



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

Schools Review Unit Review Report

**Zallaq Primary Intermediate Boys School
Zallaq - Southern Governance
Kingdom of Bahrain**

Date of Review: 30 April and 2 - 3 May 2012

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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 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 eight 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		Zallaq Primary Intermediate Boys School													
School's type		Government													
Year of establishment		1953													
Age range of students		6-15 years													
Grades (e.g. 1 to 12)		Primary				Middle				High					
		Grades: 1, 2, 3 (Cycle 1) Grades: 4, 5, 6 (Cycle 2)				Grades: 7-9 (Cycle 3)				-					
Number of students		Boys		703		Girls		-		Total		703			
Students' social background		The majority of students come from middle-income families													
Classes per grade		Grade		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
		Classes		2	3	2	2	3	2	3	3	3	-	-	-
Town /Village		Zallaq													
Governorate		Southern													
Number of administrative staff		9													
Number of teaching staff		54													
Curriculum		Ministry of Education (MoE)													
Main language(s) of instruction		Arabic													
Principal's tenure		5 years													
External assessment and examinations		MoE's examinations and QAAET's 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	
		70				70				2				36	
Major recent changes in the school		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20 new teachers joined the teaching staff this school year 2011-12 • A new gymnasium and science laboratory have been built this school year. 													

Table of review judgments awarded

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

Overall effectiveness is satisfactory, the same as the judgement at the previous review in November 2008. All reviewed aspects are judged satisfactory and no better due to inconsistent teaching and learning, and similar inconsistency in the quality of educational support provided to students, particularly those with low achievement. Students in general achieve expected levels in most lessons, but their level in English is low. The very large majority of students demonstrate appropriate behaviour and show awareness of their rights and duties by observing the school's regulations and attending punctually. The leadership team has focused on preparing the school environment appropriately and making the curriculum supportive and motivating for students to learn. The team inspires and motivates most of the school's staff with varying impact on their overall performance. Students and parents are satisfied with school's performance.

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

Grade: 3 Satisfactory

The school's capacity to improve is satisfactory as judged previously. A strategic plan is based on school self-evaluation and focuses on priorities to develop the educational process. The plan includes general objectives linked to the school's vision and mission, which have had some impact on improving students' academic achievement. Most students achieve the levels expected of them by their teachers, but little more. Improvements in preparing the school environment and making the curriculum supportive and motivating are evident. An appropriate atmosphere has been created by strengthening relationships, motivation and teamwork among staff, which has provided capacity to face key challenges, mainly the varied performance of teachers and students' acquisition of basic skills in English. Insufficient staffing, such as social counselling professionals, senior teachers of Arabic and English and classroom teachers, is a barrier to improvement.

Students' achievement

□ How well do students achieve in their academic work?

Grade: 3 Satisfactory

Grade 9 students attained below average levels in national examinations in most core subjects in 2010 and 2011, with the exception of science, where they were slightly above in 2011. Grade 3 and Grade 6 students attained below average levels in most core subjects in 2009 to 2011, whereas they were above average in mathematics in 2012. With exceptions, these results broadly reflect students' satisfactory achievement in most lessons, particularly in Arabic and English in Cycles 2 and 3.

Students achieve high pass rates in school and MoE examinations, which are in line to a great extent with proficiency levels in Cycle 1, inconsistent with proficiency levels in the second Cycle 2 and more so in the Cycle 3. These high pass rates only reflect students' achievements in good and outstanding lessons, particularly in Grades 2 and 3. Yet they do not reflect their levels in most lessons, especially in English due to inconsistent teaching methods and support. There is low achievement of basic skills in English whereas students' acquisition of skills in Arabic and mathematics in Grades 2 and 3 is good. Acquisition of skills in the remaining subjects is satisfactory, with the exception of Arabic in Grade 1 where skills are lower than expected.

Students' results for three consecutive years from 2008 to 2011 show that there is inconsistent progress in most core subjects in Cycles 2 and 3. Most students in Grades 2 and 3 progress well in lessons and with their written work due to effective teaching and variation in activities. Nonetheless, their progress in the remaining grades is satisfactory, particularly in Cycles 2 and 3 due to inconsistent support which does not take students' individual differences in consideration.

