



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

Schools Review Unit Review Report

**Saffeya Bint Abdulmutaleb Primary
& Intermediate Girls School
Hamad Town– Northern Governorate
Kingdom of Bahrain**

Date reviewed: 10-12 May 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

Review Scope

This Review was conducted over three days, by a team of seven Reviewers. During the Review, Reviewers observed lessons and other activities, examined students' written 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: 745

Age range: 6-15 years

Characteristics of the school

Saffeya Bint Abdulmutaleb Primary-Intermediate Girls School is located in Hamad Town, in the Northern Governorate. It was founded in 1963. The age range in the school is from 6 to 15 years, and the number of students is 745 in total. The students are distributed amongst 24 classes (6 classrooms in the first cycle, 6 classrooms in the second cycle and 12 classrooms in the third cycle). The school categorized 38 students as talented and gifted, 150 as outstanding and 53 students have learning difficulties. Most students belong to limited-level economic backgrounds.

The number of administrative staff is 15 members, and the number of the teaching staff is 60 teachers. The Principal has been in the school for her fifth academic year. The school has some shortage in human resources such as a second assistant principal and two senior teachers of English and Mathematics. The school is one of His Majesty King Hamad's Schools of the Future, fourth phase.

Overall effectiveness

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

Grade: 2 (Good)

The overall effectiveness of Saffeya Bint Abdulmutaleb Primary-Intermediate Girls School is good. The school also gains good satisfaction of parents and students.

The students' level of academic achievement is good. Students achieve high success and proficiency rates in most of the school and Ministry's examinations. These reflect the students' levels of knowledge and understanding in most lessons, particularly in English, as a result of employing effective teaching and learning strategies. Students' high success rates are consistent with the students' standards in all subjects in the first and second cycles; however, they are less in Mathematics only in the third cycle. Students achieve a clear level of progress and good proficiency rates compared with their success rates in most lessons and assignments as a result of employing interesting teaching methods, problem solving techniques and diversity in class activities that meet most students' needs. However, they are not given sufficient opportunities to develop their higher order thinking skills in some lessons. In addition, individual differences are catered for in most extra-curricular activities, consequently, the majority of students achieved levels of progress appropriate to their abilities.

Students' personal development is good. Students are aware, responsible, well-behaved inside and outside classrooms, punctual and attend lessons on time. Moreover, they enthusiastically take part in classes and various cultural and national events, such as mathematical thinking, library reading and Tajweed (Quran recitation) competitions. This is in addition to their participation in the Community Service Committee and taking on a number of leadership roles that develop their self-confidence and self-motivation, such as the organisation of lectures, giving guidance in the morning assembly and assuming responsibilities. Further, most students enjoy good relationships with their peers and teachers. The students feel safe and secure in the school.

The effectiveness of teaching and learning processes is good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and manage class behaviour and present lessons well. Teaching strategies and educational resources are very effective, various and motivating students towards learning. Examples are the use of learning aids, cards, cooperative learning, dialogue and discussions. These strategies are positively reflected on the students' academic achievement, their effective participation in lessons and acquiring basic knowledge, concepts and skills. This is in contrast to satisfactory lessons that relied on asking questions to measure lower order

thinking skills. Despite students being assigned homework activities and feedback being regularly given, individual differences are insufficiently taken into account. Further, assessment methods are applied to ensure achieving lesson objectives. Moreover, assessment results are used to identify main strengths and areas for development and are met through various activities. Assessment results and tests are also used to enrol students in various remedial programmes and extra-curricular activities, which are mirrored in their academic achievement.

The provision and enrichment of curriculum is good. A number of internal and external activities, events and national festivals are organised in addition to the employment of citizenship corners inside and outside classrooms and the celebration of HM the King's speeches with regard to education issues. This is clearly reflected in developing the students' sense of belonging, loyalty, behaviour and their maintenance of the school's vital facilities and utilities.

The school is keen to beautify its facilities with displays and educational aids to create a motivating learning environment. It also posts educational aids in corridors and corners and celebrates the students' work. This effectively contributed to creating a stimulating environment. All students, particularly the talented and gifted ones, are also given opportunities to take part in extra-curricular activities to promote and develop their talents and experience. These are carried out through organizing events and programmes that cater for differentiation. In addition, students' times are effectively invested in various activities during breaks through the erection of "My school... a source of knowledge" tent whose various scientific, technical and social corners are effectively used. This positively reflected on the students' personal development and assist them in acquiring significant soft skills. Basic skills and subjects are inadequately linked and integrated in the first cycle. Students acquire good basic skills in reading, writing, numeracy and IT in most lessons. However, in the third cycle, students' acquisition of basic numeracy skills is still in its early stages compared to the first and second cycles.

The quality of support and guidance given to students is good. Induction programmes and educational meetings for Grade 1 students and intermediate phase students are organized when initially joining the school and this helped them easily settle in school. In addition, induction programmes set up by the school help ease the Grades 3, 6 and 9 students onto the next levels. The school identifies the students' personal and educational needs and supports them when any behavioural or psychological problems arise in accordance with the available resources. Further, students are given support inside classes. The school also communicates well with the parents, assesses the security and health hazards and trains its staff and students on evacuation. This creates a healthy atmosphere and secure environment for all the school staff and students.

The effectiveness of leadership and management is good. The school has a shared vision focused on achievement and it is translated in most lessons. The school also has a strategic plan that focuses on the improvement and development of various areas. Despite the plan being based on the analysis of the school's reality, it lacks some performance indicators. The school assessed most of its areas well and involved parents in such assessment. It also seeks to motivate, inspire and raise the professional competencies of most staff, which positively reflected on the overall performance. The management also seeks to fill the shortages in human resources, such as a second assistant principal and two senior teachers of English and Mathematics by delegating powers to some teachers. Moreover, it seeks the opinions of students and their parents through the distribution of surveys and questionnaires to identify the main strengths and areas for development. This creates an overall satisfaction with the school.

□ Does the school have the capacity to improve?

Grade: 2 (Good)

The school has good capacity to develop and improve. The school has a strategic plan that focuses on achievement and raises the overall performance according to the school's leadership priorities. The school's leadership is committed to sharing its decisions and seeks to promote a culture of development among teachers. It conducted a comprehensive self-evaluation of most of the school's work flow, which is reflected in most students' personal development and academic achievement. The management has made clear efforts in enhancing the human relationships among its staff. In addition, it effectively introduced improvements to the learning environment and employs its utilities to create a motivating learning environment. This has a positive impact on improving the overall performance of the school.

The school's main strengths and areas for development

Main Strengths

- Self-evaluation
- Strategic planning
- Development of the spirit of citizenship
- A motivating learning environment
- Teaching and learning strategies
- Students' standards in the school and Ministry's examinations
- Basic skills in reading and writing in Arabic, English, numeracy and IT
- Students' behaviour
- Support given to students
- Security and safety.

Areas for development

- Developing analytical thinking skills
- Link between subjects in the first cycle
- Lack of performance indicators in the strategic plan
- Differentiation in assignments
- Basic skills in Mathematics in the third cycle.

What the school needs to do to improve

In order to improve further, the school should:

- Develop teaching and learning strategies that focus on the following:
 - Developing higher order thinking skills to a greater degree
 - Taking individual differences into account in homework activities
 - Helping students to acquire basic skills in Mathematics in the second cycle
 - Linking between subjects in the first cycle to a greater extent.
- Complete the performance indicators of the strategic plan.

Overall judgements

Aspect	Grade: Description
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 delivery	2: Good
The quality of guidance and support for students	2: Good
The quality and effectiveness of leadership and management	2: Good