

# Al-Furqan Community College (Boys)

Independent school standard inspection report

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DfE registration number	330/6029
Unique Reference Number (URN)	136063
Inspection number	366862
Inspection dates	20–21 September 2011
Reporting inspector	David Young

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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 college's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.<sup>1, 2</sup>

## **Information about the school**

Al-Furqan Community College (Boys) is an independent Islamic day college for boys aged between 11 and 16 years. It is located in the Tyseley area of Birmingham and serves a multicultural community. The college is situated adjacent to the girls' college and primary school that are also operated by the Al-Furqan Educational Trust. Provision for boys started in 2007 as an extension of the girls' college and in January 2010 it was separately registered as a boys' college. There are currently 60 boys on roll, most of whom speak English as an additional language. Five students have statements of special educational needs. This is the first inspection of the college since its registration.

The college aims, 'to ensure the highest educational achievement of which each student is capable, by providing a broad and balanced education within the framework of the National Curriculum and the Islamic curriculum, regardless of racial origin, disability, gender or academic ability'.

## **Evaluation of the school**

Al-Furqan Community College (Boys) provides an outstanding quality of education and meets its aims successfully. As a result of the high quality of leadership, it is outstanding in many respects, including the curriculum provided, arrangements for the personal development of students and attention to their safeguarding and welfare. Students respond positively to the opportunities provided, through outstanding behaviour and progress from their various starting points on entry. The college meets all the regulatory requirements for registration as an independent school.

## **Quality of education**

The outstanding curriculum makes a major contribution to the quality of students' learning and their progress. The curriculum is innovative, broad and appropriate to the needs of students. It is kept under regular review and amended in response to the changing needs of students and the demands of the society for which they are

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<sup>1</sup> [www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/32/contents](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/32/contents).

<sup>2</sup> [www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2005/18/contents](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2005/18/contents).

being educated. A balanced range of subjects, broadly reflecting the pattern of the National Curriculum, is provided for students in Years 7 to 9. There is an appropriate focus on English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT), supported by lessons in humanities, art, religious studies, citizenship, and sport and games. This provides a breadth which meets the interests of students and prepares them well for the accredited courses introduced in Key Stage 4. Opportunities are provided for students in Year 9 to complete the first unit of their GCSE examinations, mostly at the higher level. In summer 2011, students in Year 8 were entered for this unit examination with 100% success. This was a pilot arrangement which is being kept under review. In addition, students in Year 9 will enter for GCSE Arabic at the end of Year 9. Students state that they welcome the challenge of these early entries to examinations and that it has helped to develop their confidence for future success.

The curriculum in Key Stage 4 is original and sets high expectations for students' achievements. One-year GCSE courses are introduced enabling students to achieve an additional five examination grades by the end of Year 10, and a further six by the end of Year 11. The first cohort of students to follow this pattern is now in Year 11 and they are justifiably proud of the excellent results achieved at the end of Year 10. All have already attained at least 3 grades between A\* and C, 75% have attained at least one A\* and 49% of results are graded A or A\*. These results are well above the national average and represent outstanding progress for a group of students across a wide range of prior attainment on entry to the college. The full range of excellent one-year courses includes sciences, humanities, art, business studies, religious studies and ICT. A two-year course in English language and literature is studied in Years 10 and 11. Current assessment records indicate that students are on course to fulfil their potential in all these areas.

In addition to this core programme, the college offers lessons in sports and games, careers education and personal, social and health education successfully integrated within subjects such as history, RS and English. A number of visits to museums, theatres and sports facilities, and presentations by visitors to the college, together with a recent whole-college residential trip to the Brecon Beacons, enhance the curriculum and contribute to the personal development of students. These elements, together with opportunities to study physics and statistics in the extended provision programme, open a wide range of opportunities for students in further education and employment. The extended provision programme provides access to additional subjects, clubs and activities, and the Islamic, Qur'anic and Arabic Studies (IQA) programme. IQA provides a valuable and effective opportunity for students to learn their *Surahs* (sections of the Qur'an), for *Hifz* (memorisation), *Tajweed* (Qur'anic recitation) and to develop their understanding of Islamic interpretation. The quality of this structured course and its assessment is outstanding and fulfils the aim to 'meet the college's Islamic ethos'.

The quality of teaching and assessment is good and provides an environment in which students work with confidence, respond to high expectations and make

outstanding progress. There are a number of outstanding features in much of the teaching, including the brisk pace of lessons; the clarity with which learning objectives are explained to students; the use of strong visual resources to support oral presentations; the quality of teachers' questioning and the depth of responses achieved by students. For example, Year 8 students enjoyed and contributed enthusiastically to a vibrant practical ICT lesson; Year 11 students engaged with mature concentration in a thought-provoking analysis of a challenging poem; and Year 8 students made rapid progress in their use of Arabic numbers using Arabic script. Students demonstrate respect for their teachers and enjoy the variety of interesting methods chosen to make learning enjoyable and successful. In the great majority of lessons there is excellent intellectual challenge and students respond with mature and reflective answers and ideas. Where teaching is only satisfactory, instructions and presentations are not always clear and precise, students are uncertain about what is expected of them and their work lacks sufficient depth and rigour. Provision for students with special educational needs and/or disabilities is of high quality and enables them to achieve or exceed expectations. Their individual needs are clearly identified and shared with staff. Teachers and support teachers together ensure that students are able to gain success and make good to outstanding progress. The assessment of students' work results in clear and helpful records of their progress and enables teachers to set suitable targets for future achievement. Students know and appreciate the clarity about how they may improve their work through effective marking and verbal feedback. Arrangements for the monitoring of teaching and continuous training for staff ensure that improvements are well targeted and teachers are confident that there is dialogue and support available to assist their development.

