



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

Schools Review Unit Review Report

**Hamad Town Intermediate Boys School
Hamad Town - Northern Governorate
Kingdom of Bahrain**

Date Reviewed: 5 – 7 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 six 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: Boys

Number of students: 850

Age range: 13 - 15 years

Characteristics of the school

Hamad Town Intermediate Boys School is one of the Northern Governorate's schools. It was established in 1987. There are 850 students and they range in age from 13 to 15 years old. Most students belong to limited-income families. There are 28 classes in the school: 10 classes for grade 7 and nine classes for each of grades 8 and 9. The school classifies 1% of its students as having learning difficulties, 8% as outstanding and 2% as gifted, and one student has a physical disability. There are 68 teachers in the school and 26 administrative and technical staff. The Principal is running the school for the first year. The school does not have specialists in the areas of learning resources, outstanding students and learning difficulties. 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: 4 (Inadequate)

The overall effectiveness of Hamad Town Intermediate Boys School is inadequate, although the area of support and guidance is satisfactory. Parents and students are broadly satisfied with the school.

Students' academic achievement is inadequate. Many students achieve relatively high pass rates in school examinations, which are not mirrored in their levels of actual attainment in classes. Students achieved lower standards than expected of them in almost half the lessons, where teaching and learning strategies were ineffective. Students in grades 7 and 8 achieve higher pass rates in school examinations than those of grade 9 students in ministry's examinations which reflect the inconsistency in their progress. Generally, students of different abilities rarely achieve the levels appropriate to their abilities as teaching methods do not meet their learning needs.

Students' personal development is inadequate. Most students attend school regularly but about one-third of students are late to morning assembly, despite some actions taken by the school. Some students participate in extra-curricular activities, but many show little enthusiasm and attention during lessons. Teaching methods lack elements of interest and stimulation and the school's awareness-raising programmes are ineffective. Students are given very few opportunities in lessons to develop their higher thinking skills. Students' conduct in lessons is satisfactory overall: some students behave well, show enthusiasm towards learning and respond well to activities presented by teachers but others talk among themselves and show little interest in the lessons. The school has focused efforts on controlling some poor conduct among students and has had some success, which has increased stability in the school and made students feel more secure. There are still, however, examples of students' unacceptable behaviour. Some teachers, particularly new ones, use inappropriate behaviour management methods and some parents are concerned about this.

The effectiveness of the teaching and learning process is inadequate. Almost half of the lessons were inadequate while the other half were mainly satisfactory. Inadequate lessons are distributed across all core subjects, but particularly the English language. Teachers manage most lessons satisfactorily, starting and finishing classes on time and achieving the lesson objectives. Most teachers have satisfactory subject knowledge but this is not always

reflected in their performance in lessons. Most lessons are presented with instructional teaching methods that do not consider individual differences or allow enough opportunities for students to work together or learn from each other. Teachers use assessment that relies on verbal questioning and focus on retrieving information to assess students' learning in most lessons. This does not produce an accurate diagnosis of students' learning needs to help in planning learning.

The curriculum enrichment programmes are inadequate. The school seeks to develop students' sense of citizenship through the morning broadcast, and develops some students' understanding of their rights, duties and responsibilities. This understanding is not, however, reflected in some students' behaviour. The school provides students with some extra-curricular activities and some vocational programmes but these activities do not sufficiently enhance most students' experience or meet their different interests, particularly the gifted students. Reading skills are satisfactorily developed in most Arabic lessons and students' information technology skills are adequately developed but basic skills development in the majority of English and Mathematics lessons is inadequate.

The effectiveness of support and guidance is satisfactory. The school has managed to improve students' discipline by holding special sessions with students that have led to better discipline during lessons. The school appropriately meets students' personal needs but does not meet their educational needs. Support provided to students during lessons varies in effectiveness according to the quality of the support and guidance methods used by teachers. The school communicates with parents in various ways but does not inform them adequately about their sons' progress. Students are not properly prepared for their transition to the secondary level.

The effectiveness of leadership and management is inadequate. The school's efforts are centred on the area of students' conduct but similar attention is not given to the teaching and learning methods. The school has a shared vision but its impact is not reflected in lessons. Self-evaluation is carried out for some of the school's practices but the results are not effectively used. The school has a three-year strategic plan; the monitoring and follow up mechanisms for the plan are, however, ineffective. The senior and middle management inspire the administrative and teaching staff and encourage some initiatives in the school.

Does the school have the capacity to improve?

Grade: 4 (Inadequate)

The school has inadequate capacity to develop and improve. It has made some improvements recently, in the areas of students' conduct, managing lateness through

initiatives such as a competition, enhancing the school environment, and setting up the students' council.

The school uses self-evaluation to design plans but does not consistently apply it to improve teaching and learning processes or to bring about actual changes to practices inside the classrooms. The strategic plan is having no clear effect in lessons. The mechanisms used to monitor and follow up the strategic plan are ineffective.

The school faces considerable challenges that it cannot overcome without external assistance. Its key challenges are to raise students' awareness and change their attitudes towards learning and to develop the teaching and learning processes to make them more interesting for students and in line with their educational needs. Another limiting factor in the school's capacity to improve is the lack of stability in leadership: four Principals have been in post in the past four years.

The school's main strengths and areas for development

Main Strengths

- Support and guidance
- Students' attendance
- Developing citizenship

Areas for development

- Developing students' awareness and sense of responsibility
- Differentiation in teaching and learning
- Use of assessment
- Higher thinking skills
- Teaching and learning strategies
- Students' working together and learning from each other
- Developing basic skills, particularly in English and mathematics
- Using self-evaluation results
- Following up the impact of the strategic plan programmes
- Behaviour management

What the school needs to do to improve

In order to improve further, the school should:

- Draw on external support to improve performance in the school
- Develop students' awareness and sense of responsibility, and enhance their attitude to learning
- Develop varied and effective teaching and learning strategies in order to:
 - Develop students' basic skills, particularly in English and mathematics
 - Make use of assessment results to plan learning
 - Take into account individual differences among students
 - Develop students' higher thinking skills
 - Provide more opportunities for students to learn together and learn from each other.
- Make effective use of self-evaluation results to improve performance
- Track the impact of the strategic plan programmes after setting clear performance indicators
- Develop appropriate behaviour management strategies
- Stabilise the school's leadership for a sufficient span of time and fill shortages in human resources.

Overall judgements

Aspect	Grade: Description
The school's overall effectiveness	4: Inadequate
The school's capacity to improve	4: Inadequate
Students' academic achievement	4: Inadequate
Students' progress in their personal development	4: Inadequate
The quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning	4: Inadequate
The quality of the curriculum delivery	4: Inadequate
The quality of guidance and support for students	3: Satisfactory
The quality and effectiveness of leadership and management	4: Inadequate