

# Islamic Shakhsiyah Foundation

Independent school standard inspection report

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Reporting inspector	Daniel Towl HMI

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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.<sup>1, 2</sup>

## Information about the school

The Islamic Shakhshiyah Foundation School, for children aged 3–11 years, was established in 2002. It moved to its current premises in Haringey in 2007. It has a partner school in Slough. There are 110 pupils on roll, 16 of whom are part-time. Fifteen percent of pupils speak English as an additional language and are new to speaking English. Just over half of the pupils are bilingual and a quarter is trilingual. The school has identified five pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. There is very wide ethnic diversity with 26 different nationalities represented among the pupils. There are 49 children in the Early Years Foundation Stage all of whom receive government funding. The school was last inspected in October 2007. There were significant staff changes at the start of the school year.

The school's main aim is to develop each child's Islamic *Shakhshiyah* (personality) in partnership with parents.

## Evaluation of the school

The overall quality of education provided by the school is inadequate. Teaching and assessment of key subjects are inadequate and this leads to pupils making insufficient progress especially in written English. Pupils' personal development is good and a strength of the school. The school is successful in developing pupils' personal skills and *Shakhshiyah*. In this respect it effectively achieves its aims. There are some strengths in the Early Years Foundation Stage where the overall effectiveness is satisfactory. The provision for welfare, health and safety is inadequate because the school does not have a current fire risk assessment, though all other health and safety requirements, including those relating to safeguarding and child protection, are met. Parents and carers have very positive views about the school.

Since the last inspection improvements have been made to the methods the school uses to monitor pupils' progress. The school fails to meet some of the regulations for teaching and assessment; welfare, health and safety; and the suitability of premises.

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<sup>1</sup> [www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2002/ukpga\\_20020032\\_en\\_14#pt10-ch1-pb4-l1g162](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2002/ukpga_20020032_en_14#pt10-ch1-pb4-l1g162)

<sup>2</sup> [www.opsi.gov.uk/ACTS/acts2005/ukpga\\_20050018\\_en\\_15#sch8](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/ACTS/acts2005/ukpga_20050018_en_15#sch8)

## Quality of education

The curriculum is satisfactory and covers the required areas of study. English and mathematics are given due prominence in curriculum planning. Other subjects such as Arabic, art, science and information and communication technology provide further opportunities for pupils to develop and practise literacy and numeracy skills. Through the history curriculum pupils learn about events in different countries around the world including China, Britain, Africa and India. They explore key events, significant people and cultural developments. Pupils successfully carry out their own research and this is woven into the rest of the curriculum making effective links with Islamic history. Music is explored through *Nasheeds* (traditional religious songs) and the use of percussion instruments. Older pupils take part in Wing Chun and younger pupils have weekly opportunities to practise bat and ball skills, use play equipment and skipping ropes and engage in races. Older pupils say they would like to have a wider range of extra-curricular activities. Currently there are only homework clubs but plans are in place to extend activities to football and cycling proficiency.

The *Halaqah* (circle time) curriculum provides a strong foundation for learning by integrating Islamic studies, personal and social education, citizenship and history. These daily sessions are oral and thus enable pupils to develop good speaking and listening skills. They also provide good opportunities for pupils to discuss a range of issues and develop their own views, which contribute strongly to good personal development. Daily lessons in Arabic support successfully pupils' Islamic studies. The school reports that pupils go on to do well in their Arabic studies at secondary level.

Teaching and assessment are inadequate in Key Stages 1 and 2. Although there is some good and satisfactory teaching, for example in the *Halaqah* sessions, too many lessons are inadequate in English and mathematics. Despite developing basic skills, pupils do not always achieve enough in lessons and consequently they make inadequate progress. Weaknesses in the teaching, especially in English and mathematics, in Key Stages 1 and 2, mean that pupils do not consistently complete enough written work, and this has an adverse effect on their learning and progress. The presentation of work in pupils' books is untidy and this hinders their achievements. However, pupils make satisfactory progress in reading and demonstrate that they can use interesting vocabulary at times in their writing.

