



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

# **Schools Review Unit**

## **Review Report**

**Al Diya Primary Boys School**  
**A'ali - Central Governorate**  
**Kingdom of Bahrain**

**Date of Review: 3 - 5 January 2012**

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## The Schools Review Unit

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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:

<b>Grade description</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
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 ten 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

<b>School's name</b>		Al Diya Primary Boys School													
<b>School's type</b>		Government													
<b>Year of establishment</b>		2004													
<b>Age range of students</b>		11-12													
<b>Grades (e.g. 1 to 12)</b>		<b>Primary</b>				<b>Middle</b>				<b>High</b>					
		5 - 6				-				-					
<b>Number of Students</b>		<b>Boys</b>		282		<b>Girls</b>		-		<b>Total</b>		282			
<b>Students' social background</b>		Limited - Middle class													
<b>Classes per grade</b>		<b>Grade</b>		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
		<b>Classes</b>		-	-	-	-	5	5	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Town /Village</b>		A'ali													
<b>Governorate</b>		Central													
<b>Number of administrative staff</b>		5													
<b>Number of teaching staff</b>		29													
<b>Curriculum</b>		Ministry of Education													
<b>Main language(s) of instruction</b>		Arabic													
<b>Principal's tenure</b>		1 semester													
<b>External assessment and examination</b>		National Examinations, QAAET													
<b>Accreditation (if applicable)</b>		-													
<b>Number of students in the following categories according to the School's classification</b>		<b>Outstanding</b>		<b>Gifted &amp; Talented</b>		<b>Physical Disabilities</b>		<b>Learning Difficulties</b>							
		74		-		-		33							

<b>Major recent changes in the school</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• New school principal was appointed the current in school year 2012-11.</li><li>• Senior teacher of Mathematics and senior teacher of English were appointed in the last academic year.</li><li>• The school joined the School Improvement Project at the beginning of the last academic year.</li></ul>
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## 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	2	-	-	2
The quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning	3	-	-	3
The quality of the curriculum implementation	2	-	-	2
The quality of support and guidance for students	2	-	-	2
The quality and effectiveness of leadership, management and governance	2	-	-	2

### Key:

- 1: Outstanding
- 2: Good
- 3: Satisfactory
- 4: Inadequate

## Review judgements

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### Overall effectiveness

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

#### **Grade: 3 Satisfactory**

The school was judged to have made sufficient progress in the previous monitoring visit in January 2011, and the school's overall effectiveness changed from inadequate in the last review visit in January 2010 to satisfactory level in this current review. Although the school was judged satisfactory in the academic achievement and teaching and learning strategies, it was judged to be good in other aspects. This improvement is attributed to a number of factors, namely, the use of self-evaluation for improvement, effective strategic planning and active participation by the school staff. This resulted in notable improvements in students' behaviour, the provision of a motivating learning environment and in the steady rise in students' academic achievement. Students and their parents are pleased with the school's provision.

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

#### **Grade: 2 Good**

The school's capacity to improve changed from inadequate in the previous review visit to good in this current review. This is because of the comprehensive application of self-evaluation mechanisms that have identified correct priorities for strategic and development planning. The staff work as a team to bring about change and get involved in the improvement process. They overcome the challenges faced by the school, which is reflected in most students' better academic progress and personal development, particularly their behaviour. The improvements in the educational practices from inadequate to satisfactory are a result of better performance by teachers and the provision of a motivating learning environment, which are set to continue.

## **Students' achievement**

### **□ How well do students achieve in their academic work?**

#### **Grade: 3 Satisfactory**

Although students achieved high pass rates in the school examinations in the academic year 2010-2011, their proficiency rates varied in all the core subjects, especially in Arabic and mathematics in Grade 6. While students' high pass rates are reflected in the majority of students' achievement levels in good lessons, they are adequately reflected in the majority of students' written work and in satisfactory lessons, which represented more than two thirds of lessons during the review. This is due to the varying effectiveness of teaching methods and support given to different categories of students. The majority of students gain good practical skills in science and numeracy; however, their speaking and reading skills vary too widely in both Arabic and English and their writing skills are weaker.

