



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

Schools Review Unit

Review Report

Pakistan School - Isa Town
Isa Town - Central Governorate
Kingdom of Bahrain

Date of Review: 9-10 and 13-14 January 2013

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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 four days, by a team of 11 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 | | Pakistan School | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| School's type | | Private | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Year of establishment | | 1968 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Age range of students | | 6 – 18 Years | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Grades (e.g. 1 to 12) | | Primary | | | | Middle | | | | High | | | | | |
| | | 1 - 3 | | | | 4 - 8 | | | | 9 - 12 | | | | | |
| Number of students | | Boys | 1024 | Girls | 837 | Total | | 1861 | | | | | | | |
| Students' social background | | Most come from lower income families. | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Classes per grade | | Grade | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 |
| | | Classes | | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 8 | 6 | 8 | 7 | 6 | 4 |
| Town /Village | | Isa Town | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Governorate | | central | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Number of administrative staff | | 18 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Number of teaching staff | | 113 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Curriculum | | Oxford curriculum, Punjab Textbooks Pakistan syllabus, Federal Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education of Pakistan curriculum (FBIPS), Islamabad, Pakistan. | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Main language(s) of instruction | | English, Urdu & Arabic | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Principal's tenure | | 4 months | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| External assessment and examinations | | Federal Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education, Islamabad, Pakistan. | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Accreditation (if applicable) | | None | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Number of students in the following categories according to the school's classification | | Outstanding | | | | Gifted & Talented | | | | Physical Disabilities | | | | Learning Difficulties | |
| | | - | | | | - | | | | - | | | | 2 | |

| | |
|---|--|
| Major recent changes in the school | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introducing Oxford syllabus from kindergarten to Grade 4• Students have been divided into four houses to participate in co-curricular and extra-curricular activities• Improvement in transportation facilities. |
|---|--|

Table of review judgements awarded

| Aspect | Grade: Description | | | |
|--|-------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|---------|
| The school's overall effectiveness | 4: Inadequate | | | |
| The school's capacity to improve | 4: Inadequate | | | |
| | Elementary / Primary | Middle / Intermediate | High / Secondary | Overall |
| Students' academic achievement | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 |
| Students' personal development | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| The quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 |
| The quality of the curriculum implementation | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 |
| The quality of support and guidance for students | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 |
| The quality and effectiveness of leadership, management and governance | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 |

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: 4 Inadequate

The school's overall effectiveness is inadequate as are all aspects except the students' personal development which is satisfactory. Students are well mannered and respect each other as well as their teachers. Students' attainment and progress during lessons do not match their successful performance in examinations. They are strongly influenced by the reliance on memorisation. Lessons are predominantly teacher-centred, which in almost all lessons across the school limits students' opportunities to participate. The school adequately seeks to develop students' understanding of their rights and responsibilities by delegating responsibility to the older students for discipline and care of the younger ones. The school's leadership has a clear vision which focuses on quality education, however self-evaluation lacks rigour and is not embedded in all the processes of the school. The majority of parents and students are satisfied with the school.

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

Grade: 4 Inadequate

The current senior leadership as well as the newly elected Board of Management have aspirations for school improvement and a clear vision which focuses on quality education and professional development. However, the school has many challenges due to the instability of the previous leadership over the last two years. This has resulted in self-evaluation not being rigorous or systematic, action planning which is inconsistent and not sufficiently explicit to impact on the quality of provision and outcomes. In addition, there is no significant improvement introduced in recent years. The school has a high percentage of turnover of the teachers and lacks the planning necessary for effective individual professional development programmes for staff.

Students' achievement

□ How well do students achieve in their academic work?

Grade: 4 Inadequate

Most students attained the pass rate of 33%, or higher, in most core subjects in the Secondary School Certificate (SSC) and Higher Secondary School Certificate (HSSC) Board examinations in 2012. Grades 9 to 12 students attain pass rates ranging from 41 per cent to 100 per cent. In Grades 9 to 11, the competency rate is adequate; however, it is better in Grade 12.

