



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

# **Schools Review Unit**

## **Review Report**

**Om Al Qorra Primary Intermediate Girls School**  
**Nowaidrat - Central Governorate**  
**Kingdom of Bahrain**

**Date of Review: 21, 22 and 28 November 2011**

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## The Schools Review Unit

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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:

<b>Grade description</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
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

<b>School's name</b>		Om Al Qorra Primary Intermediate Girls School													
<b>School's type</b>		Government													
<b>Year of establishment</b>		1990													
<b>Age range of students</b>		6 - 15 years													
<b>Grades (e.g. 1 to 12)</b>		<b>Primary</b>				<b>Middle</b>				<b>High</b>					
		1 - 6				7 - 9				-					
<b>Number of students</b>		<b>Boys</b>		-		<b>Girls</b>		596		<b>Total</b>		596			
<b>Students' social background</b>		Most students come from limited level income families													
<b>Classes per grade</b>		<b>Grade</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>
		<b>Classes</b>		2	2	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	-	-	-
<b>Town /Village</b>		Nowaidrat													
<b>Governorate</b>		Central Governorate													
<b>Number of administrative staff</b>		15													
<b>Number of teaching staff</b>		63													
<b>Curriculum</b>		Ministry of Education													
<b>Main language(s) of instruction</b>		Arabic													
<b>Principal's tenure</b>		One year													
<b>External assessment and examination</b>		MoE's examinations and QAAET's national examinations													
<b>Accreditation (if applicable)</b>		-													
<b>Number of students in the following categories according to the School's classification</b>		<b>Outstanding</b>				<b>Gifted &amp; Talented</b>				<b>Physical Disabilities</b>				<b>Learning Difficulties</b>	
		21				41				4				44	

<b>Major recent changes in the school</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A new principal was appointed for the school year 2010/11</li><li>• A senior teacher for the Arabic department was appointed for the school year 2009/10</li><li>• Eight new teachers joined the school: 1 class teaching, 2 Arabic, 2 English, 2 social studies and 1 computer studies, as well as two social workers for the current year 2011/12.</li></ul>
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## Table of review judgments awarded

Aspect	Grade: Description			
The school's overall effectiveness	3: Satisfactory			
The school's capacity to improve	2: Good			
	Elementary / Primary	Middle / Intermediate	High / Secondary	Overall
Students' academic achievement	3	3	-	3
Students' personal development	2	2	-	2
The quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning	3	3	-	3
The quality of the curriculum implementation	2	2	-	2
The quality of support and guidance for students	2	2	-	2
The quality and effectiveness of leadership, management and governance	2	2	-	2

### Key:

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

## Review judgements

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### Overall effectiveness

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

#### Grade: 3 Satisfactory

The school's overall performance is satisfactory and in line with the judgement in the previous review in November 2008. It is satisfactory in students' academic achievement and teaching and learning. Due to the utilisation of practical scientific skills in good lessons, particularly in science. Students' abilities vary in mathematics, Arabic and English in the intermediate stage. The school is effective in areas, such as personal development, curriculum implementation and enrichment, support and guidance, and leadership and management. Students' self-confidence is evident in their good behaviour. The school environment enriches the curriculum. Participatory decision-making, delegation of authority to the school staff and students and active middle leadership bring ownership of the school's purpose. A healthy and safe environment has been created. Students and parents are satisfied with the school.

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

#### Grade: 2 Good

The school has good capacity to improve that reflects the leadership's developmental thinking. Senior staff keep pace with developments in educational practices based on participatory decision-making and delegation. Strategic planning is based on self-evaluation with priorities placed on the recommendations in the previous review. A positive impact on students' personal development is particularly evident. Improvements have been made by creating a suitable learning environment that is characterised by students' artistic and educational achievements and has helped to enrich the curriculum and provide students with a sense of security. This has increased students' enthusiasm and commitment to maintain their achievements. Most teachers implement effective teaching and learning strategies. Performance is variable, particularly in the intermediate stage and there are insufficient teachers and senior teachers for the class teaching and mathematics.

## Students' achievement

### □ How well do students achieve in their academic work?

#### Grade: 3 Satisfactory

Although students achieve high pass rates in school examinations, ranging between 92% and 100%. The results are in line with proficiency rates in core subjects in the first cycle except in science. Pass rates vary too widely in English and Arabic in the second and third cycles. Comparatively, students in the first cycle do best. Students do not demonstrate similar levels in the second and third cycles, particularly in Arabic and English, due to the varying quality in teaching methods. Most first cycle students acquire good reading and writing skills in Arabic and English, but second and third cycle students' acquisition of writing skills is only satisfactory. Students acquire practical skills in science and technology well, whereas their proficiency in arithmetic skills varies due to varying degrees of support provided to them.

