



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

Schools Review Unit Review Report

**Fatima Al Zahraa Primary Girls School
Manama - Capital Governorate
Kingdom of Bahrain**

Date Reviewed: 4 - 6 May 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

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: 172

Age range: 6-12 years

Characteristics of the school

Fatima Al Zahraa Primary Girls School is a Capital Governorate school, in Al-Manama Town, and was founded in 1951. The age range in the school is from 6 to 12 years. Most students come from limited-income families. There are 172 students. Students are distributed across 10 classes: five classes for each cycle. The school categorises 33 of its students as talented, 55 as outstanding and 44 as having learning difficulties. The headmistress is in her third year at the school. There are four administrative staff and 30 teaching staff. The school lacks senior teachers for English and Mathematics and is short of some educational resources, such as a sports hall. The school is part of King Hamad's Schools of the Future project.

Overall effectiveness

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

Grade: 2 (Good)

The overall effectiveness of Fatima Al Zahraa Primary Girls School is good. The school has outstanding aspects in students' personal development, curriculum enrichment and delivery, and the quality of guidance and support for students. Students and their parents are exceptionally satisfied with the school.

Students' academic achievement is good. Most students achieve high pass and proficiency rates in most core subjects. Students' levels of understanding and knowledge in most lessons are equally high. Students benefit from the varied teaching strategies used, the support they are given, and the consideration of their individual differences in the activities provided; they make good progress and achieve well, particularly in the good lessons. Students gain good basic skills in most of the core subjects, although their reading and writing skills in English are less well developed. In satisfactory lessons observed, where the standard of teaching varied, students did not reach the same levels of achievement. Students with special educational needs progress well in the good lessons, as a result of their participation in activities, programmes and remedial lessons as well as the support they receive. Outstanding and talented students make progress in and outside lessons; they are offered enriching activities and programmes and encouraged to participate in internal and external activities.

Students' personal development is outstanding. All students attend school regularly and get to lessons punctually. They participate enthusiastically in a wide range of extra-curricular activities, events, sports competitions, developmental projects and school committees. They are also given plenty of opportunities to take on leading roles. All these factors have had a significant effect on students' self-confidence, ability to take responsibility and capacity to work independently in and outside lessons: students make an exceptional contribution to school life. Students' higher thinking skills are developed well in most lessons. Students' relations with each other and with their teachers are characterised by harmony and mutual respect; this atmosphere contributes significantly to their feeling of satisfaction with the school. Students' conduct, regard for rules and cooperation in and outside lessons are excellent. They also look after school properties in an outstanding manner.

The quality of teaching and learning processes is good. Teachers know the study materials well, use varied teaching strategies and make effective use of educational resources in most lessons; this increases students' motivation for learning and places them at the centre of the

educational process. Most observed lessons were managed well. Activities were planned effectively to help students acquire the required skills, knowledge and understanding, which contributed to students' achievement and progress in most lessons. In some satisfactory lessons, insufficient time was allocated to achieve the intended learning goals. Cooperative learning is used properly in most educational situations. Teachers challenge students' abilities appropriately in most lessons by asking varied questions and setting extra-curricular activities and homework that considers their individual differences. They use continuous assessment to make sure that learning is taking place; this helps them to diagnose and meet students' educational needs and contributes to students achieving advanced levels in most lessons. Assessment is not carried out consistently well in the satisfactory lessons.

The quality of curriculum enrichment and delivery is outstanding. The school develops students' understanding of their rights and duties exceptionally well by assigning them duties that develop their sense of responsibility and self-confidence. Students' sense of citizenship and patriotism are strongly developed through their participation in a wide range of national festivals, events and competitions and displays of traditional and folklore scenes. The school also encourages students' participation in a rich variety of internal and external activities and school committees. The school environment is significantly enriched with attractive and educational displays in the educational corners. Students' work is celebrated well, which has a significant effect on students' personal development. Students acquire good skills in reading and writing in Arabic, Mathematics and Information Technology (IT). Students' English skills are less well developed in some lessons. All lessons of the first cycle and most lessons of the second are characterised by effective linking between the core subjects, which enables students to study a logical and coherent curriculum.

