



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

Schools Review Unit Review Report

**Arad Intermediate Girls School
Arad – Muharraq Governorate
Kingdom of Bahrain**

Date Reviewed: 4 - 6 May 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 five Reviewers. During the Review, Reviewers observed lessons and other activities, examined students' written 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: 750

Age range: 13-15 years

Characteristics of the school

Arad Intermediate Girls School, founded in 1995, is one of the Muharraq Governorate's schools. The age range in the school is from 13 to 15 years, and there are 750 students. Most students come from middle-income backgrounds. The students are distributed across 24 classes (eight classes for each level, including a combined class for the first intermediate year). The school categorised 179 students as outstanding, 69 as talented and gifted and 22 as having learning difficulties; four students have a physical disability. There are 82 administrative and teaching staff. The Principal is in her second academic year in the school. The school is one of King Hamad's Schools of the Future.

Overall effectiveness

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

Grade: 2 (Good)

The overall effectiveness of Arad Intermediate Girls School is good. Parents and students are very satisfied with the school.

The students' level of academic achievement is good. Students achieve high success rates in school examinations and these are consistent with their proficiency rates in most subjects, except for Science and English in the third intermediate level. Such rates are also well matched with students' levels of performance: students show good reading and writing skills in Arabic, numeracy skills in Mathematics, and IT skills in line with those expected for their age group. Students' English skills are particularly well developed, especially in the first and second intermediate levels where effective teaching and learning strategies are used. Individual differences are catered for in most lessons. In the remaining lessons where they are not catered for sufficiently and class activities are presented at the same level, lower-achieving students make limited progress. The school organises a number of remedial classes for low achievers, which improves the achievement levels of some of them. The school also organises effective enrichment programmes for various categories of students, led by the learning difficulties specialist and the talented and outstanding student specialist.

Students' personal development is good. Most students are punctual in the morning and attend lessons on time. Most of them effectively and enthusiastically take part in school life by participating in various extra-curricular activities, competitions and school committees. In lessons, too, students participate effectively in response to the varied teaching methods that help develop their knowledge and skills. Students' analytical thinking skills are not sufficiently developed in some lessons, however. Students show mutual respect for each other and their teachers, inside and outside the classroom. The prevailing atmosphere in the school is one of harmony, which contributes to students' good behaviour and makes them feel safe and secure in the school.

The effectiveness of teaching and learning processes is good. Most teachers have good subject knowledge. They manage their classes well and their use of effective teaching and learning strategies helps to encourage students to take part in lessons and has a significant impact on students' academic development. A few lessons lacked good time management. Most teachers provide opportunities for collaborative learning but some lessons are not planned well and insufficient opportunities are given to challenge students' abilities. Teachers use a range of verbal and written assessment methods to ensure that lesson

objectives are achieved. Students are assigned homework activities as indicated in lesson plans and assignments are regularly marked; sometimes, however the activities lack differentiation and students are not always given feedback.

The provision and enrichment of the curriculum are good. The school works very effectively to organise a number of extra-curricular activities and enhancement programmes. Weekly activity lessons contribute to students' acquisition of different knowledge and skills, particularly English skills, and their ability to use them in learning situations. Such activities and programmes help students to work together, enhance their experience and develop their learning skills. The school develops the spirit of citizenship in students. It promotes students' understanding of their rights and duties appropriately through advice and counselling and by carefully applying the school's rules and regulations. The school takes good care of its facilities, making them attractive by posting wall displays, celebrating students' work and setting up educational corners in classrooms. This provides a motivating learning environment.

The quality of support and guidance given to students is good. Induction programmes for new students help them easily settle into school. Most students are also well prepared for the next phases of education: the school ensures that they have the knowledge and skills they need, as well as information about secondary education, which is furnished through educational programmes and visits. The school diagnoses students' learning needs and offers appropriate remedial classes, although the support for low achievers in some lessons is insufficient. The school meets students' personal needs and gives exceptional support and guidance to students that contributes to enhancing their behaviour and their motivation for learning. The school also pays proper attention to providing a safe and healthy environment for staff and students by regular monitoring of safety and security procedures. The school uses varied methods to communicate with students' parents, such as the communication cards in students' diaries.

The effectiveness of leadership and management is good. The school has a clear and shared vision that is mirrored in the school's practices and activities and in departmental plans. It also sets a strategic plan and action plans that focus on improvement and development in identified areas. The school's plans are based on an analysis of the school's position and have been translated into procedures and methods that help the school to manage its work effectively; however, they lack accurate performance indicators. The school managers seek to raise teachers' professional competencies by organising internal workshops and encouraging individual meetings and visits to exchange good practices. The resources and educational facilities of the school are used effectively to serve the educational and learning process. The school seeks the opinions of students and their parents and responds to their proposals whenever possible.

□ Does the school have the capacity to improve?

Grade: 2 (Good)

The school has a good capacity to develop and improve. The school leaders and managers are well aware of the school's strengths and areas for improvement through conducting a self-evaluation process. This is clearly reflected in the school's strategic plan, which focuses on meeting students' educational and personal needs and raising their levels of performance. The school is led effectively; senior staff work as a team and provide a harmonious and respectful atmosphere. The school's leaders have also managed to bring about improvement in students' behaviour and their levels of attainment. The school has a group of first-class teachers who are keen to improve and develop and their performance has been enhanced by the provision of extracurricular activities and professional competency programmes. All these factors have helped to improve the overall performance of the school.

The school's main strengths and areas for development

Main Strengths

- Self-evaluation
- Students' standards
- Basic skills, particularly in English
- Teaching and learning strategies
- Students' enthusiasm and self-confidence
- Students' relations with classmates and teachers
- Extra-curricular activities
- The school environment
- Induction programmes
- Support and guidance.

Areas for development

- Performance indicators
- Differentiation in assignments
- Developing higher thinking skills
- Challenging students' abilities
- Determining roles and responsibilities in collaborative learning.

What the school needs to do to improve

In order to improve further, the school should:

- Include clear and measurable performance indicators in the strategic plan
- Apply teachers' good teaching and learning practices to all lessons
- Develop teaching and learning strategies that focus on:
 - Catering for individual differences in homework activities
 - Developing higher thinking skills and challenging students' abilities to a greater extent
 - Determining roles and responsibilities in collaborative learning in some lessons
 - Giving more support to low achievers in classrooms.

Overall judgements

Aspect	Grade: Description
The school's overall effectiveness	2: Good
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