



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

# **Schools Review Unit**

## **Review Report**

**Ibn Al-Nafees Primary Boys School**  
**Sitra - Central Governorate**  
**Kingdom of Bahrain**

**Date of Review: 26 - 28 March 2012**

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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 national authority, attached to the Cabinet and set up under Royal Decree No. 32 of 2008, amended by the Royal Decree No. 6 of 2009. 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:

<b>Grade description</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
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

<b>School's name</b>		Ibn Al-Nafees Primary Boys											
<b>School's type</b>		Government											
<b>Year of establishment</b>		1993											
<b>Age range of students</b>		6 - 10 years											
<b>Grades (e.g. 1 to 12)</b>		<b>Primary</b>				<b>Middle</b>				<b>High</b>			
		1 - 4				-				-			
<b>Number of students</b>		<b>Boys</b>	500	<b>Girls</b>	-				<b>Total</b>	500			
<b>Students' social background</b>		Most students belong to middle-level income families											
<b>Classes per grade</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>
	<b>Classes</b>	5	4	5	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Town /Village</b>		Sitra / Wadyan											
<b>Governorate</b>		Central											
<b>Number of administrative staff</b>		7											
<b>Number of teaching staff</b>		39											
<b>Curriculum</b>		Ministry of Education (MoE)											
<b>Main language(s) of instruction</b>		Arabic											
<b>Principal's tenure</b>		Five and a half years											
<b>External assessment and examinations</b>		QAAET's national examinations											
<b>Accreditation (if applicable)</b>		-											
<b>Number of students in the following categories according to the school's classification</b>		<b>Outstanding</b>				<b>Gifted &amp; Talented</b>			<b>Physical Disabilities</b>			<b>Learning Difficulties</b>	
		138				87			6			32	
<b>Major recent changes in the school</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school joined the performance improvement programme in 2011-12</li> <li>• Providing extra wooden classrooms for Grade 4 students.</li> </ul>											

## Table of review judgements awarded

Aspect	Grade: Description			
The school's overall effectiveness	3: Satisfactory			
The school's capacity to improve	2: Good			
	Elementary / Primary	Middle / Intermediate	High / Secondary	Overall
Students' academic achievement	3	-	-	3
Students' personal development	2	-	-	2
The quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning	3	-	-	3
The quality of the curriculum implementation	2	-	-	2
The quality of support and guidance for students	2	-	-	2
The quality and effectiveness of leadership, management and governance	2	-	-	2

### Key:

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

## Review judgements

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### Overall effectiveness

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

#### **Grade: 3 Satisfactory**

The school's performance is judged similarly to that in the previous review in February 2009, mainly because of inconsistent academic achievement and teaching and learning. However, the school is good in the areas of students' personal development, support programmes, curriculum enrichment, and leadership and management. This is attributed to the accuracy of self-assessment, which informs the school leadership of the areas of strength and those needing improvement for strategic planning purposes. The school environment is conducive to learning. Students are self-confident and able to take responsibility. The school has implemented support programmes for the different groups of students, particularly for those with learning difficulties, special educational needs and the merged students. The students and their parents are satisfied with the levels of service the school provides.

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

#### **Grade: 2 Good**

The school's capacity to improve changed from 'satisfactory' in the previous review to 'good' in this one. This comes as a result of the progress the school has made in implementing its strategic plan and the action plans that are based on a comprehensive self-assessment of the school's work, and the recommendations of the previous review. This progress is reflected positively in the improvements the school has made in most areas of its work. The students and staff adhere to the school's system, which has resulted in considerable success, especially in spreading a spirit of teamwork by the higher leadership among its members. Programmes and activities are continuously seen through to completion, thus enabling the school to improve further.

## Students' achievement

### □ How well do students achieve in their academic work?

#### Grade: 3 Satisfactory

The students' attainment in the national examinations over the past three years are below the national average, and slightly below in mathematics and Arabic. Students in Grades 1, 3 and 4 achieve high pass rates ranged between 81% and 98%, while they were lower in Grade 2. Also they achieve the highest varying proficiency rates in English in Grades 1 and 2 and in mathematics in Grade 1.. The lowest rates in Arabic are in Grade 2 and in English in Grade 4. These rates reflect the students' satisfactory performance in most core subject lessons in both cycles, which account for more than half of the lessons. Satisfactory achievement is the result of variations in the effectiveness of teaching. Too little consideration of students' individual differences is given when setting activities and written work, despite this being a recommendation for improvement in the previous review report. However, most achievement in science lessons is good where students gain skills, such as classification, explanation and deduction, as a result of the effective teaching. Most students acquire good basic skills in IT. However, they are satisfactory in mathematics, reading and composition in Arabic and reading, writing and listening in English.