Comparing the students' pass results in 2009-10 and 2010-11, their high pass rates are stable in most core subjects, but slightly less in science. Most students achieve good progress rates in good lessons such as in mathematics and science in Grade 6 as a result of differentiated teaching activities and active support given to them. Nevertheless, the students' progress in the remaining lessons and in most written work is satisfactory, particularly in English lessons.

Students with learning difficulties make good progress in line with their abilities through effective special education programmes. Most outstanding and talented students make good progress in good lessons as a result of the use of effective enrichment programmes, and the choice by teachers of appropriately challenging learning opportunities. However, lower achievers do not make similar progress due to the wide variance in the quality of teaching, particularly in selecting materials to meet their learning needs.

In 2009 to 2011 national examinations, Grade 6 students attained results that are generally lower than the national average in most core subjects, but were above in Arabic and mathematics in 2009. Students attained levels that were almost equivalent to the national average in 2011 national examinations, including in science and English.

### **□ How good is the students' personal development?**

#### **Grade: 2 Good**

Most students attend regularly and are punctual to lessons. Clear procedures to deal with the few cases of late arrivals and absences are consistently followed.

Students enthusiastically take part in the life of the school. They participate in the morning broadcast, and students' committees such as the cleanliness committee and discipline committee. They use learning clubs such as the Arabic and English Language Clubs. They also play leadership roles in the students' council and participate in sports teams that help to enhance their self-confidence and in becoming responsible members of their school. Such positive aspects are reflected in their participation in good lessons particularly. Students are well-able to express their views, and praise the school's efforts in celebrating a chosen value on a monthly basis. Extra-curricular activities contribute to developing their positive conduct towards each other inside and outside classes.

Students' adherence to the school's rules and regulations and their keenness to clean the school and its utilities are positive characteristics in developing a sense of good citizenship. They are gaining an understanding of Bahrain's heritage and show respect to each other and their teachers, which is reflected in their strong sense of belonging to the school and community. The majority of students and parents expressed their satisfaction with the school as it is free from problems and very positive. They praised the school leaders' interest in this aspect.

## **The quality of provision**

### **□ How effective are teaching and learning?**

#### **Grade: 3 Satisfactory**

Most teachers have good subject knowledge that is reflected in their logical presentation of lessons, especially in good lessons, which represented one third of lessons during the review. Teachers use a number of modern teaching strategies such as in science and mathematics, in addition to the use of educational resources and aids such as electronic presentations. Although such practices help to enhance the students' interest and motivation to learn and contribute to a great extent to enhance the curriculum and students' experiences, the use of such strategies is not similarly reflected in satisfactory lessons which constituted half of the lessons seen during the review. For example, in Arabic and English lessons, educational situations depended on direct teaching methods in which the teacher is the centre of the teaching process which tended to limit the students' participation and interaction in these lessons.

Although teachers effectively manage the students' behaviour in most lessons, time management is not as effective because much time is taken in carrying out repetitive activities. Elements of lessons are presented quickly, without ensuring that planned targets and learning objectives are met. While most teachers of science and mathematics provide

appropriate opportunities to develop critical thinking skills and logical interpretation to provide solutions to mathematical and scientific problems, some teachers emphasise theoretical content too much, which limits the development of students' skills and practical understanding. Moreover, oral and written questions too often focus on low level skills such as recall.

Students are given homework activities that are indicated in most lesson plans. Such activities are differentiated, especially in mathematics and science, but feedback is rarely given to students about homework, particularly in some subjects. Teachers use various assessment techniques, such as oral and written questions, and individual and collective methods. The results of such assessments and diagnosis tests are used in developing daily teaching plans and setting remedial and enrichment programmes as students are given prompt feedback that helps to progress various categories of students. Assessment methods and the results from them are not used enough in satisfactory lessons or for meeting the needs of lower achievers.

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

**Grade: 2 Good**

Experiences are provided that are consistent with the students' learning needs. Opportunities to take part in the cultural competitions and extra-curricular activities, such as the 4<sup>th</sup> Al Tabri Poetry Contest and Mathematics Olympics are good. Various clubs contribute to enriching students' experiences, such as the Science Club that develops the skills of talented students.

