



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

Schools Review Unit Review Report

**Sh. Mohamed Bin Isa Al-Khalifa Primary Boys School
Muharraq – Muharraq Governorate
Kingdom of Bahrain**

Date of Review: 24 - 26 December 2012

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The Schools Review Unit

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:

Grade description	Interpretation
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

School's name		Sh. Mohamed Bin Isa Al-Khalifa Primary Boys School															
School's type		Government															
Year of establishment		1981															
Age range of students		9-10 years															
Grades (e.g. 1 to 12)		Primary				Middle				High							
		4-5				-				-							
Number of students		Boys	189	Girls	-				Total	189							
Students' social background		Most students come from middle and limited income families.															
Classes per grade		Grade		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12		
		Classes		-	-	-	3	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Town /Village		Muharraq															
Governorate		Muharraq															
Number of administrative staff		3 administrative and 4 technicians															
Number of teaching staff		20															
Curriculum		Ministry of Education (MoE)															
Main language(s) of instruction		Arabic															
Principal's tenure		5 years															
External assessment and examinations		None															
Accreditation (if applicable)		-															
Number of students in the following categories according to the school's classification		Outstanding				Gifted & Talented				Physical Disabilities				Learning Difficulties			
		60				11				-				20			
Major recent changes in the school		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appointment of a senior Arabic teacher in conjunction with another school. 															

Table of review judgements awarded

Aspect	Grade: Description			
The school's overall effectiveness	2: Good			
The school's capacity to improve	2: Good			
	Elementary / Primary	Middle / Intermediate	High / Secondary	Overall
Students' academic achievement	2	-	-	2
Students' personal development	2	-	-	2
The quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning	2	-	-	2
The quality of the curriculum implementation	2	-	-	2
The quality of support and guidance for students	2	-	-	2
The quality and effectiveness of leadership, management and governance	2	-	-	2

Key:

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

Review judgements

Overall effectiveness

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

Grade: 2 Good

The school's performance has changed from inadequate in the previous review in 2009 to good in this one. In the meantime, the school was subjected to two monitoring visits and achieved a judgement of 'sufficient progress' in the latter. Performance is good in all aspects, which is attributed to its effective strategic planning and action, based on self-evaluation and the recommendations of the previous review and monitoring visits. The continuous encouragement of teachers to apply modern teaching strategies that focus on developing basic skills has been significant. This is especially so in Arabic and mathematics. Good attention to teaching critical thinking and problem-solving has broadened students' intellectual capacities. Most students are self-confident and responsible and their work is celebrated in a rich stimulating learning environment. Approval from students and parents is good.

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

Grade: 2 Good

The school's capacity to improve has changed from inadequate in the previous review to good. This is attributed to the leadership's belief that keeping up with educational developments will improve the school's overall performance, which is reflected in their devising of an accurate strategic plan based on the results of self-evaluation and the recommendations of previous reports and implement the comments received from the external improvement partner accurately to raise performance standards. The plan aims to improve the school's overall performance by focusing efforts to improve students' educational and personal development outputs through applying effective strategies. These in turn are raising the standards achieved in school examinations and develop the students' self-confidence and ability to work independently. They promote good values and behaviour in a stimulating learning environment where students' work is celebrated.

Students' achievement

□ How well do students achieve in their academic work?

Grade: 2 Good

Students attained pass rates that ranged from 65% to 89% in school examinations in most core subjects in the academic year 2011-12, among which the lowest rate was in Grade 4 English and the highest was in Grade 5 Arabic. These rates are in line with the competency rates in Arabic and mathematics and are good, while they vary more widely in Grade 4 science and Grade 5 English. High pass rates reflect the students' standards in outstanding and good lessons, such as Arabic and mathematics, especially in Grade 5. Outstanding and good lessons comprise more than two-thirds of the total. This is attributed to effective teaching strategies and the students' motivation to learn. Most students' acquisition of reading and writing skills and use of grammatical and spelling rules in Arabic are good in Grade 4 and even better in Grade 5. Students' acquisition of IT skills, scientific research skills and mathematical skills, such as multiplication and oral problem-solving, are good, while their acquisition of English linguistic skills is satisfactory, especially in writing.