Over the past three years 2009-2011, students show steady improvement in their pass rates in some core subjects such as Arabic and science, while they achieved high rates of improvement in mathematics and English. However, their rates of progress dip as they transfer between classes and cycles.

Most students make progress in good lessons such as in the Arabic and science lessons. This is a result of the diversity of teaching methods used. However, their progress in the rest of the lessons is satisfactory, especially in some of the Grade 2 lessons, as a result of the lack of effective teamwork and the low proficiency level of students in some basic skills.

The students make varied progress in their written work in Arabic, science and mathematics, and their progress in English was not as expected because the activities were mostly unified for all the student groups.

The students with learning difficulties and the merged class in Arabic make noticeable progress due to the help and support they receive. However, the progress of low achieving students in most lessons and remedial lessons in mathematics and English for Grades 3 and 4 does not match their ability levels. Moreover, the abilities of outstanding students are not adequately challenged in lessons.

## □ How good is the students' personal development?

### Grade: 2 Good

Most students attend regularly and punctually as a result of effective monitoring and the awarding of appreciation certificates for students and their parents who show a good record. This contributes to students' good development and commitment to deadlines.

Most students participate enthusiastically in extra-curricular activities and contests such as the 'Arabic and mathematics train', 'photography', and 'the young teacher', and gain advanced positions. Outstanding students have opportunities to participate in the 'quick multiplication' contest, but their participation in lessons is not as good because they are not given enough opportunities of this quality.

Students take leading and responsible roles in school committees, such as the 'agriculture committee' and the 'little nurse'. The students' council organises lectures on behavioural skills and takes part in the Creative Child Forum at the Sultan Centre in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, which reflects positively in their self-confidence and contributes to developing their personalities. Most Students preserve property and show their loyalty to the school. They show respect for each other during group work and have good relations with their teachers, which help them feel safe. Only a few students show inappropriate behaviour.

A good understanding of Islamic values through prayers and reciting the Quran is evident. Students show a sense of citizenship through implementing programmes such as 'honesty' and organising events for National Day Which reflected significantly on their personal development.

## The quality of provision

### □ How effective are teaching and learning?

### Grade: 3 Satisfactory

Most teachers are familiar with their study material, which is practically demonstrated in their planning, teaching methods and questioning skills. Students take part in setting the lesson goals and teachers use various strategies such as cooperative learning, discussion, conversation, inquisition, and learning by playing in good and satisfactory lessons. These include exciting introductory activities that are supported by various educational resources such as cards, shapes, and smart boards, which contribute to increasing students'



enthusiasm and attraction to learning. Teaching contributes to their acquisition of skills, concepts and knowledge, and the improvement of their performance in the core subjects, such as IT and science skills of deduction and sorting. However, these methods are not consistently effective. In most satisfactory lessons, students' enthusiasm and motivation to learning is less good, which in turn has an impact on their acquisition of the basic skills in core subjects such as knowing the place value of digits in mathematics in Cycle 1.

Lesson management attracts students' attention. Learning goals are suitable for the time available and students' various needs. Students are given opportunities to share their thoughts and ideas with the class, thus contributing to the achievement of the goals. Teachers make sure the majority of students participate in lessons through motivating and encouraging them by various means and rewards. However, the teaching is not good because of the weak follow-up with students about their learning, especially low-achieving and outstanding students. Opportunities to develop the students' higher level thinking skills and challenge their abilities in order to enhance their mental capacities are not enough, which adversely affect their levels of progress and achievement.

Teachers use various assessment methods including written, verbal, individual and group assessment. These methods are evident in good and some satisfactory lessons, but they are limited to observation and group assessment only in others. Individual assessment to meet the students' needs is rarely used to ensure that students have actually learned what they should. The students' work is supported by giving them homework and various activities to improve their skills, which are outlined in the lesson plans and followed up by teachers by way of marking and feedback. However, much of the homework is undifferentiated and does not take into consideration students' individual differences.

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

#### **Grade: 2 Good**

The curriculum is enriched with various extra-curricular and remedial activities. These include the 'word challenge', 'children's art', 'professions in the past' and the 'creative child forum'. Students participate in external contests such as the 'young critic'. School committees, such as the computer committee and the agriculture committee, help students to learn life skills. Different groups of students are catered for, such as those having special needs. They participate in the 'I'm distinguished despite my disability' event and the outstanding and talented programmes, such as the 'distinctive chair'. These contribute to meeting students' various educational needs.

