

# Al-Ihsaan Community College

Independent school standard inspection report

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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

Al-Ihsaan Community College is a Muslim secondary school for up to 24 boys and girls aged 11 to 16 years of age. It was registered and opened in September 2011. This is the school's first inspection. It provides both an Islamic and an academic education. The school is located in a former factory in a residential part of the City of Leicester. The building is owned by the local Somali Community Association. Part of the building is a Mosque and a cafeteria. Other parts are unused, though some areas are currently being adapted for the school's use in the future. The school is open to any students who live locally, but all students are currently of Somali heritage with a Muslim religious commitment. The majority are British while others are from other European countries or refugees directly from Somalia. All are fluent English speakers. There are 10 girls currently on roll, all of whom are in Years 7 and 8, who are taught together in one class. It is intended that boys will be admitted in September 2012 when the year groups will extend to Year 9. There are no disabled students or students with statements of special educational needs on roll. The school's ethos is to meet the cultural and academic needs of the community's children through 'the finest educational opportunity in a friendly environment for academic and character building.'

## Evaluation of the school

Al-Ihsaan Community College provides a satisfactory quality of education. The curriculum, together with the quality of teaching and assessment, is satisfactory. As a result, the progress made by students is satisfactory. Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The school complies with all of the regulations and all safeguarding requirements are met: the regulatory failure identified at the registration visit has been addressed. The commitment and dedication of the staff is positively contributing to taking the school forward and helping it to achieve its aims.

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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).

## Quality of education

Al-Ihsaan provides a satisfactory quality of education. The quality of the curriculum is satisfactory. It is broad and balanced, and takes account of National Curriculum expectations, although no music is taught. In addition, students receive Islamic studies and regular Arabic lessons. Curriculum plans are in place for all subjects and a good emphasis is given to the teaching of English, mathematics and science. The plans for science and English are well developed and provide good detail of how student's knowledge and skills will progress in these subjects. Other subject plans provide a secure overview but have not yet been developed to the same level of detail. Consequently, the school is not able to track as systematically what is being taught. The school recognises that there are not always enough practical resources available to support students' learning well, for example to conduct simple experiments and to have more meaningful first-hand experiences in science.

There is an appropriate balance between the secular subjects and Islamic and Qur'an studies and Arabic. The Islamic and Qur'an studies programmes give the students the opportunity to deepen their knowledge and understanding of their faith and contributes well to their spiritual, moral and social development. The daily lunchtime prayer enables students to practice their faith and develop further their sense of community.

The school is aware that there is sometimes an overreliance on worksheets from structured schemes that are not appropriately matched to students' needs. This has a particular impact on challenging more-able students, particularly when teachers miss opportunities to extend their learning. As a result, some students do not achieve as well as they can in lessons. Information and communication technology is taught regularly and enjoyed by students. Students also enjoy visits to the library and local museums which enrich the curriculum. Visitors to the school, such as from the local police, support their understanding of staying safe, for example, e-safety. The school has a good indoor space available for physical education lessons and the outdoor provision is adequate.

The quality of teaching and assessment is satisfactory. Most students join the school with knowledge and skills at or above expectations for their ages. Work seen in books and discussions with them indicate that they are making satisfactory progress. The classroom is mostly well organised and there are some interesting displays of students' work. Lesson planning is often detailed and intended learning outcomes are routinely shared with students. Teachers know their students well and relationships are positive. As a result, students enjoy their lessons.

Basic skills, including spelling and grammar, are taught regularly and the small class size enables teachers the time to give individual support. However, expectations of what students can achieve are not always high enough. Opportunities are sometimes missed to provide appropriately challenging work across the range of abilities in both year groups, for students to develop independent learning skills, and for them to

actively make the most of all learning opportunities. This was seen to be done well in a history lesson where students of different ages and abilities made good progress. They were given an open-ended task to research and develop their ideas in order to answer a challenging question. Throughout the lesson the teacher actively circulated, checking understanding, addressing misconceptions and asking individuals specifically-tailored questions in order to challenge them further. This is not routinely the case in all lessons where, occasionally, teachers stand back and miss opportunities to provide individually-tailored support.

The school is developing a suitable assessment framework that includes regular tests and indicators of National Curriculum levels. However, teachers do not always make the best use of this information to plan lessons and to track the rate at which students make progress. Student's books are regularly marked and often include positive comments which build their self-confidence and self-esteem. Comments to help them improve are less common.

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

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students is good overall. Teachers, volunteers and other adults provide good role models for Islamic life and this has a positive impact on students' spiritual and moral development. The strong Islamic ethos ensures that students successfully develop a set of values, principles and beliefs which inform their perspective on life and their behaviour. Through their participation in Islamic studies and personal, social and citizenship programmes of study they develop a good understanding of what is right and wrong, and have a clear understanding of their Islamic identity. As a result, students build trusting relationships with their peers and with their teachers.

