



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

Schools Review Unit

Review Report

Qurtoba Intermediate Girls Schools
Bilad Al Qadeem – Capital Governorate
Kingdom of Bahrain

Date Reviewed: 9 – 11 November 2009

Table of Contents

The Schools Review Unit.....	1
Introduction	2
Characteristics of the school.....	2
Overall effectiveness	3
The school’s capacity to improve.....	4
The school’s main strengths and areas for development.....	5
What the school needs to do to improve	6
Overall judgement	7

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 five 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, students and parents. This report summarises their findings and recommendations.

Information about the school

Gender of students: Girls

Number of students: 488

Age range: 13-15 years

Characteristics of the school

Qurtoba Intermediate Girls School is one of the Capital Governorate schools, located in Al-Bilad Al-Qadeem area. It was established in 1984. The students are aged between 13 and 15. There are 488 students at the school, of whom the majority belong to families of average income. The students are distributed among 16 classes: six classes for the first intermediate, five for the second intermediate and five for the third intermediate. 26 students are categorised as talented and gifted, 90 as outstanding students, and four with learning difficulties. The Principal is in her third year in post at the school. There are 13 administrative staff, 36 teachers and four senior teachers.

Overall effectiveness

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

Grade: 3 (Satisfactory)

The overall performance of Qurtoba Intermediate Girls School is satisfactory. Students and their parents are satisfied with the school.

The academic achievement of students is satisfactory. Most students achieve high success rates in most subjects. Their proficiency levels in most lessons; however, do not match these success rates. The traditional teaching methods contribute to the disparity between the rates of success and proficiency in most subjects. The teaching methods observed concentrated on teaching the whole group to the average academic level and did not take into account individual differences in those lessons and the tasks assigned to students.

The students' personal development is satisfactory. Students are also aware of the importance of looking after school property, although a small number of students behave inappropriately. Students participate enthusiastically in internal and external activities, but this enthusiasm is less in most lessons, which lacks excitement and stimulation. Some students have self-confidence, an ability to work independently and a sense of responsibility, developed through some of the tasks entrusted to them in extra-curricular activities. Such opportunities were few, however, in most lessons. Students' analytical thinking is developed to only a satisfactory level, as little of the teaching focuses on higher-order skills.

The quality of the teaching and learning process is satisfactory. Most lessons start on time, but varying standards of classroom management make some lessons less effective than others. Some of the observed lessons were good and teachers used effective strategies to gain students' attention, which made them enthusiastic about their lessons, and raised their motivation to learn. Students participated well in such lessons. In most lessons, however, the teacher was at the centre of the educational process and relied too heavily on the blackboard and textbooks. Most of the teachers depended on oral questioning to assess students during lessons and failed to properly evaluate the extent to which students met the objectives of their lessons.

The presentation and enhancement of the curriculum are satisfactory. The school's curricular and extra-curricular activities enhance the students' experience and satisfy their different interests. The school environment outside the classroom enriches the curriculum but most classes do not enrich the curriculum as a result of the lack of teaching aids. The curriculum is presented in a way that enables students to acquire only satisfactory basic skills in reading and writing in English, as a result of the teaching methods that focus too heavily on knowledge rather than skills. The school develops students' computer and manual skills more effectively.

The support and guidance provided for students are satisfactory. The school provides a satisfactory induction programme for new students to ensure that they settle in easily. The preparation of students for the next educational stage is less satisfactory, as the school develops the students' basic skills required for the secondary stage to only a satisfactory level. The school meets students' personal needs according to available resources but does not meet educational needs as effectively. The school provides a safe environment and risk-free environment for students, which reflected on the students' feeling of safety and security. However, Communication with parents is not done regularly or systematically.

The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The school has a shared vision focusing on achievement but the operational plans for different departments vary in their assessment mechanisms and performance indicators. The school self-assesses some aspects of the school system. It is also aware of its strengths and the areas to be developed. The school meets some of the training needs of its teaching staff through some professional development programmes, but the impact of such programmes are not reflected in the performance of teachers in satisfactory lessons.

□ Does the school have the capacity to improve?

Grade: 3 (Satisfactory)

The school has satisfactory capacity to improve and develop due to having clear objectives in its operational plan; students have progressed in their academic achievement throughout the past three years, particularly those higher achievers and talented students due to the support provided. In addition, the school's self-evaluation is effective in some aspects yet, there is still some variation in evaluation procedures and setting succinct indicators for some objectives so that impact on teaching and learning in lessons can be measured. Having substitute teachers of core subjects is one of the obstacles that hinders the school in moving forward.

The school's main strengths and areas for development

Main Strengths

- High rates of success in school examinations
- Attendance and punctuality
- Enthusiastic participation in internal and external activities
- Use of the school environment outside classrooms
- Computer and manual skills
- Security and safety procedures

Areas for development

- Basic skills in reading and writing English
- Consideration of individual differences in teaching and learning
- Self-evaluation.
- Development of higher-order thinking skills
- Use of assessment and benefiting from its results.

What the school needs to do to improve

In order to improve further, the school should:

- Develop teaching and learning strategies in terms of:
 - Using assessment in lessons to know and meet the needs of students
 - Taking individual differences into account in activities and homework
 - Developing basic skills in reading and writing English
 - Providing opportunities for the development of higher-order thinking skills and challenging the capacity of students.
- Develop a time-bound strategic plan based on the results of self-assessment and include measurable performance indicators and clear assessment mechanisms
- Develop self-assessment procedures
- Establish clear mechanisms to monitor the personal growth and academic development of students
- Ensure that reserve teachers of the basic subjects are more settled to ensure a proper educational process.

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	3: Satisfactory