



الهيئة الوطنية  
للمؤهلات وصنمان جودة التعليم والتدريب  
National Authority for Qualifications &  
Quality Assurance of Education & Training

# **Schools Review Unit Review Report**

**Sar Primary Boys School  
Sar - Northern Governorate  
Kingdom of Bahrain**

**Date of Review: 8-10 October 2012**



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## The Schools Review Unit

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The Schools Review Unit (SRU) is part of the National Authority for Qualifications and Quality Assurance of Education and Training (NAQQAET) that was officially set up in 2008 as an independent body governed and supervised by the Council of Ministers. It is established to raise standards in education and training.

The SRU is responsible for:

- evaluating and reporting on the quality of provision in all schools and kindergartens
- establishing success measures
- spreading best practice
- making recommendations for school/kindergarten improvements.

Review involves monitoring standards and evaluating the quality of provision against a clear set of indicators. The reviews are independent, objective and transparent. They provide important information for schools and kindergartens about their strengths and areas for improvement to assist in focusing efforts and resources as part of the cycle of school improvement in order to raise standards.

Review grades are awarded a four-point scale:

<b>Grade description</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
Outstanding (1)	Outcomes or provision are at least good in all areas and outstanding in the majority.
Good (2)	Outcomes or provision are at least satisfactory in all areas and good in the majority.
Satisfactory (3)	A basic level of adequacy. There are no major weaknesses, or the majority of areas are satisfactory. Some areas may be good.
Inadequate (4)	There are major weaknesses or the majority of areas are inadequate.

## Introduction

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 data concerning the school's performance and other documents, and talked with staff, students and parents. This report summarises their findings and recommendations.

### Characteristics of the school

<b>School's name</b>		Sar Primary Boys School											
<b>School's type</b>		Government											
<b>Year of establishment</b>		1993											
<b>Age range of students</b>		6-11 years											
<b>Grades (e.g. 1 to 12)</b>		<b>Primary</b>				<b>Middle</b>				<b>High</b>			
		1-5				-				-			
<b>Number of students</b>		<b>Boys</b>	440	<b>Girls</b>	-				<b>Total</b>	440			
<b>Students' social background</b>		Most students belong to middle and limited income families.											
<b>Classes per grade</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>
	<b>Classes</b>	3	3	3	3	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Town /Village</b>		Sar											
<b>Governorate</b>		Northern											
<b>Number of administrative staff</b>		4 administrative and 3 technicians											
<b>Number of teaching staff</b>		39											
<b>Curriculum</b>		Ministry of Education											
<b>Main language(s) of instruction</b>		Arabic											
<b>Principal's tenure</b>		4 years											
<b>External assessment and examinations</b>		NAQQAET national examinations											
<b>Accreditation (if applicable)</b>		-											
<b>Number of students in the following categories according to the school's classification</b>		<b>Outstanding</b>			<b>Gifted &amp; Talented</b>			<b>Physical Disabilities</b>			<b>Learning Difficulties</b>		
		135			30			1			31		
<b>Major recent changes in the school</b>		-											

## Table of review judgements awarded

Aspect	Grade: Description			
The school's overall effectiveness	3: Satisfactory			
The school's capacity to improve	3: Satisfactory			
	Elementary / Primary	Middle / Intermediate	High / Secondary	Overall
Students' academic achievement	3	-	-	3
Students' personal development	3	-	-	3
The quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning	3	-	-	3
The quality of the curriculum implementation	3	-	-	3
The quality of support and guidance for students	3	-	-	3
The quality and effectiveness of leadership, management and governance	3	-	-	3

### Key:

- 1: Outstanding
- 2: Good
- 3: Satisfactory
- 4: Inadequate

## Review judgements

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### Overall effectiveness

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

#### **Grade: 3 Satisfactory**

The school's overall performance has changed from being good in the previous review, in May 2009, to satisfactory in this one. The school's strategic plan variedly reflects the students' acquisition of basic skills, except in English in the first cycle and Arabic in Grade 1, where they are less well developed due to the limited teaching and learning strategies used. Efforts have been made in creating an attractive environment, utilising the school's various facilities to serve the learning process sufficiently well. The second cycle students participate enthusiastically and with self-confidence. The social guidance department gives special attention to solving students' problems, meeting their personal needs and supporting those with learning difficulties. Approval of the school's performance by students and their parents is satisfactory.

- How strong is the school's capacity to improve?**

#### **Grade: 3 Satisfactory**

The school's capacity to improve is judged satisfactory in this review. It also has made use of self-assessment tools in diagnosing its situation in relation to the different educational processes it provides and in preparing a strategic plan from which an action plan has been developed. However, capacity to improve is not good because the monitoring and implementation mechanisms are not accurate or flexible enough. This has limited students' academic and personal achievement and the quality of teaching and learning. This is attributed to the variation in classroom management and educational support. Improvements are evident in the school's environment, its maintenance operations and its purposeful educational corners. Additionally, the school provides professional improvement programmes, arranges exchange visits to spread effective practice and uses its facilities to enrich the students' experiences.