In lessons students' standards differ too much, such as in Urdu. Most students have good oral and reading skills, especially in high school. Grade 11 students confidently describe the difference between the genre of poetry and name the poets in Urdu, and in English as well. The majority of students are able to read with appropriate fluency and expression. However, in both languages most students' writing skills do not reflect the expected progress or understanding of language usage, and extended writing is less developed across the school. Students study Arabic from Grades 1 to 8 only. In middle school, students' reading, although better than their writing, does not sufficiently develop their basic skills such as speaking and reading aloud, and their standards remains below the expected levels. In mathematics, students' skills are inadequately developed but with an over-emphasis on memorization rather than understanding and application, particularly in the primary and middle sections. For example, the majority of Grade 7 students are unable to solve simple linear equations independently and few students in Grade 3 can correctly describe angles. In science, the majority of students in middle and high school have age-appropriate knowledge yet their progress is limited. Students' investigative, problem solving and practical skills are at a basic level, mostly due to limited opportunities in lessons to undertake experimental and enquiry-based learning.

Over the past three years and in the majority of core subjects, students' performance in Board examinations is relatively stable in Grades 9 to 11 with the exception of Grade 11 chemistry. Across the school, students' attainment and progress during lessons and in their written work do not match their successful performance in examinations, due to the strong reliance on memorisation and teacher-centred approaches in teaching. Moreover, the progress of low-achieving and high-achieving students is limited due to insufficient support provided to them.

□ How good is the students' personal development?

Grade: 3 Satisfactory

The majority of students are committed to school and attend regularly. However, a significant number do not. This impacts negatively on their progress. Students participate sufficiently, especially in the more effective lessons. When given opportunities, they willingly contribute to school committees and competitive activities; such as managing assemblies, and senior students compete in 'oratory club' competitions outside the school. Students enjoy membership of the four school houses and compete enthusiastically in school activities especially sports. Certificates are awarded to outstanding students reflecting their confidence and responsibility in school. Students work adequately together when given opportunities in and outside classrooms.

Despite the lack of a students' council, some students show confidence and the initiative to pass on their suggestions to the school administration. Leadership roles are offered to a limited number of students as prefects. These students demonstrate responsible attitudes and behaviour as they monitor and care for younger ones. Students work together responsibly in good lessons and cooperate outside the classroom where boys show positive behaviour while playing cricket together.

The majority of students demonstrate mutual respect and this is reflected by their sense of security. However, a minority of students share a concern about some problems between different ethnic groups. The majority of students show a sense of belonging and understanding of the heritage and culture of Bahrain, and most confidently sing Bahrain's national anthem.

The quality of provision

□ How effective are teaching and learning?

Grade: 4 Inadequate

The majority of teachers have secure subject knowledge which is reflected in clear explanations and supportive handling of students' responses in the most effective lessons. However in almost all lessons, teachers lack a confident understanding of how best to teach students of different ages and abilities. Additionally, poor subject knowledge is demonstrated in a few Arabic and mathematics lessons. Teachers fail to address students' misconceptions.

Class management is generally appropriate as lessons are orderly and well supported by the self-disciplined and quiet conduct. However low expectations together with limited lesson planning lead to ineffective use of time and low productivity. The daily lesson plans lack sufficient detail and attention to specific objectives, activities and learning outcomes to suit the different abilities of students.

In the few most effective lessons, particularly middle school science and mathematics, teachers use a range of questioning techniques to help students acquire understanding and develop higher order thinking skills. In addition, in middle school English and high school Urdu, teachers facilitate group-work and adequately challenge students with brainstorming exercises.

However, most lessons are predominantly teacher-centred, focusing on factual knowledge acquisition, choral responses and memorization which limits the range of teaching strategies used in all grades. Furthermore, teachers do not adequately probe students' understanding and insufficiently promote students' independent learning and creative thinking. Equally, in almost all lessons, the teaching uses a limited range of learning resources and provides limited challenge and insufficient support to students of different abilities. The whole-class undifferentiated method of teaching limits students' opportunities to participate in a range of activities to motivate and support learning.

Homework is regularly assigned, yet is almost always limited to reinforce and practice work completed in lessons. Students' work is not consistently marked and lacks constructive feedback to highlight gaps in their knowledge or to help them improve their work. Assessment is mostly oral in lessons, more often using closed questions and choral answers which emphasize factual recall, and is very rarely used to diagnose and meet students' diverse learning needs.

