



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

# **Schools Review Unit Review Report**

**Sehla Primary Girls School  
Bu Quwa - Northern Governorate  
Kingdom of Bahrain**

**Date of Review: 9-11 April 2012**

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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 national authority, attached to the Cabinet and set up under Royal Decree No. 32 of 2008, amended by the Royal Decree No. 6 of 2009. 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 seven 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>		Sehla Primary Girls School											
<b>School's type</b>		Government											
<b>Year of establishment</b>		1986											
<b>Age range of students</b>		6-12 years											
<b>Grades (e.g. 1 to 12)</b>		<b>Primary</b>				<b>Middle</b>				<b>High</b>			
		1-6				-				-			
<b>Number of students</b>		<b>Boys</b>	-	<b>Girls</b>	598				<b>Total</b>	598			
<b>Students' social background</b>		Most students belong to middle and good 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	4	3	3	4	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Town /Village</b>		Bu Quwa											
<b>Governorate</b>		Northern											
<b>Number of administrative staff</b>		11											
<b>Number of teaching staff</b>		52											
<b>Curriculum</b>		Ministry of Education (MoE)											
<b>Main language(s) of instruction</b>		Arabic											
<b>Principal's tenure</b>		One year											
<b>External assessment and examinations</b>		QAAET's 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>	
		319				171			Physical (1) Mental (2)			98	
<b>Major recent changes in the school</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appointment of school principal in the current academic year 2011-12</li> <li>• Appointment of social worker in the current year.</li> </ul>											

## Table of review judgements awarded

Aspect	Grade: Description			
The school's overall effectiveness	1: Outstanding			
The school's capacity to improve	1: Outstanding			
	Elementary / Primary	Middle / Intermediate	High / Secondary	Overall
Students' academic achievement	1	-	-	1
Students' personal development	1	-	-	1
The quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning	1	-	-	1
The quality of the curriculum implementation	1	-	-	1
The quality of support and guidance for students	1	-	-	1
The quality and effectiveness of leadership, management and governance	1	-	-	1

### 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: 1 Outstanding

The school's overall performance has changed from being judged good in the previous review in October 2009 to outstanding in this one. This is attributed to the effectiveness of the leadership and management in focusing the efforts of the school and incorporating the partnership principle in seeking excellence. This is evident in the students' self-confidence, their ability to handle responsibility, take leading roles and managing self-learning. Academic achievement is higher than usually expected because of effective teaching and learning strategies, a motivating learning environment and support programmes that highly contributed to the students' mastery of the basic skills. Students are particularly skilful at writing in English, arithmetic and in their analytical thinking. The school's success is clearly reflected in the appreciation expressed about it by students and their parents.

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

#### Grade: 1 Outstanding

The school's capacity to improve is outstanding because of several factors. Realistic goals are set, which are achieved in the students' academic distinction and well above average results in the national examinations. Particularly good results were attained in Arabic and English in 2010 and 2011 respectively. In addition, the students achieved advanced positions in several competitions, such as one involving research in science. These outcomes are a result of outstanding provision in teaching, curriculum implementation and support and guidance. They are well set to continue because of excellent leadership. Strategic planning is based on an accurate and comprehensive self-evaluation and includes clear and measurable performance indicators focused on the correct priorities.

## Students' achievement

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

#### Grade: 1 Outstanding

Students in Grade 3 attained above average results in the national examinations in Arabic and mathematics over 2009-2011. In particular, the results were well above average in Arabic in 2010. Grade 6 students attained above average results in all core subjects. These high results reflect the outstanding levels of achievement by the vast majority of students in lessons, especially in Arabic.

The students attained high rates in the school examinations, which ranged from 92% to 100% in all subjects over the past three years and the first semester of the current academic year 2011-12. Their rates are highly commensurate with their proficiency rates in all subjects across the whole school, especially in Arabic and English, which reflects the students' actual achievement levels in the vast majority of lessons. The students distinctly acquire the required skills, concepts and knowledge as a result of effective teaching. The vast majority of students demonstrate a mastery of the basic skills in all subjects well above the level normally expected for their age. This is true for reading, writing and speaking skills in Arabic and English, in arithmetic and IT in Grades 4 to 6. Scientific enquiry skills are well developed across the whole school, but especially in Grade 6.