Reviewing students' results over three consecutive years shows consistently high results in all core subjects. Students' progress well in most first cycle lessons due to a variety of activities which cater effectively for students' differing levels, whereas the progress of second and third cycles students varies in most lessons and written work due to variations in teaching methods, which do not cater sufficiently for students' individual differences.

Outstanding students and those with learning difficulties and special needs progress well in most lessons and in the excellence and special education programmes. Low-achieving students do not progress sufficiently well due to variations in the quality of teaching.

Students in Grades 3 and 6 achieved higher than national average results in national examinations in Arabic and science for the years from 2009 to 2011. Their results in mathematics vary, but were higher than national average in 2009, yet lower for Grade 3 in 2010 and 2011. They were within the national average for Grade 6 and for English in all three years. Grade 9 students also achieved higher than national average results in 2010 and 2011 in most core subjects except English, where result were close to the national average in 2010. In Arabic, results were much higher than the national average in 2011.



## **□ How good is the students' personal development?**

### **Grade: 2 Good**

The administrative supervision department takes the necessary action to monitor the limited cases of late arrivals and absence and provides students with the opportunity to participate in improvement programmes, with the result that most attend regularly and punctually.

Most students participate effectively and enthusiastically in school life by taking part in school activities such as the morning broadcast, Students' Council, Friends of the Library and internal and external competitions. These enhance students' self-confidence and provide good opportunities to express their views and develop their abilities. Leadership and team working qualities are evident. Students participate in many school committees, such as the Girl Scouts and Young Nurses' committees. In good and outstanding lessons, which accounted for about one third of all lessons, students are provided with many opportunities to work together. Some are assigned the role of 'young teacher', which has a significant impact on developing their ability to take responsibility.

Most students are proud of belonging to their school and of their achievements. They participate in creating folklore boards, Bahraini Springs, the traditional Sado room and miniatures of ancient wells. These enhance their Bahraini identity. Most students show awareness and responsibility by preserving school property and respecting and cooperating with one another. As a result of social bonds between students and teachers their sense of security and safety is good.

## **The quality of provision**

### **□ How effective are teaching and learning?**

#### **Grade: 3 Satisfactory**

Teachers have knowledge of the content of study materials, which is evident in their use of a variety of the teaching and learning strategies in most first cycle lessons and good lessons in the second and third cycles, which account for almost third of the lessons. In good lessons strategies include dialogue and discussion, cooperative learning and learning through investigation, which was evident in first cycle science lessons and mathematics and science lessons in the second and third cycles. These help enrich students' knowledge and motivate and encourage them to employ higher level thinking skills such as analysis and in structuring ideas. They develop their reading and verbal expression skills and apply grammar rules well in some Arabic lessons. These strategies also provide opportunities to

challenge students' abilities in prediction and analysis, especially in the first cycle and in some mathematics lessons. Meanwhile, almost two thirds of lessons were satisfactory where strategies largely adopted the dictation method which limited the opportunities to challenge students' abilities, particularly in some Arabic and English lessons in the second and third cycles.

Most teachers manage their lessons effectively which are characterised by order and quietness, with effective allocation of time and implementation of activities to achieve lesson objectives.

First cycle teachers utilise the interactive board and lesson presentations effectively. Images, models and presentations are utilised in good lessons in the second and third cycles, which help motivate most students to learn. Yet, in most satisfactory lessons, teaching is not as effective because teachers are at the centre of lessons rather than the students.

Students are assigned appropriate amounts of homework, most of which caters for individual differences. Follow-up on homework through regular marking and feedback varies from cycle to cycle and students' progress varies accordingly to their levels of ability.

Most teachers employ a variety of assessment methods, both verbal and written, especially in good and outstanding lessons. These methods focus on verbal discussion, targeting outstanding students more than those in other categories. Where feedback is less effective, this affects students' progress and contributes to making it satisfactory rather than good.

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

#### **Grade: 2 Good**

In order to enrich the curriculum and enhance students' experiences so that they understand rights and duties, the school offers several effective extra-curricular activities. These include the morning broadcast, national and religious celebrations, field trips, various school committees, such as the 'Friends of the Library' and 'Loyalty and Citizenship' committees, wall displays, such as 'My Vision for 2030' and internal and external competitions such as the 'Charity Train' and 'Journalistic Package', where the school won first place. These activities enhance students' experiences and interests.

Students' basic skills are developed through activities and exercises in lessons, which build knowledge and concepts in various subjects linked to real life situations. This occurs in most first cycle lessons and some lessons in the second and third cycles. Enrichment programmes

are also provided, such as the 'Court' programme for outstanding students and supporting and remedial programmes, such as individual tutoring for students with learning difficulties.

