



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

School Review Unit Review Report

Saar Primary Boys School
Saar - Northern Governorate
Kingdom of Bahrain

Date Reviewed: 11 – 13 May 2009

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The School Review Unit

The School 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 drive up 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, pupils and parents. This report summarises their findings and recommendations.

Information about the school

Gender of students: Boys

Number of students: 523

Age range: 6 -11 years

Characteristics of the school

Saar Primary Boys School, located in the Northern Governorate, was established in 1993. The students are distributed amongst 20 classes (four classes for each grade). The school accommodates a total of 523 students ranging between 6-11 years. Most of the students belong to families that are from a middle economic and social background. 21 students are categorized as students with learning difficulties in cycle 1, and 1 student in cycle 2. 5 students are categorized as disabled, 224 high attainers and 67 gifted and talented. There are 31 teachers in the school. The principal is new to the school and is in post for the first year.

Overall effectiveness

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

Grade: 2 (Good)

The overall effectiveness of Saar Primary Boys School is good. Parents' and students' level of satisfaction is good.

Generally, the students' level of academic achievement is good. The students' success rates are high in most subjects except for English where success rates are low in grade 3. The students make good progress in both Arabic and Mathematics. This was due to the application of diverse teaching strategies in most lessons and differentiating activities in good and some satisfactory lessons. As a result, students achieve progress which is appropriate to their abilities.

Students' personal development is good. Students attend school regularly and are punctual. They participate enthusiastically in extra-curricular activities such as "library friends" and sports activities. In addition, in most lessons, students participate effectively because of the use of student-driven strategies such as cooperative learning. This enhances students' ability to work individually and collectively and creates harmonious relationships with the staff. However, higher-order thinking skills are not effectively developed. Students feel safe and show respect for their classmates and staff.

The effectiveness of the teaching and learning process is good. Teachers know their subjects well and employ effective teaching strategies that are student-centred and use various methods of assessment that encourage students' acquisition of basic skills, understanding and knowledge. Furthermore, students' abilities are challenged in good lessons. However, some of tasks and homework are not differentiated to ensure they match the learning needs of students.

The provision and enrichment of the curriculum is good. The curriculum is enriched in various ways. This is evident in the development of students' understanding of their rights, duties and responsibilities, their sense of citizenship and extra-curricular activities broaden their experience. The school's resources are used to enhance experience and improve the school environment. Whilst, cross curricular links are made in some lessons, it was not consistently achieved.

The quality of support and guidance of students is good. The school has an induction programme for its new students in the beginning of the academic year. The school identifies

students' personal and educational needs and satisfies them. However, the school's support in some lessons was not at the right level to meet the various students' educational needs. The school provides programmes that prepare students for their next phase in education. It also makes sure that the students and staff have a secure and safe environment to learn and work.

The effectiveness of leadership and management is good. The school has a vision and mission statement and a strategic plan focusing on improvement and development. The school also carries out self-evaluation of its programmes and this has led to identifying its priorities and including them in the schools' strategic plan. The school organizes workshops and training courses for its teachers which have had a big impact on their enthusiasm to use various teaching strategies and unique projects such as using technology in lessons. They also regularly seek the views of students and their parents through students' and parents' councils and respond to them.

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

Grade: 2 (Good)

The capacity to improve is good. This is largely due to the good leadership and management by the principal and the assistant principal who have introduced some effective practices. The school makes good use of self evaluation to identify strengths and areas for improvement. Strategic planning plays a positive role in promoting performance improvement which has had a big impact on students' achievements. Other recent improvements are in enhancement of relationships between the management and the staff, and the tangible changes in the school environment and enrichment.

The school's main strengths and areas for development

Main strengths

- Self-evaluation.
- Strategic Planning.
- Progress in Arabic language and mathematics.
- Use of student focussed strategies.
- Attendance and punctuality of students.
- Extra-curricular activities
- Safety in the school environment.

Areas for development

- Performance in English language in grade 3.
- Higher-order thinking skills.
- Differentiation in some tasks and homework.
- Links between subjects

What the school needs to do to improve

In order to improve further, the school should:

- Employ effective and varied teaching strategies which:
 - Develop higher-order thinking skills.
 - Take into consideration the individual differences of students for lessons and homework

- Improve the students' performance in English Language in grade 3.

Overall judgements

Aspect	Grade
The school's overall effectiveness	2: Good
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	2: Good
The quality of guidance and support for students	2: Good
The quality and effectiveness of leadership and management	2: Good