The students' high success rates over the past three years 2009-2011 were steady in all core subjects across the school. The vast majority of students make significant progress in achieving lesson goals because of their teachers' focus on developing the students' understanding and the challenge they bring to their different abilities by means of activities and tasks planned for this purpose. Furthermore, the students make excellent progress in their written work as a result of the variety of questions posed which take individual differences into consideration.

Outstanding students also make significant progress in lessons, written work and the various school programmes due to the challenging opportunities they are given. Low achieving students and those with learning difficulties make noticeable progress in the special education programme and remedial programmes such as the 'I can succeed' programme due to the effective support they receive in these programmes and their lessons.

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

### **Grade: 1 Outstanding**

All students participate in school life effectively, express their ideas with confidence and show a sense of responsibility in the roles they take, such as the 'student teacher' and in the 'learning through peers' programme. Their contributions in the morning programme and musical performances attract the attention of other students as serve as good models of behaviour. School committees, such as the 'Nurses' and 'Globe' committees, and the achievement of advanced positions in external contests such as the green land project contribute further. The students' council project, 'My problem has a solution' in which the students took part with the social advisor department to solve the problems other students faced. These opportunities have a significant impact on developing students' positive personal characteristics and self-confidence.

The school community enjoys a spirit of teamwork that is based on good relationships and mutual respect. The students observe good values in class and look after school property well, whilst keeping standards of cleanliness high. Awareness and understanding of the school rules is high. Most students attend school and lessons on time, and this is reflected in their behaviour, motivation towards learning and their notable achievements.

Students have good understanding of Bahraini culture and Islamic values, and participate in many related competitions and events. Display corners promote Bahraini heritage well.

## **The quality of provision**

### □ How effective are teaching and learning?

### **Grade: 1 Outstanding**

The teachers are familiar with their study material and use highly effective teaching and learning strategies to achieve lesson goals. In Grades 1 to 3, strategies such as 'ice-breakers', learning through play and role-play, and teachers singing, motivate students well. In Grades 4 to 6, teaching strategies such as brainstorming and setting problem-solving activities extend learning to high levels. Methods that require deduction in Arabic, English, and mathematics, and exploration and experimenting in science lessons are good examples. Teaching aids such as the interactive board and data shows are used effectively. Students



across the school watch documentary movies which contributed to increasing their motivation to learning and acquisition of skills, knowledge and concepts in the core subjects.

Teachers share lesson goals with students and encourage them by using rewards and motivation. They provide care and support which has a noticeable impact on the students' progress. However, there is room for improvement in the support provided to low achieving students and to time management in seldom lessons. Lessons are generally managed very well in organised and productive ways which increase students' enthusiasm. The students' higher level thinking skills are developed by focusing on speculation, explanation and analysis, and the students' abilities are effectively challenged in the vast majority of lessons by way of questions that require justification, as was the case in a science lesson observed which considerably contributed to increasing their progress well above expectations.

Students are given a suitable amount of homework. This is varied in ways that consider students' different levels of ability, such as 'My duties based on my abilities' and in conceptual mapping work where students' individual differences are a high priority. Correction and follow-up of homework is accurate and regular, and feedback is effective, which enables students to progress because they know what to do in order to improve.

The teachers use various effective assessment methods for groups and individuals. These consist of oral, written and illustrative-drawing assessments in addition to acting, for example. Drawing the tools Sinbad used for traveling and then role-playing their use, and buying and selling items in mathematics assessments of addition. Students are given immediate and continuous feedback to help them improve at their different levels.

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

#### **Grade: 1 Outstanding**

The school provides a set of distinct programmes, such as the 'future roses' for nurturing outstanding and talented students, and the reading project, to improve the achievement of low-achieving students. The students' interests are developed through extra-curricular activities and committees, such as the 'little nurse' and the 'e-learning class' committees. Students do well in many competitions, such as in public speaking, which significantly contributes to developing their varied interests and confidence.

