



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

Schools Review Unit Review Report

**Al-Razi Primary Boys School
Al-Diyah - North Governorate
Kingdom of Bahrain**

Date Reviewed: 18 - 20 January 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 six 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: 666

Age range: 6-12 Years

Characteristics of the school

Al-Razi Primary Boys School is one of the Northern Governorate's schools, founded in 1980 in Al-Diyah region. The age range in the school is from 6 to 12 years and there are 666 students. Most students come from middle-income families. Students are distributed across 23 classes in two cycles: three classes for each of grades 1, 4 and 5, four classes for each of grades 2 and 3, and six classes for grade 6. The school categorises 30% of its students as outstanding, 2% as talented and 9% as having special educational needs. The school has 61 teaching staff and 12 administrative and technical staff. The Principal is in his first year in the school. The school has no assistant principal, no senior teacher for English or science, no specialist for students with special educational needs or outstanding and talented students, and there is only one social advisor. Al-Razi School is part 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 Al-Razi Primary Boys School is satisfactory. Students and their parents are satisfied with the school.

The students' academic achievement is satisfactory. Most students achieve high pass rates in school examinations. Their achievement in lessons, however, varies according to the teaching methods used. Some students achieve levels in line with their abilities in lessons, especially in the good and outstanding ones. The progress of the outstanding, talented and the special educational needs students is limited in inadequate lessons, and in some of the satisfactory ones. The teaching methods in these lessons do not match their educational needs and the school does not offer them suitable programmes. Support programmes for low achieving students vary in quality and are not well coordinated and these students do not make consistent progress. The school does not have effective mechanisms to monitor the progress of different groups of students.

Students' personal development is satisfactory. Most students attend regularly and punctually. Some of them contribute enthusiastically to school life, in areas such as sport and art education, which helps their personal development. Their participation in lessons, however, varies according to the teaching methods. Students' higher thinking skills are developed effectively in the good and outstanding lessons but less successfully in the satisfactory and inadequate lessons. Most students enjoy good relations with each other and act with awareness and responsibility. They show this responsibility by taking care of school property, although a few of them do not show enough concern for the cleanliness of their surroundings. Most students feel safe in school, except for a few who were unhappy about the inappropriate disciplinary methods of some teachers. The school is taking the necessary procedures to curb such practices.

The effectiveness of teaching and learning processes is satisfactory. About half of all observed lessons were good or outstanding. Most teachers know the study subjects well and this is particularly reflected in the good and outstanding lessons. In such lessons, teachers used varied teaching methods to raise students' enthusiasm and motivation. This was not the case in the inadequate lessons, particularly in English, as well as some of the satisfactory lessons; in these lessons, teaching methods such as dictation were over-used. Students are not given enough opportunities to work together and to learn from each other, nor are

individual differences sufficiently considered; the homework set is the same for all students. Different assessment methods are used in lessons but no beneficial use is made of the assessment results to plan learning.

The quality of curriculum presentation and enrichment is satisfactory. The school makes good use of its environment to enrich its curriculum. It does this by using wall hangings and various educational resources, which produces an environment conducive to learning. The school's wooden classrooms, however, are not suitable for learning and limit the movement of both the teacher and the students. The school offers activities that develop the experiences of some of the students, such as sports and arts activities, but there are not enough such activities for all the students, especially the talented. Students' basic skills in Arabic are developed well, but their English skills are developed inadequately. IT skills are enhanced by employing websites in competitions.

The effectiveness of guidance and support programmes is satisfactory. The school inducts new students in a suitable manner, but its induction for students' transition to the second and third cycles is not sufficient. It also meets students' personal needs by providing practical help. Its success in meeting their educational needs is patchy, however, being better in the good and outstanding lessons and limited in the inadequate lessons and some of the satisfactory ones; the school's efforts in this area are insufficiently coordinated to be able to achieve effective results. Teachers provide effective support in the good and outstanding lessons, which motivates students to make better progress, but support is less effective in the satisfactory and inadequate lessons. The school evaluates risks related to health and safety appropriately; the wooden classrooms, however, are potentially dangerous.

The effectiveness of leadership and management is satisfactory. The school's management plays an effective role and is generally aware of the school's strength and areas for development. It delegates responsibilities appropriately. As the school's management is new at the school it has not yet brought about improvements in all aspects of the school's performance. The school has a five-year-old vision that focuses on achievement; its influence could only be seen in good and outstanding lessons. It also has a strategic plan based on SWOT analysis, aspects of which, such as improving the school environment, have been implemented. The plan does not, however, include performance indicators and its execution has not been followed up accurately. The school has ineffective mechanisms to seek the opinions of students and their parents and does not respond sufficiently to their views.

Does the school have the capacity to improve?

Grade: 3 (Satisfactory)

The school's capacity to improve is satisfactory. The most important recent improvements can be seen in the consolidation of personal and social relationships among teachers and improvements in the environment. Some of these improvements include: wall hangings, educational boards, initiating the morning broadcast, designing electronic lessons and communicating with students through websites.

The school Principal is generally aware of the school's strengths and areas for development but has not yet been effective in addressing all the areas for improvement. The school has a strategic plan based on SWOT analysis and elements such as improving the environment have been achieved. The fact that good and outstanding lessons make up half of all lessons also shows that the plan has had success. The school is not, however, monitoring the plan's implementation accurately.

The school suffers from shortages in some leadership positions, because of the transfer of the Principal, assistant principal and some of the senior teachers all at the same time. This has caused confusion in the operation of organisational and administrative matters, which has affected the school's general performance. This shortage is one of the most important challenges the school faces, in addition to pushing towards stability in teaching and learning processes, accurate self-evaluation of performance and monitoring the strategic plan after setting clear performance indicators.

The school's main strengths and areas for development

Main Strengths

- School examination results
- Students' attendance and punctuality
- Extra-curricular activities
- Use of the school environment in curriculum enrichment
- Basic skills in the Arabic language
- Meeting personal needs

Areas for development

- Teaching and learning strategies
- Basic skills in English
- Consideration of individual differences
- Benefiting from the results of assessment
- Higher thinking skills
- Self-evaluation
- Monitoring the progress of different groups of students
- The strategic plan

What the school needs to do to improve

In order to improve further, the school should:

- Develop effective and varied teaching and learning methods, so as to:
 - Benefit from the exceptional practices of some teachers
 - Develop students' basic skills in English
 - Consider individual differences to meet students' educational needs
 - Use assessment results in planning learning
 - Develop higher thinking skills
 - Provide more opportunities for students to work together and learn from each other.

- Use self-evaluation in a more effective and organized way, to improve performance

- Set performance indicators in the strategic plan and monitor progress towards their achievement

- Establish more structured mechanisms to monitor the progress of different groups of students

- Fill the shortages in human resources: assistant principals, social advisors, senior teachers and special educational needs specialist.

- Tackle the shortages in facilities, such as the science and family education laboratories and e-classroom

- Replace the wooden classrooms with rooms more suitable for teaching and learning.

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