The quality of support and guidance for students is outstanding. The school inducts new students well by offering them a number of entertaining activities and programmes and holding educational meetings with their parents. It also prepares them exceptionally well for their next stage of education by providing them with the skills necessary for that stage and arranging class observations to the second cycle and intermediate schools nearby. The school meets students' personal needs very well; for example, it organises talks to raise awareness of health issues and teaches students healthy eating habits. Students' educational needs are also met very effectively: the school applies diagnostic tests and provides significant support through individual and group remedial programmes and daily remedial lessons for lower-achieving and special educational needs students. Effective support is also provided in lessons, particularly the good ones, where varied assessment methods help students make good progress. The school sends regular monthly reports to parents about their daughters' academic progress and also updates them with text messages. The school's continuous monitoring of health and safety matters and potential hazards helps create a healthy and safe environment.

The effectiveness of leadership and management is outstanding. The school has a shared vision that focuses on excellence and keeping abreast of developments. It was drafted with contributions from across the school and its influence is reflected in many practices in lessons. The school has also a comprehensive strategic plan that includes accurate performance indicators; the execution of the plan has had an outstanding impact on students' personal development, the quality of curriculum delivery, and support and guidance programmes. Most aspects of the school's work are evaluated and monitored thoroughly and regularly; the results are carefully analysed and used to set realistic departmental plans and programmes to improve the overall performance of the school and meet the educational needs of different student categories. These plans have had a good effect on most students' academic achievement. The school management inspires and motivates all its staff, encouraging teamworking and fostering good working relationships among them. The school also provides a good range of training programmes, workshops and panel discussions for teachers' professional development; these have had a significant impact on teachers' good performance in most lessons and their use of effective teaching strategies, and on the achievement of most students. The school environment and the educational facilities are employed well to serve the educational process. The school also listens and responds particularly well to the opinions and suggestions of students and their parents.

□ Does the school have the capacity to improve?

Grade: 1 (Outstanding)

The school's capacity to improve is outstanding. The school's leaders believe in improvement and keep fully abreast of educational developments. They have set an accurate strategic plan based on the results of careful and comprehensive self-evaluation of most aspects of the school's work, in order to raise the overall performance of the school. The school has introduced many developmental projects and awards medals of excellence to teachers as part of a project aimed at raising students' academic achievement and creating exceptional educational experiences. Despite having old buildings, the school has managed to create an outstanding educational environment by its good use of most of the school facilities, clubs and corners to serve the educational process; continuous monitoring also ensures that the environment is a safe one. The school has raised significantly students' levels of academic achievement and personal development, which could be clearly seen in their self-confidence and willingness to take leading roles in and outside lessons.

The school's main strengths and areas for development

Main Strengths

- Leadership and management
- Strategic planning
- Self-evaluation
- Support and guidance programmes
- Meeting students' personal and educational needs
- Induction and preparation programmes
- Extra-curricular activities
- Students' conduct
- Students' regular attendance
- Communication with parents.

Areas for development

- Basic skills in English
- Challenging abilities to a greater extent.

What the school needs to do to improve

In order to improve further, the school should:

- Spread the good and excellent practices in teaching and learning, to include:
 - Developing better basic skills in English
 - Challenging students' abilities to a greater degree.

- Address the shortage in human resources represented by senior teachers for English and Mathematics.

Overall judgements

Aspect	Grade: Description
The school's overall effectiveness	2: Good
The school's capacity to improve	1: Outstanding
Students' academic achievement	2: Good
Students' progress in their personal development	1: Outstanding
The quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning	2: Good
The quality of the curriculum delivery	1: Outstanding
The quality of guidance and support for students	1: Outstanding
The quality and effectiveness of leadership and management	1: Outstanding