



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

Schools Review Unit Review Report

**Ibn Sina Primary Boys School
Hamad Town - Southern Governorate
Kingdom of Bahrain**

Date Reviewed: 16-18 November 2009

Table of Contents

The Schools Review Unit.....	1
Introduction	2
Characteristics of the school.....	2
Overall effectiveness	3
The capacity to improve	5
The school’s main strengths and areas for development.....	6
What the school needs to do to improve	7
Overall judgements.....	8

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 five 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: 656

Age range: 9-12 years

Characteristics of the school

Ibn Sina Primary Boys School is one of the northern governorate schools. It was founded in 1966 in Manama, and was moved to its current location in 1985. It has 656 students on roll, aged between 9 and 12 years. Most of them come from limited income families. The school has 25 classes, all of which are in the second cycle; 5 classes in grade four, 6 in grade five, and 14 classes in grade six. The school classifies 3% of its students with learning difficulties, 12% high attainers, 14% gifted and talented, and two students with physical disabilities.

The number of teachers is 71, eight of which are substitutes, and 15 administrative and supporting staff. This is the second year for the Principal. The school has no senior English teacher or a special education needs specialist. It is one of the schools implementing King Hamad's project for Future Schools. It has an outdoor class (open class).

Overall effectiveness

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

Grade: 3 (Satisfactory)

The overall effectiveness of Ibn Sina Primary Boys School is satisfactory, with strengths in personal development, support and guidance, and leadership and management. Students and their parents are satisfied with the school.

Students' academic achievement is satisfactory. Most students achieve high pass rates in school examinations, and achieve the expected standards in the good and outstanding lessons, which is just below half of the lessons observed. Students of all abilities make good progress because of the special programmes offered by the school. However, their progress in classes varies because activities do not consistently match their learning needs. The special education needs students, despite the absence of a specialist, display good progress as a result of the school's initiative of allocating a teacher for providing the needed support.

Students' personal development is good. The great majority of students attend regularly and punctually. They contribute effectively and enthusiastically in extra-curricular activities, sports and competitions. They were distinguished in the Mathematics Olympics. Students work together effectively in lessons, and take leadership roles and responsibility when they are given the chance, which reflects positively on their self-confidence. They behave well and responsibly due to the school's monitoring. They have good relationships with each other and with their teachers. However, developing the capacity to work independently and higher-level thinking skills varies among students.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Class management by teachers is good. They make sure that most students are participating in lessons by using appealing strategies like: learning through play and role play. In addition, they employ suitable encouraging methods. The discussion and dialogue method is used inconsistently in most lessons. On the one hand, some teachers use it effectively to challenge students' abilities, which reflects positively on the development of their higher-order thinking skills. On the other hand, other teachers use it only to recall previous information, which limits its effectiveness. Assessment is used to measure what students have learned. However, assessment information is not sufficiently used to plan learning and monitor progress. Differentiated teaching is used inconsistently to meet students' learning needs.

Curriculum presentation and enrichment programmes are satisfactory. The development of students' understanding of rights and responsibilities is good. This is done by developing citizenship, and taking part in the Student's Council. The school achieved second place in the Mathematics Olympics, which it has organised for 10 years with other parties. However, the school does not have enough mechanisms to provide for the various interests of all students. The environment is well used to enrich the curriculum, especially the "open class" in the schools' garden, which has a significant effect on students' performance in those classes. Basic skills in reading are better developed in English and Arabic than in writing. Links between subjects are inadequate.

Support and guidance programmes are good. Personal needs are met by providing some material assistance. Learning needs are met through the support programmes and remedial classes, which help low attainers. The school's administration plays an integral role in monitoring students and providing advice and guidance to them; which is reflected on students' good behaviour. Parents are informed about their children's progress using many methods, such as open day, and SMS messages. The school provides satisfactory induction programmes to new students in grade 4. However, it is not enough for new students in grade 6, as well as for those moving to the intermediate stage. The school ensures that all staff work in a safe environment through suitable safety measures, but the nature of the land on which the school is built is sloped, which increases the risk of accidents.

Leadership and management are good. The school has a shared vision that focuses on achievement. In addition, the school has a comprehensive self-evaluation that makes it aware of its strengths and areas for improvement. It is used in the annual plan for the current year to achieve the strategic goals, the impact of which is reflected in the good lessons. However, monitoring the effects of strategic planning on students' achievements and measuring the effect of professional development programmes are not effective enough. The schools' administration inspires and motivates its members, which is reflected in their initiatives, such as the "merged strategy"; a mix of two methods: problem solving and collaborative work which is effective in engaging students in lessons. The school uses most of its resources effectively. It has an acute shortage in technological resources, which negatively affects the development of students' technical skills.

□ Does the school have the capacity to improve?

Grade: 2 (Good)

The capacity to improve is good. The most important recent improvements are represented in the focus on behavioural values among students and improvements in the school environment to become motivated for learning. In addition, there is a focus on improving relations with staff, which brought about some initiatives such as: the “merged Strategy”, which is a mix of two methods: problem solving and collaborative work, which is effective in engaging students in lessons.

The school has a comprehensive self-evaluation which makes it aware of its strengths and areas for development. This is used to achieve the school’s strategic goals which have a success in personal development as a result of the support and guidance programmes. Moreover, the effectiveness of the good leadership and management places the school on the right track for improving performance after going through a period of administration instability, as the school had three principals in the past three years.

The greatest challenges, yet, that the school faces in the next stage are developing effective, diverse methods of teaching and learning, in addition to monitoring the effect of school programmes in order to achieve the strategic goals.

The school's main strengths and areas for development

Main Strengths

- School examinations
- Personal development of students
- Achieving advanced positions in competitions
- Support and guidance programmes
- Students' understanding of rights and responsibilities
- Leadership and management
- Class management

Areas for development

- Methods of teaching and learning
- Use of assessment information
- Academic progress of students of all abilities
- Basic skills in Arabic and English languages
- Independent learning and higher-level thinking skills throughout the school
- Mechanisms to be put in place to measure the impact of the strategic plan.

What the school needs to do to improve

In order to improve further, the school should:

- Developing effective, diverse methods of teaching and learning , so as to:
 - Benefit from the best practices in school
 - Match them with students' learning needs more effectively in lessons
 - Use of assessment information to plan for learning and monitor progress
 - Develop independent learning and higher level thinking skills
 - Develop basic skills, especially writing skills in Arabic and English
- Monitoring school programmes more accurately, and measuring its impact on improving students' achievement
- Enhancing resources which have shortages related to technology and human resources, particularly senior teachers, a special education needs specialist and keeping top management of the school long enough to ensure steady improvements and development.

Overall judgements

Aspect	Grade: Description
The school's overall effectiveness	3: Satisfactory
The school's capacity to improve	2: Good
Students' academic achievement	3: Satisfactory
Students' progress in their personal development	2: Good
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	2: Good
The quality and effectiveness of leadership and management	2: Good