



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

# **Schools Review Unit Review Report**

**Sumaya Primary Girls School  
Manamah - Capital Governorate  
Kingdom of Bahrain**

**Date of Review: 12 - 14 March 2012**

## Table of Contents

---

<b>The Schools Review Unit .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>2</b>
Characteristics of the school .....	2
<b>Table of review judgements awarded.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Review judgements .....</b>	<b>5</b>
Overall effectiveness.....	5
Students' achievement.....	6
The quality of provision.....	7
Leadership, management and governance .....	10
<b>The school's main strengths.....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Recommendations.....</b>	<b>13</b>

## The Schools Review Unit

---

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>		Sumaya Primary Girls School											
<b>School's type</b>		Government											
<b>Year of establishment</b>		1969											
<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>	333				<b>Total</b>	333			
<b>Students' social background</b>		Most students are from middle-level 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>	2	2	2	2	3	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Town /Village</b>		Manama											
<b>Governorate</b>		Capital											
<b>Number of administrative staff</b>		19											
<b>Number of teaching staff</b>		32											
<b>Curriculum</b>		Ministry of Education											
<b>Main language(s) of instruction</b>		Arabic											
<b>Principal's tenure</b>		4 months											
<b>External assessment and examinations</b>		QAAET 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>	
		126				64			2			68	

<b>Major recent changes in the school</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Appointment of a school principal in the current school year 2011-12</li><li>• Appointment of a principal assistant in 2010-11</li><li>• Appointment of a senior teacher for class teaching in 2011-12</li><li>• The school joined the performance improvement project in 2009-10.</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

---

### Overall effectiveness

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

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

The outstanding level achieved reflects the considerable overall improvement since the school's last review in May 2009 when it was judged to be good. Excellence in all areas is reflected in the students' and their parents' high regard for the services the school provides. In nearly all lessons, a variety of effective teaching strategies are used, such as brainstorming and learning through play. The majority of students acquire basic skills and take leading roles with confidence and responsibility. Practices reflect the high quality of support for outstanding, talented students as well as for others, the various curriculum reinforcement programmes motivate and bring success. Leaders appropriately delegate authority. In addition, the staff are provided with professional development that is well coordinated and where their combined efforts have made a difference.

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

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

The school's capacity to improve has shifted from good in the previous review to outstanding. This is attributed to the accuracy of self-assessment and the quality of strategic planning across the school which is based upon identified priorities and obvious realistic performance indicators. The senior management's efforts have contributed to improving the school's environment, raising teachers' professional competency and reinforcing professionalism. There is a team spirit that promotes students' personal development, good behaviour and national values. The roles performed by the internal and external improvement teams have been highly effective in evaluating educational practices and identifying areas that need improvement. Collective efforts have enabled the school to achieve significant progress and provide the basis for sustaining its services at outstanding levels.

## Students' achievement

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

#### Grade: 1 Outstanding

Students in Grades 3 and 6 generally attain above or well above the national average in the core subjects in national examinations, except in mathematics for Grade 3 students, where they were broadly average in 2011. Eleven students achieved high levels in Grade 6, four of whom got full marks in English. These above average attainment levels are in line with the students' performance and achievement in most lessons, especially the outstanding and the good ones.

The large majority of students also achieve high pass rates in the school examinations, which are in line with their proficiency rates, ranging from 91% to 96.6% in all main subjects in 2011. These rates are reflected in the students' actual performance in lessons and in their written work, as a result of the various teaching strategies that are used which focus on raising the students' attainment.

Students master the basic skills of Arabic in both cycles, and of English in the second cycle. This is also true for the arithmetic skills, and concepts related to fractions. Furthermore, students acquire considerable knowledge and understanding in science, which contribute to raising their level of achievement in most lessons.

The students' high pass rates in all subjects have been consistent over the past three years. Achievement is well above the expected level, especially for second cycle students who make significant progress against the diagnostic tests results and in their academic mid-term examinations. This progress is in line with that achieved in lessons and in their written work due to the effective support, accurate differentiation of activities and well-pitched homework.

