

الهيئة الوطنية
للمؤهلات وضمان جودة التعليم والتدريب
National Authority for Qualifications &
Quality Assurance of Education & Training



Schools Review Unit

Review Report

Omayma Bint Al-Noaman Secondary Girls School
Isa Town - Central Governorate
Kingdom of Bahrain

Date of Review: 8-10 October 2012

Table of Contents

The Schools Review Unit.....	1
Introduction	2
Characteristics of the school	2
Table of review judgements awarded	4
Review judgements.....	5
Overall effectiveness	5
Students' achievement.....	6
Leadership, management and governance	10
The school's main strengths	11
Recommendations	12

The Schools Review Unit

The Schools Review Unit (SRU) is part of the National Authority for Qualifications and Quality Assurance of Education and Training (NAQQAET) that was officially set up in 2008 as an independent body governed and supervised by the Council of Ministers. 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 eight 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	Omayma Bint Al-Noaman Secondary Girls School												
School's type	Government												
Year of establishment	2000												
Age range of students	16-18 Years												
Grades (e.g. 1 to 12)	Primary				Middle				High				
	-				-				10-12				
Number of students	Boys	-	Girls	700				Total	700				
Students' social background	Students belong to middle to above socio-income families.												
Classes per grade	Grade	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
	Classes	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	9	9	8
	Level 2: scientific stream (chemistry & physics: 3 classes physics & mathematics: 1 class Literary stream: 2 classes Commercial stream: 3 classes												
	Level 3: scientific stream (chemistry & physics: 3 classes physics & mathematics: 1 class Literary arts track: 1 class Commercial stream: 3 classes.												
Town /Village	Isa Town												
Governorate	Central												
Number of administrative staff	8 administrators and 31 technical staff												
Number of teaching staff	87												
Curriculum	Ministry of Education (MoE)												
Main language(s) of instruction	Arabic												
Principal's tenure	5 years												
External assessment and examinations	Examinations of the MoE												
Accreditation (if applicable)	-												

Number of students in the following categories according to the school's classification	Outstanding	Gifted & Talented	Physical Disabilities	Learning Difficulties
	104	47	1	12
Major recent changes in the school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school has a new assistant principal at the current school year 2012-13 • New appointments during the previous school year 2011-12; namely the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a number of new teachers of which 12 teachers in the Commercial Subjects Department - 2 senior teachers for science and Arabic - an academic counsellor and career advisor - 2 social workers. • The school joined the Improving Schools Project at the beginning of the current year. 			

Table of review judgements awarded

Aspect	Grade: Description			
The school's overall effectiveness	2: Good			
The school's capacity to improve	1: Outstanding			
	Elementary / Primary	Middle / Intermediate	High / Secondary	Overall
Students' academic achievement	-	-	2	2
Students' personal development	-	-	1	1
The quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning	-	-	2	2
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: 2 Good

The school's overall effectiveness is judged good, compared to satisfactory in the previous review in April 2009. Two aspects, namely students' academic achievement and the quality of teaching and learning are judged good, as students achieve high pass rates in the MoE examinations and higher rates than expected in most lessons due to the use of effective and motivating teaching and learning strategies. Senior leaders implement strategic planning effectively and achieve goals based on performance indicators set against priorities. These encompass the organisation of effective programmes for students' support and guidance. These promote the students' self-confidence, enthusiasm and their acceptance of responsibilities. The school environment and learning resources are exceptional, and contribute most effectively to enhancing and enriching the curriculum implementation. Students and parents are well satisfied with the school.

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

Grade: 1 Outstanding

The school's capacity to improve has changed since the previous review from good to outstanding. This is due to the outstanding and aspiring leaders who possess sufficient knowledge of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. This is reflected in the strategic plan which is based on an accurate and comprehensive self-evaluation of the situation. Leaders possess a systematic administrative system based on sharing activities and organising a sustainable career competency programme, which help raise the teachers' professional competency and is reflected in the rising achievement of students. Projects such as the 'Outstanding Bahraini School', 'Teaching for Learning' and 'Behaviour for Learning' provide excellent and good learning outcomes and make the school environment an attractive place for learning. These factors are set to raise the school's performance further.

Students' achievement

□ How well do students achieve in their academic work?

Grade: 2 Good

In 2011-12, students achieved high pass rates in most of the MoE examinations in all streams. While students achieve higher than the subject average of Bahrain's schools in commercial subjects, mathematics, Arabic and science, they achieve higher than the subject average by gender in Arabic and mathematics, and within the national average by gender in science. This high achievement is combined with very high levels of proficiency in most streams, but lower in the physics and mathematics streams in Grade 10 and English in the literary stream. These high rates reflect the good levels of understanding and knowledge of most students in lessons, particularly so in the outstanding and good lessons of commercial subjects, mathematics and English. The students' achievement ranges from satisfactory to good in science and Arabic lessons, and from satisfactory to outstanding in English lessons.

