



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

Schools Review Unit Review Report

**Khawla Secondary Girls School
Al Manama - Capital Governorate
Kingdom of Bahrain**

Date of Review: 23-25 April 2012

Table of Contents

The Schools Review Unit	1
Introduction	2
Characteristics of the school	2
Table of review judgements awarded.....	3
Review judgements	4
Overall effectiveness.....	4
Students' achievement.....	5
The quality of provision.....	6
Leadership, management and governance	8
The school's main strengths.....	10
Recommendations.....	11

The Schools Review Unit

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:

Grade description	Interpretation
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 ten 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

School's name		Khawla Secondary Girls School											
School's type		Government											
Year of establishment		1982											
Age range of students		16-18 years											
Grades (e.g. 1 to 12)		Primary				Middle				High			
		-				-				24			
Number of students		Boys	-	Girls	699				Total	699			
Students' social background		Most students belong to above-average income and social levels											
Classes per grade	Grade	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
	Classes	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	10	10
Town /Village		Al Manama											
Governorate		Capital											
Number of administrative staff		28											
Number of teaching staff		98											
Curriculum		Ministry of Education (MoE)											
Main language(s) of instruction		Arabic											
Principal's tenure		Two years											
External assessment and examinations		MoE examinations											
Accreditation (if applicable)		-											
Number of students in the following categories according to the school's classification		Outstanding			Gifted & Talented			Physical Disabilities			Learning Difficulties		
		240			110			-			5		
Major recent changes in the school		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appointing 28 new teachers and 13 transferred in the current academic year, 2011-12 Implementing school improvement projects such as the Performance Management System (PMS) for the fourth year successively. 											

Table of review judgements awarded

Aspect	Grade: Description			
The school's overall effectiveness	1: Outstanding			
The school's capacity to improve	1: Outstanding			
	Elementary / Primary	Middle / Intermediate	High / Secondary	Overall
Students' academic achievement	-	-	1	1
Students' personal development	-	-	1	1
The quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning	-	-	1	1
The quality of the curriculum implementation	-	-	1	1
The quality of support and guidance for students	-	-	1	1
The quality and effectiveness of leadership, management and governance	-	-	1	1

Key:

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

Review judgements

Overall effectiveness

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

Grade: 1 Outstanding

The school's overall performance changed from being judged good in the previous review in March 2009 to outstanding in this one. It is judged outstanding in all aspects as students attain very high levels in the MoE examinations and first place among the other secondary schools in Bahrain. They achieve rates that are well above average in all core subjects. They show high self-confidence and the ability to take on responsibility, in addition to the good relationships among them. Teaching activities are varied, which contribute to enhancing the students' mental capacities and experience. The school has adopted a shared decision-making approach, working with a good team spirit and effectively using the middle leadership roles in achieving the school's priorities. This is reflected in the excellent approval of students and their parents.

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

Grade: 1 Outstanding

The school's capacity to improve changed from being judged good in the previous review to outstanding in this review. It has maintained its first position in the general examinations among the secondary schools in the Kingdom over the past five years and outstanding students have received many scholarships. The school's senior leadership is ambitious and constantly gives attention to improving all educational practices including its strategic planning. Maintenance of this high level of performance reflects its effective efforts in implementing its strategic plan, which is based on an accurate self-evaluation of the school's position. The self-assessment is based on the school's priorities on areas needing development, which noticeably reflects upon the students' outstanding academic achievement and personal development.

Students' achievement

□ How well do students achieve in their academic work?

Grade: 1 Outstanding

The students attained high pass rates in the MoE examinations in all the core subjects in the three tracks, in which the pass rates were 92.8%, 98.2% and 92.8%, respectively. The school ranked first place in the general examinations among the secondary schools in Bahrain. Additionally, the students achieve rates that are well above average among Bahraini schools in core subjects, especially in English. The students' proficiency rates are commensurate with their high pass rates in most core subjects, such as mathematics, chemistry and biology in the scientific track, commercial track subjects and the common courses of English and IT. These rates are reflected in the students' achievement in most lessons and in their written work. This is a result of the effective teaching and class activities that challenge the students' different abilities.