Outstanding and talented students are able to develop skills of scientific research through special programmes such as the 'Fruits of the Future' in addition to self-esteem. Effective remedial and enrichment programmes help the less able students and those with learning difficulties to make good progress, achieve well and acquire the skills they need. Students also achieve good positions through their participation in internal and external activities, for example the first place in the 'Patterns Magic' contest.



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

### **Grade: 1 Outstanding**

The large majority of students are enthusiastic about school life. They enjoy taking leading roles in the morning broadcast and in organising teams. The students also make good use of the various opportunities they have been offered to work together during lessons. They run discussions and exchange experiences showing great self-confidence and the ability to take responsibility as a result of the effective teaching strategies. This provides students with opportunities to take leading roles during lessons such as when some students play the role of their teachers. The students' contributions in lessons and extra-curricular activities show their ability to solve problems and express their opinions without hesitation, especially via the students' council and in the young supervisor programme.

Mutual respect, older students helping younger ones and those in the merged class, and keeping the school's property in good condition are evident behaviours. Abiding by the school's rules and regulations, punctuality and effective procedures to encourage attendance, such as honouring committed students with certificates, leads to positive behaviour and nurtures feelings of safety and security. Special programmes to promote personal development are numerous. The students show an excellent understanding of Bahraini heritage, which is clearly reflected in their contributions to national events such as 'Haya Baya', and when designing cards and brochures about the Kingdom of Bahrain. Furthermore, the students' participation in religious occasions reflects their adherence to Islamic values.

## **The quality of provision**

### **□ How effective are teaching and learning?**

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

Teachers have good subject knowledge. This is reflected in the brainstorming activities and their ability to apply effective teaching strategies where lessons are students' centred. Such strategies include cooperative learning, story-telling, learning through play, discussion and dialogue, which have a positive impact on the students' enthusiasm and achievement, and results in the distinguished acquisition of most students' of knowledge, concepts and basic skills. English is the exception where skills are not at the same level in the first cycle due to less effective teaching. Teachers effectively employ different teaching aids such as white and active-boards to encourage students and attract their attention.

Lessons are well organised, productive, as the students are committed to the school rules and code of conduct, which results in a smooth flow of learning and logical transition of activities. The teachers encourage students and motivate them through praise, rewards such as stars, and the 'class queen crown'. However, the support provided for low ability students is not of the same level in a few lessons and represents an area for improvement.

Based on the recommendations of the previous review, students are offered well considered opportunities to challenge their abilities and develop their higher order thinking skills. This enables them to think critically, justify their answers, explain outcomes, creatively look for problem solutions, and deduce conclusions. This is observed in nearly all lessons at all levels, which effectively contribute to enhancing the students' intellectual and mental abilities. The individual differences among students are taken into consideration.

All teachers enrich the various educational practices with differentiated homework which supports learning and challenges students according to their levels. The homework is indicated in lessons plans and regularly marked. Creative writing is encouraged and followed up with constructive feedback, which has a positive impact on the improvement of performance. Moreover, teachers use effective assessment techniques during and outside lessons such as verbal, written, individual and group assessment to ensure that students have achieved the lessons' objectives. The findings of diagnostic and formative assessments are used to accurately identify students' educational needs, provide programmes that are suitable for their performance level, hence, measure their progress.

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

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

Curriculum implementation provides students with various experiences that suit their educational needs during and outside lessons, such as the cultural week event, and the monthly programmes 'The Young Reciter' and 'Mathematical Thinking Skills'. The school's curriculum regularly undergoes revision and analysis, for example recent reviews of science, mathematics and Arabic text-books in the second cycle. The findings are used to prepare supplementary activities, such as summaries for the science subjects.

Implementation of curriculum effectively develops the basic skills of the majority of students. Such skills include literary, mathematical, athletic and scientific capabilities. Self-esteem and life-skills development programmes contribute to preparing students for the next stage of education. The school effectively links subjects so as to enable students study a comprehensive curriculum.

The school gives special attention to developing students' understanding of their rights and duties and getting them ready to take responsibility through application of the rights and duties document. It promotes a spirit of citizenship through various national events such as 'Love of my Homeland', and field visits to famous places such as 'The Crafts Centre'.