The school analyses the curriculum, enhances and simplifies its contents by preparing summaries and encouraging students to produce scientific research papers and projects. The school also celebrates outstanding work by displaying it to enrich the school environment.

Students' rights and duties are developed through displays, and the organisation of a 'values celebration programme'. Citizenship and the students' sense of belonging are promoted through their participation in national events and field visits to local attractions. The school makes good use of morning assemblies and displays, for example with one that reflects Bahrain's construction development. Most classrooms and corners are motivating learning environments. Links between subjects are sufficient and contents of lessons are often linked to life.

The development of students' necessary skills for the next phase of education is taken into account within the curriculum. Interest in developing students' essay writing in Arabic and English is lower than in developing their IT skills.

### **□ How well are students guided and supported?**

#### **Grade: 2 Good**

Induction arrangements are effective and help new students settle quickly. The school inducts Grade 6 students to the next phase of education by organising introductory workshops and field visits to the neighbouring intermediate schools.

The school checks and meets the students' social needs through the provision of cash aids and the necessary care. It also conducts diagnostic tests and analyses their results to identify the students' learning needs. It also supports the students with learning difficulties through the special education programme and supports the outstanding and talented students through the organisation of enrichment activities. However, the support given to low achievers is not as good.

Great attention is paid to the enhancement of behavioural values through the organisation of awareness programmes and lectures. This greatly contributes to overcoming students' personal and academic problems. The school has various channels of communications with parents such as the open day, SMS messages, weekly leaflets and periodic reports. Parents praised the effectiveness and positive impact of such means in getting acquainted with their children's levels and rates of progress.

Security and safety issues are regularly assessed by the school through the maintenance of its facilities and utilities, including the school canteen. Training students and teachers on evacuation procedures is effective and helps provide a safe and secure environment.

### **Leadership, management and governance**

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

#### **Grade: 2 Good**

The school has a clear vision and mission statement that focuses on raising outcomes and is shared by administrative, teaching staff, and parents. The school's vision and mission are

well reflected in most educational practices. The school employs the results of its self-evaluation systems to identify its strengths and areas for improvement and uses its results in developing a 3-year strategic plan with clear performance indicators that focus on the correct priorities. Significant progress in realising its strategic goals has been made, particularly with regard to the enhancement of students' behaviour and the development of the school environment.

Senior and middle management motivate the teaching and administrative staff by delegation, sharing in decision-making and working as a team. The school meets the staff's training needs, especially new recruits by organising a number of workshops such as the 'Academia 1' programme. It also tracks the impact of such programmes on their performance by conducting class visits in coordination with the senior and middle management staff. The teachers praise such programmes, which are positively reflected in the majority of their educational practices.

The school uses its various facilities and resources in providing a motivating learning environment. It also seeks to communicate with the local community to enhance the students' learning and expand their knowledge and experiences such as its communications with the Civil Defence and Handicrafts Centre. Moreover, the school management seeks the students' and their parents' views on a regular basis, through questionnaires, meetings, formation of students' and parents' councils, and responds to their suggestions within the limits of available resources. Responses include improving the school environment as informed by the parents' suggestions and the rescheduling of examinations based on the students' desires.

The school also communicates with the Performance Improvement Team, and assesses its improvement aspects through their presentation of the milestones of the action plan. The school leaders and some staff and teachers praised such communication that has contributed to school improvement recently.

## **The school's main strengths**

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- Strategic planning based on a comprehensive analysis of the school performance aspects and goals focused on the school's correct priorities
- Students' behaviour, regular attendance and participation in school life
- Provision of a safe and secure school environment for the entire school staff.

## Recommendations

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### **In order to improve, the school should:**

- develop teaching and learning strategies to ensure:
  - students' basic skills are improved in English and Arabic languages
  - students' abilities are challenged
  - students' individual differences are taken into account in lessons and homework activities to a greater extent
  - linking between subjects is made to a greater extent to improve students' understanding of their learning.
- use assessments more and the results of assessment in supporting different categories of students inside and outside classes, particularly low achievers.