



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

Schools Review Unit Review Report

**Yathreb Intermediate Girls School
Hamad Town - Northern Governorate
Kingdom of Bahrain**

Date of Review: 5 - 7 March 2012

Table of Contents

The Schools Review Unit	1
Introduction	2
Characteristics of the school	2
Table of review judgements awarded.....	3
Review judgements	4
Overall effectiveness.....	4
Students' achievement.....	5
The quality of provision.....	6
Leadership, management and governance	8
The school's main strengths.....	10
Recommendations.....	11

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:

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 12 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		Yathreb Intermediate Girls School												
School's type		Government												
Year of establishment		1995												
Age range of students		13 - 16 years												
Grades (e.g. 1 to 12)		Primary				Middle				High				
		-				7-9				-				
Number of students		Boys	-	Girls	1376				Total	1376				
Students' social background		Most students belong to middle-level income families												
Classes per grade	Grade	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
	Classes	-	-	-	-	-	-	13	14	15	-	-	-	
Town /Village		Hamad Town												
Governorate		Northern												
Number of administrative staff		40												
Number of teaching staff		113												
Curriculum		Ministry of Education (MoE)												
Main language(s) of instruction		Arabic												
Principal's tenure		Nine months, beginning from the 2011-12 school year												
External assessment and examinations		MoE's examinations and QAAET national examinations												
Accreditation (if applicable)		-												
Number of students in the following categories according to the school's classification		Outstanding				Gifted & Talented			Physical Disabilities			Learning Difficulties		
		217				150			-			31		
Major recent changes in the school		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appointment of a school principal at the beginning of the current school year 2011-12 • Appointment of two assistant principals and 22 new teachers in the current school year. 												

Table of review judgements awarded

Aspect	Grade: Description			
The school's overall effectiveness	3: Satisfactory			
The school's capacity to improve	2: Good			
	Elementary / Primary	Middle / Intermediate	High / Secondary	Overall
Students' academic achievement	-	3	-	3
Students' personal development	-	3	-	3
The quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning	-	3	-	3
The quality of the curriculum implementation	-	3	-	3
The quality of support and guidance for students	-	3	-	3
The quality and effectiveness of leadership, management and governance	-	3	-	3

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: 3 Satisfactory

The school's overall performance is in line with its satisfactory overall effectiveness at the time of the previous review in March 2009. All of the review areas are no better than satisfactory due to the variation in the effectiveness of teaching and learning, and the support the students receive in lessons and programmes. Although the students achieve the expected levels in most lessons due to their discipline and awareness, their attitude is not at the same level around the school. The new senior leadership of the school has contributed to making the environment stable for the staff and the students by identifying areas of strength and those needing improvement. It has focused its strategic planning on the recommendations of the previous review and shows good capacity to improve. The students and their parents are satisfied with the school's performance.

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

Grade: 2 Good

This school's capacity to improve is good because the leadership is aware of the school's strengths and areas that need improvement. This contributes to inspiring and motivating most of the members, making them feel safe and secure, and creating a conducive learning atmosphere. This enables the school to make improvements and overcome the challenges it faces, especially in relation to the variations in students' academic achievement and personal development. The leadership has focused on the recommendations of the previous review report and has developed an action plan that is clearly contributing to raising teachers' professional competency. The plan is assessed using clear performance indicators. Good impact is reflected in teaching and learning, especially in Grade 9 lessons which are mostly of good quality and secure attainment slightly above the national average.

Students' achievement

□ How well do students achieve in their academic work?

Grade: 3 Satisfactory

The students attain broadly average levels in their national examination results. Their levels remained steady in mathematics and science in 2010 and 2011. They attained levels that were slightly above the national average in Arabic, very close to the average in English and science and within the national average in mathematics. These results reflect the students' adequate performance in lessons.

The students attain pass rates that range between 60% and 95% in the MoE examinations in most core subjects. The proficiency rates vary considerably, especially in Grades 7 and 8, while the high pass rates reflect the students' attainment levels in excellent and good lessons, especially in Arabic and English in Grade 9 as a result of these effective teaching methods. Varied activities, which improve their written work. However, the students' levels in other lessons are not at the same level. They are satisfactory in most lessons due to the varied effectiveness of teaching methods. Most Grade 9 students acquire the basic skills needed in most subjects, such as the language skills in English and Arabic, which are good, while the acquisition of the basic skills at Grades 7 and 8 students in most subjects are only adequate. These students do not acquire the needed skills due to the varied support they receive and the lack of practising these skills during lessons.