Levels of planning explain how the curriculum is arranged and enhanced. Implementation is monitored and regularly evaluated. Links between subjects are good in Grades 1 to 3 as they enable students to study a coherent curriculum. Though not as good in Grade 4, the focus is still positive on linking subjects to real life.

Students' understanding of their rights and duties and sense of citizenship are promoted in many ways. They participate in national events such as the 'We are all Hamad' festival and the 'Loyalty operetta'. Field visits to the pottery factory and Al Areen Wildlife Park and Preserve are good.

The school's efforts are evident in making its environment motivating to learning, which contributed to the enrichment of the curriculum effectively. The most prominent feature is its celebration of students' work in the classrooms and in corridors of buildings. Also various teaching aids for most subjects and attractive designs are displayed in the educational corners such as the heritage and citizenship corner.

## **□ How well are students guided and supported?**

### **Grade: 2 Good**

The school organises various programmes for new students, including two entertainment programmes, one for 'kindergarten kids' before they enrol in the school. The other is for students and their parents when the students join the school. Students in Grades 3 and 4 are introduced into the next education stage well through programmes and a visit to the Sitra Primary Boys School which is reflected in their stability at the current stage, and ease their following education.

The school regularly meets the students' personal needs by providing financial and medical assistance for students with disabilities. The students' educational needs are diagnosed using tests and the findings are used to provide effective academic and personal support. While the support in remedial lessons is to a lesser extent. Support given to outstanding, low achieving and merge class students is evident in contests and projects, such as the 'little calligrapher' and the 'little chef', but support in class is not as good. The social and guidance services provide students with support when they faced problems by providing educational programmes lectures and using influential behavioural programmes.

Parents are informed about their children's progress by various means, which parents appreciate.

The school environment is healthy and safe. The school won the bronze and silver medals for health and safety. Evacuation drills, and all health and safety issues, such the expiry of fire extinguishers, are monitored regularly.

## Leadership, management and governance

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

### Grade: 2 Good

The school has a vision and mission that focus on improvement and achievement. They have been jointly created, and accordingly an accurate three-year strategic plan and clear, action plans have been developed, which include success measures. These measures are based on the recommendations of the previous review and the comprehensive self-assessment of the 'Distinct Bahraini School' project. This planning and action have an impact on most of the school's practices, especially concerning personal development and support and guidance programmes. It also reflects but less so in the students' satisfactory academic achievement and in the teaching and learning processes.

The senior leadership inspires its administrative and teaching staff through motivation, financial incentives and strengthening social relations among them. Development and change is encouraged, which is evident in teachers' performance in good lessons, but less so in others. Delegation is effective, with some of the teaching and administrative tasks distributed to cover the shortage in human resources, such as senior teachers and an administrative and financial specialist. This enables the school's work to continue to flow smoothly.

Teachers' performance is monitored using a new system that is based on clear criteria to evaluate and improve their performance. This is done by performing class visits and organising workshops, both internally and externally. Topics have included the development of higher level thinking skills and evaluation to meet teachers' needs and raise their professional competency. The school uses its resources and educational facilities well to assist the educational process. This includes using the design and technology class, the learning resources centre and the science laboratory.

The school responds to the views and suggestions of parents through the parents' council, such as making use of substitute lessons and adding shading to the school yards. It responds similarly to the students' suggestions through the students' council, and the students appreciate this. Communication with some of the social society institutes, such as the health centre, the Qadisiyah School, and the Ahliyah Society is good and these connections enrich the students' experiences. The school board and the support committee ensure good implementation of plans. The school works with the improvement partner well, by means of discussion and observation sessions related to judging the impact of implemented programmes and determining leadership actions based on the results.

## **The school's main strengths**

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- The students' contribution to programmes and extra-curricular activities, their preservation of school property and their respect for one another
- The enrichment of the school environment to support the curriculum and promote citizenship
- The induction programmes which contribute to students' stability at school and the support programmes for the students with learning difficulties and merged students
- The effectiveness of self-assessment and its use in strategic and action planning.

## Recommendations

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

- raise students' academic achievement and develop their basic skills, especially in Arabic, English and mathematics
- develop teaching and learning strategies to include:
  - the use of various kinds of assessment, especially in individual assessment and using its findings in lesson planning to meet students' needs
  - the development of higher level thinking skills and challenging students' abilities according to their different levels
  - considering individual differences among students in lessons, especially outstanding and low achieving students.
- monitor more closely the impact of professional development programmes on improving teaching and learning.