Students' acquisition of concepts and skills in commercial processes is outstanding. Most students acquire good basic skills in mathematics, such as triangular functions, and scientific skills, especially in Grade 11 and 12. Their skills in Arabic are also good. While writing skills in English are satisfactory in Grade 10, these and other skills in English are good in Grades 11 and 12. Students make good progress when compared to their starting points, particularly in English.

Over the last three years, students have made a little progress in the high pass rates in all streams, especially recently. Students in Grade 11 and 12 have made faster rates of progress than Grade 10 students. The school's position among the secondary schools varies year to year but clinched the 10th position in 2011-12 out of 32 schools and achieved well in terms of high achievers progress across all levels. Students' progress in lessons and written work is good as a result of the use of effective strategies and activities that take students' individual differences into account.

Most categories of students achieve pass rates that are higher than expected, particularly in the 65% of lessons which are at least good. This is as a direct result of good support given to students, differentiation and challenge of their abilities in the teaching and opportunities provided for enrichment activities. This results in the high performance of students in lessons. Low achievers, comparatively for their abilities, make less good progress.

□ How good is the students' personal development?

Grade: 1 Outstanding

The vast majority of students participate enthusiastically and effectively in school's life both in lessons and activities, such as the morning broadcast, Omayma guides and school committees. They take on leadership roles and work independently in the students' council and creativity centres, as well as leading the school's events, for example, 'Drops', 'School Health Committee', and 'Omayma Economic Conference', a conference that raises their awareness of world changes. They take initiatives such as assuming the role of paramedics and participate in planning and implementing future projects such as the 'Entrepreneur Centre'. These greatly help enhance their self-confidence and fluency in expressing their views.

Students act responsibly, maintain the school's property well, adhere to rules and values, attend regularly and take part in attendance and enhancement programmes, for example 'Enhancing Morals' and 'Outstanding Class'. Good teamwork and mutual respect help create a harmonious atmosphere and result in the students feeling safe and secure.

The vast majority of students show a distinct understanding of Bahrain's heritage and traditions, celebrate national events and organise a number of events that greatly contribute to enhancing their sense of citizenship. Some students compose songs and take part in the revival of a range of Bahrain's heritage events, such as 'World of Colours'.

□ How effective are teaching and learning?

Grade: 2 Good

Teachers have good subject knowledge and experience. This is reflected in their introductory activities to lessons from which students derive their learning objectives and ways to contribute to achieving them. Learning resources, particularly e-resources, such as the interactive whiteboards and learning aids such as cards are used well. This has a positive impact on inducting students to lessons and motivating them towards learning. While most teachers employ effective teaching and learning strategies, for example brainstorming and cooperative learning, the application of such strategies varies in quality too much for teaching to be judged outstanding.

Teachers provide good support and guidance for students, and this is reflected in the progress students make in most subjects and in their acquisition of basic skills, particularly in the commercial subjects and mathematics and science in all levels and streams,

particularly in the scientific stream where the majority of good and outstanding lessons are delivered. Such strategies help develop students' higher order thinking skills and broaden their horizons by providing them with sufficient opportunities to analyse learning situations and reach solution for problems. This success is broadly reflected in their personal development and self-confidence. This also contributes to raising the standard of some Grade 10 students achievements in English as a result of focused remedial and enrichment programmes which are thoughtfully conceived.

Lessons are well managed as teachers control the students' conduct in lessons well. Teachers, raise students' levels of production and invest time to include all students in the learning situations through encouragement, motivation. They support the different categories of students, especially well in the good and outstanding lessons. Students' abilities are effectively challenged through differentiation and planned class activities and exercises, for example through various assignments and the setting of deadlines to complete tasks. This helps raise the rates of progress for most students.

Provision is enriched by assigning students to prepare reports, implement projects and undertake homework to enhance their skills and knowledge. Along with differentiation, and regular marking of such activities in most subjects and the provision of feedback about their achievement, students learn well. Teachers effectively assess students' achievement in lessons through various methods such as systematic observations and continuous formative assessment through oral and written questions. This is combined with the use of assessment results in supporting students and meeting their learning needs.

