



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

Schools Review Unit

Review Report

Sanabis Primary Girls School
Sanabis - Northern Governorate
Kingdom of Bahrain

Date of Review: 27 - 29 February 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 nine 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		Sanabis Primary Girls School												
School's type		Government												
Year of establishment		1968												
Age range of students		6 - 12 years												
Grades (e.g. 1 to 12)		Primary				Middle				High				
		1 - 6				-				-				
Number of students		Boys	-		Girls		444			Total		444		
Students' social background		Most students come from limited-income families												
Classes per grade	Grade	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
	Classes	3	3	3	3	2	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Town /Village		Sanabis												
Governorate		Northern												
Number of administrative staff		15												
Number of teaching staff		49												
Curriculum		Ministry of Education												
Main language(s) of instruction		Arabic												
Principal's tenure		Three months												
External assessment and examinations		Quality Assurance Authority for Education & Training 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			
		106			59			9			38			

Major recent changes in the school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appointing a school principal for the current academic year 2011-12 • Appointing an assistant principal for the previous academic year 2010-11 • Improving and maintaining the school building and some of its facilities • Providing the school with a social worker, and a learning resources centre specialist in 2010-11.
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Table of review judgements awarded

Aspect	Grade: Description			
The school's overall effectiveness	2: Good			
The school's capacity to improve	2: Good			
	Elementary / Primary	Middle / Intermediate	High / Secondary	Overall
Students' academic achievement	2	-	-	2
Students' personal development	2	-	-	2
The quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning	2	-	-	2
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

Overall effectiveness

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

Grade: 2 Good

The school's overall performance is good that corresponds to its performance in the previous review of April 2009 when it was also judged good in all aspects. It identified its areas of strength and those needing improvement through its newly-appointed leadership. It has effectively worked on its priorities with strong support across the school community, which contributes to creating an environment that is motivating and has improved the quality of educational practices as recommended in the previous review. Students' higher order thinking skills and group work have been consolidated, most evidently in the first cycle classes, and their good, rather than outstanding, achievement is secure. Good teaching and support contribute to sustaining the students' basic proficiencies. Students and their parents are pleased with what the school has to offer.

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

Grade: 2 Good

The school's capacity to improve corresponds to that in its last review, which is good. It has continued to make progress in implementing its annual plan which is based on a comprehensive self-evaluation of the school's work, with a focus on addressing the recommendations in the previous report. The plan has proved its effectiveness in practice through the praise it has received from the staff and parents, especially given the latest improvements the new leadership has made. This has included improving teaching and learning, which focuses on varying teaching strategies and assessment techniques, improving the school environment and using it to reinforce the students' educational experiences, moral values and social atmosphere. The leadership has been successful in encouraging some of the school's staff to join the development process.

Students' achievement

□ How well do students achieve in their academic work?

Grade: 2 Good

Students attained levels that were above average in the national examinations in all primary subjects from 2009 to 2011. The sixth grade students achieved rates that were above the national average in Arabic and mathematics while third grade students attained slightly above the average in Arabic and mathematics. Moreover, the assessment of lessons is commensurate with these results and the students' high proficiency in most primary subjects, especially in English.

The majority of students achieved high pass rates in the school examinations of 2011-12, which are in line with the proficiency demonstrated by students in all the primary subjects, especially English and mathematics in the first cycle and science in the second. These rates are reflected in the majority of students' written work and their achievement in good and excellent lessons, which account for more than two thirds of the lessons. The students' rates of progress are rapid in the first cycle and in English lessons in both cycles as a direct result of the effective teaching and learning. Students' have high proficiency rates in basic skills, such as reading and writing in Arabic for the first cycle, listening and reading in English, arithmetic operations in mathematics, and deduction and scientific experimentation in science.

