



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

# **Schools Review Unit**

## **Review Report**

**Shaikh Abdulla Bin Isa Al-Khalifah Technical  
Secondary Boys School  
Isa Town - Central Governorate  
Kingdom of Bahrain**

**Dates Reviewed: 22-24 March 2010**

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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 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

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### Scope of the Review

This Review was conducted over three days, by a team of 10 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: 1,582

Age range: 16-18 years

### Characteristics of the school

Shaikh Abdulla Bin Isa Al-Khalifah Technical Secondary Boys School is located in Isa town in the Central Governorate, and was founded in 1987. The age range in the school is from 16 to 18 years, and there are 1,582 students. Most students come from limited-income families.

Students are distributed across 68 classes:

- 16 classes for grade 10
- 19 classes for grade 11 (five for the technical route and 14 for the applied route)
- 20 classes for grade 12 (five for the technical route and 15 for the applied route)
- 6 classes for vocational training (four classes for the first year and two for the second)
- 7 classes (five first year and two second) for technical and vocational development programmes (apprenticeship programme)

The school classifies 26 of its students as outstanding and 271 as talented. There are 224 teaching staff and 52 administrative and support staff. The Principal is in his second year at the school. The school is part of King Hamad's Schools of the Future project and the Development of Technical and Vocational Education project (apprenticeship programme, both technical and commercial).

## Overall effectiveness

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

### **Grade: 4 (Inadequate)**

The overall effectiveness of Shaikh Abdulla Bin Isa Al-Khalifah Secondary Technical Boys School is inadequate. The school has satisfactory aspects in students' personal development, support and guidance, curriculum enrichment, and management and leadership. Students and their parents are broadly satisfied with the school.

The students' academic achievement is inadequate. Most students achieve high pass rates, but these rates do not represent the students' actual standards in most lessons. The technical route students, who make up a minority of grades 11 and 12, achieve better rates than the applied students who make up the majority. Most students make limited progress in lessons, where their individual differences are not considered, although they make satisfactory progress on the practical application courses. Outstanding and talented students make limited progress; they are offered no suitable programmes that target the development of their abilities. The school does not accurately identify students with learning difficulties and does not help this group of students adequately. Lower-achieving students, who represent the vast majority of students, do not make enough progress in most lessons: the school's teaching, learning and training methods vary in their effectiveness; students and teachers alike have limited expectations; students are not set clear goals that motivate them and challenge their abilities.

The students' personal development is satisfactory. Most students attend school regularly, although some students do not come to school on time and at the beginning of lessons. The school monitors attendance satisfactorily, which has reflected on students' discipline. Some students participate in school activities. Students generally do not show enough enthusiasm and motivation for learning and do not contribute sufficiently in lessons, where the methods of teaching and learning are based on instruction. The focus in most lessons is on lower-level thinking skills and students are given insufficient opportunities to develop higher-level thinking skills. Most students have good relationships with each other and with their teachers, although there are some unacceptable behaviour, such as smoking by a group of students. The school holds guidance sessions for students, which have had a positive effect on the conduct of some students.

The effectiveness of the teaching, learning and training process is inadequate. More than a quarter of all the lessons observed were inadequate. In the applied route, which accounts for almost half the total number of students, one-third of the lessons were inadequate. Lessons

in the specialised courses are satisfactory. Most teachers have lesson plans, are familiar with their subjects and have sound technical skills, which are reflected in the good lessons. Most teachers, however, rely on direct verbal questions for assessment purposes, which does not help effectively in identifying students' strengths and areas for development. Students are given homework in some lessons, but the assignments are at the same level for all students despite their different learning needs. Students are not given enough opportunities for cooperative work and learning from each other in most lessons.

The quality of curriculum presentation and enrichment is satisfactory. The school runs some extra-curricular activities that are suited to the interests of some students and enrich their experiences, but it does not evaluate the effectiveness of these activities well. Students' sense of citizenship is developed through their participation in national competitions and festivals. The school environment is not used sufficiently to encourage learning, although the practical training workshops were better in this respect than the classrooms. The overall development of basic skills on the specialised courses is satisfactory for most students; it is better in the technical route than in the applied one. On theory courses, students' basic skills are inadequately developed, especially in English. Teachers of specialised courses use Arabic for instruction most of the time, which holds back students' acquisition of English. Vocational skills are reinforced well through some training programmes away from the school, in workplaces.

