



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

# **Schools Review Unit Review Report**

**Saar Primary Girls School  
Saar - Northern Governorate  
Kingdom of Bahrain**

**Date Reviewed: 26 - 28 April 2010**

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## The Schools Review Unit

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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**

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### **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: Girls

Number of students: 741

Age range: 6-12 years

### **Characteristics of the school**

Saar Primary Girls School is one of the Northern Governorate schools and was founded in 1993. The age range in the school is from 6 to 12 years, and there are 741 students. Students are distributed across 24 classes, four classes for each level. Most students come from middle-income families. The school categorises 189 of its students as outstanding, 146 as talented and 62 as having special educational needs. There are 73 teaching and administrative staff. The headmistress is in her second year at the school. The school is lacking two senior teachers for the English and Science departments and some electronic learning resources. It has no science laboratory or family education classroom. The school is part of King Hamad's Schools of the Future project and the English language teaching project for first grade students.

## Overall effectiveness

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### □ How effective is the school in meeting the needs of students and their parents?

#### Grade: 2 (Good)

The overall effectiveness of Saar Primary Girls School is good. Students and their parents are very satisfied with the school.

Students' academic achievement is good. Most students, the first cycle students in particular, achieve high pass and proficiency rates in school examinations. The proportion of outstanding students is increasing in both cycles. In more than half of the lessons observed, students showed good levels of understanding and knowledge. Students also perform well in written work and show good mastery of basic skills such as reading and writing in Arabic, mathematics skills and information technology (IT) skills. Some students' skills in writing and reading aloud in English were less well-developed. Students' results in core subjects are good, compared with those for the past three years. Students also generally make appropriate progress in most lessons, where effective teaching strategies are used that meet their differing educational needs. Different categories of student make good progress in line with their abilities; they are given good support outside lessons.

Students' personal development is good. Most students attend school regularly. They show great eagerness to learn and plenty of enthusiasm and self-confidence in educational situations. Some students assume leading roles and take responsibility in a variety of extra-curricular activities. Students behave well in and outside lessons; they show good awareness, and keep the school facilities clean and tidy. In many lessons, their higher thinking skills are developed effectively, but the teaching strategies used in some of the satisfactory lessons observed limited their opportunities to develop these analytical thinking skills. Most students feel safe at school and have good relationships with each other and with the administrative and teaching staff.

The effectiveness of teaching and learning strategies is good. Most teachers know the study materials well and reflect this in highly effective teaching and learning strategies that suit students' needs. These strategies include brainstorming, cooperative learning and the use of electronic learning in some lessons, which raise students' enthusiasm and motivation to take part. Most teachers assign homework, mark it regularly and give feedback to students in an effective manner. Some homework activities take into account students' individual differences, develop their analytical thinking skills and challenge their abilities, but to a lesser degree than happens in classroom activities. Teachers use a good variety of

assessment methods and use the results to reinforce students' strengths and work on their areas for development, which helps to raise students' academic achievement.

The quality of curriculum enrichment and delivery is good. In most lessons, the curriculum is delivered in a thoughtful and coherent way that focuses on providing students with the basic skills of a subject. The school develops in students a good understanding of their rights and duties by encouraging their participation in a number of educational programmes and activities; their sense of citizenship is also enhanced by taking part in national festivals and competitions that encourage community spirit. The school environment is employed effectively to promote concepts and knowledge that enrich the curriculum. The school celebrates students' work well and creates a motivating environment for learning. Most students can pursue their interests by participating in various extra-curricular activities, such as the agriculture and theatre committees. Students and their parents are very appreciative of the role that the school activities play in enriching students' experiences and supporting their personal and academic development.

The quality of support and guidance for students is good. The school inducts new students who join the school and prepares students effectively for their move to the next stage of education; this has a good impact on helping them get involved in the educational atmosphere. The school gives appropriate financial support to students who need it, as well as supporting students with health concerns. Students' educational needs are assessed and met in most lessons; special categories of students receive good support and guidance, as well as academic support from the special education and talented specialists, which helps students make more progress. Guidance and advice are also provided to help solve students' problems and instil ethical values in them. The school communicates with parents through a variety of channels; these activities are better organised in the first cycle. The school monitors safety and security issues properly and trains staff in evacuation procedures. Staff are pleased to be working in a safe and healthy environment.

The effectiveness of leadership and management is good. The school has a shared vision that is clearly embedded in the school's practices and activities, and reflected in teachers' performance in most lessons. The school also has a strategic plan, based on the findings of an analysis of the school's position; it has had a positive effect on students' progress, academically and personally. A self-evaluation committee, which involves school staff and parents, assesses most aspects of the school's work; the findings of the evaluation are used effectively to improve the overall performance of the school. The school's managers have played a significant part in fostering good relationships among staff and raising the professional competency of teachers, which has been of benefit in their performance in lessons. Financial resources and educational facilities are used effectively to meet students' educational needs and particularly to overcome shortages in equipment and facilities, especially those related to electronic learning. The school listens to the views of students and

their parents and responds to suggestions as best it can; students and parents are very pleased with the overall performance of the school.

**□ Does the school have the capacity to improve?**

**Grade: 2 (Good)**

The school's capacity to improve is good. It uses the findings of its accurate self-evaluation to develop and implement an effective strategic plan and developmental plans. These plans are translated well in practice, with the effective participation of some excellent teaching and administrative staff. The school's actions have had a positive effect on improving the overall performance of the school, particularly its teaching and learning processes. The school has brought about other improvements, in areas such as the professional competency raising programmes for teachers and the academic achievement and personal development of students. The school's senior leaders adopt principles of shared decision-making and teamworking; the school is in a good position to achieve further improvement in the future.

## **The school's main strengths and areas for development**

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### **Main Strengths**

- Students' results in school examinations
- Strategic planning
- Self-evaluation
- Teaching and learning strategies
- Regular attendance
- Participation in school life
- Safety and security
- Inspiring and motivating school staff.

### **Areas for development**

- Developing higher thinking skills
- Considering individual differences in homework assignments
- Challenging students' abilities in written work
- Basic skills in English related to reading and writing.



## What the school needs to do to improve

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### In order to improve further, the school should:

- Employ teaching and learning strategies that suit students' needs so as to:
  - Benefit from the good and outstanding practices at the school
  - Further develop students' higher thinking skills
  - Challenge students' abilities to a greater extent in written work
  - Take greater account of individual differences when assigning homework.
- Ensure students master the basic skills of English, especially skills related to reading and writing
- Address the shortages in human and physical resources.

## Overall judgements

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Aspect	Grade: Description
<b>The school's overall effectiveness</b>	<b>2: Good</b>
The school's capacity to improve	2: Good
Students' academic achievement	2: Good
Students' progress in their personal development	2: Good
The quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning	2: Good
The quality of the curriculum delivery	2: Good
The quality of guidance and support for students	2: Good
The quality and effectiveness of leadership and management	2: Good