Students' pass rates were stable in most core subjects from 2011 to 2012, and their standards improved in mathematics. Most students progress in a manner that enables them to achieve their lesson objectives in outstanding and good lessons, such as in Arabic, mathematics and science, and they make good progress in written work due to the varied activities which challenge their abilities and consider their different abilities of prior learning.

Outstanding and talented students make good progress. Their abilities are considered well in lessons and other school programmes. This good progress is also attributed to effective curricular and extra-curricular activities and contests, which challenge their abilities and consider their different educational needs. Moreover, students with learning difficulties make good progress in the special educational programme, due mainly to effective teaching support. However, low achieving students do not achieve the same standard of progress due to variation in the teaching support they receive during lessons and in remedial programmes.

□ How good is the students' personal development?

Grade: 2 Good

Most students participate with enthusiasm as they show a good team spirit during lessons, events and activities such as the school broadcast, the morning line-up and the Library

Friends committee. Students express themselves confidently and take leadership roles in various activities, such as the 'student teacher' and participation in the student council and the discipline committee, which also provide them with opportunities to assume responsibility and to work independently.

Most students behave maturely during individual and team work. They observe the school's regulations and attend regularly and punctually because of the motivating programmes. They care for the school's facilities with pride and show good behaviour and respect for each other and teachers. This is attributed to the school's efforts to promote values and carry out guidance sessions, which result in the students feeling secure and stable.

Students demonstrate deep understanding of Bahraini culture, identity and its Islamic values by acting plays and by participating in national events. Their observance of Islamic values and principles is reflected clearly in the morning assembly programme as verses from the Quran are recited and prayers said daily. The students also participate in Islamic contests, such as the Holy Quran and Sunnah contest.

The quality of provision

□ How effective are teaching and learning?

Grade: 2 Good

Most teachers are familiar with their material, which reflects in their enthusiasm about passing knowledge and ability to provide varied examples. They use introductory activities well which help engage the students in achieving lesson objectives. They use varied teaching resources, such as projectors and physical models, and apply interesting teaching strategies, which provide stimulating learning opportunities, such as cooperative learning, learning through exploration and constructive discussion. These motivate students and facilitate their acquisition of knowledge, concepts and skills in most lessons.

Most teachers manage their classes in an organised manner which are well planned, have clear instructions that guide the interesting activities, engage students in the learning process and invest their time in constructive learning. Most lessons are effective and productive. Most Students are provided with good support and encouraged to participate through different methods of reward and stimulus. However, low achieving students do not receive a similar level of support in some lessons. Teachers focus on developing students' higher order thinking skills, such as critical thinking, problem-solving, brainstorming and inference. They also challenge students' abilities in most activities which require analyses and inference, and provide opportunities for creativity and independence, such as creating

short sketches about glaciers in science, This resulted in good progress considering their abilities and starting points.

Teachers assign homework that is stated in lesson plans. They correct it and provide motivating phrases for students in their feedback. They also provide some limited remedial programmes which often consider students' individual differences and usually include feedback which is helpful in improving students' standards of performance. Teachers implement effective assessment methods which include oral and written, individual and collective styles. They use these findings and those of diagnostic tests to address students' problems and devise plans and activities which meet their different educational needs. Teachers involve outstanding students directly in assessment and support activities to help the development of students of different abilities. This is a way of applying the 'student teacher' method, which is popular and effective at the end of lessons.

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

Grade: 2 Good

The school develops the students' understanding of their rights and responsibilities and instils a sense of loyalty and citizenship through programmes and activities which reflect in their good behaviour and participation in national events, such as festivals and contests. Extra-curricular activities and programmes enrich most of students' experiences and meet their varied interests, such as in acting and painting activities where they are assigned to different committees each month to ensure variety. Participation in the morning broadcast and internal and external contests is good, where in an external contest one of the talented students ranked first in the Kingdom.

