



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

# **Schools Review Unit Review Report**

**Sitra Primary Girls School  
Sitra - Central Governorate  
Kingdom of Bahrain**

**Date Reviewed: 24 - 26 May 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 five 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: 362

Age range: 6-12 years

### **Characteristics of the school**

Sitra Primary Girls School is a Central Governorate school and was founded in 1991. The age range in the school is from 6 to 12 years and there are 362 students. Most students come from limited-income families. Students are distributed across 12 classes: six classes for each cycle and two for each grade. The school categorises 37 of its students as talented and creative, 113 as outstanding and 34 as having special educational needs; two students are physically disabled. The Principal is in her third year at the school. There are 40 teaching and administrative staff. The school has vacancies for senior teachers of Arabic, English and Mathematics and an administrative and financial affairs supervisor. The school is part of King Hamad's Schools of the Future project.

## Overall effectiveness

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### □ How effective is the school in meeting the needs of students and their parents?

#### Grade: 2 (Good)

The overall effectiveness of Sitra Primary Girls School is good. Students are exceptionally satisfied with the school and their parents are very satisfied with it.

The students' academic achievement is good. Most students achieve high pass rates in final examinations, which match their proficiency rates and their performance levels in lessons. Students' pass rates over the past three years have remained high in most subjects as a direct result of the effective teaching methods used and the consideration of individual differences in most lessons and written work. Most students reach levels in line with their abilities, especially in good lessons, where they are given plenty of opportunities to participate and ask questions. Students do not make the same degree of progress in some satisfactory lessons. The special educational needs specialist works well to follow up students who are falling behind academically.

The students' personal development is good. Most students attend school regularly and punctually; the school takes appropriate action to deal with lateness, which has benefited students' discipline. Students are given many opportunities to participate in a good variety of events and committees, which increases their enthusiasm to participate in school life, to broaden their experiences and develop their personal awareness. Students develop their self-confidence by participating in various extra-curricular activities and learn to take on leadership roles. The relations between students are good and are reflected in their awareness, responsible behaviour and acceptance of each other's opinions. During class activities, students work harmoniously, which helps to create healthy competition and motivates them. Most students feel secure at school; there are no risks or behaviour that intimidate them.

The effectiveness of the teaching and learning processes is good. Teachers know their study materials and reflect this knowledge in a variety of teaching strategies that ensure that most students are active and participating. The good use of educational and modern technical resources helps to hold students' attention and raises their motivation for learning. Students' abilities were generally challenged sufficiently in the questions and activities used in observed lessons, but this was not done enough in some satisfactory lessons. Most students' individual differences are considered so that they acquire the knowledge and skills they need to advance; this was done less effectively in satisfactory lessons observed, especially in relation to mathematical skills. Most teachers organise their lessons well to ensure that

lesson goals are achieved and students participate in various class activities. Students are given plenty of homework that considers their individual differences and that is referred to in most lesson plans. Most teachers give appropriate feedback on homework, which helps students to make progress. In outstanding and good lessons, teachers use a variety of assessment methods to measure the extent to which students have learned, mastered skills and made progress, in order to provide the support students need; assessment is insufficient, however, in some satisfactory lessons.

The quality of curriculum enrichment and delivery is good. The school environment and facilities are used exceptionally well to enrich the curriculum: educational displays feature throughout the school. Students' work is celebrated throughout the school yards, which are full of interesting paintings for this age group. The school promotes a spirit of citizenship in students by participating in national activities and events, and students' understanding of their rights and responsibilities is developed well through talks and lectures. The school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities through various school committees, which help to develop students' talents and match their different interests. The school provides some activities to reinforce the acquisition of skills and students gain good basic skills in Arabic, English and Information Technology (IT), although students' mathematical skills are less well developed in the second cycle. Although the quality of linking between subjects varies, it is generally done so as to ensure a logical transition between subjects.

The quality of guidance and support for students is good. The school provides a proper induction for new students at the beginning of the school year, as part of which it holds educational meetings with parents. It also prepares students well for their next stage of education by organising visits to intermediate schools and developing students' life skills. Personal needs are well met by providing students with financial support; students' educational needs are effectively met through intensive classes that help them to make progress. The school communicates with parents through text messages, termly reports and an open day but these activities are not done systematically. The school assesses and continuously monitors all risks in the school and provides a healthy and safe environment for all staff and students.

The quality and effectiveness of leadership and management are good. The school has a vision and mission that focus on personal development and the development of students' national loyalty; they were developed with the involvement of school staff and have influenced most practices in lessons. The strategic plan focuses on development and improvement and was built based on an analysis of the school's situation. Departmental operational plans, reflecting the school's general goals, emerged from the strategic plan and have been of benefit to students' academic achievement and the educational environment. The school's leaders are fully aware of its strengths and areas for development; most aspects of its work are evaluated and the results are analysed and used effectively in some areas of

work. The senior managers work well to make the work environment productive and harmonious by encouraging teamwork and motivating their staff; most teachers see change as a positive thing. The senior and middle managers work well to monitor and improve teachers' performance, the results of which are clear in the varied teaching strategies in the good and excellent lessons. The school uses its facilities, such as the learning resources centre and training classroom, appropriately to meet the different educational needs of students. The school seeks parents' opinions and operates an open door policy for parents; it responds to students' and parents views when it can.

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

#### **Grade: 2 (Good)**

The school's capacity to improve is good. It is led effectively by managers who have brought about major changes in all areas by careful planning, effective evaluation and regular monitoring. Teachers are enthusiastic and motivated to work together as a team, which improves the school's overall performance. The school has a comprehensive strategic plan that can be further developed and which was built on the findings of an accurate self-evaluation process. Managers are aware of the school's most important strengths and areas for improvement, which has led them to focus appropriately on teaching and learning strategies in most subjects and the development of basic skills. The school is making progress in all subjects, despite its significant shortages at middle manager level; teachers benefit from the development workshops provided and their performance is continuously monitored by senior and middle managers.

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

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### **Main Strengths**

- School examination results
- Strategic planning
- Self-evaluation
- Teaching and learning strategies
- Challenging students' abilities
- Assessment and using its findings
- Basic skills in Arabic
- Support for students in most lessons
- Team working.

### **Areas for development**

- Consideration of individual differences
- Linking between subjects in the first cycle
- Basic skills in the second cycle.



## What the school needs to do to improve

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

- Develop teaching and learning strategies, so as to include:
  - More consideration of individual differences in lesson planning
  - Better development of basic skills in Mathematics in the second cycle
  - Better linking between subjects.
- Fill the gaps in human resources.

## Overall judgements

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