

Leicester Community Islamic School

Independent school light-touch inspection report

DfE registration number	856/6014
Unique Reference Number (URN)	132781
Inspection number	364270
Inspection dates	11 May 2011
Reporting inspector	Jacqueline Wordsworth 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.^{1, 2}

This was a light touch educational inspection which focused principally on the quality of education provided by the school; its provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development; the arrangements for safeguarding pupils and the improvements the school has made since its last inspection.

Information about the school

Leicester Community Islamic School is an independent co-educational school that admits children, aged five to 16 years, from families from the Muslim community in the Humberstone area of Leicester. Most pupils are of Somali, Indian and Pakistani heritage while some are of Bangladeshi heritage. The school was established in 2004 in premises that were previously used for commercial purposes. Ofsted last inspected the school in June 2008. School teaching areas for the primary section and girls' secondary section are on the ground floor while the boys' secondary section is located on the first floor. The school is registered for 211 pupils and there are currently 207 full-time pupils on roll, taught in seven classes across the school. There are currently no pupils attending the school who have special educational needs and/or disabilities or pupils who are at the early stages of learning to speak English. The school is owned by Leicester Educational Trust. It is a charity and registered trust and run by a governing body. The school aims to 'offer education in a relaxed and friendly environment and to provide a broad and balanced study of all areas of the National Curriculum with staff striving to achieve high standards in all avenues of learning.'

Evaluation of the school

Leicester Community Islamic School has made good progress since its previous inspection, and it continues to improve steadily. It provides a good quality of education for the pupils, effectively meeting its stated aims. The school's self-evaluation has led to a good understanding of its strengths and has highlighted areas of the teaching and assessment that it is continually seeking to develop. It meets all but two of the requirements for registration. Pupils make good progress in their learning and achieve well in school. The school has successfully created a strong spiritual and nurturing environment firmly based on Islamic principles, which parents

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

and carers strongly appreciate and support. Staff promote the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development in a secure and outstanding manner. As a result, pupils' behaviour is outstanding. The provision for safeguarding pupils' welfare health and safety is good. There is full compliance with all regulations pertaining to the safer recruitment of staff and meticulous completion of the single central record of safeguarding checks. Nonetheless, further work needs to be done to improve some aspects of the premises. For example, although the school has sufficient toilet facilities, it does not meet the requirement to provide shower facilities for all of the senior pupils. On-site facilities for science and physical education are limited.

Quality of education

The quality of education is good and the school fulfils its aims well. There have been clear improvements since the previous inspection. The quality of the curriculum is good. Provision in both the Islamic and the secular curriculum enables all pupils across the school to make good progress over time particularly in English and mathematics. The secular curriculum, including personal, social and health education is integrated well with the Islamic curriculum.

The vast majority of pupils make good progress and all groups of pupils are well served by a well-organised and developmental Islamic curriculum. Key principles, beliefs and moral teachings, including: the Qur'an; *Fiqh* (the practical aspects of Islamic life); *Tajweed* (Qur'an recitation); Islamic history; life of the prophet; and a selection from the traditions of the prophet (*Hadith*) are taught effectively. Pupils are required to learn Arabic as a modern foreign language and to learn Arabic notation and the correct pronunciation of the language in order to study the Qur'an. This leads to effective *Tajweed* (Qur'anic recitation) and *Tahfiz* (memorisation). Teachers of Islamic studies and Arabic have good subject knowledge and set work that matches well with pupils' skills and abilities.

Well-focused curriculum policies, plans and schemes of work for all six areas of the secular curriculum are in place across the school. Information and communication technology (ICT) provision is less strong. It has limited provision and is not fully used, especially by pupils, to secure progress across the whole curriculum. The secular curriculum in Key Stages 3 and 4 is based on the National Curriculum programmes of study. In Key Stage 4, pupils study eight subjects including English language, history, mathematics, science, ICT, citizenship, religious studies, Arabic or Urdu to GCSE level. Progression routes, including provision for careers advice and work experience for pupils in Key Stage 4 have been improved since the previous inspection and are now good. Considerable effort is put into enabling pupils to benefit from useful work experience in Year 11. Consequently, pupils are prepared well for their future lives or next phase of their education. Physical education (PE) is taught to all year groups, off-site at a local park, owing to the limitations of the premises and accommodation provided on-site. However, there are no facilities for senior pupils to shower after PE on- or off-site. An adequate range of trips and visits

enriches pupils' wider learning experience. For example, boys and girls in Key Stages 1 and 2 have visited the Think Tank Museum as part of their science work.

Teaching and assessment are good. Assessments are in place to measure pupils' attainment on entry to school, at the end of each unit of work and, by bi-annual tests, to establish National Curriculum attainment levels. Teachers' day-to-day planning is detailed and effective and takes account of the different abilities of pupils, so that work is generally matched well to pupils' needs.

Lessons are typified by excellent relationships, mutual respect, humour and warmth. These features were exemplified in a Year 7 English lesson, on the difference between the modern use of English and that spoken in Shakespearean England. The boys buzzed with excitement and worked in a mature and independent manner. Pupils were able to respond creatively to the task because they clearly enjoyed the activity and understood what it was they were learning. Pupils forge ahead in such lessons and make good and sometimes excellent progress, because the work is challenging and the pace is brisk.