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

Grade: 1 Outstanding

The attractive school environment helps to enrich the curriculum in a distinct manner. Curriculum concepts are enhanced through displays on walls which celebrate students' work in classes and across the schools' facilities. Extra-curricular activities, committees and competitions, for example, 'Bahrain Achievement Centre', 'Omayma Guides' and 'Globe', and the 'sand sculpture and beach ball' contest, where the school won first place, make excellent contributions to curriculum enrichment.

Students show great understanding of their rights and duties through their effective participation in committees such as the discipline and community committees, as well as their adherence to Omayma Class Agreement. The school effectively develops students' sense of citizenship by national displays and the organisation of heritage fairs such as

‘Omayma Culture and Heritage Exhibition’. This enhances the students’ national values and develops their positive behaviour and sense of responsibility.

Parents’ views are sought and accurately analysed. These are used. Curriculum review leads to enrichment such as in the commercial subjects. The school has transferred some books to electronic format to support textbooks and provides special experiences which help prepare students for the next stage of education. Links across subjects are effectively made in most lessons for example, the Islamic studies has been linked to commercial studies and physics concepts has been applied in mathematics problems. These enable students to study a systematic and comprehensive curriculum.

□ How well are students guided and supported?

Grade: 1 Outstanding

The school effectively inducts new students. They settle quickly. The induction starts with visiting intermediate schools and transferring experiences from ‘Omayma Ambassadors’ to get the new ones acquainted with the unified stream system. This is completed in line with the guidance programmes for students and their parents covering the discipline rules. Students also organise various programmes to enrich their knowledge and skills. These include ‘How to write CVs’ and visits to Bahrain University and the Career Expo, which effectively enhance their induction to the next stage of education.

Students’ educational and personal needs are carefully diagnosed and met. The school monitors attendance to the creativity centres and matches their interests. Outstanding students get involved in creativity and scientific competitions. The school prepares alternate sessions to raise the attainment of low achievers and students with learning difficulties. These students receive the necessary care and interest.

Social workers provide distinct services to prevent and solve students’ problems, for example, the ‘Behaviour for Conduct Program’. These help enhance the students’ personal development. Parents are regularly and effectively kept informed about their children’s progress via various communication channels.

The school provides a safe and secure environment for all as a direct result of good maintenance procedures for its facilities, safety of food, identification of chronic diseases, regular morning exercise and first aid.

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 shared vision that focuses on leadership, creativity and excellence. This is practically translated across the school's activities through the combined efforts of its staff and students. A systematic organisational structure and strategic and academic departmental plans with clear performance indicators are used to address the school's priorities which are based on the results of accurate self-evaluation.

Teaching and administrative staff are well managed. Sharing ideas and high motivation towards the implementation of educational initiatives and projects pays dividends. The school leaders delegate powers, for example to some English and commercial subject teachers to act as coordinators, which works well. The school leaders provide opportunities for teachers' professional development through internal and external training workshops, for example the 'Teaching Academy for Learning' and 'Mobile Training' projects. Teachers' performance is supported well so as to enable them to take on their roles effectively. This has helped make significant changes in the use of teaching strategies and is positively reflected in the students' academic achievement.

The school seeks students' and parents' views and responds to their suggestions directly, such as in actions to findings from the e-learning questionnaire as well as from students and parents' remarks through the school's councils. The organisation of tutorials during holidays and weekends, the improvement of canteen facilities, the opening of the northern gate to relieve crowding and the instigation of 'My Religion is my Values' project for Grades 11 and 12 are significant examples of such responses. Students and parents are well satisfied with the school. It effectively cooperates with the local community institutions through activities such as the students' visit to Kanoo and Boori Health Centres in which community service students delivered a health workshop. The school also cooperates with the Information Affairs Authority and arranges visits for other schools to see Omayma Heritage Exhibition.

The school makes exceptionally good use of its learning resources and facilities, such as the sports hall, e-classroom, laboratories and training centre. The Arts Committee, Board of Directors, and other steering committees help in planning and implementing initiatives effectively according to their roles. Taking part in the School Improvement Project in the previous year has helped improve and promote the school's overall performance.

The school's main strengths

- Distinguished leadership that applies accurate self-evaluation to inform effective strategic planning and communication strategies to provide quality educational services
- The progress made by students, their achievement and personal development
- Use of effective and motivating teaching and learning strategies with effective assessment to meet the various learning needs of most students
- Students' responsible actions, their enthusiastic participation in the school's life, and their self-confidence drawn from feeling safe and secure in the school
- The school environment which enriches the curriculum and various extra-curricular activities, support and guidance programmes.

Recommendations

In order to improve, the school should:

- make wider use of the school's outstanding practices, especially in the mathematics and commercial departments in developing teaching and learning processes to include:
 - challenging students' abilities in class activities to a greater extent
 - raising the performance of low achievers.