The comparison between the reported examinations results and those of the first academic semester assessments of the current year 2011-12 indicates that students make significant progress in mastering basic skills. Writing in English in the second cycle and dictation in Arabic in both cycles are good examples of this. Furthermore, the students make good progress in written work in the primary subjects, although their progress in Arabic is not as marked.

The students in the merged class and those with learning difficulties make good progress in line with their abilities, through the special education programme and complementary remedial programmes and because of the effectiveness of the support they received. Most of the outstanding and talented students make good progress in the better lessons due to the attention they receive in these lessons. However, low achieving students do not make similar progress due to the variations in the quality of teaching in meeting their educational needs.

□ How good is the students' personal development?

Grade: 2 Good

Most students show enthusiasm and participate well in school life by taking part in the morning broadcast programme and keeping the school, clean and safe. They take part in the 'Young Nurse' programme and events, such as 'I make my own breakfast', and the scout camp. They participate in the student council and implement some of its suggestions. These activities reinforce their understanding of their responsibilities towards their school and contributes to bringing harmony among students and in shaping their personalities. The teachers continue to develop these aspects in students throughout most lessons, but some focus too much on presenting the content at the expense of giving students enough opportunities for personal development.

Students' attend regularly and punctually showing good conduct and respect toward each other and their teachers. Their good relationships, awareness of their duties towards their school and high motivation to learning is reflected in preserving the school's property and adhering to the rules and regulations of the school.

Most students show a high sense of citizenship and good understanding of the Bahraini heritage and Islamic values, which is apparent in their interest in using the various school corners and their participation in folk festivals and games. The school is free from inappropriate conduct, an aspect that was particularly well addressed by the school administration and which is highly appreciated by the students and their parents.

The quality of provision

□ How effective are teaching and learning?

Grade: 2 Good

Most teachers are familiar with their study material and show enthusiasm in lessons. They use various teaching aids such as shapes, audio-visual equipment, cards and effective teaching methods such as group learning, learning through play, role-play and brainstorming. These methods are most effective in the first cycle lessons and especially English in the second cycle, which results in increasing the level of students' participation, motivation, proficiency and acquisition of concepts, skills and knowledge. However, in about a third of lessons, these methods are less effective in the second cycle, especially in Arabic. The students' abilities are challenged in most activities, especially during the first

cycle lessons, and in mathematics, science and English in the second, but less so in most Arabic lessons.

Class management is effective in most lessons. This was seen in controlling the students' behaviour, integrating them into the educational process and fruitfully using the lesson time, which increases lesson productivity and students' achievement. The students are encouraged to participate and most of them are given good support. However, the support provided for low-achieving students is not enough, especially in the Arabic lessons in the second cycle, thus limiting their progress. Most teachers give students opportunities to develop their higher level thinking skills such as analysing text, critical thinking, logical reasoning in arithmetic problems and using problem solving skills in most mathematics and science lessons in the second cycle.

Students are given appropriate amounts of homework that is indicated in lesson planning. Furthermore, the homework is followed up with regular marking and feedback to improve the students' performance. However, individual differences between students are not considered enough in most of the homework set.

The school provides surveys and diagnostic tests for all the primary subjects. The findings are used to provide remedial and enrichment programmes. The teachers use various assessment methods in most lessons such as observation, verbal and written assessment both for individuals and groups. They also prepare projects and conduct research which enable learning to be measured, strengths to be consolidated and areas needing development to be followed up according to the students' different levels of ability. This has a considerable impact on raising students' achievement and progress.

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

Grade: 2 Good

A wide range of activities support the curriculum which suit students' various educational and social needs, such as participating in the UNESCO project, 'Me and the others'. The students also participate in culture and poetry contests such as the 'Most beautiful word for my country' which have a big impact on their learning where they achieve well.

Despite the old school building and shortage of equipment, the school environment supports learning and promotes good discipline. It is enriched with guidance and teaching aids, and students' work is celebrated and displayed in the school yard, halls and classes. The majority of the first cycle lessons use links among subjects to enable students to study a

coherent and logical curriculum. However, this linking is not as effective in most of the second cycle lesson as in the first. The curriculum and its supporting programmes contribute to inducting students into the next stage of education, as most students master the key basic skills including their ability to use IT.

