



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

Schools Review Unit Review Report

**Shahrakan Primary Girls School
Shahrakan - Northern Governorate
Kingdom of Bahrain**

Date Reviewed: 27 - 29 December 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

Scope of the Review

This Review was conducted over three days, by a team of four 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: Girls

Number of students: 377

Age range: 6 - 12 years

Characteristics of the school

Shahrakan Primary Girls School is a Northern Governorate school that was founded in 1986. The age range in the school is from 6 to 12 years. There are 377 students, most of whom come from higher-income families. Students are distributed across 13 classes: three classes for the third grade and two classes for each of the first and second cycle levels. The school categorises 51 of its students as talented and creative, 62 as outstanding and 64 as having learning difficulties; two students have a physical disability. The principal is in her fifth year at the school. There are eight administrative staff and 32 teaching staff. The school has a shortage of senior teachers for all subjects. The school is part of King Hamad's Schools of the Future project.

Overall effectiveness

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

Grade: 3 (Satisfactory)

The overall effectiveness of Shahrakan Primary Girls School is satisfactory. It is good in the aspects of students' personal development, curriculum enrichment and presentation, student support, and leadership and management. Students are exceptionally satisfied with the school and their parents are very satisfied with it.

The students' academic achievement is satisfactory. Students achieve high pass rates in most school examinations. Their performance in more than half the observed lessons was satisfactory; in these lessons, the teaching methods used and the written work given to students were varied and effective. Students' proficiency in basic skills is varied; they achieve good proficiency in the basic skills of Arabic but are weaker in other subjects, particularly English and mathematics. Comparing results over the past three years, students' progress is steady in most subjects. Students generally achieve levels in line with their abilities; lower achievers benefit from the care of the learning difficulties specialist; some remedial plans are made for students falling behind; and the talented and outstanding students are helped by taking part in various competitions and activities. In lessons, however, students' progress is inconsistent; the activities they are given do not consider sufficiently their different levels of ability.

Students' personal development is good. Most students attend school regularly and arrive on time. Most of them contribute well to school life through a range of activity classes, competitions and programmes that give them plenty of opportunities to increase their self-confidence and develop their different personal and mental abilities. Students are not given the same level of opportunities for personal development in lessons. The students have good awareness and show positive behaviour. They show respect for each other and their teachers and care for the school environment. They feel safe and secure in the school; although there is some unacceptable behaviour, the school monitors this closely.

The quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning are satisfactory. Most teachers have good subject knowledge, which was particularly reflected in the good and excellent lessons observed. In these lessons, teachers managed the class effectively and used a variety of strategies that focused on students as the centre of the teaching process. They considered students' levels of ability, challenged their different abilities through the activities and assessments provided and used teaching resources effectively. These practices benefited students' acquisition of skills, concepts and knowledge. In other lessons, however, the

teacher was too much the focus of activities and the students' roles were limited to answering direct verbal questions; their different levels were not considered and their abilities were insufficiently challenged. The assessment methods used in these lessons did not always accurately measure students' performance. Time management was poor in some lessons. Although cooperative work is used in some lessons its effectiveness varies because tasks and roles are not clear assigned. Students are given homework and activities in most lessons but the work is the same for all students and does not consider their different levels.

The quality of curriculum enrichment and presentation is good. The curriculum is enriched by activity classes that cater for students' different interests. A good variety of extra-curricular activities and events enhance students' personal development. The school develops students' understanding of their rights, duties and spirit of citizenship through morning assembly activities, celebrating national events, and using school committees. The school environment is used particularly well to enhance the curriculum by enriching it with students' work, celebrations of their achievements and various educational and guidance displays; the environment is one that increases students' motivation to learn. The linking between subjects in the first cycle is good but is not effective in the rest of the lessons despite being emphasised in daily lesson plans.

The quality of student guidance and support is good. New students are inducted well when they join the school and when moving to the next stage of education; this is done by going on field visits between the first and second cycle levels and by visiting intermediate schools. The students' personal needs are identified and met according to the school's available resources. Their educational needs are met effectively: the learning difficulties programmes; remedial lessons in some subjects; intensive classes in mathematics; and the participation of talented and outstanding students in various activities and competitions all contribute to the progress of these groups. The support given to students in lessons is not at the same level, however, and students' abilities are not always considered when presenting activities. The school makes good efforts to solve students' problems and provides them with guidance programmes to promote positive behaviour, which benefit their personal development. Communication with parents is done through a range of channels, which parents appreciate. The school ensures that it provides a healthy and safe environment for staff and students.

The quality and effectiveness of leadership and management are good. The school has a clear and shared vision which focuses on achievement and from which the strategic plan has been built, based on a comprehensive analysis of the school situation. The plan has had a positive impact on all aspects of the school's work, especially the students' personal development and the school environment. The school is well aware of its areas of strength and those in need of development; it monitors all aspects of its work and involves most staff. It does not make consistent use of its findings, however, especially those related to the development of the teaching and learning process. The school's senior and middle managers inspire their staff by supporting educational projects and delegating authority, which makes

teachers keener on development. The school identifies the training needs of its staff and meets them in a variety of ways; this has had a positive impact on teachers' performance in most lessons. The school facilities and resources are used to support the educational process. The school involves students and their parents well in its work and responds to some of their suggestions, which increases their approval of the school.

□ Does the school have the capacity to improve?

Grade: 2 (Good)

The school's capacity to develop and improve is good. The school has a strategic plan that was built based on an accurate and comprehensive evaluation of the school situation. The plan has had an impact on performance in several areas, such as the students' personal development, the school environment, the encouragement and training of staff and the school's support for educational projects. The school still faces challenges, such as monitoring the impact of training in some lessons, but the leadership is fully aware of the school's strengths and areas for development and is carrying out continuous monitoring and improvement.

The school's main strengths and areas for development

Main Strengths

- Strategic plan
- High pass rates in school examinations
- Students' personal development
- Students' feelings of safety and security
- Student support outside lessons
- Extra-curricular activities
- Seeking and responding to parents' suggestions
- The school environment.

Areas for development

- Student support in lessons
- The students' acquisition of basic skills in mathematics and English
- The consideration of students' levels in lessons and homework
- The development of higher thinking skills
- Challenging students' abilities
- Cooperative work.

What the school needs to do to improve

In order to improve further, the school should:

- Develop the teaching and learning strategies, to ensure:
 - That students acquire better basic skills in mathematics and English
 - Different student levels are considered in lessons and homework
 - Students' higher thinking skills are developed and abilities challenged
 - Subjects are integrated in the first cycle
 - Cooperative learning is used
 - Assessment findings are used to diagnose and meet students' educational needs.
- Use the findings of self-evaluation more effectively to meet students' educational needs.
- Raise teachers' professional competency and monitor the impact of training.

Overall judgements

Aspect	Grade: Description
The school's overall effectiveness	3: Satisfactory
The school's capacity to improve	2: Good
Students' academic achievement	3: Satisfactory
Students' progress in their personal development	2: Good
The quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning	3: Satisfactory
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