



هيئة جودة التعليم والتدريب  
Education & Training Quality Authority  
Kingdom of Bahrain - مملكة البحرين

# **Directorate of Government Schools Reviews Special Review Report**

**Hajer Primary Girls School  
Bani Jamrah – Northern Governorate  
Kingdom of Bahrain**

**Date of Review: 6 November 2017  
SG197-C3-R139**

## Introduction

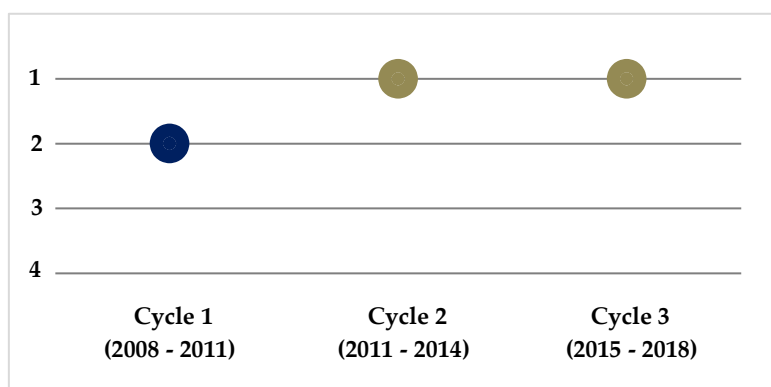
The Directorate of Government Schools Reviews (DGS), which is a part of the Education & Training Quality Authority (BQA), conducted this special review in accordance with the review procedures of schools with 'outstanding' performance in the last review cycle over one day by a team of seven reviewers. During the review, reviewers observed lessons and other activities, scrutinised students' written works and analysed the school's performance data and other documents. They spoke to the staff, students and parents. This report summarises their findings and recommendations.

### Summary of review judgements

<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>Satisfactory</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>Inadequate</b>	<b>4</b>
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Aspect		Grade			
		Elementary / Primary	Middle / Intermediate	High / Secondary	Overall
Quality of outcomes	Students' academic achievement	1	-	-	1
	Students' personal development	1	-	-	1
Quality of processes	Teaching and learning	1	-	-	1
	Students' support and guidance	2	-	-	2
Quality assurance of outcomes and processes	Leadership, management and governance	1	-	-	1
Capacity to improve		1			
The school's overall effectiveness		1			

The chart demonstrates the school's overall effectiveness throughout the review cycles.



# School Report

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## Percentile words used in relation to different judgements

Grade	Relative words used	Interpretation
Outstanding	All / Almost all	Indicates completeness and comprehensiveness/about to reach completeness and comprehensiveness.
	The vast majority	Indicates an amount that exceeds most.
Good	Most	Indicates an amount that exceeds majority.
Satisfactory	Majority / Adequate / Suitable / Variable	Indicates more than average.
Inadequate	Minority / Few	Indicates less than average.
	Limited	Indicates less than minority.
	Very limited	Indicates scarcity/rarity.
	None	Indicates unavailability/nothing.

### School's overall effectiveness 'Outstanding'

#### Justifications for sustaining "Outstanding" Judgement

- The school's leadership has a thorough understanding and remarkable awareness of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. This shows in its accurate and comprehensive self-evaluation of the school's situation. The leadership benefits from a priorities matrix and classroom visits reports to develop a well-structured participatory strategic plan with clear performance indicators and regular monitoring mechanisms, which contributes significantly to sustaining the school's outstanding performance.
- The outstanding interpersonal relationship between the school's leadership and staff is characterised by courtesy. This creates a positive work climate, driven by active support for improvement and a fascinating variety of motivation, encouragement and recognition methods through the 'Roses of Hajer' programme which builds a competent second line of leaders authorised to carry out responsibilities, such as coordinating teachers who are delegated to manage and take an active role in various academic departments.

- The professional development programmes in the newly established in-house development and training centre, the 'Let us Grow Academy', have a real impact. Programmes include targeted workshops such as 'Behaviour Management', 'Digital Learning Content' and the Flubaroo tool for online assessment of students' test results and In-house classes. The results show strongly in teachers' professional competency and performance quality, as well as in their effectiveness in improving students' academic achievement and personal growth.
- Students achieved full (100%) pass rates in school tests and MoE examinations in all Cycle 2 core subjects in the school year 2016-2017, and in the vast majority of Cycle 1 core subjects with the lowest being in Grade 2 Arabic with 95%. Motivation is further enhanced by the progressive medals granted by the school such as the Queens of Hajer medal under the 'Throne of Excellence' project.
- Students in Cycles 1 and 2 achieve very high proficiency rates in all core subjects, ranging from 70% to 100%. The lowest rate is in Grade 5 English and the highest in Grade 6 science, which is positively demonstrated in the motivational colours in the 'Colour-coded Keys to Proficiency' project.
- The consistently very high pass and proficiency rates indicate students' high standards in the outstanding lessons, which account for more than two-thirds of all lessons spreading across both cycles, with the exception being English lessons which are generally good.
- Students in all categories achieve outstanding progress in core lessons in general, as well as in written work in

most core subjects and extracurricular programmes and activities. The exception is low-achieving students who make less progress in some English lessons.