The school's environment is enriched with various displays, guidance posters and students' works which are celebrated in and outside classes. This supports learning and promotes loyalty to the school. Moreover, the school cooperates with civil establishments to enrich the students' experiences, which is reflected in the partnership with the Capital Governorate and the Schools' Production Centre which sells the students' products of cups and money-boxes.

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

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

Grade 1 students are easily settled at school due to the effectiveness of the education and entertainment induction programme. Guidance programmes introduce students to the assessment system and special lectures, for example on 'Puberty', contribute to preparing students for the next stage of education. The school has a clear policy for diagnosing students' personal and educational needs. This includes following up students' personal issues, providing financial, in-kind aids and using the findings of diagnostic tests and assessment to provide a variety of effective support and remedial programmes for them based on their needs. The special care for those in the merged 'Jasmine class' is of high quality.

The school carefully monitors the problems the students face and provides tailored guidance programmes which help them overcome difficulties. Parents are regularly communicated to be informed of their daughters' progress through meetings, correspondence notebooks, and assessment reports, which is highly appreciated by them.

The school's stakeholders cooperate in making the school environment safe, healthy and secure. Risks are assessed and standards in the school canteen and around the school buildings are checked and maintained on a daily basis. Training on evacuation drills is given. Additionally, the students' departure is also monitored, which provides a free-of-risks environment when the school is closed.

## **Leadership, management and governance**

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

### **Grade: 1 Outstanding**

All of the school's stakeholders work to achieve the vision and mission of the school, which focus on high achievement. These have been jointly formed in light of the management's belief in shared decision making, careful delegation of authority, high motivation and encouragement, and working in a team spirit.

The culture of self-assessment and planning has become an embedded culture among the school's stakeholders as they work within the 'Bahraini School for Distinction' to accurately assess their educational practices. The findings are used to identify improvement priorities and accordingly, develop sound plans, which have an impact on improving the school's overall performance. Strategic planning represents a high-end product of self-assessment. The planning takes into consideration the recommendations of the school's previous review. Accurate performance indicators reflect the school's awareness of the areas of strength and those in need of development, placing gains in added value especially on students' academic achievement and their personal development.

Teachers' performance is monitored by middle and senior leadership, and by the external 'Sharing Improvement Partner'. Findings inform professional development programmes, which have had a clear impact on the practices of most teachers, especially in developing students' higher order thinking skills and implementing differentiated activities.

The school uses its educational facilities according to fixed schedules to reinforce students' learning and develop their experiences. Such facilities include the science laboratory, the learning resources centre and the e-learning class. In addition, other financial resources are used to support teachers in implementing teaching and learning strategies, providing the needs of the 'We Ascend in Applying our Values' project, and turning a vacant room into a play room to serve the educational process.

The school constantly seeks opinions about its services. The students' and parents' councils are used to receive suggestions, which of many are acted upon. The school is making use of its communications with civil establishments to support and enrich students' educational experiences, for example in providing health lectures, and participation in the orphan money-box project.

The external 'Sharing Improvement Partner' has had a major role in speeding up developments. The team has kept in touch with the school on a weekly and trimestral basis. The administration board participate in discussion sessions to monitor what has been implemented against the priorities in the strategic plan. In this way outstanding improvement has been secured.

## The school's main strengths

---

- Strategic planning based on an accurate, comprehensive self-assessment of the educational practices, which include accurate performance indicators and effective mechanisms for implementation and assessment
- Students' above average attainment in the school and national examinations, and the progress they make in acquiring the basic skills
- Various effective teaching and learning strategies, such as cooperative learning, exploration, learning through play and brainstorming
- Development of students' higher thinking skills, such as critical thinking, explanation and justification, in addition to challenging students' abilities through considering their individual differences in activities and homework
- Programmes and activities provided for outstanding and talented students to meet their educational needs beyond lessons
- Students' self-confidence and their ability to take responsibility and leading roles in activities and school committees
- Provision of a comprehensive curriculum using various methods that ensure transferring knowledge from one subject to another, such as linking subjects with examples and applications of real life situations.

## Recommendations

---

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

- spread best practices in the teaching and learning processes further
- sharpen the focus on:
  - developing students' skills in English in the first cycle
  - providing further support for students with learning difficulties to ensure their academic progress.