



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

Schools Review Unit Review Report

**Al Ma'ameer Primary Boys School
Ma'ameer - Middle 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 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: Boys

Number of students: 510 students

Age range: 6-12 years

Characteristics of the school

Al Ma'ameer Primary Boys School is one of the Middle Governorate schools in the west Ekur region and was founded in 1954. The age range in the school is from 6 to 12 years, and the number of students is 510. Most students come from limited-income families. Students are distributed in 19 classes; 10 classes for the first cycle and 9 for the second. The school categorizes 28 of its students as talented and creative, 200 as outstanding and 51 as students with learning difficulties. The Principal is in his second year at school. The number of administrative staff is 10 and the number of teaching staff is 45. The school has a shortage in human resources represented in senior teachers for English and Science. It also lacks a sports hall. The school is implementing King Hamad's Project for the Future Schools.

Overall effectiveness

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

Grade: 3 (Satisfactory)

The overall effectiveness of Al Ma'ameer Primary Boys School is satisfactory; with some good aspects in the fields of student guidance and support and in management and leadership. It has gained good approval from the students and their parents.

Students' academic achievement is satisfactory. Students achieve high pass rates in most subjects; this is reflected in the achievement evident in the good lessons because of the various and effective teaching methods used. However, in English, the overall achievement is inadequate because the teaching methods observed many lessons are ineffective. Where students' progress is good, this is because in those lessons individual differences are considered through the lesson activities. Where progress is less good, the teaching is too focused on students of average attainment and, in those lessons, there is too little challenge for the high-achieving students and too little support for those who need it. Nonetheless, students identified as having special educational needs (SEN) make good progress because of the additional activities provided by the specialist teacher. In addition, talented and outstanding students make good progress, overall, through participating in indoor and outdoor programmes, competitions and activities.

The students' personal development is satisfactory. Most students attend school regularly and reach lessons on time. They also contribute enthusiastically in those classes where there are indoor and outdoor activities and competitions, such as the cultural competition. This enthusiasm is not at the same level in many other lessons because the teaching methods are not interesting and motivating. Several students develop self-confidence and can take responsibility through the various tasks assigned to them during the extra-curricular activities. However, these opportunities are less available in those lessons judged as inadequate or just satisfactory.

Students are evidently developing analytical thinking skills in those lessons which are judged as good, but this is seldom the case in other lessons. Most students are aware of the need to take good care of school property but a few display unacceptable behaviour, such as getting into small fights.

The effectiveness of the learning and teaching processes is satisfactory. Most teachers are well acquainted with the subject they are teaching and use strategies that attract students, create suspense and raise their motivation towards learning. This is reflected positively in

students' participation in these lessons. However, by contrast, in a few lessons, students are too passive because of the teaching methods which are too reliant on the textbook and teacher-talk. Students are given opportunities for co-operative work in an effective way in a few lessons, but, for the most part, the roles and responsibilities are not defined to ensure students learn from one another. Students' abilities are challenged to a varying degree. In the best lessons, teachers use a variety of assessment methods to measure the lesson goals achieved by students and meet their educational needs. However, mostly they rely too much on verbal questions in assessing students. This strategy does not ensure that students are achieving the lesson objectives. While students are usually given homework, the tasks are not matched to individual abilities and learning needs.

The quality of curriculum enrichment and delivery is satisfactory. Curriculum enrichment is achieved through the indoor and outdoor activities and events that enrich students' experiences and different interests, such as cultural competitions. Moreover, the school environment enriches the curriculum outside classes. The class environment contributes to enriching the curriculum to a varying degree, as it could be seen to a higher degree in the first cycle than in the second. Students acquisition of basic skills is inconsistent across different subjects; their skills in Arabic and Information and Communication Technology (ICT) are stronger than in English and Mathematics, because too little focus is given to these latter two subjects in many lessons. Cross-curricular links between different subjects are not evident in most of the first cycle lessons except in a few limited instances.

The quality of guidance and support is good. The school successfully inducts new students into the life of the school through introducing them to its members and facilities thereby helping to create a stable learning community. However, the preparation for the next educational stage is not so successful because the necessary advanced learning skills are not developed. The school meets the personal needs of the students within the available resources through distributing financial and in-kind aids, such as daily meals. The educational needs are met through the programmes presented by the learning difficulties specialist and reinforcement classes. The school also provides guidance and advice to solve students' problems through educational and guidance lectures. These lectures are successful in restricting the occurrence of unacceptable behaviour. The school gives special attention to providing a safe environment that is free from avoidable risks. These arrangements help to make the students feel safe and secure. Although the shared gate used by both students and school cars has posed a threat to students' safety; the concerned authority has now consented to open the other gate. The school effectively communicates with parents through several channels to inform them about their children's progress.

The effectiveness of management and leadership is good. The school has a shared vision and a strategic plan that focuses on development and improvement, and follows up with implementing the plan. School leaders effectively evaluate most aspects of school's work, and they are aware of its strengths and areas for development. The school leaders

concentrate upon identifying and meeting the training needs, of its teachers, although the effectiveness of these arrangements is not always clear, as exemplified by a minority of teachers in the English department. The different educational facilities, such as the learning resources and science laboratory, are used in a satisfactory manner. In addition, the school has put some effort into investigating, the opinions of students and their parents. As far as it can, the school has responded to this feedback to the satisfaction of both students and their parents.

□ Does the school have the capacity to improve?

Grade: 2 (Good)

The school's capacity to develop and improve is good. This is due to the leadership that is aware of the aspects of strength and areas for development and believes in shared decisions. The school has spent efforts in using the available resources and inspiring and encouraging the administrative and teaching staff, which has reflected on their performance in good lessons. The school's strategic plan, which focuses on development and improvement, has reflected on raising the level of achievement. It also highlights the importance of self-evaluation, a process which reflects upon most aspects of the school's work:- analysing performance results, identifying school improvements, especially in students' progress in their academic achievement over the past three years; and its success in providing an attractive, safe and stimulating learning environment which is a motivating place to learn.

The school's main strengths and areas for development

Main Strengths

- Levels in school examinations
- Perseverance and regular attendance
- Students' relationships with each other
- Self-evaluation
- Strategic planning
- Meeting personal needs
- Communicating with parents
- Induction programmes.

Areas for development

- Basic skills in English
- Learning and teaching strategies
- Lesson assessment
- Analytical thinking skills
- Challenging students' abilities
- Considering individual differences in lessons and homework
- Student support in class
- Linking between the subjects in the first cycle.

What the school needs to do to improve

In order to improve further, the school should:

- Follow up with the concerned authority with regard to the school gate to ensure students' safety

- Extend and develop learning and teaching strategies, to include:
 - Promoting students' analytical and thinking skills
 - Challenging students' abilities
 - Considering more the individual differences in lesson planning and homework
 - Teaching students the basic skills in English
 - Using assessment in lessons to diagnose and meet students' needs
 - Linking between the subjects in the first cycle.

- Provide support for different groups of students within lessons.

Overall judgements

Aspect	Grade: Description
The school's overall effectiveness	3: Satisfactory
The school's capacity to improve	2: Good
Students' academic achievement	3: Satisfactory
Students' progress in their personal development	3: Satisfactory
The quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning	3: Satisfactory
The quality of the curriculum delivery	3: Satisfactory
The quality of guidance and support for students	2: Good
The quality and effectiveness of leadership and management	2: Good