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

Schools Review Unit
Review Report

Al Quds Primary Girls School
Juffair - Capital Governorate
Kingdom of Bahrain

Date Reviewed: 25 - 27 October 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 drive up 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 3 days, by a team of 5 Reviewers. During the review, the team 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: Girls
Number of students: 392
Age range: 6-12 years

Characteristics of the school

Al Quds Primary Girls School is located in Juffair . It was established in 1980. The age range in the school is from 6 to 12 years, and the number of students is 392. Most students come from middle income families. Students are distributed across 12 classrooms; 6 classrooms each for the first and second cycles. Fifty two of Al Quds school students are classified as talented and creative students, 102 as outstanding, and 44 with special needs. This is the fifth year for the principal at the school. The number of teaching staff is 34, 6 administration staff and one nurse. The school is part of King Hamad's Schools of the Future project.

Overall effectiveness

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

Grade: 3 (Satisfactory)

The overall effectiveness of Al Quds Primary Girls School is satisfactory. The students and their parents are well satisfied with the school.

The students' academic achievement is satisfactory. They achieve high success rates in their examinations but their achievements in lessons do not always reflect this. The students' basic skills are satisfactory. The academic progress of the students was satisfactory. The challenge of the capacity of both gifted students and students with learning difficulties is varied; as a result of the inconsistency of the remedial programmes and activities provided to them. Students are developing subject skills as well as knowledge. Their science skills are good, whilst in English their skills are satisfactory. In Arabic and mathematics their skills varied.

The students' personal development is satisfactory. Attendance is good; students regularly attend school and classes, and they participate in school life in a satisfactory way. Although little student initiative was evident in several lessons, outside the classroom a few of them assume leadership roles and these provide them with suitable opportunities to express their opinions and develop their self-confidence. Their development of analytical thinking varied and several showed only a limited capacity. Most students demonstrate mutual respect to each other and they enjoy harmonious relations. They also have warm relations with the teaching and administration staff based on mutual respect. All these factors contribute positively towards their sense of security and safety. The students take good care of the school premises and the learning resources.

The teaching and learning quality is, overall, satisfactory, but it is inconsistent. In around one third of lessons it is good because the teachers have good subject knowledge, which they can convey effectively. In these good lessons, the teaching strategies focus on skills and concepts as well as knowledge. They are challenging students and assessing their achievement by different methods; they also provide opportunities for students to work together and learn from each other. However, in many lessons, teachers do not allow active roles for the students, and do not provide sufficient opportunities to challenge their capabilities. Therefore, the students' drive to learn is diminished. Students are often assigned homework that does not give due consideration to their different learning needs.

The quality of the curriculum implementation is satisfactory. The school has developed plans and programmes to teach the curriculum, and these are usually applied in a suitable way so that the students acquire basic skills as well as subject knowledge. The school provides appropriate opportunities for students to make connections between subjects, and it also enhances the students' understanding of their duties and responsibilities as well as their rights. The curriculum is enriched through the students' participation in different extracurricular activities and competitions. The school also enriches the school environment and some of its facilities to motivate the students to learn. The learning corners are properly utilised in the classrooms and in the corridors to celebrate the students' work.

The support and guidance programmes provided to the students are satisfactory. The school inducts the new students through several activities and programmes. It prepares them for the next stage of their education by guiding, directing and instructing them about what to expect. The school assesses and meets some, but not all, students' personal and learning needs well. For example, it provides remedial programmes for low achievers and enrichment programmes for outstanding and talented students, but the provision for the rest of the students is less developed. The students can approach staff in school, and are provided with several suitable guidance programmes, both as individuals and in groups. The school communicates with parents and updates them on their daughters' progress on a regular basis. The school ensures a safe and secure learning environment.

The quality of leadership and management is satisfactory. The school management inspires the teachers by enhancing working relationships and teamwork; this is positively reflected in the performance of several teachers. The school has a shared vision focusing on achievement and which is evident in several school procedures and activities. There is a strategic plan based on the diagnosis derived from the self-evaluation process. It identifies the strengths and the areas for development. The school evaluates and follows up some activities, but the evaluation results are not regularly used to identify strengths and areas for development. The system, for example, does not follow up the impact of professional development programmes on teachers' classroom performance. From time to time, the school seeks the opinions of the students and their parents. Positive suggestions are acted upon, as far as possible, and parents' general satisfaction with the school is a positive reflection of this.

☐ **Does the school have the capacity to improve?**

Grade: 3 (Satisfactory)

The school's capacity to improve is satisfactory. The school has a new strategic plan for three years based on the diagnosis of the current situation. The self-assessment process has identified the strengths and the areas for improvement. Some recent improvements have included: the improved guidance and support programmes; the enhancements to the school environment; the developing atmosphere of professionalism and trust amongst the staff. However, the school faces several challenges relating to the students' variable achievement and the variations in teachers' performance. Currently there is no clear mechanism to measure the effect of the professional development programmes in increasing the competency of the teachers' performance.

The school's main strengths and areas for development

Main Strengths

- The good attainment in the school examinations

- The high rates of proficiency in core subjects

- Students' good behaviour

- Good quality induction programmes

- Effective promotion of the national spirit

- Students sense of security and safety

- Mutual respect between school's staff.

Areas for development

- Self-assessment

- Strategic planning

- Professional development programmes

- Levels in the lessons

- Teaching and learning strategies

- Considering students individual differences

- Effective use of assessment

- Students acquisition of basic skills

- Challenging students capabilities

- Developing higher order thinking skills

- Cooperative learning.

What the school needs to do to improve

In order to improve further, the school should:

- Develop teaching and learning strategies, including:
    - Effectively using assessment to meet the students needs
    - Teaching the students basic skills
    - Developing the higher thinking skills of the students
    - Challenging the students capabilities
    - Considering the individual differences of the students in the classroom and in the homework assignments
    - Providing opportunities for students to work together and learn from each other.

- Improve the use of self-assessment procedures to improve performance

- Ensure that there is a clear mechanism to follow up the impact of strategic planning on performance

- Monitor the impact of teachers' professional development programmes on regular classroom performance.

Overall judgements

Aspect	Grade
The school's overall effectiveness	**3: Satisfactory**
The school's capacity to improve	3: Satisfactory
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	3: Satisfactory
The quality and effectiveness of leadership and management	3: Satisfactory