Outstanding students' progress is in keeping with their abilities during most lessons and out of class activities due to effective support that is pitched appropriately for their abilities. Students with learning difficulties make adequate progress, because of the special education programme. Low achieving students do not make sufficient progress in most lessons. Insufficient support in a few lessons and activities, impacts adversely on these students' progress.

□ How good is the students' personal development?

Grade: 3 Satisfactory

Groups of students participate in school life enthusiastically and effectively by taking part in certain extra-curricular activities such as sports competitions, morning broadcast and the hygiene and discipline committees. These contribute to enhancing students' self-confidence and ability to take responsibility; however, such participation is limited to particular groups, mainly the talented and outstanding. Participation is high in good and outstanding lessons where students are provided with opportunities to assume leading roles in cooperative learning and the 'student as teacher' activities. Nonetheless, their contributions in most lessons are only satisfactory, due to the teaching methods where the teacher is too often the centre of the educational process and which limits students' personal development.

Attendance is regular and punctual due to students' awareness of its importance and continuous encouragement and monitoring. Good relationships based on mutual respect exist among students and with teachers. Most students act with awareness and responsibility and preserve the school environment. This reflects their good behaviour and sense of security, despite a few students' complaints of inappropriate treatment by a limited group of teachers and some unacceptable behaviour by a few students who brawl and sabotage toilet facilities. An appropriate understanding of Bahraini heritage and culture and Islamic values are demonstrated, through national celebrations, visits to heritage sites and the school's heritage corners such as 'Al-Jleeb'.

The quality of provision

□ How effective are teaching and learning?

Grade: 3 Satisfactory

Most teachers have good subject knowledge which is reflected in their enthusiasm for teaching and ability to plan lessons and give clear explanations. Their self-confidence is particularly apparent in outstanding and good lessons which begin with interesting introductory activities and utilise various educational resources such as presentations and teaching strategies such as cooperative learning, learning through play and storytelling. In most lessons, on the other hand, there is inconsistent impact of teaching, particularly in the Cycles 2 and 3 where dictation methods do not meet the needs of all students. Moreover, most lessons focus on developing lower level thinking skills, such as recall, while other

teaching strategies are not utilised effectively. Inadequate planning and a lack of clear tasks and roles result in inconsistent achievement by students.

The more effective teaching uses various activities, such as discussions that challenge students' abilities and develop higher order thinking skills. An example of drawing conclusions was observed where students identified the characteristics of arthropods in a scientific investigation. Such teaching enables most students to acquire relevant concepts and skills in a significant manner, but this is not typical.

Overall class management is appropriate and very evident in the outstanding and good lessons, particularly in Cycle 1 where students' participate in setting lesson objectives and are constantly encouraged. Students' enthusiasm and motivation in these lessons is not as evident in the satisfactory and inadequate lessons. Time management is often a weakness which results in inconsistent participation and progress by students towards achieving the objectives of these lessons.

Students are assigned homework in certain lesson which sometimes caters for students' individual differences and is followed up by teachers' marking. Yet feedback is inconsistent so does not help students improve their performance as much as it should. Teachers implement various individual and group assessments using verbal and written methods highly effectively in outstanding and good lessons. However, assessment in the remaining lessons is not as effective, particularly in inadequate lessons due to focusing mainly on verbal assessments, the results of which are not used to support students well enough. Overall, various lesson planning and presentation methods enable students to achieve satisfactory progress that matches their abilities.

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

Grade: 3 Satisfactory

Curriculum implementation is inconsistent, although effective integration of subjects is evident in most first Cycle 1 lessons but not in others. Most lessons focus on linking the curriculum to real life in ways that involve most students using the basic skills required for the next stage of education. This is satisfactory. The curriculum is enriched with extra-curricular activities, mainly sports competitions, school committees such as the 'Learning Resources Group', the 'Science Club', and enrichment programmes for outstanding and talented students, such as the 'Knights of Language'. The curriculum is enhanced further by guidance memos and projects such as 'My Language is My Identity' and 'My Language is

the Basis for My Progress'. Activities and programmes provided for low-achieving students are insufficient, which has an adverse impact on meeting their needs and expanding their experiences.