Pupils across the school make good progress and demonstrate good attitudes to learning, as a result of effective teaching that is well planned and derived from longer term planning. Assessment is accurate and up to date, as indicated in the work seen in pupils' books, results from national tests, including those from GCSE examinations, and discussions with pupils during the inspection. A key reason for the success relates to the quality of lesson planning, particularly in Islamic studies, which routinely identifies learning needs for two ability levels.

The marking of pupils' work provides pupils across the school with a good understanding about how well they have done. However, it rarely provides guidance to help pupils improve their work. The most helpful marking is usually in English where pupils are often shown the next steps they need to take. Consequently, this improves their rate of progress. In spite of this good practice on a number of occasions in other subjects, some of the most-able pupils are not sufficiently challenged because teachers miss opportunities to allow pupils to work independently. For example, in English pupils sometimes spend too much time working through exercises from textbooks or worksheets. Pupils are not doing enough independent and extended writing or using a range of more complex writing styles across a sufficient range of genres. It is a similar picture in mathematics and science, with insufficient time devoted to investigative and research activities.

Learning is sometimes inhibited by the small range of resources available, particularly for science. Although ICT provision is satisfactory in the primary school, it is insufficiently resourced elsewhere to effectively support learning across the curriculum or to be used as an effective teaching tool. Consequently, pupils' progress is good rather than outstanding, as the school believes.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. They enjoy school a great deal, and have exceptionally positive attitudes to school, as demonstrated by the overwhelmingly positive responses in the completed pupil questionnaires.

Teachers provide excellent role models for Islamic life and this has a very positive impact on pupils' moral development. Their active participation in Islamic studies (early recitation of Surahs) supports pupils' spiritual and moral development exceptionally well. Even the youngest children make good progress in their Islamic studies. Moreover, the daily routines such as Duaa (supplication) and Zohar Salah (lunchtime prayer) enable pupils to practise their faith and develop a very strong sense of community. In addition, they develop excellent knowledge of what is right and wrong and have a clear understanding of their Islamic identity.

The school provides a varied range of experiences that enable pupils at all stages of their education to learn about different cultures. Much of the improvement has been achieved through increasing the number and range of educational visits and visitors and by introducing formal religious education lessons, where pupils learn about other religions and cultures in their own community and in the wider world.

Discussions and debates on issues such as discrimination, racism and animal rights have helped pupils to develop a strong moral code and to respect the law. Consequently, pupils become increasingly aware of the qualities needed to live in a harmonious and ethnically diverse world. The citizenship programme also contributes well to preparing pupils for their future roles as British citizens and their understanding of public institutions and services in England.

Pupils are confident young people who enjoy being involved in all school activities, such as charity events, and make a good contribution to the wider community through their involvement in community events. However, the school is aware that it needs to improve the opportunities to develop the social development of girls in order to increase their involvement in the life of the whole school.

Attendance and punctuality are excellent; pupils have very positive attitude to learning and their behaviour is outstanding. The pupils are unfailingly polite and courteous, and the boys are eager to talk about their work and their pride in their school.

Safeguarding pupils' welfare, health and safety

The provision for safeguarding, welfare, health and safety of pupils is good across all phases of the school because it is considered and planned for carefully: a much-improved position since the time of the previous inspection. Pupils flourish because they are happy in school and feel safe. They form very good relations with their teachers and are supervised well at all times. The school's anti-bullying and

behaviour policies are of good quality and are effectively implemented. Pupils say that they are not bullied and if they have a concern it is dealt with effectively.

The school has robust procedures for all aspects of health and safety including testing of electrical and fire safety equipment. However, there are still a few important maintenance issues that have not been addressed. These include missing protective covers on some fluorescent lights and two upper floor windows that are unrestrained.

The school has a robust policy for child protection with frequent and up-to-date staff training. Recruitment procedures fully comply with statutory requirements on safeguarding with very detailed records kept. A range of relevant policies has been implemented including reference to the new Equality Act 2010. A suitable plan is in place to address a range of disability and access issues, including the provision of safety railings outside the school buildings. The school meets the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, as amended.

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 provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety (standards in part 3) and must:

- employ effective measures to ensure pupils' health and safety, which have regard to the DfES guidance *Health and safety: responsibilities and powers* (DfES 0803/2001) by ensuring that that all aspects of the school buildings and environment are free from significant hazards (paragraph 11).

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

- provide shower facilities for all senior pupils (paragraph 23(j)).

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

What the school could do to improve further

While not required by regulations, the school might wish to consider the following points for development:

- improve pupils' access to science and ICT facilities in order to develop their independent learning
- improve the consistency of provision between the secondary boys and secondary girls departments particularly in social development
- improve pupils' progress from good to outstanding, particularly in writing, by decreasing the use of worksheets and increasing opportunities for independent and sustained writing.

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	Community Islamic		
Date school opened	September 2004		
Age range of pupils	5 to 16		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 100	Girls: 107	Total: 207
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
Number of pupils who are looked after	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
Annual fees (day pupils)	£1560.00		
Address of school	2 Overton Road Leicester LE5 0JA		
Telephone number	0116 2741626		
Email address	INFO@LCIS-DARULARQAM.ORG.UK		
Headteacher	Mr Ahmed Abdul Hai Dadipatel		
Proprietor	Leicester Educational Trust		