

Tayyibah Girls' School

Independent school standard inspection report

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Reporting inspector	Michèle Messaoudi

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Purpose and scope of the inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.^{1, 2}

Information about the school

Tayyibah Girls' School is an independent day school that was set up in 1992 to provide full-time education for Muslim girls aged between five and 18 years. It is located in the London Borough of Hackney and serves the diverse Muslim community of Greater London, having expanded over the years. There are 252 pupils, the majority of whom are bilingual or at advanced stages of learning English as an additional language. There are no pupils with a statement of special educational needs. The school's stated mission is to provide education in a safe and orderly Islamic environment centred on promoting good moral character, self-respect, self-discipline and good manners. It aims to *'provide a broad and balanced education... and educate pupils according to the Qur'an and the Sunnah'* (the example of Prophet Muhammad). The school was last inspected in March 2007.

Evaluation of the school

Tayyibah Girls' School provides a good quality of education and meets most of its aims. Pupils make good progress over time because teaching is good and the headteacher is focused on raising standards in challenging circumstances, dominated by turbulence in staffing. Subject leaders monitor the curriculum and teaching effectively and have successfully remedied the shortcomings identified in the last inspection. Pupils' outstanding behaviour and good attitudes to learning reflect good provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Safeguarding arrangements have improved since the last inspection and are now good, and so is the provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety. The school complies with most of the regulations for independent schools.

Quality of education

Despite improvements made since the last inspection and significant strengths, the quality of the curriculum remains satisfactory. One of its main strengths is the good provision for basic skills, mathematics and science. There is an appropriate emphasis on reading, grammar and spelling in the primary classes, and opportunities for creative writing have expanded since the last inspection. Another strength is the

¹ www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2002/ukpga_20020032_en_14#pt10-ch1-pb4-l1g162

² www.opsi.gov.uk/ACTS/acts2005/ukpga_20050018_en_15#sch8

provision for learning Arabic and either Turkish or Urdu from Year 1 to Year 6, which contributes effectively to pupils' cultural and language development. The provision for information and communication technology benefits from improved resources and is now satisfactory. Personal, social and health education (PSHE) has been enriched with a programme of citizenship from Year 1 to Year 11, which is appropriately taught as a discrete subject in Key Stages 3 and 4. Citizenship is enhanced very effectively by developing links with local projects and contributes well to pupils' personal development. Careers guidance has expanded since the last inspection and supports pupils well in making choices for their future. The planning of the curriculum has much improved and provides an effective foundation for teaching throughout the school.

Nevertheless, there remain weaknesses in the breadth and balance of the curriculum. Throughout the school, the curriculum provides few planned experiences in the creative and aesthetic areas of learning. Although the quality of provision for physical education (PE) has improved since the last inspection and is now satisfactory, currently, pupils in Year 11 and beyond do not have any opportunities for physical exercise and the other year groups only have one weekly session of PE. In Key Stage 4, the curriculum gives pupils the opportunity to take up to nine GCSEs. However, it does not include art, design and technology and business studies which have been identified by pupils and parents as subjects that pupils need to study to increase their career options. In the sixth form, pupils choose between English language and literature, mathematics, biology, chemistry, sociology and Urdu. This core offer of subjects meets the needs of most, but some pupils have expressed the wish to study geography at A level. Educational visits are insufficient in range and frequency to fully support and enhance the curriculum. The school makes effective links with the local community to provide a satisfactory range of after-school clubs. These include fitness and yoga for mothers and daughters, in response to popular demand.

Effective monitoring of teaching and learning has further improved the quality of teaching and assessment. This is now good, with a higher proportion of good and outstanding teaching than in the last inspection. The quality of teaching in the primary classes, previously found to be satisfactory, is also now good. Consequently, primary pupils make good progress, well supported by class teachers who oversee their whole education, and subject leaders who monitor the quality of learning in each subject. However, turbulence in staffing has affected primary pupils' performance in English in the last two years and their progress is only satisfactory in this subject. While the teaching of handwriting has improved considerably, planned opportunities for extended writing vary across primary subjects.

Throughout the school, teaching is characterised by good subject knowledge, good working relationships and good deployment of support staff. Most of the teaching takes into account the prior attainment of pupils to plan lessons that match their individual needs closely. A variety of methods is used to sustain pupils' interest and match their varying learning styles. In these good lessons, pupils make good progress because they are actively involved in their learning. Where the teaching is

outstanding, it maintains a high level of challenge throughout the lesson and shows pupils exactly how to improve their work against specific success criteria. This stretches all pupils and ensures that all can progress at a fast rate. Weaknesses in less effective lessons include: insufficient checking on pupils' learning to provide the support that they need; talking for too long which dominates the lesson and does not involve pupils actively in their learning; ineffective use of resources to support pupils in their learning; and insufficient time given for pupils to practise new skills, resulting in superficial learning. Occasionally, pupils' learning is not consolidated at the end of the lesson. There are good strategies to involve pupils in the assessment of their own learning and show them exactly what to do next to improve, but they are not implemented consistently throughout the school. For example, marking is not consistently constructive, and teachers' comments in academic reports and learning targets are not always subject-specific. Consequently, pupils do not always progress at the fastest possible rate of which they are capable. There are good systems to track pupils' progress rigorously.