The school develops students' understanding of rights, duties and responsibilities and enhances their sense of belonging and citizenship. Students enter competitions and celebrate national events. Heritage corners, pictures and wall displays enhance their sense of responsibility in appropriate ways and the environment is utilised to enrich the curriculum and celebrate students' work.

□ How well are students guided and supported?

Grade: 3 Satisfactory

New students are assigned classes and introduced to the school's facilities, the success of which is reflected in their settled start. Grade 9 students are helped prepare for the next stage of education through lectures that introduce educational routes.

Students' personal needs are assessed and met by providing free meals, uniforms and glasses. The school supports students with special needs and creates a school environment that is appropriate for their needs. Activities and competitions are arranged for talented and outstanding students and the support programmes for students with learning difficulties. Nonetheless, students' educational needs are inconsistently met in lessons, particularly low-achieving students who often do not get sufficient support.

Awareness-raising and guidance programmes are provided during morning line-up. The school deals with behavioural problems with appropriate firmness. Students' discipline and behaviour is improving. Parents are reached by various means, such as phone calls, text messages, the open days and convenient office hours. They receive adequate information about their children's personal and academic progress. Moreover, the school's Health and Safety Committee monitors aspects relating to health awareness, environmental risk assessment and canteen services. It provides health activities and programmes such as the 'Nutritional Problems Detection' project. Some students rightly say that they are uncomfortable with the low level of supervision on school buses and hygiene standards and conditions in the toilets.

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 and mission which focuses on achievement and creativity and has been drafted with participation by the school community. These are reflected in all areas of educational practices in a satisfactory manner. The school also has a strategic plan that is based on a diagnosis of the school's overall current situation and an analysis of certain areas of work. The plan has general objectives linked to school's vision and mission, but it lacks clear performance indicators for regular monitoring. The school assesses and monitors some of its events and activities through direct evaluation by the school's management and the Technical Committee. It also utilises criteria from the 'Bahraini School of Excellence' project, for evaluation, the results of which are used, though inconsistently, to improve the school's performance.

Staff are motivated to work in a team spirit by strengthening relationships, mutual respect, and encouraging good communication. The management also delegates authorities as in assigning a teacher to provide support to the social guidance worker and senior teachers to undertake leadership tasks. This has impact on increasing the rate of improvement progress. Teachers' professional needs are determined and competency programmes are organised which include discussion sessions, class visits and exchanges among various departments, workshops on strategies such as 'class management' and 'cooperative learning'. Support is provided through the recently formed Teaching and Learning Team which has had a satisfactory impact on most teachers' performance, with the exception of English department where performance has not been satisfactory.

The school utilises learning resources and facilities appropriately, such as the science laboratory and Science Club, whereas the Learning Resources Centre is not used as effectively. The school communicates with parents and responds to some of their suggestions through the Parents' Council as in consulting them on the examinations schedule and activates the Students' Council by motivating students to implement certain programmes, such as establishing a miniature zoo, and communicating with the local community by holding lectures on themes such as 'Teeth' and 'Healthy Food' lectures. It

cooperates with the Qur'an Memorization Centre. All this contributes to enhancing and enriching students' learning experiences in a satisfactory manner.

The school's main strengths

- High pass and proficiency rates in Cycle 1 reflecting students' levels in the Grades 2 and 3
- Students' punctual attendance to school and lessons
- Curriculum enrichment by utilising the school environment and making it a motivating one where students can learn, and their work is celebrated
- Motivation of the staff and students by the school's leadership.

Recommendations

In order to improve, the school should:

- raise students' academic achievement by developing teaching and learning strategies that include:
 - enabling students to acquire basic skills in all subjects, particularly English
 - utilising assessment more effectively to diagnose and meet students' learning needs
 - catering for students' different levels of achievement in lessons and homework
 - developing students' higher order thinking skills and challenge their abilities
- adopt a clear, systematic and accurate mechanism for school's self-evaluation and using its findings to benefit all aspects of school work; particularly to improve the professional competency of all teachers
- provide personal and academic support programs for various categories of students, both during and outside lessons
- fill the gaps in staffing in terms of senior teachers for Arabic and English, class teachers and social guidance.