

Tribal
1-4 Portland Square
BRISTOL
BS2 8RR

T 0300 123 1231
Text Phone: 0161 6188524 **Direct T** 0845 123 6001
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk **Direct F** 0117 315 0430
www.ofsted.gov.uk **Email:** Fiona.allan1@tribalgroup.com

12 October 2010

Mrs G Coffey
Headteacher
Iqra Slough Islamic School
Grasmere Avenue
Slough
Berkshire
SL2 5JD

Dear Mrs Coffey

Special measures: monitoring inspection of Iqra Slough Islamic School

Following my visit with Andrew Lyons, Additional Inspector, to your school on 5–6 October 2010, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings.

The visit was the first monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures in March 2010. The full list of the areas for improvement which were identified during that inspection is set out in the annex to this letter. The monitoring inspection report is attached and the main judgements are set out below.

Progress since being subject to special measures – **satisfactory**.

Since the last inspection the school has entered into a soft federation with Lynch Hill Primary School who appointed three newly qualified teachers and placed them full-time within this school. This was done without first seeking the agreement of Ofsted. No further placements of newly qualified teachers may be made to the school without the agreement of the Lead HMI inspector.

This letter and monitoring inspection report will be posted on the Ofsted website.

I am copying this letter and the monitoring inspection report to the Secretary of State, the Chair of Governors and the Director of Children's Services for Slough and ams: UK.

Yours sincerely

Susan Gadd
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in March 2010

- By September 2011, raise pupils' attainment and achievement in English, mathematics and science to nationally expected levels in Years 3 to 6 by:
 - improving teaching so that it is consistently good or better and promotes better progress in learning
 - using assessment information to ensure higher expectations in lessons and good challenge for all pupils in learning
 - using assessment information and better marking to ensure that all pupils are aware of how they can improve.
- Improve leadership and management by developing sharper and more rigorous monitoring to evaluate the quality of teaching.
- By June 2011, put in place effective strategies to improve pupils' attendance so that it is at least average compared to all primary schools.
- By June 2011, improve the curriculum in Key Stage 2 by ensuring adequate opportunities are provided for all pupils to develop the basic skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology.

Special measures: monitoring of Iqra Slough Islamic School

Report from the first monitoring inspection on 5–6 October 2010

Evidence

Inspectors observed the school's work, visited 11 lessons, scrutinised documents and samples of pupils' work. They met with senior and middle leaders, groups of pupils, the Chair of Governors and a representative from the local authority.

Context

There have been some significant changes in staffing since the last inspection. The substantive headteacher is no longer in post. As of September 2010 the seconded headteacher at the time of the last inspection has been appointed as the executive headteacher. She will remain with the school for the next two years under the umbrella of a soft federation with Lynch Hill Primary school. The local authority has appointed a full-time head of school and a deputy headteacher for three days a week. Both of these members of staff were advisers within the authority. Five teachers have left the school and have been replaced by two experienced teachers and three newly qualified teachers.

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning

Unvalidated data in the 2010 examination tests show that attainment remains low in English, mathematics and science. There is some evidence of a slight improvement in English and a significant improvement in mathematics. The improvement in mathematics is as a result of additional intervention since the last inspection. The school has introduced 'setting' in mathematics where pupils are taught in mixed ability groups with the addition of an extra mathematics group for the more able pupils. Additional one-to-one tuition has been provided for pupils identified as underachieving. However, attainment in science declined significantly last year as the school shifted its focus to improving mathematics and English. Progress for pupils within Key Stage 2 remains inadequate despite some improvements to provision. By the end of Key Stage 1, attainment remains broadly average within an improving trend. However, lesson observations in Key Stage 1 indicate that progress in lessons is far too inconsistent and occasionally inadequate. Consequently, current learning remains far too inconsistent throughout the school both within year groups and within subjects such that achievement overall is inadequate. Pupils classified as Pakistani boys and those that are more able remain weaker groups in terms of attainment. However, children in the Early Years Foundation Stage continue to make better progress than those in the rest of the school. Learning support assistants occasionally support pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities well through targeted questioning but again this good practice is still far too inconsistent across the school.

Judgement

Progress since the last inspection on the areas for improvement:

- By September 2011, raise pupils' attainment and achievement in English, mathematics and science to nationally expected levels in Years 3 to 6 – inadequate.

Other relevant pupil outcomes

Pupils say they feel safe in school and enjoy attending. Since the last inspection, a new behaviour policy has been introduced based on school rules with clear sanctions and short- and long-term rewards. Common benchmarks have been established so that staff and pupils are clear about expectations in behaviour. However, lesson observations indicate that overall behaviour is just satisfactory with girls behaving better than boys. Some staff require training to further develop their strategies to ensure greater consistency in implementing the school's new policy.