As a result of good teaching and assessment, pupils make good progress over time, including those who speak English as an additional language. Some pupils make outstanding progress. They achieve highly in most subjects at GCSE level, particularly in English, science, geography and religious education, and they perform outstandingly well in mathematics. In the sixth form, some pupils achieve highly in mathematics, biology and chemistry.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

While the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall, their cultural development is only satisfactory. The school is successful in creating a disciplined, caring and nurturing ethos. Consequently, most pupils enjoy school and their attendance is good. Their behaviour is outstanding and they display high levels of self-discipline. They are hard-working, polite, respectful and friendly. They develop a strong sense of identity as young Muslim girls, and a strong sense of community. 'We form life-long friendships here', they say. The acquisition of good basic skills and good preparation before examinations and university interviews contribute positively to their future economic well-being. When asked what they like best about their school, they unreservedly answer, 'having teachers who care about our education'. However, there is a perception among some of the pupils that not all staff treat them fairly.

Pupils develop a good awareness of what it means to be responsible citizens through the excellent citizenship programme and projects. For example, they take part in recycling; they develop an increasing understanding of and respect for people who hold different beliefs from theirs through the three faiths forum activities; they raise funds for charity; and they experience democracy through the election of the school council. Although pupils have more opportunities to use their initiative and shoulder responsibilities than at the time of the last inspection, the school rightly recognises that the profile of the school council needs to be raised. Under half of the pupils feel that the school does not listen to their views. The provision for pupils' cultural

development is weaker because it is not sufficiently promoted through the curriculum and educational visits.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The school makes good provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety. All the policies and procedures aimed at safeguarding pupils and minimising risks are implemented consistently. The child protection policy is detailed, providing clear guidance to staff on how to fulfil their responsibilities. Appropriate references are obtained on all staff and their employment history is checked. The staff receive the full range of appropriate training to promote pupils' welfare and well-being. Pupils feel very safe and instances of bullying are very rare. The school has a satisfactory level of fire safety. Appropriate risk assessments of the premises and off-site activities are carried out. Pupils' attendance is monitored effectively. The school fulfils the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, as amended.

Pupils develop a good awareness of healthy lifestyles through PSHE, science and Islamic studies, as well as through participation in events such as 'skip-a-thons'. The school encourages healthy snacks and packed lunches and pupils have free access to water. Pupils have insufficient opportunities for regular exercise during the school day; however, an increasing proportion of pupils walk to school.

Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors

Robust recruitment procedures ensure that all the required checks on the proprietor and staff are carried out in good time. These checks are appropriately recorded in a single central register.

Premises of and accommodation at the school

The premises provide teaching accommodation that is fit for purpose and enables pupils to learn effectively in a clean, safe and secure environment. However, the current arrangements do not provide sufficiently for outdoor play. Whereas the school makes good use of the local facilities for after-school sports clubs, it does not use the local park for physical exercise at break times.

Provision of information

Parents and others receive accurate and up-to-date information about the school through an information pack and newsletters. Most of the information required is provided to parents, but two of the regulations are not met. The school is in the process of improving the range of information it provides to parents and others by compiling a parents handbook and creating a website. Parents feel well informed about their daughters' progress as in each year they have two formal opportunities to meet their daughters' teachers and receive three progress reports. Parents say that they are delighted with the academic achievements of the school. However, many do not feel sufficiently consulted about school matters.

Manner in which complaints are to be handled

There are suitable procedures to handle complaints fairly and promptly, and all regulations are met.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The proprietor has ensured that the school meets The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, schedule 1 ('the Regulations'), with the exception of those listed below.³

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of the quality of education provided (standards in part 1) and must:

- review its curriculum policy to improve the breadth and balance of the curriculum, provide appropriate plans and schemes of work for physical education in Year 11 and for creative subjects throughout the school, and ensure that these schemes are implemented effectively (paragraph 2(1))
- provide all pupils of compulsory school age with experiences in the physical and aesthetic and creative areas of learning (paragraph 2(2)(a)).

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of the premises of and accommodation at schools (standards in part 5) and must:

- make appropriate arrangements for providing outside space for pupils to play safely (paragraph 23 (s)).

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of the provision of information (standards in part 6) and must:

- ensure that the following information is provided to parents, carers and others:
 - the name of the headteacher
 - the full name of the proprietorial body, the address and telephone number of its registered or principal office for correspondence and communication during both term time and holidays (paragraph 24(1)(a))
- send to parents of pupils (and of prospective pupils on request) a copy of the safeguarding children policy as required under part 3, paragraph 7 (paragraph 24(1)(c)).

³ www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2010/1997/contents/made

Inspection judgements

outstanding	good	satisfactory	inadequate
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The quality of education

Overall quality of education		✓		
How well the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of pupils			✓	
How effective teaching and assessment are in meeting the full range of pupils' needs		✓		
How well pupils make progress in their learning		✓		

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Quality of provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development		✓		
The behaviour of pupils	✓			

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The overall welfare, health and safety of pupils		✓		
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School details

School status	Independent
Type of school	Muslim day school
Date school opened	September 1992
Age range of pupils	5–18 years
Gender of pupils	Girls
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	252
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs	0
Number of pupils who are looked after	0
Annual fees (day pupils)	£1,800
Address of school	88 Filey Avenue, Stamford Hill, London N16 6JJ
Telephone number	020 8880 0085
Email address	admin@tayyibah.org.uk
Headteacher	Mrs Naheda Qureshi
Proprietor	Tayyibah Educational Trust