



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

Schools Review Unit

Review Report

Al-Imam Ali Primary-Intermediate Boys School
Al Ma'meer - Central Governorate,
Kingdom of Bahrain

Date Reviewed: 11- 13 January 2010

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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 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: 442

Age range: 6 -15 years

Characteristics of the school

Al-Imam Ali Primary-Intermediate Boys School, located in Al-Ma'meer village, is one of the Central Governorate schools. It was established in 1989. The students range in age from 6 to 15 years. There are 442 students, distributed across 17 classes: four classes for the first cycle, three for the second cycle and 10 for the intermediate stage, as well as a class for students with special needs. Most students come from middle-income backgrounds. The school categorises 38 students as outstanding, 37 as gifted and 25 as students with learning difficulties. The Principal is in his first academic year in the school. There are eight administrative staff and 47 teachers, of whom four are new teachers. The school has no learning resource centre specialist and lacks senior teachers for class teaching, English and mathematics. The school is part of King Hamad's Schools of the Future project.

Overall effectiveness

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

Grade: 3 (Satisfactory)

The overall effectiveness of Al-Imam Ali Primary Intermediate Boys School is satisfactory and it has good aspects in the quality of leadership and management, students' personal development, the provision and enrichment of the curriculum and the quality of support and guidance given to students. Parents and students are very satisfied with the school.

The students' level of academic achievement is satisfactory. First cycle students achieve high success rates in school examinations that are in line with their proficiency rates in basic subjects; these high levels are, however, inconsistent with performance and attainment in lessons. The students' performance and proficiency are low in the second and third cycles, particularly in Mathematics. Students have a weak grasp of basic skills in English language. Teaching methods do not take students' individual differences into account. Homework activities and assignments are not matched to students' abilities and are given at the same level for all students in some lessons. Students do not make progress appropriate to their abilities except in good and outstanding lessons. The programmes developed for students with special needs are outstanding and help them make good progress. Programmes and activities for the talented and outstanding students are not up to the same standard.

Students' personal development is good. Most students are punctual, although a very few students arrive late to morning assembly. The school keeps accurate computerized records of such cases, takes the necessary steps and notifies parents appropriately. The school makes good use of student permission cards to reduce lateness and absences. Most students effectively and enthusiastically take part in the school's activities and programmes, which enhances their self-confidence and their good awareness of their responsibilities to the school. Students take on appropriate leadership roles such as the management of the Scout committee and the discipline committee when the school managers are busy. The atmosphere in the school is secure, caring and respectful, and this is positively reflected in students' performance in outstanding and good lessons and in some satisfactory lessons. Students' analytical thinking skills are also promoted, but these skills are insufficiently developed in the classroom due to teaching methods.

The effectiveness of teaching and learning processes is satisfactory. Although most teachers show good subject knowledge and possess lesson plans, their presentation of lessons is variable. Some teachers use varied teaching strategies that develop students' higher thinking skills and their abilities of expression and creativity, motivating students to learn,

particularly in the first cycle and in Arabic lessons. In some lessons, however, teaching methods fail to attract students' interest and motivation and do not challenge their mental abilities; this has a negative impact on students' acquisition of skills and understanding in some subjects, particularly English language. Some teachers use assessment methods that measure only lower thinking skills and they give the same homework activities without taking students' individual differences into account. These practices hold back students' progress and performance, except in outstanding and good lessons and in some satisfactory lessons.

The provision and enrichment of the curriculum is good. Students' understanding of their rights and duties are developed mutually between the school and students. The school develops students' sense of citizenship well through internal events, some field visits, posting displays and murals and encouraging their involvement in national events. The school is proud of its students' handiwork and celebrates their achievements by using work they produce during extra-curricular activities to enrich the school environment; this motivates students to respect their surroundings. Some teachers rely too heavily on textbooks in presenting lessons and on the use of dictation as a teaching method. These practices limit some students' experiences and negatively affect their acquisition of basic skills, particularly in English language.

The quality of support and guidance given to students is good. Good induction programmes are organized when students initially join the school and when they move to secondary school. Work to prepare students moving to the second and third cycles in the school itself, however, is limited to giving some guidelines and direction and is only satisfactory. The school ensures that a safe and healthy learning environment is provided for students, based on training, control and guidance. It also keeps parents appropriately informed about the academic and personal progress of their sons. The school identifies and meets students' educational needs with adequate support to all students regardless of their educational levels, particularly in outstanding and good lessons, and the provision of outstanding support to students with special needs in special lessons allotted to them. The school's support to students in some satisfactory and inadequate lessons was not adequate, especially in English lessons.

The effectiveness of leadership and management is good. The school's entire teaching and administrative staff took part in phrasing its vision and mission statement, the results of which can be clearly seen in the learning environment, some teachers' performance and students' discipline. The school also conducts comprehensive self-evaluation. It uses situational, qualitative and quantitative analysis and makes use of them to draw up strategic and action plans, the aims of which are integrated in most work areas. The senior management spreads its knowledge of quality management through the school, encourages its staff to improve their performance, motivates them towards positive change and seeks to raise teachers' professional competency by organizing educational program, workshops and peer visits. The good performance of some staff members reflects the school's work and

commitment in this area. The school management also distributes tasks and delegates powers well. It also uses its resources and facilities well; most of the school's projects and programs are computer-based to meet the needs of its staff. Students and parents are pleased with the school.

□ Does the school have the capacity to improve?

Grade: 2 (Good)

The school has a good capacity to develop and improve. Its senior management is keen to develop different aspects of the school's work. The senior managers are supported by competent, experienced and diligent administrative and teaching staff who worked together to phrase the school's vision and mission statement. The school's vision and mission are reflected in the departmental action plans and have helped bring about a number of improvements in the school. For example, the school environment is more attractive to learning; respect for rules and regulations has been enhanced; everyone's opinions are treated with respect; citizenship rules have been established; and creativity is applied, as shown by most of the school's work and procedures being computer-based.

The school is working hard to achieve the objectives of the school's new strategic plan, which is based on its self-evaluation results. The plan focuses appropriately on improving students' academic achievement, raising teachers' professional competency and achieving discipline in the school. The school has shortages in human resources, such as a learning resource centre specialist and senior teachers for class teaching, English and Mathematics.

The school's main strengths and areas for development

Main Strengths

- Leadership and management
- Self-evaluation
- Dissemination of the culture of change in the school
- Supporting students with special needs
- Safety and health measures
- Giving leadership roles to students
- Developing citizenship and students' understanding of their rights and duties.

Areas for development

- Basic skills in English
- Differentiation in teaching and learning
- Analytical thinking skills
- Challenging students' abilities
- Use of assessment.

What the school needs to do to improve

In order to improve further, the school should:

- Develop effective teaching and learning strategies that take the following into account:
 - Improving students' basic skills, particularly in English
 - Taking individual differences into account
 - Developing students' analytical thinking skills
 - Challenging students' abilities
 - Using outstanding and experienced teachers.

- Use of assessment results to diagnose and meet students' learning needs

- Stabilize the current school's management to continue the planned development and fill the following staff vacancies:
 - Learning resource centre specialist
 - Senior teachers for the following subjects:
 - English
 - Mathematics
 - Class teaching.

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	2: Good
The quality of guidance and support for students	2: Good
The quality and effectiveness of leadership and management	2: Good