- Students in both cycles are outstanding in their acquisition of basic skills and knowledge, such as in verbal and written expression, reading aloud, use of the rules of grammar in writing and speaking, and analysis of characters in audio stories. This is further enhanced by the enrichment of reading values and linguistic ability encouraged by the school in developing positive attitudes to reading, as in the 'Hajer's Forum', 'Hajer's Corner' and 'Most Fascinating Tales' projects. Students also show excellence in acquiring scientific concepts such as the concept of adaptation, identifying human digestion stages, food chain structure and graphical representation of data, alongside their ability to solve oral questions in various ways and demonstrate multiplication skills. They also have the ability to build sentences in English using new vocabulary, and to write and understand content.
- The vast majority of students show strong motivation toward their school and great enthusiasm and enjoyment in their participation in school's activities. They show high self-confidence and leadership skills, starting with pre-morning assembly activities and morning assembly leadership in which they show independence and the willingness to assume responsibility. They are fluent in expression, oration and presentation and participate in various types of programme such as 'Hajer's Storyteller' and 'Young Scientist'. This continues into break

times with a variety of activities such as the 'My Break is More Fun' programme, and in various committees such as the 'Student Self-assessment Committee' and 'We Saw in order to Reap' committee. They also show a great ability to manage constructive dialogues during school activities and cooperative work, and accept peer comments and performance analysis during Peer Assessment sessions.

- Students participate in lessons with extraordinary effectiveness and remarkable enthusiasm, working in a highly competitive atmosphere in which they show keenness to learn and play various roles such as those of group leaders and student teachers.
- Students are very comfortable in their positive relationships, these being based on love, affinity and respect for all school staff and students. This shows in their good conduct and fascinating awareness, which is further enhanced by several awareness-raising programmes such as the 'Behavioural Contract' and 'Flower of the Week'.
- Students show their thorough understanding of Bahrain's culture and Islamic values in their strict discipline and good ethics. They listen attentively to recitations of the Holy Quran during morning assemblies. They also add beauty to the school's environment by developing heritage corners and national boards, and participating in national occasions and events such as the Bahrain Sports Festival and Joined in Love of Bahrain.
- Students have an excellent ability to work independently due to the numerous opportunities they are given in lessons. Examples are the 'Open Book' strategy in science and school

group activities such as the 'Press' and 'Scientific Research' groups.

- Students attend school punctually and regularly. The reception team welcomes them warmly and encourages them to arrive early with events organised for them, such as the 'Sunrise of Hajer' project and the row flag carried by the earliest attending student from every class. The exception to the above is students' mass absenteeism from some non-official occasions.
- The vast majority of teachers employ a variety of effective pro-learning teaching and learning strategies, such as cooperative learning, discussion and dialogue, learning through play, role playing and 'Think, pair and share'. In these the students are at the centre of the learning process and are provided with the opportunity to express themselves and share information through the encouragement of initiative, particularly in free unrestricted situations as in lessons in which students demonstrate the ability to identify pros and cons and make decisions.
- Teachers use learning resources, such as smart boards, data show projectors, flashcards, figures, educational movies, class corners and numeracy tools in an effective manner. This significantly helps to attract the vast majority of students to participate in learning activities in an atmosphere of joy and excitement.
- Teachers manage their classes in an organised, effective and productive manner in terms of planning and preparation, learning time management, logical progress of explanations and lesson coherence. They give clear instructions and use various motivation and encouragement techniques such as

praise, applause and honorary titles granted to students, such as 'Princesses of Hajer'.

- Various assessment methods are used, including individual and group assessment, oral and written assessment, peer assessment, self-assessment, structured observation and modern digital assessment methods and tools such as Plickers, QR and Quizlize. These are followed by instant feedback to students and parents on students' academic achievement and personal growth through the 'Class Dojo' programme, which enhances communication and the spirit of participation between the school and parents.
- The vast majority of teachers train students on higher order thinking skills such as critical thinking, and motivate them to employ scientific methods in investigating and concluding several alternative solutions to problems, as in Arabic and social studies lessons, in scientific experimentation in science lessons, and in brainstorming in mathematics. Teachers also enhance these skills in outstanding students through activity classes with specific projects, such as the Mathematics Genius project.
- Teachers challenge the abilities of the vast majority of students with differentiated activities in lessons, where they cater for students' learning patterns such as presenting worksheets in class teaching, Arabic and English lessons. Students are also assigned various learning activities and homework that are differentiated according to their learning abilities, including educational projects such as the 'Challenge for the Smart' project in

activity classes and electronic presentations as in science and mathematics lessons.