The curriculum is regularly reviewed, supported and simplified by guides, such as the one on language exercises for Arabic, which deals with differentiation. Links between subjects are made according to set plans. These enable students to acquire the knowledge and basic

and technical skills they need through a curriculum of subjects which are logically connected. Life skills are developed through many roles, such as being a 'library-friend'. Students are very well prepared for their next educational stage.

A spirit of citizenship is promoted by giving students the opportunity to take part in the morning programme, activities and festivals such as the National Day. The students show a good sense of awareness of their rights and duties and an understanding of the importance of their role in voting for the council that represents them. The school environment is rich in teaching aids, such as the many educational displays.

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

#### **Grade: 1 Outstanding**

The induction of new students is provided in various programmes which contribute to their stability at school. Advice and guidance about the next stage of education is provided and enhanced by making visits to other schools.

Students' personal and educational needs are diagnosed and the findings are used to support them. Coupons are given to students in need, so that they can buy from the canteen, for example, and various effective programmes are offered to meet the students' educational needs such as the 'Court' and the future flowers programmes for outstanding and talented students. Low-achieving students have intensive lessons through the 'I can succeed' programme and parental projects such as 'I learn to teach my child', which contribute to the students' personal development and considerable progress in lessons.

Students receive advice and guidance on their personal problems. The guidance department holds workshops on 'decision-making' and projects such as 'My problem has a solution', which help students to feel cared for and safe. A safe and healthy environment is well maintained. Health checks and records and evacuation drills reflected on students feeling safe and secure.

Parents are regularly informed of their daughters' academic progress through various channels such as the open day, weekly periodicals and educational publications. This effective communication between home and school contributes to resolving potential concerns before they arise.

## **Leadership, management and governance**

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

### **Grade: 1 Outstanding**

The school has a shared vision that seeks further achievement and to prepare students for building a bright future. It has a strategic plan that focuses on the quality of performance and includes clear and measurable performance indicators. The plan is based on the findings of accurate school self-evaluation, which includes organised monitoring mechanisms for all areas of work and logistics. These cover the environment and facilities, in addition to measuring the satisfaction of the school community such as taking the views of parents and teachers into consideration when determining priorities especially in relation to the development of high quality teaching and learning strategies.

The senior and middle leadership gives attention to raising teachers' professional competency through organising many training workshops. These are on issues such as introductory activities and differential education. Conducting class and exchange visits to share expertise in order to meet teachers' professional needs are very effective, including the awarding of appreciation certificates for distinguished teachers. The school uses its material resources well, such as the e-learning classroom and the learning resources centre which contributed significantly to improving the overall performance of the school.

The school explores the views of students and their parents and responds to suggestions, such as rearranging the mid-term examinations schedule and performing educational and charitable visits, to the Yuko Elderly House, allocating a special portal for the exit of students, and train parents to review mathematics with their daughters. The school also made use of the parents' council to spread the culture of national examinations throughout the village.

The school effectively communicates with the local community in order to enrich the students' experiences. This is represented in performing educational visits and making use of the health services provided by the Bilad Health Centre. Additionally, the school holds lectures in cooperation with community services. It monitors the work flow in the academic and technical departments via the school board and technical committee meetings, which help improve the monitoring mechanisms at the school. The external improvement team has had an important role in improving the educational practices despite its recentness, particularly in the discussion sessions on class situations and the areas that need most improvement.

## The school's main strengths

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- The students in Grades 3 and 6 attain levels that are above average in the national examinations in all core subjects over the years 2009 to 2011
- The strategic plan which is focused on important development and improvement priorities and which includes clear performance indicators based on an accurate and comprehensive self-evaluation
- The students' ability to take responsibility and leading roles, which is reflected their self-confidence
- The effective use of teaching methods and the quality of assessment used, including correcting students' work and using findings to improve the teaching and learning processes which in turn lifts levels of achievement
- Developing and enhancing the students' higher order thinking skills and challenging their abilities
- The students' awareness of the available channels for help when they are needed as a result of the high quality care students receive.

## Recommendations

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

- spread best practices as much as possible to ensure continued outstanding performance
- learn from the outstanding support at the school in providing support for low achieving students and raising their levels of performance in lessons.