Teachers analyse the content of the curriculum and support it with teaching portfolios. Their way of explaining and supporting the curriculum facilitates the students' good acquisition of basic skills and life skills, which are developed comprehensively across the different subjects. This prepares them well for the next stage of their education as they are confident in solving problems and assuming leadership roles.

The school enriches its attractive environment with educational and guidance paintings, and decorates the hallways with educationally stimulating teaching aids, which are used in the different academic subjects. The school's celebration of students' work inside classrooms and all over the school is a distinctive feature.

□ How well are students guided and supported?

Grade: 2 Good

The school organises good induction programmes for new students. These include exchange visits with nearby schools, activities during recess and student guidance lessons that last for up to two months. The findings of diagnostic tests are used in designing plans to improve low achieving students' academic achievement. Weekly remedial lessons in core subjects are provided. Special support programmes are provided for students with learning difficulties. These help students make good progress. Non-native speakers of Arabic are also supported through constituent programs with intensive follow-up in the classrooms.

The school effectively addresses students' social problems and monitors their personal development, such as by noting significant misbehaviour. It deals with issues in cooperation with the parents. It meets their financial needs through the provision of meals and stationary. It organises health and safety oriented programmes and constructive workshops such as the 'Healthy Diet Workshop'. It, monitors safety and security aspects and executes regular evacuation drills.

Outstanding efforts are made to promote values and good behaviour. Guidance visits and awareness raising events, such as lectures, school broadcast programmes and plays are of good quality. The school communicates with parents through text messages, the open day and letters. However, the response of some parents to the school is insufficient.

Leadership, management and governance

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

Grade: 2 Good

The schools' members work enthusiastically to achieve its vision and mission, which focus on students' academic achievement and personal development. These are created collectively. Accurate self-evaluation based on the Outstanding Bahraini School Project and the recommendations in the previous review reports have determined priorities of work in the strategic plan. Furthermore, the operational plans emerged from the strategic plan's general and specific goals, and their implementation achieved a qualitative shift in the

school's performance and greatly improved several aspects, especially personal and academic achievement, and the safety of students.

The school's leadership delegate to qualified staff members some administrative and technical duties, such as monitoring the teachers' performance with regard to the planning processes. They put together a leadership team which cooperates with the internal improvement team in identifying the teachers' training needs and executing training programmes. This is reflected significantly in most teachers' practices, especially with regard to implementing new teaching and learning strategies and using materials and teaching resources in the best way to serve the learning process. The school's earnest endeavours to meet the shortages in facilities are good. These include sheltering the quad as an alternative to the gymnasium, creating a centre for students with learning difficulties, equipping classrooms as an alternative for laboratories, improving the services provided at the learning resources centre and equipping it with technologies appropriate to improving students' academic achievement.

Advantage has been taken of the school's location near archaeological sites. Students have experienced good educational tours. Well-being workshops provided by specialists at Shaikh Salman Health Centre, such as the one on 'dental braces' and of the cooperation with the talented centre have been successful.

The school seeks the opinions of students and parents and responds to their suggestions, such as the ones regarding school trips and remedial lessons. However, the reluctance of some parents affects communication, which requires additional efforts on the school's behalf.

The external improvement team plays a crucial role in advancing improvements in the school. It stays in touch with school members and leads discussion sessions with the internal improvement team, the leadership team and the teaching and learning team. These groups follow up on the priorities of the strategic plan that have been accomplished and those that have not, which results in a significant positive improvement in all areas of school performance.

The school's main strengths

- Applying varied and effective teaching and learning strategies which focus on developing higher order thinking skills in a stimulating learning environment
- Students' acquisition of basic skills in Arabic and mathematics
- Students' self-confidence, ability to assume responsibility and their respect for everybody
- The administration's inspiration of staff with appropriate delegation of authority
- The leadership team's effective monitoring and assessing of teachers' performance.

Recommendations

In order to improve, the school should:

- share and benefit from the effective practices in school to ensure continuous progress in overall performance
- develop the effectiveness of teaching and learning to include:
 - development of English linguistic skills
 - better support for low achieving students
 - reinforcement and enrichment of what is provided in the classroom by utilizing homework.
- widening communication with parents.