The school develops the students' understanding of their rights and duties through guidance boards, the events such as the 'Citizenship' and 'Elections' weeks. This raises students' awareness and their loyalty to the school community. The teachers take part in analysing the curriculum and make recommendations for improvements which are acted upon.

□ How well are students guided and supported?

Grade: 2 Good

Special programmes induct new students. These contribute to making students feel stable at school. Moreover, the school arranges guidance classes and visits to nearby secondary schools and holds meetings for students and their parents which contribute to preparing students well for the next stage of education.

The students' personal needs are regularly met. Students in the merged class are given good academic and personal support from the persons responsible. The students' educational needs are identified after performing the diagnostic tests and, accordingly, students receive the academic support they needed through the lessons, special education programmes and the weekly intensive lessons. Additionally, outstanding and talented students are provided with activities and enrichment programmes such as the 'talent forum' in which they participated, which contributed to raising their academic achievement.

The students express satisfaction with the good support they received from the social guidance and administrative supervision. Parents are contacted regularly by various means such as the open day and the scheduled library meetings, which were thought of by parents as being an effective channel for communication.

Risks are assessed, and any issues that could pose a threat to the safety of students are addressed. The school provides drills on evacuation and regularly checks on fire extinguishers and other equipment, which contribute to making the school's environment a healthy and safe one.

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 vision and mission that focus on presenting distinguished educational achievement. These have been jointly formed by the school and parents. The school has an annual plan that focuses on improvement and includes clear performance indicators that have been developed using the comprehensive self-analysis of the school's situation. The plan also includes the recommendations of the previous review. Although recent, many of the actions about teaching and learning have been implemented successfully.

Joint decision-making, working in the spirit of one team and delegating authorities such as appointing heads for committees and activities, are praised by staff. These processes increase their motivation and contribute to raising the overall performance of the school.

The school uses its resources effectively to reinforce learning, although the learning resources centre is not used enough. The senior leadership gives special attention to raising its affiliates' competency by providing various training programmes that are closely related to their needs, such as organising workshops on learning and exploration, introductory activities, and how to analyse content, in addition to using class and exchange visits. These programmes have practically improved the teachers' educational practices in two thirds of the lessons. The school explored the views of students and their parents by way of questionnaires and the students' and parents' councils, where some of their suggestions relating to improving the school environment were implemented. Furthermore, the school responded to the parents' suggestion to provide healthy meals during the break and change the examinations schedule as per the students' request.

The school communicates with the local community in order to enrich the students' experiences. This includes visiting Jidhafs health centre and practising traffic control. In addition, a workshop on analytical thinking was held in cooperation with the Arab Gulf University. The school has joined the shared improvement programme in the current year and despite the cooperation between the school and the team being recent, the teachers value the support they receive from the team through the training workshops and discussion sessions about classroom situations.

The school's main strengths

- The students attained levels that are higher than average in the national examinations and achieve high pass and proficiency rates in the school examinations
- The effective participation of most students in school life
- The effective use of various modern teaching methods, especially in the first cycle lessons, and in English
- The provision of various extra-curricular activities to support the curriculum
- The healthy and safe environment for all the school affiliates
- The shared decision-making approach by the senior leadership and working in the spirit of one team.

Recommendations

In order to improve, the school should:

- make use of the excellent and good educational practices in improving teaching and learning strategies, taking into consideration the following:
 - extending the implemented practices in the second cycle, especially for Arabic
 - providing low achieving students with more support in lessons
 - considering students' individual differences more when giving homework
 - making better links among subjects in the second cycle.
- use the learning resources centre more effectively to support teaching and learning
- develop the current annual plan to become a strategic plan that extends over three years and that include reference to all areas of the school's work.