## Students' achievement

### □ How well do students achieve in their academic work?

#### Grade: 3 Satisfactory

Grade 3 students attained below the national average in the national examinations in both Arabic and mathematics in 2009 and 2010. They were close to the national average in Arabic, slightly above in mathematics in 2011 and slightly below in 2012 for both subjects. These results reflect the students' satisfactory achievement levels in most lessons, especially in mathematics.

Students achieved high pass rates in core subjects in school examinations in 2011-12, which ranged from 87% to 100%. These rates are commensurate with the proficiency rates. The high pass rates reflect most students' good levels of achievement in the better lessons due to effective teaching. However, they do not reflect students' actual levels of achievement in the rest of the lessons because of the variance in classroom management and the educational support provided, which are generally satisfactory. Most students in both cycles adequately acquire mathematical and scientific skills such as basic computation and simple enquiry. However, acquiring the basic skills of Arabic and English is too varied. For example, Arabic skills such as reading and writing were good in Grade 5, but only adequate in both Grade 4 and across the first cycle. The students' acquisition of English skills is only adequate, but it is good in information technology.

Students' high pass rates were stable during the consecutive years from 2010 to 2012 in all core subjects in the second cycle. However, levels in the first cycle slightly decreased in those subjects. Most students make good progress in the good lessons, such as in Arabic in Grade 5. These lessons enable students to achieve the learning goals due to the activities that challenge their abilities. Students make satisfactory progress in the rest of the lessons and sometimes good progress in English in the first cycle, because of the consideration of students' individual differences in those lessons.

Students with learning difficulties make good progress according to their abilities through special educational programmes and effective support. Most outstanding and talented students make good progress in line with their abilities in most lessons and enrichment programmes as their abilities are variedly but generally challenged appropriately. However, the progress made by low achieving students is not at a similar level because of the limited educational support provided to this group of students.



## □ How good is the students' personal development?

### Grade: 3 Satisfactory

Most students participate well in school life. They celebrate national and regional events and participate in competitions such as 'Latifa bint Mohammad for Child Creativity'. Students also take part in committees such as 'Police Society', 'Young Paramedic' and 'Library and Environment Friends'. Some students show good leadership abilities and self-confidence in taking responsibility, especially in the morning line up, as a result of the opportunities provided. This shows students' enthusiasm, their ability to work together and their lively participation in good lessons. However, these students are in the minority. The rest are not offered similar opportunities to improve their self-confidence and leadership roles.

Most students show responsibility in looking after the school's facilities. They show good understanding of Bahraini culture by participating in national events and preserving the cultural corners. They observe Islamic values, as they show respect to their teachers and classmates, and provide help when needed. However, some students show signs of misbehaviour in some lessons and during recess, despite the school's programmes to enhance behaviour, such as the 'Stop' programme and the guidance signs displayed around the school.

Attendance is good. The social guidance department takes the necessary actions in cases of absence. Activities that aim to increase the students' motivation to attend regularly such as the 'Surprise Box' and the encouragement rewards are effective.

## The quality of provision

### □ How effective are teaching and learning?

### Grade: 3 Satisfactory

Most teachers have good subject knowledge. This is reflected in their enthusiasm, gradual presentation of material in most lessons and the various methods and examples used in the introductory activities. They use some effective teaching and learning strategies, such as cooperative working, learning through play and acting, but these are limited to the minority of good lessons. Educational resources, such as the class environment, smart boards, models and educational cards, which have significant impact on the students' motivation and participation, are widely used. Teachers encourage students through rewards, which increase their participation and motivation towards learning. Additionally, students' acquisition of knowledge, concepts and skills is generally satisfactory, except for English

skills in the first cycle and Arabic skills in Grade 1 where the teaching does not produce outcomes at a consistently satisfactory level.

Most teachers provide students with adequate opportunities to develop their higher order thinking skills, especially in good lessons, such as determining the parts of speech in Arabic and recognizing the difference between 'x and y' in mathematics. However, these opportunities are not enough to challenge students' abilities in most lessons, which limit their expected progress. Students are assigned an adequate amount of homework that is coordinated, but corrected to varied standards. Students are given feedback in the form of encouraging words and grades. Whilst constructive, this is often not critical enough.

Lessons are effectively planned and managed, especially the good lessons. Generally, lessons have satisfactory planning and management where the educational goals are achieved. However, this is not effectively achieved in those lessons where teachers move to other goals without ensuring that students have understood, and where differentiated learning objectives are not considered.

