



**Shaikha Hessa Girls
School**



25 – 27 November 2024



Location
West Riffa



School Type
Private



No. of Students
419



Grade Levels
1-12

Overall effectiveness
Outstanding

Students' Academic
Achievement

Students' Personal
Development and
Wellbeing

Teaching, Learning
and Assessment

Leadership,
Management and
Governance

Review Summary

Since the last review, Shaikha Hessa Girls School has significantly elevated its performance to an Outstanding level. Students consistently achieve high standards, even when opting for external examinations. Their progress is exceptionally strong in most lessons. The school's environment provides effective personal support, fostering self-confidence and encouraging active participation in both curricular and extracurricular activities. Teachers create stimulating learning environments, and the school employs a systematic approach to meet the diverse academic needs of its students. The school leadership team maintains a clear focus on improving performance and closely monitors classroom practices.

Key Positive Features

- Excellent growth: Students' outstanding progress and development of learning skills, particularly in Elementary School.
- Responsible learners: Students' strong self-confidence, leadership skills, and ownership of their learning, nurtured in a supportive learning environment.
- Effective education & support: The variety of teaching and learning strategies, integration of technology and the systematic provision of academic support.
- Awareness and continuous improvement: Leadership awareness, effective planning to address improvement priorities, and the range of teachers' individual professional development programmes.

Recommendations

- Spread outstanding practices in English and Elementary School across the school.
- Enhance the rigour of internal assessments in High School science and mathematics.
- Further improve students' writing skills in Arabic.

Students' Academic Achievement

Outstanding

- In the 2023-2024 internal examinations, pass rates are high, in almost all subjects across the school, even throughout the past three academic years. Proficiency rates are also high across all stages ranging from 50% in Grade 11 Biology HL and SL, Chemistry SL and English Language B HL to 100% in Grade 2 Arabic and the majority of subjects in High School. Internal examinations are generally well prepared and marked. The very few students opting for the International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) external examinations achieve high proficiency rates. In the International Baccalaureate (IB) external examinations, all students take chosen languages subjects like Arabic Language B, English Language and Literature SL and HL, while the attempt rates for other subjects vary. Overall, pass rates are high, with the percentage of students achieving 5 and above are high ranging from 55% in Mathematics: Applications and Interpretation SL to 100% in English A: Language and Literature HL, and Biology SL.
- Students at all levels demonstrate outstanding learning skills through independent learning and critical thinking, with notable progress in most lessons, particularly in English and Elementary School. Low achievers, though few, show satisfactory progress in the less effective lessons due to inconsistent standards. Students demonstrate strong English language proficiency across all school stages through analysing literary texts and identifying narrative features. Arabic language skills, particularly reading and speaking, exceed expectations. Mathematics skills are significantly above average, with students excelling in operations, algebra, and trigonometry. Science progress is notable, with strong performance in early-stage investigations and some areas of Middle School science, though High School investigations show less consistent results.

Students' Personal Development and Wellbeing

Outstanding

- Students flourish both inside and outside classrooms. Beyond the curriculum, they actively engage in a diverse range of extracurricular activities and events. Initiatives like the 'Robotics Club', 'Trade Quest', and the 'Mini Counsellor' programme cultivate creativity, leadership skills, and a sense of responsibility. The school community celebrates achievements in competitions such as the 'NASA Challenge', 'A Book is the Best Companion', and the 'Gymnastics Ribbon Show'. In classrooms, students demonstrate independence and initiative, often taking on the role of 'Little Teachers' or participating in local and international field trips. The school's comprehensive induction and transition programmes, coupled with the 'ORAH' platform for emotional well-being, support students' holistic development and prepare them for future success.
- The school fosters a supportive and inclusive environment characterised by positive behaviour, self-discipline, and strong relationships between students and teachers. This nurturing setting minimises behavioural issues and promotes a sense of respect and responsibility. Events such as 'Anti-Bullying' and 'Kindness' weeks reinforce these values. The school community also celebrates Bahrain's cultural heritage through events like the 'National Day'. Students actively participate in community service, including beach clean-ups, bake sales, and impactful projects like 'SHGS Goes Gold' and the 'Orphan's Dream Project'. These activities provide opportunities to give back to the community.

Teaching, Learning and Assessment

Outstanding

- Across the school, teachers create stimulating learning environments and employ a variety of effective teaching strategies to enhance students' engagement. These strategies include 'Think-Pair-Share' in Elementary School, experiential learning in Middle School, and Socratic seminars in High School. Lessons are well-planned and implemented, incorporating engaging activities, particularly in Elementary School, to foster discussions and participation. Teachers effectively integrate technology and learning resources, such as 'Nearpod' in English, 'GeoGebra' in mathematics, and science simulations, to promote interactive learning. Many lessons are linked to real-life scenarios, such as discussing money and savings in Elementary School mathematics. Effective motivational techniques and behaviour management strategies are implemented across the school to optimise learning time in most lessons.
- Teachers employ a range of assessment methods that are aligned with learning objectives and curriculum standards. They promote self-assessment and peer-assessment among students, using the results to identify gaps in learning and inform future instruction. Timely and constructive feedback, both oral and written, is provided during lessons and on students' written work. However, in few of the less effective Middle School lessons, students are not sufficiently challenged to develop their critical thinking skills.
- The school employs a systematic approach to identify and address students' academic needs. The Learning Support Unit develops Individual Educational Plans (IEPs) for low achievers and provides targeted academic support through pull-out sessions and after-school classes. The school's 'Olive' system is used to rigorously track and monitor students' academic progress, ensuring continuous improvement.

Leadership, Management and Governance

Outstanding

- The school's self-evaluation process is comprehensive, considering BQA's previous review recommendations, involving staff, data analysis, stakeholder feedback and lessons' observations. Whole-school (SWOT) analyses demonstrate a high level of self-awareness and is instrumental in identifying key improvement priorities, particularly in academic achievement. The school's strategic plan aims to develop all aspects of school life. The action plan outlines clear key performance indicators, and its implementation is monitored through regular meetings. As an all-female school, the curriculum review process emphasises women's empowerment and the development of global citizens. School's facilities are sufficiently provided and subject to annual inspections.
- The school employs a systematic approach to identify and address teachers' training needs. Through classrooms' observations and open communication with the professional development coordinator, teachers can specify their training requirements. Workshops covering topics such as '21st-Century Skills', 'Student-led Classrooms', and the specific curriculum training for 'IB Diploma' and 'Pearson Edexcel' have had a significant impact on teaching and learning practices across the school. A positive work environment is fostered through promoting internal staff development, exceptional efforts are recognised through 'Thumbs-Up' cards and early departure rewards.
- The school prioritises digital literacy to foster innovation and resilience. This focus is reflected in improvements of students' mathematical standards and provision, particularly in Middle School, where dedicated support is offered.
- The school actively engages with the community through its links with organizations like Bahrain IB World Schools Association (BAIBWS) and Injaz Bahrain. Utilising many communication channels, the Parent-Teacher-Student Association (PTSA) organises events like the school's carnival and workshops. The Board of Directors plays a crucial role in shaping the school's mission, while emphasising impact measurements and setting strategic direction.

Next Actions

The school must submit an Action Plan to implement the review recommendations four weeks after receiving the draft report.