



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

Schools Review Unit

Review Report

Nusaiba Bint Ka'ab Primary Girls School
Hamad Town - Northern Governorate
Kingdom of Bahrain

Date Reviewed: 15-17 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 founded 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 practices among schools
- 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 six Reviewers. During the Review, Reviewers observed lessons and other activities, examined students' written 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: Girls

Number of students: 666

Age range: 6 - 12 years

Characteristics of the school

Nusaiba Bint Ka'ab Primary Girls School is a Northern Governorate school in Hamad Town and was founded in 1999. The age range in the school is from 6 to 12 years. Most students come from middle-income families. The 666 students are distributed across 23 classes: 12 classes for the first cycle and 11 for the second. The school categorised 321 students as outstanding, 216 as talented and 66 as having learning difficulties. The Principal is in her first academic year in the school. There are 15 administrative staff and 50 teaching staff. 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 Nusaiba Bint Ka'ab Primary Girls School is satisfactory. The school has some good aspects in students' personal development, student guidance and leadership and management. Students and their parents are exceptionally satisfied with the school.

Students' academic achievement is satisfactory overall. Students achieve high success rates in school examinations, in line with their overall proficiency rates. Students' actual levels of understanding and knowledge were similarly high in good lessons, particularly in Arabic. In other, less effective, lessons students' performance was no more than satisfactory, particularly in English and Mathematics. Students progress well in good lessons, where individual differences are considered in written activities. In most lessons, however, students make no more than satisfactory progress: teaching methods are based on dictation; students are not all given the same opportunities to challenge their abilities in some lessons; and advanced activities are not tailored to students' individual needs. Students with special educational needs and lower-achieving students make some progress with the help of remedial lessons and activities the school provides. Talented and outstanding students also make adequate progress; they are offered adequate support inside and outside the classroom and the chance to take part in internal and external activities and competitions.

Students' personal development is good. Most students attend regularly. They show enough awareness of their school environment, keep it clean and abide by school laws and regulations. Students have good relationships with each other and their teachers, based on friendship and respect. There are few behavioural problems between students and the school's atmosphere is one of comfort, safety and security. Most students participate enthusiastically in internal and external school activities and various committees, and in lessons, particularly the good ones. The opportunities provided for students to take leading roles in and outside lessons enhance their self-confidence and their ability to take responsibility and work independently, which helps ensure good personal development. In the less effective lessons, students are not given enough opportunities to develop their analytical thinking skills and improve their mental abilities.

The effectiveness of the teaching and learning processes is satisfactory. Teaching and learning strategies are not consistently good and result in varying levels of student achievement. In good lessons, the strategies used help to challenge students' abilities,

encourage them to participate, motivate them to learn and give them skills, concepts and knowledge. Teaching methods in the less effective lessons are mostly dictation-based and focus on providing knowledge without linking it to skills. Time management is not effective in some lessons in terms of allocating time and organising activities; students' interaction, participation, motivation and acquisition of basic skills, particularly English and numeracy, are reduced in these lessons and their achievement and progress is often inconsistent. Students are not given enough opportunities to work together in some lessons. In effective lessons, teachers use a variety of assessment methods to measure students' achievement of learning objectives but in others they rely on direct questioning that measures only lower thinking skills, without meeting students' educational needs or challenging their abilities. The homework assigned to students is the same for everyone, without allowing for individual differences.

The presentation and enrichment of the curriculum are good. The school develops students' sense of patriotism and citizenship well by allowing them to participate in most national events and festivals, as well as several extra-curricular activities, internal and external competitions and a variety of events that satisfy students' interests and broaden their experiences. The curriculum is enriched by making the school environment motivating and conducive to learning; students' work is celebrated, teaching aids and educational boards are displayed, and areas are set aside for heritage and popular games. The classroom environment is also enriched appropriately with teaching aids and study areas that help the personal development of students. Students' basic skills in Arabic language and IT are adequately developed but they do not acquire basic skills in English and Mathematics to the same level. Curriculum subjects in the first cycle are linked well.

The effectiveness of support and guidance for students is good. The school provides leisure programmes for new students and holds educational meetings for their parents, which help students to settle at the beginning of the school year. It also offers appropriate guidance lectures and lessons for students moving to the next stage of their education. Students' acquisition of basic skills is satisfactory overall. Their personal needs are diagnosed and met well and health care is provided. The educational needs of students with special educational needs and lower achievement are satisfied by suitable remedial lessons. Appropriate support is provided for talented and outstanding students outside the classroom and in good lessons, which helps them to make adequate progress. Support for students in the less effective lessons is not as successful.

The effectiveness of leadership and management is good. The school has a clear shared vision based on preparing its students for the future, and has a strategic plan which focuses on development and improvement. The school evaluates most of its activities, programmes and events. It analyses performance results to use them in developing plans and programmes to improve the school's overall performance. The school's leaders are fully aware of its strengths and areas for development. They effectively identify challenges that

hinder school work and strive to overcome them; this has had a positive effect on curriculum enrichment, students' personal development, support and guidance of students and is reflected in students' satisfactory achievement in most lessons. The school encourages, motivates and develops its staff by providing many training programmes and workshops; these activities have benefited educational practices, particularly in good lessons. The school does not, however, assess the impact of departmental plans on students' achievement adequately. Nor does it properly monitor the effect of professional development programmes on some teachers' performance, particularly in English and Mathematics.

□ Does the school have the capacity to improve?

Grade: 2 (Good)

The school has a good capacity to improve and develop. The school's leaders operate as a close team, based on respect and strong relationships. They are fully aware of the school's strengths and areas for development. The school's strategic plan is based on self-evaluation and a diagnosis of the school's situation; it focuses appropriately on improvement and development by defining and developing objectives, plans and events to further this aim. The Principal has established several development projects, such as a training programme entitled 'Together for a Better Future', to raise professional competency and turn the school into a stimulating and attractive learning environment. The school involves students and parents well in its development, allowing them to participate in events and activities, providing them with advice and guidance, setting up a Students' Council, and increasing channels of communication with parents.

The school's main strengths and areas for development

Main Strengths

- Strategic planning
- Self-evaluation
- Students' enthusiasm and self-confidence
- Students' mature behaviour and ability to take responsibility
- Meeting personal and educational needs
- Communication with parents
- Extra-curricular activities and competitions
- Basic skills in Arabic and IT.

Areas for development

- Planning for individual differences
- Basic skills in English and Mathematics.
- Higher thinking skills
- Use of varied assessment
- Cooperative working
- The impact of professional development on some teachers
- Following up on teaching departments' plans.

What the school needs to do to improve

In order to improve further, the school should:

- Develop and diversify teaching and learning strategies so that they include:
 - Developing students' basic skills, particularly in English and Mathematics
 - Considering individual differences when planning lessons and in written activities and homework
 - Diversifying assessment methods to ensure that academic needs of students are met
 - Developing students' higher thinking skills
 - Providing students with more opportunities to work together and learn from one another.
- Monitor more closely, and assess the impact of, departments' plans for students' achievement
- Measure the impact of professional development programmes on lessons in general and on English and Mathematics lessons in particular.

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