



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

# **Schools Review Unit Review Report**

**Hafsa Primary Girls School  
Isa Town – Central Governorate  
Kingdom of Bahrain**

**Date reviewed: 2 – 4 March 2010**

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## The Schools Review Unit

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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:

<b>Grade description</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
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**

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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 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: 707

Age range: 6 -12 years

### **Characteristics of the school**

Hafsa Primary Girls School, founded in 1984, is one of the Central Governorate's schools and is located in Isa Town. The age range in the school is from 6 to 12 years. Most students come from middle-income backgrounds. There are 707 students, of whom 127 are categorised as outstanding, 18 as talented and gifted and 28 as having special needs. The students are distributed across 24 classes. There are 73 administrative and teaching staff, including nine new teachers. The Principal is in her first academic year at the school. The school is part of the fifth phase of King Hamad's Schools of the Future project.

## Overall effectiveness

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

#### Grade: 2 (Good)

The overall effectiveness of Hasfa Primary Girls School is good. Parents and students are very satisfied with the school.

The students' level of academic achievement is good. They achieve high success rates in school examinations, except for the second cycle of education. They also achieve high proficiency rates in most basic subjects, particularly the first cycle students. These rates were effectively reflected in most observed lessons. While students achieve good basic skills in Arabic, Mathematics and IT, their proficiency in English is only satisfactory, in particular the second cycle students. The school offers various programmes and activities for outstanding students and those who have learning difficulties, which raise their levels of achievement. Students do not achieve to the same high level in some satisfactory lessons where class activities are standardised for all students.

Students' personal development is good. Most students are punctual and respect class timings. Most students take on responsibilities and contribute to school life by active participation in various committees and extra-curricular activities such as competitions, in which they do well. Students play an active part in lessons, where teachers generally employ effective teaching and learning methods that develop the self-confidence of most students. Students' analytical thinking skills were not well developed in some lessons. Most students enjoy good relations with their fellow students and teachers, based on mutual respect. Students are happy with the school and feel safe and secure.

The effectiveness of teaching and learning processes is good. Most teachers use effective teaching and learning strategies that reflect their good subject knowledge. They use effective class management techniques to ensure good participation and learning of most students. Varied teaching methods are used, including discussion and dialogue, role playing and puppet shows, which have a positive effect on students' engagement, enjoyment and personal and academic achievement. Collaborative learning strategies are employed in some lessons, particularly in the first cycle, in which students are given opportunities to learn from each other, exchange roles and take on responsibilities. The development of students' higher thinking skills is patchy, as teachers do not generally give sufficient opportunities to students to use these skills, but they were better developed in good and outstanding lessons. Most teachers use varied oral and written assessment methods to monitor whether lesson objectives are being achieved. Students are assigned homework activities as set out in lesson

plans and students' individual differences are taken into account in some of them. Most teachers regularly mark homework, but do not always give feedback to students.

The provision and enrichment of the curriculum is good. Students acquire good basic skills in most lessons, where teachers generally use effective diagnostic and assessment methods to ensure students' mastery of these skills. The curriculum is presented in a way that ensures most students learn effectively. Some students are given good support in some lessons to help them see how the knowledge they are gaining can be applied to other areas of the curriculum and linked across subjects in the educational situations as a result of the support provided for them in those lessons, however, it is not presented in the same effectiveness in most lessons. Most students look after school property in a way that reflects their sense of belonging to the school community. The school organises programmes and events that encourage such feelings, as well as celebrations of national events and occasions. All students respect their school and classroom environment, which is rich in drawings, educational posters and displays prepared by students and teachers; resources such as these are also put to good use in most lessons, which fosters students' interest in learning.

The quality of support and guidance given to students is good. All new students benefit from good educational and leisure programmes when they join the school. These programmes help create a respectful and harmonious atmosphere in the school and give students opportunities to get involved in the school environment. The school also arranges appropriate programmes and activities for students moving to the next phase of education. It effectively enables students to acquire basic and personal skills by offering opportunities to take on responsibilities and work independently. The school also provides suitable support to different categories of students, such as remedial programmes, tutorial classes and extra-curricular programmes. The impact of such support was clear in most lessons, where most students were effectively enabled to make the progress expected of them. The school uses various channels to communicate with parents, who praised the school's efforts in this regard.

The effectiveness of leadership and management is good. The school has a vision and mission statement that has been shared with all staff and is based on a systematic analysis of the school situation. The effectiveness of the school's strategic plan, which is based on its vision and mission statement and focused on raising students' attainment and teachers' professional competency, is reflected in the school's general performance, particularly in lessons. The school evaluates its performance and monitors its various programmes effectively. It has set up a team to determine its priorities for the development and improvement of the strategic plan. A number of forms relating to parents and teachers were developed to assess the service standards and the school has carried out a comprehensive assessment of the school buildings. The school identifies effectively the training needs of its staff and provides appropriate development. The impact of such development was clear in many educational practices in most lessons. The school uses its educational facilities and

resources effectively to enhance the educational process, although it lacks many resources, especially IT resources. Although the school communicates with parents through different means and responds to some of their suggestions, parents' involvement in school life is below the expected level.

## **□ Does the school have the capacity to improve?**

### **Grade: 2 (Good)**

The school has a good capacity to develop and improve. It applies inclusive and accurate strategic planning and self-evaluation processes to all aspects of its work, which has helped to raise students' attainment well. The school's leaders adopt a policy of sharing with staff and create a harmonious atmosphere in which to enhance performance and achieve the desired quality of education. The school has made a number of improvements, particularly to the teaching and learning processes, and enhanced the sense of citizenship in the school by actions such as forming a quality team, creating the Hafsa Cultural Tent Project and setting up material recycling. All its improvements have helped to raise students' levels of achievement. The school's self-evaluation results are consistent with the results of this Review.

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

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### **Main Strengths**

- Students' academic achievement
- Basic skills in Arabic, numeracy and IT
- Learning and teaching strategies
- Students' contribution to school life
- Students' relationships with their peers and teachers
- Use of the educational environment to promote learning
- Strategic planning
- Self-evaluation.

### **Areas for development**

- Analytical thinking skills
- Challenging students' abilities
- English language skills
- Links between subjects
- Taking individual differences into account in homework.



## What the school needs to do to improve

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### In order to improve further, the school should:

- Develop students' English language skills to a greater extent
- Develop teaching and learning strategies that focus on:
  - Developing students' analytical thinking skills
  - Providing more opportunities to challenge students' abilities
  - Effective linking between subjects in the first cycle.
- Employ effective mechanisms to address individual differences in lessons and homework activities.

## Overall judgements

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Aspect	Grade: Description
<b>The school's overall effectiveness</b>	<b>2: Good</b>
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