Students attained high pass rates over the past seven semesters in core subjects, such as Arabic, English, and mathematics, in addition to the specialised scientific and commercial subjects in all levels. Students make very good progress in most lessons due to the effective teaching and learning strategies used, especially in English in Grade 12 and mathematics and science in the scientific track. They make similar progress in written work due to its variety and teachers' consideration of students' individual differences.

The majority of students master basic skills. For example in Arabic and English in the three grade levels, IT skills in the design programmes using Visual Basic; calculus in Grade 11 in the commercial track, geometric applications of integration in the scientific track, deduction, sorting, and scientific experimentation in science and skills in commercial courses such as human resource management and communication skills.

The majority of students make significant progress using their skills. This is attributed to the effective support students received from the various creativity and enrichment programmes such as the 'Bahrain Achievement' and 'I Earn' programmes. Low achieving students make good progress in the effective intensive programmes, which contribute to their acquisition of basic skills.

□ How good is the students' personal development?

Grade: 1 Outstanding

The students are enthusiastic and motivated to learn as they compete with each other under the motto 'Khawla in the lead'. They show ability to express themselves and their opinions and to take initiative in lessons and in several school events and programmes. They have high self-confidence, the ability to work independently and to take leading roles, such as in morning broadcast programmes, when they use their public speaking and language skills. They practise reading poetry and participate in several school committees and activities, such as the talent committee, the students' council, the guide committee and creativity centres under the 'Globe' programme. A high sense of awareness and respect for all the school members is visible. This is attributed to their abidance to good values and positive behaviours, promoted by the school via projects such as 'Guidance Week' and 'My Little Project', which contribute to making students feel safe. Moreover, they follow school rules and regulations which promote their loyalty and punctual attendance to school and lessons.

The community service students are inspired by the Bahraini national flag as a base for the formal uniform worn during volunteer work. This contributes to promoting a spirit of citizenship. The students wear traditional costume, read popular aphorisms and sing popular traditional songs, which reflects and instils Bahraini culture and identity.

The quality of provision

□ How effective are teaching and learning?

Grade: 1 Outstanding

Teachers have excellent subject knowledge and are familiar with their study material, which is reflected in effective teaching and learning well suited to students' different levels of ability, especially the outstanding and able students who account for more than half of the student population. The majority of teachers use strategies such as debate and discussion in Arabic and English lessons, learning by questioning, enquiry, and brainstorming in mathematics, and learning through discovery in science. Students are given many opportunities to learn from each other during cooperative learning activities. The teachers also include strategies that attract students into their learning, such as using ice-breaker activities and competitions, and effective learning resources, such as scientific apparatus, data shows and educational movies. These contribute to broadening the students' experiences, extend their knowledge and concepts and develop many skills such as reading, writing and speaking in Arabic and English by Grade 12.

Lesson management is well organised and purposeful, which enables the majority of students to achieve their lesson goals, as the lessons are invariably effective and productive. The teachers motivate students to learn using imaginative methods and students' abilities are challenged in most lessons by activities that develop students' higher level thinking skills such as analysis, evaluation, combination, explanation and use of conceptual maps.

Students are given activities and homework, both written and computerised, where teachers have considered students' individual differences and levels. The students' levels at the school are categorised into bronze, silver and gold. The activities and homework are regularly corrected and followed up with students through effective feedback. The 'My steps toward distinction' poster help students to know their strengths and where they need to improve, so the majority of students are able to make excellent progress.

Teachers used various assessment methods effectively. These include verbal and written assessments carried out in groups and individually. Formative tests and assessment through the application of skills and observation and checking while giving students feedback, reflect the success of evaluating students' achievement of the lesson goals.

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

Grade: 1 Outstanding

The school provides various programmes and activities which support the curriculum and enrich students' experiences, such as 'Bahrain's Achievement' and creativity centres that offer public speaking, Quran recitation, painting, acting and poetry. Other events are organised, such as the science fair and the 'Talents in English' contest.

The students' understanding of their rights and duties is promoted by implementing programmes that aim to promote a sense of citizenship. This is aided by direct contact with the students themselves and the elected Students' Council. Participating in national events such as the National Day and popular games and making field visits to ancient Bahraini sites promote cultural understanding.