- The school fosters its outstanding and talented students by supporting their participation in several programmes and external and international festivals and competitions, such as the Princesses of Creativity programme, International Children's Art Exhibition in Japan and Drawing Competition in Egypt. In some of these, students achieve high positions, such as the first position in the Students Scientific Research Forum and second position in the 13 National Competition for Future Scientists. The school also supports its low-achieving students and strives to improve their levels in educational competencies through effective weekly support lessons.
- The school supports students with learning difficulties in its unique 'Buds of Hajer' programme, along with thorough and effective follow-up, and organises break time events and the 'Self-esteem Building' programme.
- The school helps students financially by providing winter support and school uniforms. Their behaviour is enhanced through a set of special programmes such as 'My Behaviour is Green'. Students with problems are supported using a standard and effective procedure that includes helping them to overcome the obstacles they encounter and in special cases by communicating relevant parties.
- The school enriches students' experiences with a large group of extracurricular activities that suit students' interests and preferences. These include students' committees such as 'Friends of the Learning

Resources Centre' and 'Order Committee' and internal and external competitions, in some of which they achieve high positions as in the Children's Art Exhibition. The school also enhances students' life skills in an outstanding and innovative ways, as in problem solving, farming and sewing skills, cooking skills in the weekly 'Hajer's Kitchen' programme and science projects, as in the 'I am a Scientist' programme.

- The school monitors security and safety aspects regularly and makes extensive efforts to create a safe and healthy environment for its staff and students. Health and awareness-raising programmes and projects such as first aid programmes are organised, as are counselling classes and the 'Cleanliness

is my Main Characteristic' project. Evacuation drills are arranged and there is evident follow-up on the maintenance of the school's buildings and facilities. The school strictly controls students' dismissal, though overcrowding at the school's gate, which opens directly to the street, prevents the school from ensuring optimal safety for its students.

- The school uses its physical resources effectively to enhance the teaching process. Use of its educational facilities such as the learning resources centre are managed according to well-structured schedules to ensure that they are used in an optimal manner, while some facilities are put to dual use such as using a hall in the learning resources centre as a gym and another room as a family education workshop.

## Main Strengths

- The school's leadership is very aware of work and development priorities, which is obvious in the strategic planning processes which include accurate self-evaluation, comprehensive general and specific objectives, and effective strategic and action plans. These all contribute to maintaining the school's outstanding performance in the vast majority of schoolwork aspects.
- The teacher professional development programmes are effective, the impact showing in the quality of teaching and learning and the students' outstanding academic achievement.
- Outstanding progress is achieved by students in both cycles in lessons, written work and school programmes, as well as in acquiring skills in core subjects and life skills.
- Support programmes and the various curricular and extracurricular teaching, training and assessment activities are outstanding, aiming to broaden students' minds, enrich their experiences, cater for their differences and develop their critical thinking, analysis and problem solving skills.
- The vast majority of students are very self-confident in participating in school life. There is an atmosphere of enthusiasm and enjoyment filled with the spirit of leadership and further enhanced by students' good behaviour, made more exciting by their ability to boldly assume responsibility and their self-motivated learning, fluent expression, high quality oration, good writing and skilful scientific research.

- Interpersonal relationships between the school's leadership and its staff and students are outstanding, as is the school's effectiveness in continuing to develop and maintain its outstanding performance.

### **The most Outstanding/Pioneer Projects**

- 'Colour-coded Keys to Proficiency' is a project that aims to motivate students to increase their proficiency rates in core subjects. Any student who improves her proficiency rate to green is rewarded. The school has set green as the colour for outstanding proficiency, yellow for average rates and red for rates that require follow-up. This has a positive impact on students' standards and has improved their proficiency rates.
- 'Princesses of Creativity' is a programme that nurtures talented students by allocating fixed classes in the timetable for their participation in several external and international festivals and competitions, in some of which they achieve high positions.
- 'Buds of Hajer' and 'Self-esteem Building' are two programmes for students with learning difficulties that aim to provide them with academic support and enhance their personalities. These programmes have resulted in evident improvement in students' academic levels and enhanced their self-confidence.
- 'I am a Scientist' is a project that enhances students' interests in researching and reaching clear and accurate scientific conclusions and encourages them to apply scientific experimentation to theoretical information which has helped polish their skills and increase the accuracy of their observations. It also enhances their ability to participate in discussions, express their opinions and measure impacts.
- 'Challenge for the Smart' and 'Mathematics Genius' are two projects that aim to develop Cycle 2 students' mathematical abilities and higher order thinking skills. These have contributed to students' achievement of advanced levels in national examinations.
- 'My Behaviour is Green' is a programme that aims to promote the value of respect among students, enhance their self-confidence and develop their interpersonal skills and adaptation abilities, and has helped improve their good qualities and ethics and reduced behavioural problems.
- 'The Behavioural Contract' is a programme in which individual or group agreements, as relevant, are made with students covering the type of behaviour that they should develop, together with monitoring and observing behavioural changes and rewarding students who achieve positive behavioural changes.
- 'Throne of Excellence' is a project that aims to improve students' academic achievement by awarding them progressive medals according to their total scores in mid-semester examinations. These medals are 'Champions of Hajer', 'Princesses of Hajer', and 'Queens of Hajer' as the highest medal. Students are also encouraged through several other initiatives such as 'Star Queens' and 'Hats of Achievement', which have helped stimulate students' competitiveness and increased their motivation to learn and excel.