The school has plans and programmes to implement and teach the curriculum according to time schedules and operational plans. The school assesses the curriculum, where all teachers cooperate to overcome obstacles so as to implement the curriculum smoothly and enhance it with enrichment and remedial activities.

The school environment enriches the curriculum as classrooms are full of teaching aids and school corridors and yards are decorated with educational, guidance and artistic wall displays created by students. There are ample green areas. Facilities such as the Learning Resources Centre, e-classroom and science laboratories are effectively utilised in a manner that helps to increase students' knowledge.

### **□ How well are students guided and supported?**

#### **Grade: 2 Good**

Most new students settle at the beginning of the school year due to effective programmes where students are introduced to the school's facilities and its code of discipline. Meetings are held with parents to introduce them to school rules, administrative and teaching staff and the assessment methods used with students. The school helps students prepare for the next stage of education, particularly the secondary stage, in cooperation with the Guidance and Direction Office at the Ministry of Education, through introducing them to stage requirements and study specialisations.

Students' personal needs are helped by the school giving financial assistance. The school also assesses and monitors students' personal needs, particularly those with problems. It frequently solves these problems in cooperation with parents. The school also diagnoses and meets students' educational needs by utilising the results of diagnostic and assessment tests in order to conduct regular effective remedial lessons to support students with learning difficulties, particularly in the first cycle. Integration students receive concentrated care and support, which is reflected in their good academic progress. Outstanding students achieve good progress in excellence programmes where their higher level thinking skills are challenged. This contributes to students' satisfactory progress. Low-achieving students make appropriate progress in enhancement lessons due to the effective activities used.

Parents commend the various communication channels used, such as the open day, educational meetings and SMS. These keep parents fully updated on their daughters'

academic and personal development levels. Staff and students cooperate to make their learning environment healthy and safe. The school assesses and monitors its facilities and areas and trains its staff and students on evacuation under the supervision of the Civil Defence Directorate. The school also strives to provide students' security and safety, which it does well and enhances students' good sense of belonging and security.

## **Leadership, management and governance**

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

#### **Grade: 2 Good**

The school has a clear vision and mission statement which focuses on students' achievement and improvement of professional competency. Its vision and mission were developed in a participatory manner and are reflected in most practices. The school also has a strategic plan that is based on self-evaluation to diagnose all aspects of the school's situation, according to various evaluation mechanisms. These include participation of the school's staff and students and parents. From this strategic plan, an operational plan for all departments was derived and its positive impact is evident in regulating school work, which has helped students to achieve tangible improvements. Middle leaders have used committees effectively in this process.

The school conducts training programmes in order to improve the professional competency of teachers. Their training needs are identified through assessment visits to see teachers in other similar lessons. Professional development programmes focus on improving the areas highlighted by the recommendations in the previous review, such as strategic planning and differentiation workshops. Exchange visits between teachers in order to promote good educational practices occur, but the impact of these programmes is not evident in the performance of some teachers, which results in varying levels of students' achievement which are not necessarily their best.

The leadership motivates members of the administrative and teaching staff effectively, by implementing a policy of delegation, involving staff in decision-making and enabling them to lead professional development. This is reflected in their satisfaction with the school, helped by their acceptance of change and their increased motivation to take responsibility through the various school clubs.

The school employs educational facilities effectively and provides an attractive learning environment. This helps to improve the academic levels achieved by most students, for example the utilisation of the school's rooms, particularly the Learning Resources Centre and E-Class. It also employs and provides financial resources to meet various educational needs of different students.

The school seeks and responds to students' and parents' views. The proposition to develop an emergency communication mechanism between the school and parents is an example of this. The school also communicates effectively with the local community through students' participation in external activities in cooperation with groups such as the Ocean Institute and Village Club. These activities contribute to the personal development of most students and make students and parents satisfied with the school.

## **The school's main strengths**

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- Participatory decision-making and delegation of authorities to school's staff and students
- Action by middle leadership through main and sub-committees at school
- The opportunities provided to students to develop self-confidence in most lessons and activities
- Relationships between students and their appreciation of their teachers
- Effective use of the school environment to enrich the curriculum and celebrate students' work
- Students' ability to apply practical skills and organise their learning.

## Recommendations

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### **In order to improve, the school should:**

- utilise practices to raise achievement and improve teaching and learning that include:
  - employing effective assessment during lessons that is linked to students' different educational needs
  - providing support to students in the second and third cycles according to their levels
  - developing students' ability to analyse and criticise
  - linking various study materials in a planned manner, particularly in the intermediate stage.
- equip students with basic skills in mathematics, Arabic and English in a more effective manner so that skills can be applied across the curriculum, particularly in the intermediate stage
- address the shortage in staffing, namely senior teachers for class teaching and mathematics.