The school uses its educational environment well to enrich the curriculum. This is done through educational boards, paintings, and by celebrating students' work and projects in a motivating way. Demonstrations for students during lessons, breaktimes and the morning broadcast programme positively contribute to the quality of the educational process and students' self-confidence.

The curriculum is regularly reviewed, especially new sections, and teachers' observations are referred to the concerned groups. Students are provided with notes and summaries that complement study materials. Links across the various subjects develop knowledge, concepts and generic skills effectively for the students' next stage of education or employment.

□ How well are students guided and supported?

Grade: 1 Outstanding

Students settle well as a result of effective induction programmes. They are introduced to the facilities and rules, and are given a portfolio to familiarise them with the available educational tracks. They join committees and tracks according to their abilities and interests. Induction programmes for university and employment vary as students are provided with activities such as community service, field visits and application conditions for universities to help them. Vocational institutions are visited so that students become familiar with the requirements of the labour market.

The school accurately identifies and meets students' needs through financial and in-kind aid. Diagnostic and formative tests are used in identifying students' educational needs and to set remedial plans for low achieving students. Outstanding and talented students receive support through creativity centres and student committees. Contests are held both locally and internationally, and students win top positions, as in the 'Mathematics Olympiad'.

Guidance and support through preventive programmes contribute to limiting behavioural problems. These include programmes such as 'Our Values in Khawla' and 'Good Friendship'. The students enjoyed good treatment from all the school members and especially their teachers.

Parents are well informed of their daughters' academic and personal progress. The school provides a safe and healthy environment by closely monitoring and regularly maintaining its facilities. The students were also trained on first-aid and evacuation.

Leadership, management and governance

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

Grade: 1 Outstanding

The school has a vision that focuses on the development of teaching and learning processes and achievement of distinctive educational outputs. This was formed through participation and is translated into the practices of the school, vividly reflected in the students' excellent academic and personal progress, their high attainment and achievement of advanced places in competitions and in receiving scholarships locally and abroad. The internal and external improvement teams work together to achieve the priorities in the strategic plan, which is based on an accurate and comprehensive self-assessment of the school's practices. The plan includes clear performance indicators against which to measure improvement. Training programmes for teachers on cooperative learning, dual teaching and class management organised for each academic section are highly effective. Evaluative class visits also contribute to meeting teachers' training needs and are reflected in their implementation of many highly successful teaching and learning strategies in class.

The senior leadership inspire the administrative and teaching staff and motivate them towards change and improvement. This is achieved by way of honouring teachers, assigning them to organise and lead training workshops, giving the middle leadership responsibilities, and encouraging them to work with a team spirit as, for example, with the internal improvement team and the school board, which has had a major impact on the overall satisfaction of teachers.

The school uses its resources and educational facilities effectively to enrich and broaden students' experiences. This is represented in the use of the science laboratories, the learning resources centre, the e-learning classroom and the talent centres. These contribute to the enrichment of the teaching and learning processes well. The school explores the views of students and their parents and responds to their suggestions, such as holding a yearly celebration and maintaining facilities, which clearly reflect in the obvious approval of students and their parents.

The school contacts the local community institutions such as Salman Cultural Centre, the centre for talented students and different embassies to increase students' awareness and to introduce them to the prerequisites for studying at university abroad, for example via the 'Yes' programme. Furthermore, the school is in contact with the school's president to implement the improvement projects and share teaching expertise among teachers from other schools, which contributes to the continuous efforts in raising the school's overall performance.

The school's main strengths

- Students' high attainment levels and the achievement of first place among the secondary schools in Bahrain for the past five years
- Accurate and comprehensive self-evaluation and strategic planning which include effective professional competency programmes which motivate and inspire the administrative and teaching staff
- Students' self-confidence, good relationships and their ability to take on responsibility and leading roles
- Effective teaching and learning, assessment and use of educational resources that contribute to motivating students to learning and their high achievement
- Provision of excellent activities and programmes that meet students' educational and personal needs and prepare them for the next stage of education or employment
- The school's environment, which is inviting and attractive.

Recommendations

In order to improve, the school should:

- continue to implement best practices in all aspects of the school
- spread best practices among educational institutions in Bahrain to improve the overall educational outcomes in the Kingdom.