



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

Schools Review Unit Review Report

**Bilad Al-Qadeem Primary Girls School
Bilad Al-Qadeem – Capital Governorate
Kingdom of Bahrain**

Date Reviewed: 22 –24 March 2010

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The Schools Review Unit

The Schools 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 raise 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

Review Scope

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 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: 723

Age range: 6 -12 years

Characteristics of the school

Bilad Al-Qadeem Primary Girls School, founded in 1968, is one of the Capital Governorate's schools. The age range in the school is from 6 to 12 years, and the number of students is 723 in total. The students are distributed amongst 24 classes in the first and second cycles each of which have 3 stages (4 classes for each class). Most students belong to middle- and to limited-level economic backgrounds. The school categorized 203 of the students as outstanding, 128 as talented and gifted and 83 as students with learning difficulties. The Principal is in her fourth year at the school. The teaching staff consists of three senior teachers and 59 teachers. The school lacks some significant utilities such as a sports hall and science laboratory, in addition to some human resources such as an administrative and financial affairs supervisor, accounts specialist and computer technician. The school has joined His Majesty King Hamad's Schools of the Future project in the academic year 2009-2010.

Overall effectiveness

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

Grade: 2 (Good)

The overall effectiveness of Bilad Al-Qadeem Primary Girls School is good. The school also gains good satisfaction of parents and students.

The students' level of academic achievement is good. Students have achieved high success rates over the last three years in most subjects in both cycles, except for English and Mathematics in the second cycle. Also, most students achieved good progress. Nevertheless, in a few lessons observed, individual differences are not catered for in some written work and insufficient attention was given to different learners' needs. This was particularly the case for lower-achieving student in English lessons in the second cycle. Nonetheless, overall, students achieve academic levels appropriate to their abilities in most lessons as a result of good lesson planning and organisation. There is a range of programmes to care for talented and outstanding students in lessons and internal activities, together with their participation in the external competitions. The school supports students with learning difficulties in Arabic, Mathematics and English and they make appropriate progress.

Students' personal development is good. Most students are punctual and arrive to lessons on time. Most students enthusiastically and effectively take part in the morning assembly and school activities. Their attitude to learning is good in many lessons as a result of teachers using various teaching methods such as the strategic dialogue, effective discussion and fact finding. This has a positive impact on enriching the student's knowledge and in the development of their personal development. Students are given opportunities to assume leadership roles and take responsibilities inside and outside classes, together with distributing roles when working collaboratively. Moreover, students actively take part in the students' council, which enhances their self-confidence and their ability to express their views. Although students are often given opportunities to develop their analytical thinking in several lessons, the low achievers are not always engaged in the activities. Most students enjoy good relationships with their peers and teachers and respect their views, feelings and beliefs. The majority of students behave responsibly in classrooms and most of them feel safe and secure in school.

The effectiveness of teaching and learning processes is good. Teachers' good subject knowledge is reflected in their employment of various effective teaching strategies that contribute to students' acquisition of skills and knowledge and their good progress in

lessons. Nonetheless, there are some inconsistencies and all teachers are not equally skilful; for example in a few English lessons in the second cycle some weaknesses were evident. Most teachers manage classes in a well-organised manner and effectively employ appropriate teaching and learning strategies to ensure the students' engagement in lessons and to provide them with appropriate opportunities to work together. Moreover, teachers employ learning resources that result in effective learning and this is reflected in students' good progress. However, in a few lessons observed, teachers' limited use of different strategies coupled with excessive dictation limited students' participation and motivation. Teachers use assessment techniques in the majority of lessons to meet the various needs of students effectively. However, the assessment techniques in a few lessons were limited to low level skills, and these limited the opportunities to challenge the students' abilities and accurately diagnose their performance. Students' school work is effectively enhanced through homework assignments that are regularly marked; however, these assignments do not always cater for students' individual differences and some of them lacked feedback.

The provision and enrichment of the curriculum are good. The curriculum is delivered through the provision of different activities that help students to acquire basic skills and to develop effective information and communication technology (ICT) skills. These are evident in most lessons apart from in a small number of English lessons. There is good cross-curricular linking of the subjects in the first cycle to enable students to learn coherently and systematically. The curriculum is enriched and enhanced through a range of extra-curricular activities that contribute to developing different students' interests and skills. Talented and outstanding students take part in internal and external competitions and achieve advanced positions. Moreover, the school seeks to promote students' awareness of their rights and duties in the morning broadcast by the students' council. In addition, the school successfully seeks to develop the student's sense of citizenship through the activities carried out by the "Citizenship and Belonging Committee", the impact of which is evident in the students' positive engagement. The curriculum is also enhanced through the use of the school buildings and the local environment. In addition, the classrooms are well prepared for learning and self-learning corners are used, particularly in the first cycle, together with using the school yard and garden for the teaching of some lessons.

