



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

Schools Review Unit Review Report

**Gharnata Primary Girls School
Sitra - Central Governorate
Kingdom of Bahrain**

Date Reviewed: 11-13 January 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 five 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: 535

Age range: 6-12 years

Characteristics of the school

Gharnata Primary Girls School is one of the Central Governorate schools, founded in 1983 and located in Sitra region. The age range in the school is from 6 to 12 years, and there are 535 students. Most students come from limited-income families. Students are distributed across 18 classes. The school categorises some 37% of its students as outstanding, 11% as talented and 13% as having learning difficulties. There are 52 teaching and administrative staff. The Principal is in her second year at the school. Some of the school's facilities, such as the e-learning classroom, are under-funded. The school also has to share a sports hall with a neighbouring school.

Overall effectiveness

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

Grade: 2 (Good)

The overall effectiveness of Gharnata Primary Girls School is good. The leadership and management of the school are outstanding, as is its capacity to improve and develop. Most students and their parents are very satisfied with the school's performance.

The students' overall academic achievement is good. Most students achieve high pass rates and proficiency levels in school examinations, in line with the understanding and knowledge observed in most lessons and written work. Students make good progress in most of their lessons and written work. They achieve at levels that match with their abilities. Teaching strategies and evaluation methods used meet students' needs and take into account individual differences.

Students' personal development is good. Most students attend school and lessons regularly and punctually. Most of them contribute effectively to school life through different school committees, indoor and outdoor competitions and through extra-curricular activities. They also show enthusiasm and play a full part in the good and excellent lessons where varied teaching strategies are used. All these activities contribute significantly to developing students' personalities and reinforcing their self-confidence. Most students behave in an aware and responsible manner and show respect to each other and to their teachers. They feel safe and secure in the school.

The teaching and learning processes are good. Most of the teachers have good knowledge of their subjects, which is reflected in their effective teaching and learning strategies and assessment methods that suit students' needs. Teachers usually manage lessons well and help students acquire knowledge and basic skills such as reading and mathematical skills. Some students, particularly in the second cycle, still lack proficiency in some English and Arabic grammatical and writing skills. The school is intensifying its efforts to raise proficiency in these skills through remedial and enrichment programmes, which have already had a significant effect on the results of some students. Individual differences are considered in most lessons and homework. Higher thinking skills are developed appropriately and students' abilities are challenged through activities and verbal questions, although not to such an extent through their written work.

The quality of curriculum presentation and enrichment is good. The curriculum is presented well in most lessons, using varied strategies and incorporating logical links between subjects. Students' sense of citizenship and understanding of their rights, duties and responsibilities are developed by having the students participate in a good variety of events and extra-curricular activities. The school makes good use of facilities such as the learning resources centre and the e-learning classroom to enrich the curriculum, although the e-learning classroom is under-funded. Students' work is celebrated all around the school, which helps to create a motivating school environment.

The quality of support and guidance for students is good. New students settle quickly into school life after attending effective induction programmes with their parents. Students in Grade 6 are appropriately prepared for their transition to the intermediate stage. Students with special needs receive substantial support. Students' personal needs are diagnosed accurately and they are given the help they need. Special education and remedial and enrichment programmes ensure that the educational needs of most students are met in lessons. In a few of the satisfactory lessons, however, the educational needs of different groups were not met to an extent that would make them progress in their academic and personal achievement. Parents are pleased with the way the school communicates with them, through various channels, to update them about their daughters' progress. The school monitors safety and security aspects regularly and effectively.

The effectiveness of leadership and management is outstanding. The school has a shared vision and mission focused on the comprehensive development of every student. This vision has been translated practically into most of the school's educational practices. The school also has strategic and procedural plans that were designed after an accurate analysis of its situation, based on the findings of the school's accurate and comprehensive self-evaluation. These plans have a positive effect on many aspects of the school's work, especially those related to students' academic achievement, personal development, teaching and learning processes and the school environment. All school staff are inspired and motivated and their professional competency is developed constantly. The school's leaders believe in shared decision-making and working together, which showed during the observed lessons. The school's facilities are used efficiently to meet students' personal and educational needs. The school also seeks, and responds to, the views of students and their parents through a parents' council and a students' council. Some suggestions have been adopted, such as providing a students' fund and a healthy meal for breakfast.

□ Does the school have the capacity to improve?

Grade: 1 (Outstanding)

The school's capacity to improve is outstanding. Its leaders and managers believe in implementing quality assurance standards and pursuing excellence. They also adopt the principles of shared decision-making and the whole school working as a team. Self-evaluation, which involves senior teaching and administrative staff, is used effectively as part of the school's accurate analysis of its situation. Development plans flow from these activities and are implemented effectively. The effect of these good practices can be seen in the school's improved overall performance and especially in significant improvements to the teaching and learning processes that have helped to raise academic and personal standards among students. Both school staff and parents appreciate the strong leadership. The school's self-evaluation findings were broadly in line with those of the review team, particularly in the area of leadership and management.

The school's main strengths and areas for development

Main Strengths

- Translation of vision and mission into reality
- Strategic planning and monitoring
- Accurate and comprehensive self-evaluation mechanisms
- High pass rates and proficiency levels
- Varied teaching strategies
- Punctual and regular attendance of students
- Enthusiastic participation of students in school life
- Sound employment of the school's resources and facilities
- Regular monitoring of safety and security aspects

Areas for development

- Meeting educational needs, especially those of students with special needs in some lessons
- Developing higher thinking skills in written work
- Challenging students' abilities in written work
- Strengthening the basic skills of second cycle students in aspects such as grammar and writing in English and Arabic

What the school needs to do to improve

In order to improve further, the school should:

- Employ teaching and learning strategies that suit the needs of students, so as to:
 - develop higher thinking skills in written work
 - challenge students' abilities in written work
 - strengthen second cycle students in basic skills, such as grammar and writing in Arabic and English

- Provide the necessary financial resources to support e-learning.

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	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	1: Outstanding