- Plickers, QR and Quizlize are digital assessment methods and tools that are used in various learning situations and which have helped improve students' learning and motivated them to pay attention to their homework.
- 'Class Dojo' is a programme for providing parents with instant feedback on students' behaviour and academic achievement. This has improved communication and the spirit of participation between the school and parents.
- 'Hajer's Forum', 'Hajer's Corner' and 'Most Fascinating Tales' are projects that aim to stimulate students' love for targeted and free reading and enhance their storytelling abilities. In some of these projects, mothers participate with meaningful stories that prepare their daughters for life, which has a positive impact on developing students' positive attitude to reading, increased their linguistic skills and provided the majority of them with higher order thinking skills such as anticipating events.
- 'Sunrise of Hajer' is a project that aims to motivate more students to attend school early, enhance their behavioural values and initiate a range of events and activities. This has helped reduce morning delays, enhanced their citizenship values and provided them with additional cultural information.
- 'My Break is More Fun' is a project that aims to enliven school break times by means of various activities and events, such as folk games, competitions and scientific experiments. This has helped enhance the experiences of the vast majority of students, cater for their different interests and broaden their minds, which shows in their enjoyment of school breaks and the reduced behaviour incidents.
- 'Scientific Research' is a project that aims to develop students' research and life skills, enhance their talents in science and mathematics and enable them to collect information, design questionnaires and analyse and present scientific findings in order to improve their self-learning abilities. The results show in their achievement of the first place and inclusion in the golden category in the 8th Scientific Research Forum for their research on the importance of the thyme plant as a natural filter of sediments.

## Recommendations

- Continue to promote the school's outstanding educational practices and leading projects as widely as possible to other educational institutions in the Kingdom of Bahrain.
- Benefit from productive educational practices and models in developing teaching and learning in English in order to reach outstanding levels.
- Seek the active intervention by relevant parties in the Ministry of Education to build on the great efforts and measures carried out by the school in addressing the problem of overcrowding during students' dismissal, which is necessary in order to better ensure students' safety.

## Appendix: Characteristics of the school

Name of the school (Arabic)	هاجر الابتدائية للبنات													
Name of the school (English)	Hajer Primary Girls													
Year of establishment	1972													
Address	Building 2320, Road 4169, Block 541													
Town / Village / Governorate	Bani Jamrah/ Northern													
School's Contacts	17690702				Fax		17692293							
School's e-mail	hajir.pr.g@moe.gov.bh													
School's website	-													
Age range of students	6-12 years													
Grades (e.g. 1 to 12)	Primary				Middle				High					
	1-6				-				-					
Number of students	Boys		-		Girls		452		Total		452			
Students' social background	Most students come from middle income families													
Classes per grade	Grade	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
	Classes	3	3	3	3	3	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Tracks	Grades	Distribution of classes on Tracks												
	Grade 10	-												
	Grade 11	-												
	Grade 12	-												
Number of administrative staff	6 administrative and 11 technical													
Number of teaching staff	50													
Curriculum	MoE													
Main language(s) of instruction	Arabic													
Principal's tenure in the school	One school year													

<b>External assessment and examinations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MoE examinations for Cycle 2 mathematics and Grade 6 English.</li> <li>• BQA national examinations.</li> </ul>
<b>Accreditation (if applicable)</b>	-
<b>Major recent changes in the school</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New appointments in the current school year 2017-2018: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– 5 teachers, including 3 for class teaching and 1 for English</li> <li>– a senior teacher for class teaching</li> <li>– a senior teacher of science</li> <li>– a social counsellor.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• New appointments in the previous school year 2016-2017: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– School Principal</li> <li>– an Assistant School Principal</li> <li>– 3 teachers, 2 for class teaching and 1 for mathematics.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>