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

Grade: 4 Inadequate

The school provides an adequate range of subjects in Grades 1 to 12, based on the Pakistan National Curriculum, however, physical education periods are not offered for girls. Subjects have schemes of work, but these are insufficiently developed to ensure enrichment, progression and continuity across all years. Curriculum review seldom takes place and lacks imagination. Subjects are mostly text-book driven and insufficient attention is given to modifications and additional planning by teachers to cater for students' interests and diverse abilities. Implementation of the science and mathematics curricula gives insufficient

attention to developing students' investigative and practical skills and cross-curricular links do not exist in a planned or effective manner and are only incidental in lessons.

The school seeks to develop students' sense of community and their understanding of their rights and responsibilities by delegating responsibility to the older students for discipline and care of the younger ones. The school organizes extra-curricular activities that enhance students' experiences in a satisfactory manner; however this benefits only a limited number of participants, and sporting activities are not provided for girls only. Too few displays of students' work are celebrated in classrooms. Ineffective use is made of both the school environment and local resources as field trips are rarely curriculum-related.

□ How well are students guided and supported?

Grade: 4 Inadequate

The induction process does not effectively help students settle easily and quickly into the school environment. The monitoring of students' academic progress and personal development lacks sufficient rigour, although, the school assesses and records students' progress through end of unit and termly tests, this information is rarely analysed. Assessment is limited during lessons and insufficient recording of personal development does not adequately meet students' learning needs. Though most students with special educational needs are identified, they are ineffectively supported.

Students approach their teachers, class teachers, counsellors and section heads for help if they face problems and receive immediate advice. Older students, as prefects, supplement staff in helping to maintain the orderly procedures throughout the school. Parents receive sufficient information about their children's progress through reports, SMS and letters. The school does not provide structured career or employment guidance for older students who rely on their own efforts and occasional advice from teachers. A day care room with sufficient aids is available. Only few risk assessments have been conducted to identify potential hazards or control risks.

Leadership, management and governance

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

Grade: 4 Inadequate

The school's leadership has a clear vision which focuses on quality education and professional development. However, this vision is not effectively shared with, or by, the staff. Additionally, parents, students and staff are not formally involved in forming this vision and mission. The current school leadership is committed to setting out clear roles and responsibilities for school leaders and teaching staff. Staff appreciate the cooperative leadership, yet meetings are mostly with department heads and rarely with the Principal.

Self-evaluation is informal, lacks rigour and only involves middle and senior leaders. Furthermore, it is not systematic and is not embedded in all the processes of the school. Although students' performance over time in examinations is recorded, the analysis of results is insufficiently used and is not firmly linked with planning for improvement. Strategic planning is focused on further improvement but lacks key improvement priorities. The school lacks explicit action planning, along with well-defined procedures for monitoring and evaluating the success of the plans.

Budgeting is not firmly linked with planning and resource allocation. This negatively affects the deployment of staff, targeted professional development, as well as appropriate teaching and learning resources, and contributes adversely to the quality of provision and students' achievement. While resources are scarce, they are not always used effectively to enhance students' learning experiences; for example, the science and computer laboratories.

Senior and middle leaders evaluate teachers' performance against organisational expectations. However, this does not clearly identify school-wide training needs and insufficiently supports teachers' individual professional development.

Parents' and students' views are sought through the parents' council, student prefects, Board of Management and parent-teacher meetings. Although the school is responsive to feedback from students and parents, it lacks systems to ensure input by all parents and students. The school has developed limited links with the local community, predominantly through involvement in local competitions and field trips arranged mainly for entertainment.

The newly elected Board of Management understand and respect its separate governance role and responsibility alongside those of the school's professional leaders. It has aspirations for school improvement. However as yet, planning is not sufficiently explicit to impact on the quality of provision and outcomes. The professional leadership of the school is not held sufficiently accountable for raising educational standards and the well-being of students.

The school's main strengths

- Students' sense of community in the school
- Students' personal development including good manners and respecting others.

Recommendations

In order to improve, the school should:

- implement rigorous and systematic self-evaluation which identifies key priorities, and is embedded in strategic and action planning which guides and monitors the school's overall performance
- provide effective professional development programmes that are based on a critical assessment of teachers' training needs, as well as mechanisms to evaluate their impact on students' achievement
- raise academic achievement for all groups of students, with a focus on acquisition of skills, and understanding, as well as knowledge
- increase the effectiveness of teaching and learning by:
 - implementing a range of effective and interactive teaching and learning strategies and use of resources
 - effective use of assessment to rigorously assess students' individual attainment and diagnosis their learning needs.