Attendance has improved since the last inspection, despite remaining low. Regular meetings with the 'attendance officer' and parents have led to the whole community becoming more aware of the importance of regular attendance. The school has introduced penalty notices for persistent absenteeism and new rewards to encourage regular attendance. These include certificates, and weekly and annual presentations in assemblies. Plans are in place to develop these positive rewards further.

Judgement

Progress since the last inspection on the areas for improvement:

- By June 2011, put in place effective strategies to improve pupils' attendance so that it is at least average compared to all primary schools – satisfactory.

The effectiveness of provision

Since the last inspection the school has introduced a cross-curricular approach to learning. English, mathematics and science are taught as separate subjects but other subjects are taught within topics. Within each topic there are plans to provide opportunities for pupils to apply their English, mathematics and science skills within a meaningful context. Pupils are given an opportunity to learn new skills in information and communication technology and then through the improved curriculum are applying these within their topic work.

Relatively new expectations have been set to establish some consistency in the way teachers plan for pupils' learning. A consistent format for planning is now in place and most lesson plans make reference to pupils' learning objectives, success criteria and a range of tasks to meet the varying needs within each class. However, these improvements are so new that learning objectives are still not precise enough or

explained well enough. A lack of accurate prior assessment of pupils' attainment means that tasks are inappropriately matched to pupils' needs, lessons proceed at a slow pace and pupils have insufficient time to complete planned learning. This, combined with insufficient use of practical resources to stimulate and engage pupils, means that many pupils, and in particular Pakistani boys, become disengaged in their learning. Due to a lack of reference to either success criteria or learning objectives, pupils and staff have limited understanding of progress being made.

Since September there has been some improvement in marking to provide pupils with an understanding of their next steps to learning. Because this is a recent change it is neither embedded nor consistent across subjects or year groups. Pupils report that last year some targets were set in literacy in some year groups but there is little evidence of this in the current academic year. Although staff have received some training from the local authority to improve assessment within the school, their understanding of how best to assess pupils accurately is still at a very early stage of development. Consequently, inconsistencies in assessment, marking and target setting are hindering improvements to achievement.

Judgement

Progress since the last inspection on the areas for improvement:

- Improve teaching so that it is consistently good or better and promotes better progress in learning – inadequate.
- Use assessment information to ensure higher expectations in lesson and good challenge for all pupils in learning – inadequate.
- Use assessment information and better marking to ensure that all pupils are aware of how they can improve – inadequate.
- By June 2011, improve the curriculum in Key Stage 2 by ensuring adequate opportunities are provided for all pupils to develop the basic skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology – satisfactory.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Leadership and management have faced additional issues to those identified in the inspection report. They have correctly prioritised action required in order to secure future improvement. Leaders have rightly identified that the school first needed to develop a cohesive set of values where all staff understood the new expectations required of them and were prepared to work towards a common ethos as a whole-school team.

With these new expectations now in place, the school towards the end of last term and the beginning of this term has given greater focus to the issues identified in the last inspection. Although there is evidence of satisfactory progress in some areas,

the pace at which these changes have taken place now needs to swiftly accelerate such that initiatives can begin to be embedded across the school and have a more consistent impact on pupils' learning.

The members of the new leadership team, all of whom have only held their substantive posts for a matter of weeks, have a clear understanding of the strengths and areas for development. Their 'Aspire Plan' clearly identifies the areas for improvement with clear measurable criteria to judge progress against. This plan now needs to be implemented at a more rapid pace. Senior leaders have been involved in monitoring the quality of teaching and learning. As a result, improvements to planning have been made and staff have begun the journey to develop their professional understanding of assessment and teaching and learning. With new support from the local authority the school is considering additional ways to develop staff knowledge and practice such that more rapid improvement can be made to bring about good learning.

Since the last inspection the governors have rightly identified through their risk assessments some issues that, if not remedied, could impact on pupils' safety in the future. They are aware of the importance of addressing these issues swiftly and are beginning to work with the local authority and external contractors to bring about the necessary changes. They have established committees to hold the school to account and regularly request and receive updates on the school's progress in each of the areas identified in the last inspection. The local authority has also agreed to provide training to the full governing body before it continues the process of holding the school to account, so that governors have the most appropriate strategies and methods at their disposal.

Judgement

Progress since that last inspection on the areas for improvement:

- Improve leadership and management by developing sharper and more rigorous monitoring to evaluate the quality of teaching – satisfactory.

External support

Support from the local authority has been no more than satisfactory. They have supported the school by organising the appointment of an executive headteacher, a full-time head of school and a deputy headteacher who works three days a week. A local authority consultant has also provided some training to develop assessment within the school. However, the impact of this support has been limited due to other issues that required immediate attention within the school community. The local authority has now agreed to extend their current plans to support the school such that they are able to rapidly address the issues identified within the last inspection report.