Teachers use various evaluation methods in most lessons such as questions and written activities for groups and individuals. Furthermore, these are used in lesson planning and in identifying students' educational needs which are addressed by providing students with adequate educational support. However, the support provided for low achieving students is less in most lessons due to the poor consideration of individual differences, thus their progress is less than it could be.

### **□ How well does the implementation and enrichment of the curriculum meet the educational needs of the students?**

#### **Grade: 3 Satisfactory**

Most students' acquisition of the basic life skills for the next educational stage is adequate rather than good. That is attributed to the variance in curriculum implementation across the school. Subjects are linked in the first cycle but less so in the second, which leads to students' inconsistent application of the skills they have learned. The curricula sections are adequately analysed and enhanced through explanatory summaries to meet the changing needs for most students. Furthermore, the school enriches most students' experiences and interests through their participation in school events and activities such as the 'School Community Police', acting, and in enrichment activities for outstanding and talented students who participate in activities such as the 'Multiple Intelligence' competition. The remedial programme provides good experiences for students with learning difficulties. However the

programmes and activities for low achieving students only adequately meet their educational needs.

The school promotes students' citizenship through the programmes used in the morning assembly and across the school. Students participate in national events such as National Day which enhances students' understanding of their rights and duties. Furthermore, the school utilises the attractive environment to stimulate learning and develop students' values and behaviour. The school celebrates students' work, especially in the first cycle and effectively uses all available facilities such as the learning resource centre and the computer laboratory.

### **□ How well are students guided and supported?**

#### **Grade: 3 Satisfactory**

Though guidance and support is satisfactory overall, the school inducts new students very well by using a programme that presents exciting cartoon characters and national songs that help them settle and feel stable at school. It prepares Grade 3 students for transfer by visiting fourth grade students to hear them explain the systems in Grade 4. Students in Grade 5 are also well prepared for transfer through guidance, and the visits to the schools they will go to next, to make sure they are adequately prepared.

The school diagnoses students' personal needs, provides financial support and identifies their educational needs after analysing findings from diagnostic tests. It uses its resources to support students with learning difficulties and those with physical disabilities, which contribute to their progress. It provides talented students with adequate support through having them participate in its committees and competitions such as 'Bahrain is my Kingdom and Environment'. However, the remedial programmes for low achieving students are not at a similar adequate level.

Parents are regularly informed of their children's progress through the open day, extended office hours, reports and comments in their notebooks, thus enabling them to be aware of their children's academic progress.

Risks related to health and safety are assessed and training and information are provided to ensure a safe environment.

## Leadership, management and governance

- How effective are leadership, management and governance in promoting high achievement, strong personal development and school improvement?

### Grade: 3 Satisfactory

The school has a shared vision and mission that has been translated into specific goals within a strategic plan. The plan is based on self-evaluation in which the school community has participated through questionnaires. The findings have been used to identify the areas of strength and those in need of improvement. However, the plan performance indicators are not clear enough to measure the students' progress. This leads to varied performance in the school's work, especially regarding the students' academic achievement and teaching and learning processes. This has a negative impact on students' acquisition of basic skills, especially in English.

The school's senior leadership inspires the staff through encouragement and recognition of any distinguished performance. It promotes good relations among teachers, which positively reflects on their performance in good lessons. Some of the administrative and teaching tasks are delegated to address the shortage in human resources represented in senior teachers of English and science, and an administrator for financial and administrative affairs.

The school monitors, evaluates and develops teachers' performance partly through class exchange visits. It prepares and organises courses and workshops such as 'Classroom Management', 'E-learning' and 'Lesson Planning' to meet the teachers' needs and raise their professional competency. This has a positive impact on most of the teachers' performance in most lessons as a variety of teaching and learning strategies are applied. However, support provided to low achieving students is not enough. The school uses its available resources to serve the educational process adequately, in addition to turning one of the gymnasium into a design and technology class, and another classroom into a science laboratory.

The school seeks the opinions of students and their parents. It makes use of the students' and parents' councils and responds to their suggestions, where possible, for example in ensuring coordination in homework and the examinations' timetable across subjects.

The school communicates with the local community such as the 'Buday'e Health Centre', the dairy products factory, the nearby schools and kindergartens to enrich the students' experiences. The school's board of directors discusses important issues and provides teachers with recommendations based on its findings from monitoring.

## **The school's main strengths**

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- The attractive school environment and various learning corners
- The use of the school facilities to serve the teaching process such as the science laboratory, and the design and technology classroom
- The attention given to students with learning difficulties and those with special needs.

## Recommendations

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

- raise students' academic achievement and develop their English basic skills in both cycles, and in Arabic in Grade 1
- monitor the implementation of action plans and development programmes to ensure of the school's overall performance improves
- develop students' awareness inside and outside classes
- use effective teaching and learning strategies to achieve:
  - better classroom and time management
  - good support for different students' groups to meet their educational needs, especially the low achievers
  - more opportunities to challenge students' abilities and increase their knowledge.