focus on rote learning and do not cater for individual differences. Students with special educational needs achieve appropriately especially in Maths and Arabic, due to the academic support provided.

Student's personal development is good. Students behave well, respect their teachers and have mutual respect for each other. They make numerous contributions, for example, they take part in class activities and in other events through school committees and are given opportunities to play leadership roles that develop their self-confidence and sense of responsibility. Students stated that they feel safe in school and any misbehavior is promptly and effectively tackled. Most of the students attend school on time.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. The best teaching motivates students to learn and challenges their abilities which leads to them making good progress. However, this is not the norm. Most teaching is traditional and teacher led, which makes little attempt to engage students or develop their higher order thinking skills. Almost all homework is standardized and does not pay attention to individual differences, and, whilst correction of these home activities is carried out regularly, students are rarely given the feedback they need to improve their performance. Assessment in most lessons depends on simple questions that measure simple thinking levels and it does not show students where they go wrong and how they can improve their work.

The curriculum presentation and enrichment is satisfactory. Students acquire basic and life skills in a satisfactorily even though the approach to teaching is very narrow. There was no planning to integrate the basic subjects; hence students are missing out on the chance to understand the relevance of their learning in different contexts. A variety of activities provided by the school fosters the students' interests and inculcates loyalty and enthusiasm. The school and class environment are put to good use in the learning process.

The support and guidance provided for students is satisfactory. The well integrated induction programme helps students to settle in to school. Also, the process of evaluating and meeting personal and educational needs is satisfactory. The school is keen to maintain a safe environment for the students through applying risk assessment and taking appropriate action.

The quality of leadership and management is satisfactory. Although the principal has taken up office recently, she has been able to evaluate the situations in the school, set the strategic plan and re-phrase the vision and mission in a way that suits the school's conditions. Whilst these changes have yet to have impact on teaching and learning and higher academic standards, the school is now well placed to move forward. Considerable improvements to the school's environment have been made; students and parents expressed their contentment with these changes.

Does the school have the capacity to improve?

Grade: 2 (Good)

The new principal is focused on raising achievement and believes in sharing decision making. Additionally, the school has seen a number of improvements since the principal took up post just a short time ago. These improvements include a review of the school's vision and direction, spreading a culture of self evaluation amongst staff and accurately assessing most aspects of the school. In addition, the many improvements to the school's environment and improved relationships between staff and students provide evidence of the school's good capacity to develop and improve further.

The school's main strengths and areas for development

Main Strengths

- Standards in exams.
- Attendance and punctuality.
- Behaviour and relationship between students.
- Induction programmes.
- Use of school environment.
- Development of citizenship.
- Support for students whose mother tongue is not Arabic.
- Extracurricular activities.

Areas for development

- Planning for differentiation.
- Higher order thinking skills.
- Use of assessment.
- Basic skills in Arabic language and mathematics.
- Collaborative learning.
- Cross curriculum learning.

What the school needs to do to improve

In order to improve further, the school should:

- Raise standards in Arabic and mathematics by ensuring that individual students' learning needs are met.
- Ensure that the strategic plan and monitoring procedures are put in place to raise students' achievement and the quality of provision.
- Improve teaching and learning by:
 - Making lessons more interesting and participative;
 - Ensuring that teachers share learning objectives with students in each lesson;
 - Differentiating lessons to meet individual needs in lessons and homework;
 - Developing students' analytical thinking skills;
 - Sharing and spreading the best practices in the school.
- Reinforcing links between subjects to ensure that the students are able to use the basic skills in different situations and study a coherent curriculum.

Overall judgements

Aspect	Grade
The school's overall effectiveness	3: Satisfactory
The school's capacity to improve	2: Good
Students' academic achievement	3: Satisfactory
Students' progress in their personal development	2: Good
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