The outstanding curriculum, a high proportion of good and better teaching, and the commitment of students, result in outstanding progress, including GCSE results which significantly exceed expectations. The college is justifiably proud of its achievements since it opened.

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

The college's provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the students is outstanding. The Islamic ethos of the college enables students to express their beliefs and values in a supportive environment where spiritual development is cherished alongside academic achievement. Students' involvement in daily prayers and their recitation of *surahs* at the start and end of lessons reinforce the college's commitment to students' spiritual development. Behaviour in the college is outstanding, demonstrated by the manner in which concentration is maintained in lessons and movement around the college is orderly and respectful. Students' moral and social values are firmly rooted in their faith and demonstrated in the quality of relationships and trust which exist throughout the college. Attendance is excellent and supports consistent learning and personal development. Themes studied in assemblies and many subjects, including citizenship, humanities, English and religious studies, provide a firm basis for life in the wider community. Students are

tolerant of the diversity of cultures and beliefs in the local, national and global communities because they are provided with excellent role models and opportunities to clarify their insights and understanding. Students appreciate opportunities to take on responsibility through the college council and their various designated positions of responsibility.

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

The arrangements for the welfare, health and safety of students are outstanding. All the required policies to ensure the safety and welfare of students are in place and implemented effectively. Arrangements for safeguarding students are thorough and supported by regular, appropriate training for all staff including the designated person for child protection. The inclusive ethos of the college and the quality of relationships with the staff ensure that students are all individually known and their needs understood. Students talk enthusiastically about the 'family' nature of the college community, how everyone belongs and is cared for, and there is absolutely no risk of bullying. Staff recruitment procedures are comprehensive, fulfil statutory requirements and ensure that staff who are appointed are well matched to the needs of the college. Risk assessments for the premises, for fire safety and for off-site visits are well documented and implemented effectively. Students state in their questionnaires that the college helps them to be healthy and that they all feel safe. An appropriate three-year plan to increase access has been drawn up and is being implemented on a phased basis.

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

All the required checks on the suitability of staff are completed in advance of appointment and recorded in an appropriate single central register.

## **Premises and accommodation of schools**

The premises are located alongside the girls' college and the primary school. A number of facilities are shared and managed in a way which retains appropriate separation of boys and girls. Classrooms vary in size and are all adequate to enable effective learning for the numbers of students in each year group. Specialist facilities for science at the girls' college and for ICT in the primary school are appropriately timetabled to ensure access by all students at required times. Similarly, the mosque and the dining facilities are appropriately shared. External space for recreation in the nearby park is used effectively, and with enthusiasm, by the students on a daily basis. Movement within the accommodation and to the park is well supervised and ensures the safety of students.

## **Provision of information**

The college provides clear and up-to-date information for parents and carers. Statutory requirements are met by the information in the college prospectus and this is supplemented by regular letters and the attractive newsletter which is produced by

students. Annual reports on students' progress are issued to parents and carers, together with two open evenings each year to discuss students' progress.

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

The college's procedures for the management of complaints are available to parents and meet statutory requirements.

### **Compliance with regulatory requirements**

The proprietor has ensured that the college meets The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, schedule 1 ('the Regulations').

### **What the school could do to improve further**

While not required by regulations, the college might wish to consider the following point for development.

- Introduce strategies to raise the quality of teaching consistently to the standard of the best in the college.

## 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

<b>College status</b>	Independent
<b>Type of school</b>	Islamic day college
<b>Date college opened</b>	2007 (separate registration 2010)
<b>Age range of students</b>	11–16 years
<b>Gender of students</b>	Boys
<b>Number on roll (full-time students)</b>	Boys: 60
<b>Number of students with a statement of special educational needs</b>	Boys: 5
<b>Number of students who are looked after</b>	Boys: 0
<b>Annual fees (day students)</b>	£6,000
<b>Address of college</b>	279 Formans Road Tyseley Birmingham B11 3BZ
<b>Telephone number</b>	0121 777 8666
<b>Email address</b>	admin@alfurqancc.org.uk
<b>Principal</b>	Amjad Ahmed
<b>Proprietor</b>	Al-Furqan Educational Trust

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



22 September 2011

Dear Students

**Inspection of Al-Furqan Community College (Boys), Birmingham, B11 3BZ**

Thank you for your welcome when we visited your college. We enjoyed our visit, including opportunities to talk with you about your experiences at the college. Our inspection judged that Al-Furqan Community College (Boys) is an outstanding college and that you work hard to continue its success. We were particularly pleased to see:

- that your questionnaires show that you recognise that teaching is good and that you enjoy college
- the excellent respect and relationships between staff and students
- the concentration and enthusiasm which you show throughout the day
- the wide range of opportunities you have to succeed in examinations and that many of you have already achieved great success
- the way that you grow and develop as reliable members of the community
- the way that you care for one another and make sure nobody is left out.

To bring about further improvement inspectors have asked the headteacher and proprietor to make sure that all your lessons are as good as the best.

You can help to continue to improve your college by aiming to be the best that you can in every subject you study.

With all best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

David Young

Lead inspector