Students enjoy school and their behaviour, both in lessons and in the playground, is good. Students say there is no bullying in school. The school reward system is popular and students are keenly motivated to obtain a star or certificate for good work or good deeds. Students develop a sense of responsibility as they undertake jobs, such as classroom monitors. They report that it is important to them that they set a good example for their friends, for the Somali Community and for others. Students feel proud of their Islamic identity and have developed a strong sense of community and belonging, as commented on by one student: 'We are one family. We know each other and we work with each other.'

Students learn about their own cultures and beliefs and this is well supported by the Islamic studies and Qur'an sessions. Students learn about the beliefs and practices of other faiths through religious education, but there are limited opportunities to help students learn about the cultures and traditions of other people around them. Through the citizenship programme, students are taught about British institutions and how to be a Muslim in the British society. They benefit from visitors to school, such as the local fire brigade, and have visited the New Walk museum. They visit the

local library regularly. The current register shows that attendance is good. Their good behaviour and academic skills effectively support their future lives.

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

The provision for students' welfare, health and safety is satisfactory. The school provides a calm and nurturing environment. The small class size and good staffing levels mean that students are supervised well at all times. Staff recruitment procedures follow guidelines and all staff and volunteers have undergone enhanced checks with the Criminal Records Bureau to confirm their suitability to work with children. Appropriate attention is given to health and safety through routine fire evacuations, checks on equipment and first aid procedures. All staff have received appropriate training in safeguarding and the headteacher has attended higher level training. Students report that they feel safe in school and any concerns they have are quickly dealt with. The school actively promotes healthy eating and students have a clear understanding of how to keep themselves healthy. Although all regulations have been met, some policies and administrative procedures were in need of updating at the start of the inspection and this was swiftly addressed. The school has sensible plans in place to improve accessibility and Equality Act 2010 requirements are met.

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

The school fully complies with the regulations relating to the checks it makes on prospective employees and volunteers regarding their identity, qualifications, medical fitness and suitability to work with children. All required checks are recorded in a single central register.

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

The school premises and accommodation are satisfactory and enable students to learn effectively. It has been developed within a former factory which is also occupied by the Mosque and a cafeteria, with secured access between the separate parts of the building. The premises has been modified to provide a reception area, a computer suite, one classroom, a sick room, a directors' office, a meeting or prayer room which is a large multi-purpose room, an additional office or study room, toilets and washroom, and an asphalted and enclosed outdoor space sufficient for the number of students registered. A large room in the Mosque is used for physical education sessions. The site is monitored by closed circuit television. The indoor areas are well maintained and decorated and kept tidy providing an adequate learning environment.

## **Provision of information**

The school has established good links with parents and carers. They are kept well informed about their child's progress through regular written reports. The reports are a helpful summary of academic and personal achievement. The prospectus has been updated and fully meets requirements.

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

The school has a fair complaints policy which meets requirements. There have been no formal complaints since the school opened.

## **Compliance with regulatory requirements**

The proprietor has ensured that the school meets The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, schedule 1 ('the Regulations').<sup>3</sup>

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

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

- Ensure that all curriculum plans show clear progression in learning to systematically build on students' prior knowledge and skills, and that they are well resourced.
- Make sure that all students, particularly the more able, are challenged to achieve as well as they can in lessons.
- Ensure that teachers make the best use of assessment information to check that all students are progressing as well as they can.

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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).

## 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>School status</b>	Independent		
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary		
<b>Date school opened</b>	September 2011		
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–13		
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed		
<b>Number on roll (full-time pupils)</b>	Boys: 0	Girls: 10	Total: 10
<b>Number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs</b>	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
<b>Number of pupils who are looked after</b>	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	£1,690		
<b>Address of school</b>	1 Kambops Crescent Leicester LE1 2HX		
<b>Telephone number</b>	0116 216 8298		
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:ihsaaneducation1@hotmail.co.uk">ihsaaneducation1@hotmail.co.uk</a>		
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mahamed Farah		
<b>Proprietor</b>	Mahamed Farah		

**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 June 2012

Dear Students

**Inspection of Al-Ihsaan Community College, Leicester, LE1 2HX**

Thank you for the welcome you gave to the inspection team when we visited your school last week. We enjoyed speaking with you and your views are really important to us.

We found that your school is satisfactory and can see why you all enjoy coming to school. This is evident in your positive attitude to work and your good behaviour. The adults at school take care to make sure you are safe and nurtured well. As a result you grow in confidence and become well-rounded young people. Your spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Because of the support you all receive in the small class, the satisfactory teaching and curriculum, and the interesting things you are given the opportunity to do, you make satisfactory progress in your work.

We would like your school to continue to improve, so we have asked them to do the following things.

- Make sure that planning for all subjects shows how you are going to progress in your knowledge and skills, and that lessons are well resourced.
- Make sure that all of you, and especially the most able, are challenged to do as well as you can lessons.
- Make sure that teachers keep a close eye on how well you are doing so that they can be sure that you are all doing as well as you can.

Yours sincerely

Joanne Harvey  
Her Majesty's Inspector