The quality of support and guidance given to students is good. New students are inducted at the beginning of the academic year as various events are organized to help students settle easily. The school prepares students well for the intermediate phase of education. It also meets the students' learning needs by providing guidance and support for low achievers during lessons and through tutoring classes, which contribute to raising their level of academic attainment. However, the support given to a minority of low achievers in a few lessons was insufficient. The school supports outstanding students through their participation in special programmes such as Science and Mathematics competitions. The school also provides guidance for students, which increases their motivation towards learning and enhances their personal development. It also provides a healthy and safe

environment for all the school staff by carrying out the necessary building maintenance works, together with organising a number of awareness-raising programmes. The school regularly communicates with parents and keeps them informed of their daughters' progress through sending SMS text messages and holding meetings with teachers.

The effectiveness of leadership and management is good. The school has a shared and clear vision and mission statement focusing on achievement and accurate self-evaluation. This is informed by the results from regular questionnaires covering all aspects of the school's work. The analysis of these surveys contributes to building the school's strategic plan and departments' action plans – the positive impact of which is reflected on the school's authentic realisation of current educational practices and priorities. Nevertheless, the plan lacks sufficient accurate performance indicators in certain areas, such as objective measures of teachers' professional competencies and effectiveness. The senior management encourages and motivates the school staff, and this is positively reflected in their discipline, enthusiasm to work as a team, and their capacity to take initiative and implement support programmes for students that inspire learning. The school's management distributes duties and authorises powers to give appropriate opportunities to raise the teacher's competency and fill shortages when they arise. Teachers' training workshops are organised to address their needs; however, the impact of the professional development programmes is not continuously monitored through evaluating teachers' performance in lessons. The school effectively employs its resources and educational utilities to serve the learning process. It also communicates with the parents and students and responds to their views.

□ Does the school have the capacity to improve?

Grade: 2 (Good)

The school has a good capacity to develop and improve. This is attributed to the effectiveness of the "Self-Evaluation and Quality Assurance Committee" in conducting an accurate self-evaluation process and in the regular procedures covering all aspects of the school's work. The committee contributes to the building of the school's strategic plan and the departments' action plans, in addition to the continuous diagnostic process of the school's environment. The senior management team exerts clear efforts in inspiring and motivating the school staff and helping to disseminate the culture of quality, voluntary activities and work discipline. Such efforts are clearly reflected in the formation of a wider leadership team where teachers are represented. Teachers' positive personal and professional commitment is evident in their enthusiasm to work as a team, take initiative and enhance their levels of performance and personal development. This staff commitment has helped the school towards many achievements in educational, sports and cultural competitions and in their care for talented students and students with learning difficulties.

Despite having some shortages in human resources, the school has received many certificates of appreciation from the Ministry of Education and the local community.

The school's main strengths and areas for development

Main Strengths

- Self-evaluation
- Inspiration and motivation
- Teaching and learning strategies
- Class management
- Basic skills in Arabic, English, Mathematics and IT
- Attendance and punctuality
- Meeting students' personal needs
- Support provided to special education students.

Areas for development

- Performance indicators and measurement tools in the strategic planning
- Basic skills in English
- Higher order thinking skills and challenging students' abilities
- Assessment methods and use of its results.

What the school needs to do to improve

In order to improve further, the school should:

- Develop plans with accurate and adequate performance indicators to a greater extent
- Develop teaching and learning strategies that focus on the following:
 - Helping students acquire basic skills in English
 - Catering for individual differences in the homework
 - Using various assessment methods to a greater extent
 - Developing the students' high order thinking skills.
- Fill the shortages in significant utilities such as a sports hall and science laboratory, and in human resources such as an administrative and financial affairs supervisor, accounts specialist and computer technician.

Overall judgements

| Aspect | Grade: Description |
|------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| The school's overall effectiveness | 2: Good |
| The school's capacity to improve | 2: Good |
| Students' academic achievement | 2: Good |
| Students' progress in their personal development | 2: Good |
| The quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning | 2: Good |
| The quality of the curriculum delivery | 2: Good |
| The quality of guidance and support for students | 2: Good |
| The quality and effectiveness of leadership and management | 2: Good |