There is a high proportion of staff, new to teaching and the school, who are still developing their classroom skills and their understanding of how best to engage pupils in learning. Too frequently, weak organisation of activities, an imbalance of teacher talk and pupils' action and a lack of clear instruction lead to a slow pace of learning. Where lessons are more effective, well-planned and managed activities, such as exploring the skeleton of a fish in science or acting out scenarios in a *Halaqah* session provide engaging activities and support more effective learning.

Teaching and assessment in the Early Years Foundation stage are satisfactory and more consistent than the rest of the school.

Teachers have good relationships with pupils. A common strength in many lessons is the opportunity for pupils to answer questions and give their ideas and explain answers.

The school has begun to implement an appropriate and improved method to assess and monitor pupils' progress. The school is using National Curriculum levels to assess pupils' achievements in English and mathematics. However, teachers' skills in assessment are not well developed and this means that, despite the small class sizes, work in lessons is not always well matched to pupils' individual needs, including those who speak English as an additional language or have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Marking is too variable in quality and frequency across the school and rarely gives a helpful comment for pupils on how they could improve.

## **Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils**

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is good and is successfully supported by the curriculum. Pupils' enjoyment is reflected in their positive attitudes towards learning and their willingness to make the best of what is on offer. A calm and welcoming learning atmosphere is evident in most lessons and around the school. Relationships are respectful and this contributes well to pupils' personal development and well being. Consequently, pupils are confident to share their ideas and feelings, listening and responding appropriately to questions and requests. Pupils and parents welcome the rich diversity of the many cultural backgrounds. Pupils play and work together in harmony.

Pupils have a very clear understanding and are proud of their Islamic identity, reinforced by assemblies and *Zohr Sala* (lunch prayer). They engage fully in Islamic studies such as *Aqeedah* (theology/beliefs), *Hadith* (Prophet's life), *Tafseer* (meaning of Suras) and *Tajweed* (recitation of the Qur'aan). Links with local schools and learning about other faiths successfully help pupils to have a balanced view of their place in society and the need for tolerance. They show good understanding of what is right and wrong and this is supported well by their Islamic studies and the *Halaquah* curriculum.

Pupils' behaviour is good in lessons and around the school, though where lessons are not engaging some pupils have a tendency to fidget and call out. Overall pupils are polite and courteous, responding well to their teachers and visitors. Pupils are happy and like to come to school. Trips and visits to places of interest and visitors to the school enhance the curriculum and give pupils a broad knowledge and understanding of public institutions and services in England. They enjoy the opportunities and responsibilities available to them and make suggestions to improve the learning environment in their school through the school council.

Although the school tries very hard to encourage regular attendance, a number of parents and carers take their children on holiday during the school term.

## **Welfare, health and safety of pupils**

The provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety is inadequate because the school has not completed a fire risk assessment as required by the regulations. There are, however, clear health and safety policies. Regular fire drills are undertaken and visitors are briefed appropriately when entering the school for the first time. General risk assessments are undertaken regularly and there are appropriate procedures to minimise health and safety risks when pupils go on visits. The day-to-day supervision of pupils is good.

Child protection policies and procedures meet requirements. The designated member of staff and all other staff have received appropriate training. Procedures for appointing staff ensure that all the required checks are undertaken. Provision for first aid is satisfactory. Policies are clear and sufficient staff have been trained to an appropriate level.

Pupils say they feel safe and have a good understanding about healthy eating and parents say that their children remind them about this at home. While there is regular physical education, older pupils would like more opportunities to engage in a wider range of physical activity including at break time. Pupils move around the school buildings sensibly and safely.

The school fulfils its duties under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, amended by the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001.

## **Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors**

Appropriate checks have been undertaken on the proprietor and staff. The single central staff register had minor clerical errors but these were rectified during the inspection.

## **Premises of and accommodation at the school**

The premises are well maintained. Classrooms provide appropriate learning environments. The school has plans to improve the outdoor area to enable pupils to take part in a wider range of physical activities. Provision of toilets and wash basins is inadequate. School leaders are currently negotiating with the building proprietor to use additional rooms and this will include access to more toilets.

