



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

Schools Review Unit

Review Report

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

Date Reviewed: 19-21 October 2009

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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 as 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 student

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 work, analysed the school's performance data and other documents, and talked with staff, students and parents. This report summarises their findings and recommendations.

Information about the school

Gender of students: Girls

Number of students: 900

Age range: 16 -18 years

Characteristics of the school

Hamad Town Secondary Girls School, founded in 1991, is a school in the Northern Governorate. The age range in the school is from 16 to 18 years. There are 900 students in the school, mainly from limited-income families, and they enjoy social stability. The students are distributed among 27 classes: 6 first level classes, 16 second level classes and 5 third level classes. The school classified 127 students as gifted and 12 as having physical disabilities. The Principal is running the school for the third year. The administrative and teaching staff number 100. The school is short of technical staff in the areas of registration and data entry; the electronics specialist is newly appointed. The school is part of King Hamad's Schools of the Future Project for e-learning.

Overall effectiveness

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

Grade: 4 (Inadequate)

The performance of Hamad Town Secondary Girls School is inadequate, although students and their parents are generally satisfied with the school.

The achievement of students is inadequate; most students do not make the progress expected of them. Teaching methods do not focus on developing students' basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics and do not take account of individuals' differences. Students' progress during lessons is not monitored sufficiently. All students work on the same written activities, which does not enrich the learning process. The achievement of groups such as high achievers, less able students or those with a disability is inadequate. These students are not given appropriate support. Results from assessments and diagnostic tests are not used sufficiently when planning lessons and monitoring students' progress.

Students' personal development is satisfactory. Most students have good attendance. There are various opportunities for students to contribute to school life but such opportunities are limited to specific groups of students. Students' enthusiasm during the lessons is linked to the effectiveness of the strategies used in good lessons, and in some of the creative enrichment programmes. Some students have good self-confidence but the school's emphasis on the development of knowledge limits some aspects of their personal development, such as working together and taking responsibility. Opportunities for developing analytical thinking skills are rare in the school. Students feel safe at school. Most students behave well and respect each other and the administrative and teaching staff. There is some inappropriate behaviour such as writing on the walls and littering the school yard during breaks.

The effectiveness of the teaching and learning processes is inadequate. The teaching process is too teacher-centred, leaving students as merely recipients of knowledge. This has affected students' progress and contributes to their poor engagement and interaction in lessons. Most lessons lack elements of excitement and challenge. Students are not given sufficient opportunities to work together and learn from each other. Insufficient focus is given to developing students' basic skills and higher thinking skills.

The curriculum provision and enrichment programmes are inadequate, although the school seeks to develop students' sense of citizenship and understanding of their rights and responsibilities. The content of the school curriculum is presented in a narrow way that leaves students unable to develop basic skills in Arabic and English and limits their progress. In addition, some of the school facilities are not utilised effectively such as the E-class and the resource centre. The classrooms and the school environment lack educational materials that could enrich and enhance the learning process.

Guidance and support for students are satisfactory. The school provides induction programmes for new students but the weak academic standard of some students and lack of proficiency in basic skills leave them insufficiently prepared for the next phase of education. The school meets students' personal needs by providing them with practical and personal support but the focus of some teachers on imparting knowledge affects the personal development of some students. The educational needs of students are not always met because of ineffective assessment methods and insufficient support during lessons.

The school responds appropriately to health and safety concerns, such as its prompt response in cutting the dangling trees near the laboratories. It takes seriously its responsibilities for the safety and security of students and staff. The school's communication with parents on their daughters' progress is irregular and insufficient.

The leadership and management of the school are inadequate. The school does not translate its vision and strategic plan clearly into practice. Its self-evaluation focused only on certain events and activities and does not sufficiently consider students' achievement or the professional performance of most teachers. The school identifies teachers' training needs and runs some training workshops to raise their professional competency. It does not, however, measure the impact of such training on teachers' performance in the classroom, especially in relation to teaching and learning strategies and raising student achievement. The motivation given by senior managers to the staff is not reflected in the performance of middle managers and some teachers, particularly with regard to improving performance in the school.

□ Does the school have the capacity to improve?

Grade: 4 (Inadequate)

The school's capacity to develop and improve is inadequate. It is not able to translate its vision into practice and there has been no tangible improvement in the school's performance in the last few years, except in the area of students' behaviour. The school's inadequate self-evaluation of its performance limits its ability to plan for raising the levels of student achievement. The school's strategic plan does not use the results of analysis, nor does it apply a scientific method to identify areas of strengths and areas for improvement. The school has not identified performance indicators in the plan and has failed to achieve its ambitious vision through the previous and existing strategic plan. Its key priorities in this regard are to work towards raising the level of academic achievement and enhancing the teaching and learning processes.

The school's main strengths and areas of developments

Main Strengths

- Attendance and punctuality
- Student behaviour and relationships
- Meeting students' personal needs

Areas for development

- Self-evaluation and strategic planning
- Use of assessment
- Range of teaching and learning strategies
- Collaborative learning and students learning from each other
- Differentiation in teaching and learning
- Higher thinking skills and challenging students
- Basic skills in Arabic and English
- The role of middle management in improving teachers' performance
- Monitoring the impact of teachers' professional programmes in lessons
- Effective use of electronic e-learning and the Learning Resources Centre

What the school needs to do to improve

In order to improve further, the school should:

- Make use of self-evaluation to develop strategic planning
- Develop teaching and learning strategies which contribute to:
 - acquiring basic skills in Arabic and English
 - Meeting students' learning needs in lessons
 - Taking account of individuals' differences
 - Developing analytical skills
 - Challenging students' abilities
 - Allowing opportunities for students to work together and learn from each other
- Make greater use of assessment in classrooms and use results to measure the level of progress and plan lessons
- Evaluate the training needs of middle management and teachers, meet them and follow up the impact of professional development programmes in classrooms.

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	3: Satisfactory
The quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning	4: Inadequate
The quality of curriculum delivery	4: Inadequate
The quality of guidance and support for students	3: Satisfactory
The quality and effectiveness of leadership and management	4: Inadequate