



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

# **Schools Review Unit**

## **Review Report**

**Hamad Town Intermediate Secondary Girls School**  
**Hamad Town - Northern Governorate**  
**Kingdom of Bahrain**

**Date Reviewed: 29-31 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:

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**

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### **Scope of the Review**

This Review was conducted over three days, by a team of nine 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: 994

Age range: 13-16 years

### **Characteristics of the school**

Hamad Town Intermediate Secondary Girls School is one of the Northern Governorate schools and was founded in 1986. The age range in the school is from 13 to 16 years, and there are 994 students. Most students come from middle-income families. Students are distributed across four classes for the first intermediate grade, five for the second and seven for the third, and there are 18 classes for the first secondary grade. The school categorises 93 of its students as outstanding, 88 as talented and creative and 30 as having learning difficulties; seven students have a physical impairment. There are 23 administrative staff and 90 teaching staff, of whom 14 are new teachers. The headmistress is in her sixth year at the school. The school lacks senior teachers for science, mathematics and social studies and has a shortage of educational facilities and resources such as computer laboratories and equipment and creativity centres.

## Overall effectiveness

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

### **Grade: 3 (Satisfactory)**

The overall effectiveness of Hamad Town Intermediate Secondary Girls School is satisfactory. Students and their parents are satisfied with the school.

Students' academic achievement is satisfactory. Students achieve varied pass rates and proficiency levels in school and ministry examinations; these rates match their standards in most lessons, except in some Arabic lessons at the secondary level, where standards were below the expected level and students gained low levels of basic skills. Students make progress appropriate to their abilities in some good and satisfactory lessons, where suitable teaching methods are used, but their progress over the past three years is poor. Lower-achieving students make progress in line with their abilities, helped by the support provided. Talented and outstanding students do not progress consistently well; their individual differences are not always considered in lessons and the opportunities given to challenge their abilities vary.

The students' personal development is satisfactory. Most students attend school regularly and punctually, and the school takes appropriate measures to deal with lateness. Most students participate in creativity and activity classes that help to develop their practical skills and broaden their experiences. Most students respond to the opportunities they are given and participate enthusiastically in lessons, which has a positive effect on their personal development. Some students are given the chance to take on leading roles, which reinforces their self-confidence and sense of responsibility. Students' analytical thinking skills are not sufficiently developed, which decreases opportunities for challenging their abilities. Most students show awareness in their behaviour in the classroom and, with a few exceptions, have good relations with their teachers and each other. Most of the students feel secure and safe at school, but some of them were dissatisfied with some conduct cases that the school is pursuing.

The effectiveness of the teaching and learning processes is satisfactory. Most teachers know the study materials well. This knowledge is satisfactorily reflected in varied and motivating teaching methods in good and satisfactory lessons, especially in Science. These lessons are characterised by encouragement of student conversation and discussion, participation in activities and by teachers giving students opportunities to learn from each other; these factors contribute to students' acquiring skills, concepts and knowledge effectively. In other lessons, however, teachers use a lecturing style that does not consider individual differences

among students, challenge their abilities or help to develop their higher thinking skills. Teachers make adequate use of assessment methods, but some only test students' memorisation skills, especially in inadequate lessons. The quality of homework activities varies; some are not planned to meet students' educational needs and do not consider individual differences and, despite the efforts of some teachers, not all homework is checked.

The quality of curriculum enrichment and delivery is satisfactory. The school fosters students' sense of community and citizenship and informs them of their rights and duties, which has a positive effect on their conduct in the classroom. The school enriches its environment with cultural and educational materials. Some students participate in school committees and cultural or sports activities such as competitions or festivals. These activities help develop students' leadership abilities, allow them to show their talents and creativity and broaden their experiences. The enrichment of the classroom environment and organisation of activities within classes are not as good. Some students acquire satisfactory basic skills in different subjects. Their acquisition of information technology (IT) skills is good but, at the secondary level, students do not gain adequate Arabic skills. Most teachers rely only on textbooks when presenting the curriculum, which does not give students enough opportunities to expand their knowledge.

The quality of guidance and support for students is satisfactory. The school gives lectures, holds meetings and introduces its systems, rules and facilities to new students and their parents, which helps students to settle into the school. It prepares students for their next educational and vocational stages by means of some lectures, which is an acceptable preparation, overall. The school performs diagnostic examinations and analyses their findings and then gives advice, guidance and enrichment and remedial activities to meet students' personal and educational needs. Overall, the school provides suitable support for its students in the classroom, but individual differences are not always considered in some lessons. The school communicates with parents through several channels but does not notify them regularly of their daughters' progress and grades. The school assesses risks adequately and trains students on evacuation procedures in emergencies. It also checks the condition of fire extinguishers.

The effectiveness of management and leadership is satisfactory. The school has a vision and mission that focus on developing the school community and improving its results, which has had an impact on some lessons. The school evaluates some aspects of its work, making it aware of its own strengths and areas for development. Although self-evaluation results are used to shape a plan for the school, the plan does not cover all aspects of school work and does not include performance indicators. The school motivates teachers and raises their competency by organising training workshops and programmes, which have had a satisfactory impact on teachers' performance overall, although the performance of some

teachers of Arabic at the secondary level is variable. The lack of senior teachers for Science, Mathematics and Social Studies has made it more difficult to raise professional competency in these subjects. The school uses some of its educational facilities, but the facilities are not sufficient for the secondary level, which affects the educational services for students at this level and the school's capacity to meet these students' needs. The school communicates with parents and responds to their opinions to the best of its ability, which students and their parents appreciate.

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

#### **Grade: 3 (Satisfactory)**

The school's capacity to develop and improve is satisfactory. The school's self-evaluation of some aspects of its work has given it an awareness of its strengths and areas for development. These findings were used to shape a school plan that has had a satisfactory effect on the school's performance. The school's plan is not yet comprehensive and lacks performance indicators. The school's most important recent improvements are represented by its initiation of an educational group to keep track of developments and changes in quality assurance standards; its work in looking after lower-achieving students; the formation of a support team to monitor classroom learning; and its use of a self-evaluation committee. The challenges facing the school, such as the lack of resources for the secondary level, the lack of senior teachers for Science, Mathematics and Social Studies, and the inconsistency in teachers' performance have limited the school's ability to bring about more improvement.

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

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### **Main Strengths**

- The support provided for lower-achieving students
- Students' awareness and responsible behaviour in lessons
- Students' effective participation in activities and creativity classes
- Class management
- Good relations among school staff
- Promoting concepts of loyalty and citizenship
- Students' IT skills.

### **Areas for development**

- Strategic planning
- Basic skills in Arabic for the secondary level
- Considering individual differences in lessons and homework
- Challenging students' abilities
- Developing higher thinking skills
- Raising teachers' professional competency.



## What the school needs to do to improve

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

- Apply self-evaluation to all aspects of the school's work and use the findings to set a strategic plan with clear and measurable performance indicators
- Develop teaching and learning strategies, to include:
  - Considering individual differences in lessons and homework
  - Developing basic skills, especially in Arabic for the secondary level
  - Developing analytical thinking skills
  - Challenging students' abilities.
- Organise professional competency programmes for teachers and monitor the effect of the programmes in raising students' academic achievement
- Ensure that the secondary level is provided with sufficient educational and financial resources and fill the vacancies for senior teaching posts.

## Overall judgements

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