Over the years 2009-11, the students' pass rates in most MoE Examination subjects are not steady, while the rates in mathematics has regressed. The students' progress in lessons is satisfactory. This is attributed to the variations in the effectiveness of classroom management and the consideration of differentiation in lessons and written activities. Outstanding students make good progress in most of Grade 9 lessons, however, the rest of the students' progress in the other classes is only satisfactory. Students with learning difficulties make satisfactory progress due to the good support they receive. In addition, outstanding and talented students make progress that matches their abilities through their participation in internal and external activities, such as the athletic contests. However, low achieving students do not achieve progress that matches their abilities, due mainly to the variations in the effectiveness of the remedial programmes they receive.

□ How good is the students' personal development?

Grade: 3 Satisfactory

The majority of students are enthusiastic and motivated to participate in good and excellent lessons, especially in Arabic and English, as a result of the effective strategies that are used.

Their contributions outside lessons are of similar quality because of the opportunities they are given to contribute to athletics programmes and school committees, such as the discipline and agriculture committees. However, this participation in activities is mostly limited to the outstanding and talented students, although other students do have opportunities to develop their self-confidence and take leading roles.

Most students are punctual and attend school regularly. However, there are some cases of them dropping out and joining lessons late, especially after break. The school takes the necessary measures to limit such cases. The students generally share good relationships and respect each other as well as their teachers, which are reflected in their attitudes and generally good behaviour. There are instances of occasional lack of order, such as writing on some of the school walls and minor disruption during breaks. The students demonstrate an adequate understanding of Bahrain's heritage, culture and Islamic values. This is promoted through activities such 'Our Heritage is a Symbol of our Civilization', and through activating 'The Religious and the Behavioural Values' committees that contribute to the promotion of positive behaviour and good manners among students.

The quality of provision

□ How effective are teaching and learning?

Grade: 3 Satisfactory

Most teachers are familiar with their subject knowledge, which is reflected in their use of teaching methods that are suitable for most lessons. Therefore, the students' acquisition of skills, concepts and knowledge is broadly satisfactory. Teachers use various teaching strategies that are well reflected in Grade 9 lessons, where students conduct special seminars using different teaching resources, such as data shows. These have had a positive impact on the students' achievement. Such methods effectively motivate the students to participate in the learning process, especially in the good and excellent lessons. However, using strategies such as cooperative learning are often not so effective. The tasks and the roles allocated to students are not made clear enough, therefore, the impact on the students' achievement is not as good as it could be.

Classroom management is effective in terms of planning teaching and learning, however, time management in lessons is not as effective as it could be, especially at Grades 7 and 8 as it sometimes limits the lessons' productivity as well as the students' participation.

The students are encouraged through praising words and rewards that increase their participation and enjoyment of lessons. Students' different ability levels are considered in

most lessons, especially in Grade 9 lessons. However, the effectiveness of this in mathematics and science lessons in Grades 7 and 8 only reflects their satisfactory progress. Higher level thinking skills are developed in most lessons through comparison, deduction and justification, especially in introductory activities. Students' abilities are adequately challenged in those lessons.

The students are given homework in some lessons that is planned according to their different achievement levels, but most of the homework is not. The students' work is regularly marked but sometimes marking is inaccurate where remarks and feedback do not consistently help students improve their performance. Teachers use assessment methods during good and excellent lessons, especially at Grade 9, such as the verbal, written and applied assessment for individuals and groups, which help students improve their achievement. However, the effectiveness of assessment in other lessons is not at a similar level, as it focuses mainly on verbal assessment only.

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

Grade: 3 Satisfactory

Links between the curriculum aspects and real life situations are applied through techniques that ensure most students acquire satisfactory basic skills for the next stage of their education. This also enables students to study a coherent curriculum. The curriculum is enriched and supported with extra-curricular activities, especially for outstanding and talented students, which mostly focus on sporting contests. These programmes do not include the lower achieving students enough, therefore fail to meet their needs and develop their experiences sufficiently well. The curriculum is reviewed in part, in terms of content, such as reviewing the English books of Grades 7 and 8. In addition, the mathematics curriculum of Grade 7 is analysed for points of improvement and to ensure the implementation of a relevant curriculum.

