

Al-Islamia Institute for Education

Independent school standard inspection report

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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}

Information about the school

Al-Islamia Institute is an independent Islamic day school for boys and girls aged 5 to 11 years. The school is registered for 101 pupils. Currently, there are 82 full-time pupils on roll. In 2008, the school added an Early Years Foundation Stage, separately registered with Ofsted for 40 children. Currently there are 13 part-time pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage; all are in receipt of government funding. The school requested that the school be re-registered as a primary school and admit up to 141 pupils from the ages of 3 to 11 years. This request was considered as part of this inspection.

Al-Islamia Institute is located in the city of Leicester. It is a non-profit-making organisation and a registered charity. All the families that send their children to the school are practising Muslims. These families are mainly of British Indian, Bangladeshi and Black African heritage, although there are an increasing number of pupils from other backgrounds. No pupil has a statement of special educational needs and all pupils speak English as an additional language. The school aims 'to provide a full and interesting curriculum whilst safeguarding their Imaan (Islamic faith) by instilling Islamic morals and etiquettes in them as they acquire their education'.

The school registered under its new name in August 2007 and it was last inspected in 2008.

Evaluation of the school

The school has made good progress since its previous inspection and now provides a good quality of education for the pupils. Teachers have successfully created an excellent spiritual and nurturing environment, firmly based on Islamic principles, effectively meeting its stated aim of instilling pupils' Imaan into the heart of their education. As a result, pupils are well motivated and are eager to learn. They make good progress in their learning and achieve well both in the main school and in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The school meets all of the welfare, learning and development requirements for the Early Years Foundation Stage and therefore, this inspection recommends the acceptance of the school's request to the change of

¹ www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/32/contents.

² www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2005/18/contents.

registration to admit up to 141 pupils in the age range of three to 11 years. The school complies fully with the regulations for independent schools including all those for the curriculum, welfare health and safety, including safeguarding and protection of children that it did not meet at the time of its previous inspection.

Quality of education

The quality of education is good across the school, including that for the youngest children and the school fulfils its aims well. Within this exceptionally well-disciplined and caring environment, the school fosters pupils who are pleasant, respectful of the staff and of each other. Islamic history is taught so that pupils fully understand the cultural, moral and spiritual background to their faith and therefore have a very secure understanding of what it entails to become a good Muslim.

There have been clear improvements since the previous inspection, particularly in the curriculum, which is now good. It is underpinned by detailed policies and schemes of work that provide effective emphasis on, and detailed coverage of, the core skills of literacy and numeracy, so as to ensure that all pupils build on them securely from year to year. Pupils' outstanding personal development is successfully promoted through a well-planned personal, social, health and citizenship programme (PHSE). Activities include guidance on how to adopt healthy lifestyles and an understanding of the work of public institutions.

Provision for the teaching of reading is a strength and as a result pupils make good progress in this respect. Reading is well resourced and teachers, parents and carers are given good guidance to ensure a consistent approach to the development of reading throughout the school and at home. The school has identified that an even more focused approach to the teaching of early reading skills (phonics) across the school that will further increase pupils' progress and enable them to develop secure spelling skills. Progress in mathematics is slower because pupils are not confident with the use of technical vocabulary, as teachers do not model this appropriately or accurately. A further strength of the curriculum is the effective use of information and communication technology. Teachers are adept in the use of visual aids and resources such as interactive white boards and digital media to both illustrate key teaching points and to support pupils in their learning. Plentiful opportunities for speaking and listening result in pupils' effective communication skills preparing them well for the next stage of their education.

The quality of teaching and assessment has improved across the school and it is now good. It has improved because of the unrelenting focus on the quality of learning and the progress of the pupils they teach. Senior leaders are prepared to challenge robustly the ways of working in the school and systematically monitor the quality of teaching and assessment practices. An effective assessment framework is in place that includes a range of standardised tests and National Curriculum assessments. The electronic tracking of pupils' progress is used well to set sharp and challenging targets for improvement, that are well known to both teachers and pupils. The

quality of marking is good. The best examples of marking provide accurate and helpful guidance to enable the pupils to improve their work and reach their targets.

Pupils settle to their work very quickly and have positive work habits. Lessons are well structured and teachers use a good range of strategies to engage and motivate the pupils. During lessons, all pupils have many opportunities to work individually or together to discuss and plan their work. Teachers carefully monitor the learning of individual pupils and groups of pupils during lessons, so that they can adapt their teaching when the learning is not as good as expected. Consequently, the teaching engages pupils' interest ensures good pace and variety in lessons and as a result, pupils make good and sometimes outstanding progress. Teachers are adept in teaching pupils who speak English as an additional language and have support from other agencies to ensure that those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make the same good progress as their peers.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Excellent attention is given to pupils' spiritual development and they have an outstanding awareness of their Islamic identity and a good knowledge of other world faiths. Pupils participate in the richness of world cultures through geography, religious education, the arts and PSHE. Pupils learn about the major world faiths and study festivals such as the Passover, Eid and Divali.

