



الهيئة الوطنية
للمؤهلات وصفاان جودة التعليم والتدريب
National Authority for Qualifications &
Quality Assurance of Education & Training

Schools Review Unit Review Report

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

Date of Review: 12 - 14 November 2012

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The Schools Review Unit

The Schools Review Unit (SRU) is part of the National Authority for Qualifications and Quality Assurance of Education and Training (NAQQAET) that was officially set up in 2008 as an independent body governed and supervised by the Council of Ministers. It is established to raise standards in education and training.

The SRU is responsible for:

- evaluating and reporting on the quality of provision in all schools and kindergartens
- establishing success measures
- spreading best practice
- making recommendations for school/kindergarten improvements.

Review involves monitoring standards and evaluating the quality of provision against a clear set of indicators. The reviews are independent, objective and transparent. They provide important information for schools and kindergartens about their strengths and areas for improvement to assist in focusing efforts and resources as part of the cycle of school improvement in order to raise standards.

Review grades are awarded a four-point scale:

Grade description	Interpretation
Outstanding (1)	Outcomes or provision are at least good in all areas and outstanding in the majority.
Good (2)	Outcomes or provision are at least satisfactory in all areas and good in the majority.
Satisfactory (3)	A basic level of adequacy. There are no major weaknesses, or the majority of areas are satisfactory. Some areas may be good.
Inadequate (4)	There are major weaknesses or the majority of areas are inadequate.

Introduction

This review was conducted over three days, by a team of seven reviewers. During the review, reviewers observed lessons and other activities, examined students' written and other work, analysed data concerning the school's performance and other documents, and talked with staff, students and parents. This report summarises their findings and recommendations.

Characteristics of the school

School's name		Hamad Town Primary Boys School															
School's type		Government															
Year of establishment		1985															
Age range of students		6 - 10 years															
Grades (e.g. 1 to 12)		Primary				Middle				High							
		1 - 3				-				-							
Number of students		Boys	448	Girls	-				Total	448							
Students' social background		Most students come from average income families.															
Classes per grade	Grade	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12				
	Classes	5	5	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-				
Town /Village		Hamad Town															
Governorate		Northern															
Number of administrative staff		6 administrative and 24 technicians															
Number of teaching staff		42															
Curriculum		Ministry of Education (MoE)															
Main language(s) of instruction		Arabic															
Principal's tenure		One year															
External assessment and examinations		NAQQAET's national examinations															
Accreditation (if applicable)		None															
Number of students in the following categories according to the school's classification		Outstanding				Gifted & Talented				Physical Disabilities				Learning Difficulties			
		114				12				3				38			
Major recent changes in the school		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appointment of a new principal in the last academic year 2011-12 • Appointment of a school nurse in the academic year 2011-12 • Hiring a speech and language specialist 3 days a week • Appointment of four new teachers in 2011-12. 															

Table of review judgements awarded

Aspect	Grade: Description			
The school's overall effectiveness	3: Satisfactory			
The school's capacity to improve	3: Satisfactory			
	Elementary / Primary	Middle / Intermediate	High / Secondary	Overall
Students' academic achievement	3	-	-	3
Students' personal development	3	-	-	3
The quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning	3	-	-	3
The quality of the curriculum implementation	3	-	-	3
The quality of support and guidance for students	3	-	-	3
The quality and effectiveness of leadership, management and governance	3	-	-	3

Key:

- 1: Outstanding
- 2: Good
- 3: Satisfactory
- 4: Inadequate

Review judgements

Overall effectiveness

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

Grade: 3 Satisfactory

The school's performance has changed from being judged good in the previous review in May 2009 to satisfactory in this one. This is mainly attributed to the teachers' varied performance and their inconsistent time management in lessons which adversely affect students' acquisition of basic skills despite of the school's clear efforts in offering training workshops to improve teachers' professional competency. The school has action plans to implement these measures but they have not been as effective as they might. Behaviour modification programmes, such as 'Together', extra-curricular activities and programmes targeting students with learning difficulties, merge students and students with speech disorders have been implemented well. However, support for low achieving students is poor, which is reflected in their inconsistent performance and slow academic progress. Students and parents are satisfied with the school.

- How strong is the school's capacity to improve?**

Grade: 3 Satisfactory

The school's capacity to improve has changed from being judged good in the previous review to satisfactory. This is mainly attributed to the increasing challenges the school faces, namely shortages in human resources such as an assistant principal, senior English teacher, and a teacher for the outstanding and talented students. There are newly joined teachers and social workers. The school is aware of its strengths and those areas needing improvement through its self-assessment and analysis, with consequent action and strategic planning. This has brought some improvements, most importantly in organising programmes and workshops to improve teachers' professional competency, especially the new ones, students' behaviour and delegation of some management tasks to the administrative supervisor. These efforts however are inconsistent as reflected in the school's overall performance, particularly students' academic achievement.

Students' achievement

□ How well do students achieve in their academic work?