The school develops students' understanding of their rights and duties and promotes citizenship through various events and festivals, such as a lecture on elections, and through school committees such as the cleanliness and talent committees. These contribute to reinforcing the implementation of a meaningful curriculum. The school environment is used to enrich the curriculum by means of educational aids and guidance boards, which promote positive behaviour, in addition to celebrating students' work.

□ How well are students guided and supported?

Grade: 3 Satisfactory

Induction of new students through a guidance programme in cooperation with parents is effective and enables students to settle easily at school. Students are also prepared for the next educational stage through programmes such as 'Teenagers under the Microscope' and the 'Right Path for the Right Job'. The school identifies and meets the students' personal needs by providing financial and in-kind aid, such as in helping students' with hearing disabilities. Students' educational needs are met through support in most lessons and the special programmes for those with learning difficulties and for outstanding and talented students in extra-curricular activities. However, the programmes provided for low achieving students are not as effective because these have less impact on raising the students' achievement.

The school provides guidance programmes and visits to promote positive behaviour. Programmes such as 'No to Violence', contribute to improving students' conduct, despite a little misbehaviour. The school communicates with parents via the students' academic and conduct forum, convenient office hours and the open day policy, which keep parents well informed of their daughters' progress. It also monitors security issues and organises awareness programmes through the health and safety committee. However, monitoring during break and departure periods is not effective enough; some students complain about the level of service of the school facilities, such as the restrooms.

Leadership, management and governance

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

Grade: 3 Satisfactory

The school has a vision that has been formed jointly across the school's stakeholders and focuses on distinction and improvement. It has developed an action plan based on the recommendations of the previous review, which aims to raise the teachers' professional competency. The plan is assessed according to accurate performance indicators and is having a clear impact on the improvement of teaching and learning, especially in the Grade 9 lessons. The wider strategic plan has been developed by assessing and analysing the school's situation and is focused on correct aspects, including the professional development

of staff and raising students' academic achievement. However, the achievement indicators are not as clear as they are in the action plan and do not include those of students' personal development. The senior and middle leadership are aware of the points of strength at the school and those needing improvement due to the findings of the assessment it has recently conducted.

The leadership has motivated the administrative and teaching staff by strengthening relationships among them and by encouraging and rewarding them for their activities and initiatives. In addition, the school delegates responsibilities well and has raised teachers' professional competency by holding many training workshops on differentiation, cooperative learning and exchanging classes to share expertise. Recently appointed teachers are also given support by conducting workshops such as 'My First Teaching Steps', which is reflected in their performance during excellent and good lessons.

The financial and educational resources, such as the learning resource centre and e-learning classroom, are utilised well. The students' and their parents' views are sought as the school has an open-door policy. Parents' suggestions are discussed in the parents' council, and a workshop entitled 'How to Establish a Friendship with Your Teenage Daughter' is found to be useful. However, using the students' council is not as effective as it might be. The school communicates with the local community to enrich the educational opportunities available. This is represented in programmes such as the lecture on 'good studying habits', which is given by a mother. Additionally, students visit craft exhibitions that contribute to their experiences. The school cooperates with the 'School Improvement Partner' in implementing the performance development programme, however the impact of this cooperation is not yet obvious, because the programme has just started.

The school's main strengths

- Inspiration and motivation, and the provision of a stable environment
- The achievement of Grade 9 students in lessons and their attainment in MoE examinations
- The support for outstanding and talented students in most lessons and the school programmes and activities
- Enrichment of the school environment and utilization of its facilities and educational resources to enrich the learning process.

Recommendations

In order to improve, the school should:

- work on raising students' academic achievement in Grades 7 and 8, in addition to developing their basic skills
- develop teaching and learning strategies so as to include:
 - considering students' different levels in class and extra-curricular activities and homework, especially lower achieving students
 - increasing students' higher-order thinking skills and challenging their abilities
 - using assessment to diagnose and meet students' educational needs.
- implement programmes and procedures to raise students' awareness and standards of behaviour
- develop a strategic plan based on an accurate and comprehensive self-evaluation of all the school's work with a focus on raising students' academic achievement and personal development according to clear performance indicators.