The quality of guidance and support for students is satisfactory. The school runs a suitable induction programme for new students and invites their parents to an evening session, in addition to organising school visits from the intermediate schools. Students are prepared to their next educational stage by meetings with private and public college and university representatives and are inducted into work through field training; the school also follows up students after graduation. The school assesses students' personal needs adequately and works on meeting them appropriately. Support for students in lessons is insufficient; the teaching methods used do not consider individual differences, especially in inadequate lessons. The school keeps parents informed about their sons' absences and conduct problems but they are not told about their academic progress except at the school open day. The school assesses safety and security risks and takes appropriate measures to minimise them.

The effectiveness of management and leadership is satisfactory. The school has a shared vision and mission that focus on achievement; they are reflected in effective mechanisms to accurately monitor particular performance indicators. The school also has a strategic plan that takes into consideration those indicators; this plan has helped to shape departmental plans but has not had sufficient effect on achievement in lessons and most aspects of students' personal development. The school's self-evaluation is comprehensive. The school has put some effort into raising teachers' professional competency through workshops and several class monitoring visits; these efforts have had a limited effect on the performance of many teachers. The school does not have accurate mechanisms for monitoring the

performance of different groups of students, particularly students with special educational needs. The school communicates with parents and asks their views at the open day; it has responded to some of their suggestions, such as changing some of the evening classes into morning classes. Students' opinions are gathered through the Students' Council. The school does not communicate with labour market representatives enough to identify the market's needs.

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

### **Grade: 3 (Satisfactory)**

The school's capacity to improve is satisfactory. It has formed a unified vision that focuses on increasing students' academic achievement and pass rates. This has led to a small increase in pass rates over the past three years. It has also worked effectively with departments and management to focus on absence, punctuality and students' conduct, which has led to improvements in some of the students' behaviour and discipline.

The school has a suitable system for self-evaluation. The system effectively identified aspects of strength and areas for development; the school understands its situation and is on the right track to improve performance. The school has been able, through its strategic plan, to achieve success in some of the targeted aspects.

The school faces some important challenges: among them the necessity to improve teachers' performance and raise students' achievement by introducing effective professional development programmes. The school also requires more effective mechanisms to identify the needs of the job market and respond to them accordingly.

## **The school's main strengths and areas for development**

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### **Main Strengths**

- Most students acquire practical skills in specialised courses
- Some training programmes carried out in workplaces
- Induction of new students
- Monitoring performance indicators.

### **Areas for development**

- Teaching and learning strategies
- Basic skills, especially in English
- Assessment methods and using the findings
- Considering individual differences
- Higher-level thinking skills
- Giving students the opportunity to work together and learn from each other
- Programmes to raise teachers' professional development
- Students' awareness and motivation for learning
- Progress monitoring mechanisms for different student groups
- Responding to job market requirements.



## What the school needs to do to improve

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

- Develop varied methods of teaching, learning and training to include:
  - Developing basic skills, especially in English
  - Considering individual differences
  - Challenging students' abilities
  - Giving students more opportunities to work together and learn from each other.
- Use more effective assessment methods and use the findings to plan for learning
- Present more effective programmes to raise professional development
- Raise students' awareness and increase their motivation for learning
- Establish effective mechanisms to monitor the progress of different student groups
- Investigate the requirements of the job market and respond effectively.

## Overall judgements

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Aspect	Grade: Description
<b>The school's overall effectiveness</b>	<b>4: Inadequate</b>
The school's capacity to improve	3: Satisfactory
Students' academic achievement	4: Inadequate
Students' progress in their personal development	3: Satisfactory
The quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning	4: Inadequate
The quality of the curriculum delivery	3: Satisfactory
The quality of guidance and support for students	3: Satisfactory
The quality and effectiveness of leadership and management	3: Satisfactory