Grade: 3 Satisfactory

Grade 3 students attained standards that are below the national average in national examinations in Arabic and mathematics from 2010 to 2012, except in Arabic in 2012 where they attained within the average range, which was reflected in their achievement levels in lessons.

Students achieved high pass rates in school examinations in 2011-12, ranging from 83% to 99% in core subjects. The highest rates were in English in Grade 3. The lowest were in Grade 2 in Arabic. These rates are in line with the proficiency rates for Grades 1 and 2 but not Grade 3 where achievement is varied. High pass rates reflect the majority of students' achievement levels in good lessons, mainly because of the effective teaching methods used. They do not reflect their achievement levels in satisfactory lessons, which form more than half of the lessons observed. This is due to the variation in the quality of class and time management and the educational support provided for students with different levels of achievement. The majority of students acquire good skills in information technology (IT) and Arabic skills in reading and writing in Grade 2, and adequately in Grade 3 but less so in Grades 1. Students acquire adequate arithmetic skills and scientific inquiry in Grades 1 and 2, and English skills in speaking and listening in Grades 1 and 3, but less in Grade 2.

Tracking students' achievement for three consecutive years from 2010 to 2012 shows stable pass rates in most core subjects and a slight drop in science. The majority of students show considerable progress in good lessons such as Grade 3 science and in few Grade 2 Arabic they achieve lesson objectives; which is related to the planned variety of activities challenging students' abilities. However, their progress in other lessons and their written work only shows adequate progress, especially in Grade 2 English lessons. This is attributed to the inconsistency in considering the students' different abilities when setting activities.

Outstanding and talented students make satisfactory progress in the majority of lessons due to the varied level of challenge put to them, whereas the majority progress well outside classrooms; due to effective support that meets their needs. However, low achieving students do not make adequate progress due to the limited support and remedial activities provided in lessons. Conversely, the merged students, students with learning difficulties and those with speech and language difficulties make good progress considering their abilities, outside standard lessons.

□ How good is the students' personal development?

Grade: 3 Satisfactory

The majority of students are enthusiastic about participating in extra-curricular activities and school committees, such as 'Humane', 'Young Researcher', and the students' council. These activities develop their self-confidence, sense of responsibility and ability to work together, and offer them opportunities to take leadership roles outside the classroom, such as presenting the morning broadcast and monitoring order and cleanliness. Students' participation in class varies as they were enthusiastic in good lessons, but less so in satisfactory lessons as a result of the limited opportunities and lack of diversity in the teaching methods used.

The majority of students follow the school's rules showing responsible behaviour. They take care of school property and attend regularly and on time, mainly as a result of the applied disciplinary measures described in the late and absence policy. Although there are some instances of fighting and disorder during classes and the recess periods, the school implements adequate behaviour modification programmes such as 'Together', where the impact is visibly effective in good lessons.

Most students show a sense of citizenship and good understanding of Bahrain's heritage and Islamic values. This is attributed to the concepts they acquire from using heritage and national Bahraini corners in the majority of classrooms and around the school and successful participation in different national and religious competitions and activities; which enhanced nationalism and religious awareness with most students.

The quality of provision

□ How effective are teaching and learning?

Grade: 3 Satisfactory

The majority of teachers are familiar with their subject material which is reflected in their performance and enthusiasm in the classroom. The provision of introductory activities helps the majority of students participate in lessons. Teachers use teaching and learning strategies in various ways, such as debate and discussion, role playing and learning games. They also use some teaching resources, such as flash cards and models. They provide some opportunities for cooperative learning in good lessons, which is reflected in the students' motivation, enthusiasm and participation in their learning. However, the use of these

strategies is not as good in two thirds of the lessons, where the teachers rather than the students are at the centre of the process. This adversely affects the students' participation, interaction and acquisition of skills, knowledge and concepts in all core subjects, but especially in Grade 1 Arabic and Grade 2 English.

Teachers provide appropriate opportunities to challenge the majority students' abilities and develop their higher order thinking skills by focusing on critical thinking, such as inference and interpretation in some good lessons, especially science and mathematics. In other lessons, teachers depend too much on oral questions, which measure factual and memory, recall, which does not help the students' academic achievement enough.

Majority of teachers manage their classes appropriately with regard to providing clear instructions and achieving lesson objectives. However, time management is often inadequate, resulting in students not finishing their tasks on time. This affects the lessons' effectiveness and leads to limited support and backup for the different categories of students, particularly students with low achievement; despite the various verbal and material encouragement techniques.

Students are assigned an adequate amount of activities and homework in the majority of lessons, which are checked and marked with motivating comments. However, differences among students are not considered enough and feedback is not given so that students know their mistakes and guide to improve their performance. This results in inconsistent rates of progress. Students are assessed in different ways in the good lessons, by oral and written assessments, as groups or individually. However, assessment methods are mainly oral in lessons, which results in a failure to meet students' individual needs adequately and the achievement of the learning objectives firmly enough.

□ How well does the implementation and enrichment of the curriculum meet the educational needs of the students?

