



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

Schools Review Unit Review Report

**Isa Town Intermediate Boys School
Isa Town - Central Governorate
Kingdom of Bahrain**

Date Reviewed: 22-24 March 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 eight 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: 768

Age range: 13-15 years

Characteristics of the school

Isa Town Intermediate Boys School is a Central Governorate school. The age range in the school is from 13 to 15 years, and there are 768 students. Most students come from middle-income families. Students are distributed across 27 classes: 10 classes for the first intermediate grade, 9 for the second and 8 for the third. The school categorised 30 of its students as talented and creative, 38 as outstanding, 30 as students with special educational needs and one student has a visual impairment. The Principal is in his second year at the school. There are 63 teaching staff. The school is one of the schools implementing the second stage 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 Isa Town Intermediate Boys School is satisfactory. Students and their parents are satisfied with the school.

Students' academic achievement is satisfactory. Students achieve varying pass rates in core subjects, while their proficiency rates are low, especially for the third intermediate grade students. Their academic standards also varied in lessons and written activities. Teaching methods do not take into consideration students' abilities. Students show weak skills in core subjects such as Arabic and English. Students' results over the past three years show that they made progress when they moved to the second intermediate grade but their pass rates decreased when they moved to the third intermediate grade. Some students achieve levels appropriate to their abilities: talented and outstanding students, for example, are given opportunities to participate in internal and external competitions and the special educational needs specialist gives appropriate support to lower-achieving students

The students' personal development is satisfactory. Most students attend school regularly and punctually. Students also take part enthusiastically in some extra-curricular activities and school committees, which helps to reinforce their self-confidence and ability to take responsibility. Their contribution in lessons, however, was variable: not all students were given opportunities to participate effectively and take on leadership roles, which reflected on their development of personal skills. Students generally show appropriate awareness at school. The school monitors any undesirable behaviour and takes firm measures to limit it. Students feel safe in the school.

The quality of the learning and teaching processes is satisfactory. Most teachers have appropriate subject knowledge but their performance in observed lessons varied. In good lessons, teachers demonstrated effective class management, used various educational strategies and made sure the students were at the centre of the educational process. In addition, they used varied assessment methods, which had a clear effect on students' progress and their acquisition of basic skills, concepts and knowledge. In most lessons, however, the teacher was at the centre of the educational process and the students' role was limited to answering questions that did not represent a challenge to their abilities or take their individual differences sufficiently into account; in such lessons students made variable progress. Students are given the opportunity to work together, although this was not used effectively in terms of allocating clear roles and tasks for each student. Students are given

homework, but most of it is the same for all students and does not consider their different abilities.

The quality of curriculum enrichment and delivery is satisfactory. The curriculum is enriched by means of extra-curricular activities that increase students' experiences and enhance their various abilities; most of these activities, however, are limited to a group of students. The school seeks to develop students' understanding of their rights and duties and reinforce citizenship through school committees, morning broadcasts and by celebrating some national and social events. The school also decorates some school facilities with murals and cultural designs and displays pamphlets regarding students' rights and duties, which has helped to increase students' awareness of the school environment. The school's reinforcement of citizenship in the classroom environment was not effective. Students' proficiency in basic skills varied across subjects; their levels were adequate in Mathematics and Information Technology (IT) but were inadequate in some aspects of Arabic and English.

The quality of guidance and support for students is satisfactory. New students are adequately inducted when joining the school. The school also sets up visits to secondary schools and gives talks to students to prepare them for the next educational stages. Students' needs are identified and met according to the school's capacity. The special educational needs specialist provides support for some students, but support in lessons was variable and was insufficient overall, especially for lower-achieving and outstanding students. The school has made great efforts to identify behavioural problems and deal with them effectively, which has had a clear effect on limiting undesirable behaviour compared to previous years. The school uses several methods to communicate with parents, which parents appreciate. The school, through the efforts of its health and safety committee, provides a healthy and safe environment for staff and students, although there are some issues regarding the cleanliness of toilets.

The quality of management and leadership is satisfactory. The school has a vision and mission that have been drafted with the participation of most of the school's staff, parents and students and with which most of them are very familiar. The school has a strategic plan covering three years. The goals of the plan were identified by analysing the school's situation, but the translation of these goals into practice in lessons was variable. A self-evaluation committee monitors the school's work and prepares research related to developing it. This has contributed to improving some aspects of the school's performance. The evaluation findings have not been used to set suitable plans to raise students' academic achievement. The school works on the basis of shared decision-making, which contributes to creating a family atmosphere among its staff that helps improve performance. The school identifies the training needs of its staff and meets them, although these efforts were not reflected in the performance of some teachers. Educational resources were not used

consistently in lessons. The school gets parents and students involved in school life and responds to their suggestions when it can, which is reflected in their satisfaction with the school.

□ Does the school have the capacity to improve?

Grade: 3 (Satisfactory)

The school's capacity to develop and improve is satisfactory. The school has a strategic plan based on a comprehensive evaluation of all aspects of the school's work. The school's evaluation of its own position agreed with the evaluation of the Review team in most aspects. The effect of the school's planning can be seen in improvements such as students' rising levels of academic achievement in some subjects; the clear enhancement of students' behaviour and personal development; the development of the school environment; and the involvement of parents and their participation in school life. Falling pass rates and proficiency levels in some subjects and the variable students' performance in lessons, however, pose significant challenges for the school.

The school's main strengths and areas for development

Main Strengths

- Regular attendance
- Students' behaviour
- Meeting students' personal needs
- Inspiring and motivating school staff
- Involvement of students and their parents in school life.

Areas for development

- Using the findings of self-evaluation
- Planning to consider individual differences in lessons and homework
- Developing students' higher thinking skills and challenging their abilities
- Basic skills in Arabic and English
- Cooperative work
- Supporting different groups of students.

What the school needs to do to improve

In order to improve further, the school should:

- Use the findings of self-evaluation to set suitable plans to raise students' academic achievement.
- Develop teaching and learning strategies to include:
 - Raising students' proficiency in the basic skills of Arabic and English
 - Developing higher thinking skills
 - Challenging students' abilities
 - Using cooperative work
 - Considering individual differences in lessons and homework
 - Using the findings of self-evaluation for educational planning.
- Implement a comprehensive, effective policy to support different groups of students.

Overall judgements

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