



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

Schools Review Unit

Review Report

Osama Bin Zaid Primary Boys School
Hamad Town – Northern Governorate
Kingdom of Bahrain

Date Reviewed: 8 – 10 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 seven 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: 907

Age range: 6 – 12 years

Characteristics of the school

Osama Bin Zaid Primary Boys School is located in Hamad Town, in the Northern Governorate. It was founded in 1999. The age range in the school is from 6 to 12 years, and the total number of students is 907. Students are distributed across 36 classes; most of them come from middle-income families. Every year, a group of new students transfers to join the school in the second cycle from neighbouring schools; they represent 40% of the total number of students. The school has classified 20% of its students as outstanding, 7% as gifted, and 8% as having learning difficulties. There are 89 administrative and teaching staff. The Principal is in his third year in the school. The school has some staffing shortages: it lacks a second assistant principal, a senior teacher for English language, and some support technicians such as an information technician and IT specialist. The school also has no e-learning classroom or learning resource centre. The school has joined the fourth 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 Osama Bin Zaid Primary Boys School is satisfactory. Its leadership and management are good. Most students and their parents are very pleased with the school.

Students' overall academic achievement is satisfactory. Students achieve high success rates in most subjects. This success is reflected in their good levels of understanding and knowledge in most of the outstanding and good lessons, and in some of their written work. Students displayed less understanding and knowledge in satisfactory lessons, which formed the majority of observed lessons. Cycle one students achieve better pass and proficiency rates than students in cycle two. Students make good progress in the good and outstanding lessons but less progress in the satisfactory and inadequate lessons, where ineffective teaching and learning strategies are used. Students with special needs make better progress outside the classroom than in lessons, where their individual differences are not taken sufficiently into consideration and they are given inconsistent support and few opportunities for challenge.

Students' personal development is satisfactory overall. Most students attend regularly and punctually. Most of them effectively contribute to school life through participation in various school committees and activities. Some students are given opportunities to take on leadership roles through the students' council and scouts, which enhances their personal development and raises their self-confidence. Students are given insufficient opportunities to develop their personal qualities in those lessons where teachers are at the centre of the educational process and focus on imparting knowledge. Most students show a mature awareness and care for school property and respect for their fellow students and teachers. The school takes appropriate action in the few cases of poor behaviour that occur, which helps students to feel secure and safe in the school.

The overall effectiveness of the teaching and learning processes is satisfactory. Most teachers have good knowledge of their subjects. This knowledge is not, however, consistently reflected in teaching and learning strategies that enable students to acquire knowledge and understanding. In outstanding and good lessons, teachers employed some effective strategies such as collaborative learning and problem-solving activities. In the satisfactory and inadequate lessons, however, teachers relied on a lecturing style and questioning that only measured simple thinking skills; in these lessons, students had insufficient

opportunities to challenge their abilities and develop their higher thinking skills. Levels of achievement were inconsistent in those lessons. Homework activities given to students are often a repeat of textbook activities and are the same for all students. Teachers use varied assessment methods in outstanding and good lessons and make good use of their results to meet the academic needs of all groups of students. In some lessons, however, teachers limit their assessment to observation and oral questioning.

The curriculum presentation and enhancement are satisfactory. The school develops students' experience and broadens their horizons by encouraging participation in various events and activities. This helps to develop students' personalities, their understanding of their rights and duties and their spirit of citizenship. Many students master numeracy and IT skills but some students have insufficient grasp of basic skills such as reading and writing in Arabic and English. There are some attempts to link subjects in some lessons in the first cycle. The school and its students have made clear efforts to make the school environment more attractive to enrich the curriculum.

The effectiveness of support and guidance for students is satisfactory. The school inducts new students adequately when they join the school. The school also tries to prepare students for their next phases of education but the inability of some students to master some basic skills has had an impact on their readiness for their next phase. The school diagnoses and meets students' personal needs well. The academic support offered to students with special needs inside the classroom is less effective than that given outside the classroom. Students praise the school's efforts to help them when they have problems. The school communicates regularly with parents about their sons' progress through various channels. All staff and students of the school work in a healthy and safe environment.

The effectiveness of leadership and management is good. The school has a shared vision and mission statement, focused on achievement and providing educational services, which aims to enhance the quality of teaching. It is reflected in the departmental plans and its impact on improving pass rates and students' personal development is clear. The school has a strategic plan that focuses on improvement and development. The plan involves the whole school and is based on an accurate evaluation of the school's position. A self-evaluation committee plays an effective role in monitoring and evaluating the implementation of action plans. The senior managers work hard to spread an organisational culture among staff, motivate them to work and help them face work challenges with a team spirit. The school makes the most of its facilities and buildings – despite the shortages in some learning resources – to serve the learning process. It pays sufficient attention to improving the professional competency of staff but the impact of such training is not sufficiently reflected in some teachers' performance in some lessons.

□ Does the school have the capacity to improve?

Grade: 3: (Satisfactory)

The school has a satisfactory capacity to develop and improve. Its senior leadership believes in improvement and has the insight to spread an organisational culture and encourage teamwork. The school's strategic plan is based on a careful diagnosis of its position and focuses on appropriate priorities of development and improvement, which is reflected in the overall performance of the school. The school does, however, face challenges such as instability in staffing and staff shortages in some administrative and teaching functions – the school has no second assistant principal and lacks a senior teacher for English language, for example – as well as shortages in some physical resources. The performance of teachers in some departments is inconsistent. Factors such as these limit the school's efforts to achieve future improvement.

The school's main strengths and areas for development

Main Strengths

- Strategic planning
- Self-evaluation
- Induction for new students
- Punctuality and attendance
- Inspiration and motivation for staff
- Relationships between students and their teachers
- Security and safety
- Leadership and management.

Areas for development

- Teaching and learning strategies
- Challenging students' abilities
- Higher thinking skills
- Taking account of individual differences
- Basic skills in Arabic and English
- Support and guidance for students with special needs in lessons
- Making use of assessments to meet learning needs
- Staffing needs to be addressed.

What the school needs to do to improve

In order to improve further, the school should:

- Develop teaching and learning strategies in a way that:
 - Takes individual differences into account
 - Challenges students' abilities
 - Develops higher thinking skills
 - Employs assessment to diagnose and meet students' needs
 - Develops students' basic skills, particularly in Arabic and English.
- Provides support and guidance for different categories of students in the classroom
- Makes more use of professional development programmes to include some teachers in the Arabic and English departments and follow up their impact in improving students' academic attainment
- Stabilise the existing management structure and fill the shortages in human resources
- Provide learning resources in proportion to the number of students and staff.

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	2: Good