Well-planned opportunities, particularly in assemblies, develop pupils' self-knowledge and respect for others exceptionally. Carefully chosen stories, illustrate particular moral issues in literacy and PSHE lessons. The weekly Duaa, the Islamic Virtue and nasheeds, all provide excellent opportunities for reflection and prayer. Consequently, pupils have an excellent awareness of the effect their actions have on themselves and others. All pupils' social development is exemplary. Regular opportunities for pupils to cooperate, to take on school and class responsibilities, fund raising activities, a well-established school council and 'playground friends' system allow pupils to play an important part in the smooth running of the school. Outstanding behaviour and above average attendance demonstrates that pupils clearly enjoy their education.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety is much improved and is now good. A range of relevant policies has been implemented, including a detailed plan to address a range of disability, discrimination and access issues that meet the terms of the Equality Act 2010. Pupils of all ages feel safe in school because they are reminded about health and safety issues during lessons and because instances of bullying are rare. Nonetheless, the anti-bullying policy, although satisfactory, still contains the relative weaknesses identified during the previous inspection. For example, it does not provide a detailed definition of racist, sexist or homophobic

bullying. The quality of behaviour management remains highly effective with a praise and reward system based on the Islamic faith and tradition well embedded across the school, including the youngest children.

Good attention is paid to teaching pupils about healthy living. This is supported by the increased opportunities for physical education and sporting activities, and the school's strong message about healthy eating. The school's policy and procedures for child protection are effective and all members of staff have been trained to the required standard. Regular fire drills are carried out, and the inspection and testing of the fire alarm and emergency lighting are done within agreed timescales. There are effective systems for risk assessing educational visits and the recording of accidents and incidents.

Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors

The school has appropriate procedures in place for making the required checks on the suitability of proprietors and staff. The single central register contains all of the required information.

Premises and accommodation at the school

The accommodation is in a good state of repair and it is safe, warm and tastefully decorated. Although the accommodation is cramped, it has been appropriately adapted for educational use and is suitable for the current number of pupils. The proprietors have recently installed new separate washroom cubicles for boys and girls. This has ensured that, the school has sufficient washrooms for staff and pupils. The outside play space is quite small but adequate because only the boys and girls use on a rotational basis.

Provision of information

The school provides parents with some very useful information about the school, its ethos and organisation. Parents report they are pleased with the school; they receive regular written reports with details of their children's attitudes to work and the National Curriculum levels they achieve.

Manner in which complaints are to be handled

The school has a clearly written complaints procedure that meets the requirements.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

The overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Effective leadership and management have led to effective teamwork and planning to support children's good achievement.

Children enjoy their time in the Nursery and Reception classes. Good links between staff, parents and carers, and effective transition arrangements across the Foundation Stage ensure that children settle quickly into school. Staff foster the children's happiness, health, safety and welfare effectively through secure safeguarding procedures. Well-established routines, such as self-registration and the children's selection of activities during the child-chosen aspect of provision, help ensure good personal, social and emotional development. Skilful classroom management ensures children's good behaviour. Adults have a good understanding of how very young children learn. They are adept at improving learning through constant dialogue about the activities being tackled and by playing alongside children. Good teaching, assessment and record keeping effectively support children's good progress towards their early learning goals, enabling them to move seamlessly into Key Stage 1.

Children are able to spend a greater proportion of time learning outdoors because of improvements made to the outdoor learning environment and the teachers' planning supports children getting the most from these improvements. Staff rightly have plans to continue to develop the children's outdoor learning.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The proprietor has ensured that the school 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 school might wish to consider the following points for development.

- Focus closely on the development of pupils' skills in phonics and spelling from an early age and ensure that pupils in Key Stage 1 and lower Key Stage 2 are taught phonics systematically.
- Review arrangements for the teaching of mathematics ensuring that the skills of calculation and the correct use of technical vocabulary are taught incrementally throughout the school.

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

School status	Independent		
Type of school	Primary		
Date school opened	1 September 2007		
Age range of pupils	3–11 years		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 44	Girls: 38	Total: 82
Number on roll (part-time pupils)	Boys: 4	Girls: 9	Total: 13
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)	£1250		
Address of school	5-7 Evington Street, Leicester, LE2 0SA		
Telephone number	0116 2515101		
Email address	alislamiainstitute@live.co.uk		
Headteacher	Zubair Kola		
Proprietor	Trustees of Al-Islamia Institute for Education 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.



6 October 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Al-Islamia Institute for Education, Leicester LE2 0SA

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school. We really enjoyed seeing you work so hard in lessons and play so happily outside. You showed us how much you enjoy your school and how pleased you are with how well you are doing. You are right to be pleased, because it is a good school. Here are some of the highlights.

- You really enjoy school and make good progress in your learning.
- You behave extremely well, both in class and out in the playground.
- You are thoughtful and are very proud of your school, and take very good care of each other.
- You have an interesting and exciting curriculum. I especially enjoyed finding out about the weekly Duaas, the Islamic Virtues and listening to the nasheeds.
- Your teachers are doing a good job. They work hard to plan interesting lessons and involve you as much as possible.
- You understand very well how to stay safe and all staff take good care of you.

There are some things the school could do better and we have asked the headteacher to make sure that:

- all teachers tell you clearly how to use correct mathematical vocabulary and make sure you are using the right calculation methods for your age
- the activities planned for teaching you phonics and spelling are the very best they can be.

You can help by responding to your teachers ensuring that you tell them if you do not understand anything.

Yours sincerely

Jacqueline Wordsworth
Her Majesty's Inspector