## **Provision of information**

The school provides satisfactory information for parents and carers. The school has an informative website and also provides a brochure for prospective parents and carers which provide all the required information. Parents and carers are mostly happy with the information they receive. During discussions parents and carers were very positive and unanimous in their praise for the headteacher and staff, especially about how approachable they are. Progress reports are regularly sent to parents and termly open days provide additional opportunities for parents to discuss their children's progress. From this term pupils' personal portfolios will be the focus of discussions.

## **Manner in which complaints are to be handled**

The school's complaints procedures meet requirements.

## **Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

The overall effectiveness and provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage are satisfactory.

There are increasing opportunities for parents and carers to become more involved in their child's learning and progress. This helps children to settle happily into school and make a positive start to their education. Children's behaviour is good. They listen carefully to instructions and act responsibly. The adults regularly share information about individual children to ensure they feel well cared for and safe. Children feel secure as a result. They enjoy the relaxed atmosphere and are confident in working together and sharing their learning experiences.

An increasing number of children start school new to learning English. The current children in the Early Years Foundation Stage started with the expected skills for their age except in reading and writing where their skills are weak.

The outcomes for children are satisfactory. They make satisfactory progress as a result of satisfactory teaching, an appropriate curriculum and improving assessment opportunities. There is some good teaching in the Reception class.

Children enjoy learning in a bright and stimulating environment which encourages them to develop good social skills and work independently. There is an appropriate balance of adult led activities and those in which children can choose for themselves. Children move seamlessly between the two. Children enjoy a range of activities including role play in the doctor's surgery, using percussion instruments, and the early learning of letter sounds.

The outdoor area is less well developed than indoors. Children enjoy the planned opportunities to visit the school garden and the local park. Staff effectively support children's learning in small groups or through individual teaching using effective

questioning and modelling appropriate language. However this practice is inconsistent. Children learn well in adult-led activities when they are using a range of practical resources to stimulate their learning. A good example of this was seen in Nursery when children visited the garden to collect leaves to add to their nature table and talked with enthusiasm about the colours and shapes of the leaves.

Leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. New and significantly improved procedures have been introduced which have had a positive impact. The leader has an accurate understanding of strengths and areas required to improve the provision. She is aware that the outside facilities are in need of development and that assessment procedures are not yet consistently embedded.

## **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.<sup>3</sup>

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

- ensure that teaching of English and mathematics enables pupils to learn new skills and knowledge according to their abilities (paragraph 3(a))
- ensure that teaching methods are appropriate and activities are well organised enabling pupils to achieve more in lessons and make better progress (paragraph 3(c))
- use on-going assessment more effectively to plan more specifically for individual pupils' needs (paragraph 3(d))
- improve teachers' awareness of the subject-specific knowledge to ensure that activities are clearly explained (paragraph 3(e))
- use information from on-going assessment more effectively to ensure that pupils of all abilities are given tasks that enable them to make better progress ( paragraph 3(g)).

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of provision for welfare, health and safety of pupils (standards in part 3) and must:

- complete an up-to-date fire risk assessment (paragraph (13)).

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

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<sup>3</sup> [www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2010/1997/contents/made](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2010/1997/contents/made)



- ensure that there are sufficient toilets and wash basins (paragraph 23(j)).

## 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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### The quality of the Early Years Foundation Stage provision

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage			✓	
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage			✓	
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage		✓		
Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage			✓	

## School details

<b>School status</b>	Independent		
<b>Type of school</b>	Muslim Primary School		
<b>Date school opened</b>	September 2002		
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11		
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed		
<b>Number on roll (full-time pupils)</b>	Boys: 49	Girls: 45	Total: 94
<b>Number on roll (part-time pupils)</b>	Boys: 8	Girls: 8	Total: 16
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	£2,800		
<b>Address of school</b>	1st Floor 277 St Ann's Road Tottenham London N15 5RG		
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 88028651		
<b>Email address</b>	admin@isfnet.org.uk		
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs F Reddy		
<b>Proprietor</b>	Islamic Shakhsiyah Foundation		