Grade: 3 Satisfactory

The school provides an adequate range of learning experiences and implements curriculum projects where the most eminent are the talents programmes to support outstanding and talented students. Programmes for students with learning difficulties, merged students and students with speech disorders are often not effective enough in the majority of lessons; specially in satisfactory and inadequate lessons. The school offers extra-curricular activities, such as 'the child cinema' and sets up school committees, such as the 'traffic committee' and 'Humane'. It was ranked first in the 'Quran and Sunnah competition'. Curriculum implementation facilitate the majority of students' acquisition of life skills, supported by

projects such as 'my health reflects my cleanliness'. However, these projects do not reflect sufficiently on their overall personal development and behaviour.

The school analyses some curricula, such as social studies book and, prepares remedial and enriching supplements, for example 'Writing Comprehension'. It promotes linkages between knowledge and concepts across some of the core subjects. Though positive, these are inconsistent in helping to enrich the majority of students' experiences and improve their learning and acquisition of basic skills.

The school develops most students' spirit of citizenship and loyalty through participating in the morning broadcast, national activities and field trips. The school is decorated with murals and enriched with resources that support the curricula and represent Bahraini heritage. It uses some of its facilities, such as the learning resources centre; to enhance the students learning and frequently celebrates their work, which satisfactorily encourages students to learn.

□ How well are students guided and supported?

Grade: 3 Satisfactory

The school prepares new students through activities, competitions and tours, which help settle and integrate them within their classes quickly. Grade 3 students' preparation for the next educational stage is more limited, but focuses adequately on advice and guidance with preliminary training to read and answer examination questions.

Students' personal needs are met through providing appropriate financial and in-kind assistance, and support when they face problems. School broadcasts, trips and the 'Counsellor's Friends Committee' do much to modify students' behaviour, though with inconsistent results.

The school diagnoses educational needs and uses these findings to provide well support for students in the merged class and those with learning or speech and language difficulties. It provides programmes for talented students through extra-curricular activities, largely provided by teachers and the learning resources centre specialist, due to the lack of a specialist teacher for these students. However, support for students with low achievement is restricted to individual initiatives by teachers to offer the necessary remedial programmes, but these are generally not as effective as they might be and do not achieve expected progress.

Safety and health risks are assessed regularly, and take care in to eliminate any hazards and train them for safe evacuation. The school nurse provides awareness raising lectures and

healthcare in order to provide students with a healthy, safe environment. The school keeps parents informed of their children's academic performance and progress.

Leadership, management and governance

- How effective are leadership, management and governance in promoting high achievement, strong personal development and school improvement?**

Grade: 3 Satisfactory

The school has a shared vision and mission that is focused on raising a creative, distinctive and responsible generation. The vision was transformed into general objectives within the strategic plan from which emerged the school's operational plan, according to the school's strengths and those areas that needed changes. However, follow up mechanisms were not accurate and comprehensive enough. The school conducts self-assessment for most events and practices through questionnaires and reports and analyses them systematically, but consequent actions are inconsistent, as reflected in the school's general activities and practices.

The administration leads the faculty and provides staff with support and motivation through adopting relevant educational initiatives and projects, such as the 'Young Calligrapher' for Grade 2, Such projects promote the majority of teachers with positive motivation and enthusiasm to develop and carry on these aspects of learning. Moreover, the school delegates significant tasks to more junior levels, for example the administrative supervisor was delegated some of the assistant principal's authorities related to substitute lessons, which resulted in ensuring the continuance of the school's routine work.

The school has made sure to identify teachers' training needs, especially new teachers, through classroom and exchange visits especially for the new ones. Needs have been met through internal and external workshops such as the 'Higher Order Thinking Skills' and 'Using Effective Teaching and Learning Strategies' workshops. These have had an adequate impact on teachers' performance, because of differences and inconsistencies in applying these strategies across lessons.

The school uses its facilities and educational resources adequately, such as the gymnasium for morning assembly and setting up a screen to create space to play sporting activities. These have occurred in response to the students' suggestion. The school also sought the

opinions of parents, through questionnaires and the parents' council, with regard to students' behavioural problems, and reached an agreement with them on disciplinary measures.

The school collaborates with the local community through organising workshops in cooperation with schools, the Diabetes Health Centre, the Traffic Department and the community service departments at the Ministry of Education. Events include lectures such as 'The Family's Role in Raising Healthy Children', which have helped enrich the students' educational experiences in a relevant and appropriate manner.

The school's main strengths

- Students' discipline and punctual attendance to school
- The progress achieved by students with learning difficulties, merged students and those with speech and language difficulties.

Recommendations

In order to improve, the school should:

- raise students' academic achievement through better teaching and learning processes in a manner that includes:
 - using assessment and its findings to meet the different needs of students
 - developing students' basic skills in core subjects
 - providing support for low achieving students
 - using time management more effectively in the classroom.
- reinforcing positive behaviour through modification programmes and measuring their impact on students' personal development
- measuring the impact of professional development programmes on teachers' performance in lessons to ensure desired change and improvement
- meeting the shortage in human resources, represented in an assistant principal, a senior English teacher and a specialist teacher for outstanding and talented students.