

East London Islamic School

Unit 1, Quebec Wharf, 14 Thomas Road, London, E17 7AF

Inspection dates 17–19 September 2013

Overall effectiveness	Adequate	3
Pupils' achievement	Adequate	3
Pupils' behaviour and personal development	Adequate	3
Quality of teaching	Adequate	3
Quality of curriculum	Adequate	3
Pupils' welfare, health and safety	Adequate	3
Leadership and management	Adequate	3

Summary of key findings

This school is adequate because

- Achievement is not consistently good in all year groups and subjects. Pupils' skills in reading, writing and mathematics require improvement. More able pupils do not do as well as they should.
- The quality of teaching and the curriculum are adequate. There is not enough consistently good teaching in English and mathematics to ensure good achievement for all pupils. Teachers' marking needs to improve.
- Pupils' behaviour and personal development are not good. Break times are not well organised. There are too few cultural opportunities. Attendance is average, but punctuality is poor for many pupils and this limits their progress.
- Although policies and procedures for pupils' welfare, health and safety meet requirements, they are not applied consistently across the school.
- Leaders and managers have ensured that the school meets the minimum requirements, but they have not ensured that teaching is good and that all pupils achieve well.

The school has the following strengths

- Positive relationships exist between pupils, teachers and support staff, which are successful in boosting pupils' self-esteem and self-confidence.
- The school creates a positive Islamic ethos that fosters good spiritual and moral development.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school meets schedule 1 of The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, as amended by The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements

Information about this inspection

- This school was given one day's notice.
- The inspector observed parts of 11 lessons taught by five different teachers, of which one was observed jointly with the headteacher. The inspector also listened to pupils read and looked at pupils' work, and held meetings with senior leaders, the proprietor, staff and pupils.
- The school's documentation was examined, including policies, schemes of work, teachers' planning, assessment of pupils' attainment and progress, and the school's own checks on the quality of teaching.
- There were 11 views of parents and carers registered on Ofsted's online questionnaire Parent View, but the inspector also met parents and carers at the start of the school day. Ten staff questionnaires were scrutinised.

Inspection team

Zahid Aziz, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- East London Islamic School is a small independent Muslim day school located in Poplar, in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets. It opened in January 2013 and is registered for up to 55 boys and girls aged from five to nine years.
- There are currently 30 full-time pupils on roll in Years 1 to 4, and six pupils attend part-time in Years 5 and 6 who were not present during the inspection. None of the pupils has a statement of special educational needs and none is disabled or has special educational needs.
- The school is housed in a former industrial office unit.
- Pupils and staff are from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds and most have English as their first language. There are very few pupils who learn English as an additional language.
- The school seeks to help the pupils achieve an understanding of their Muslim faith and the role of Islam in their lives, and to teach them most subjects of the National Curriculum, as well as Arabic, Islamic and Qur'anic studies. The school's stated aim is to 'aspire to be nothing short of excellent in all aspects of school life and to work hard to nurture and produce a generation that contributes positively to the wider community'.
- The school makes use of additional provision for some sport and physical education.
- This is the school's first inspection.
- The school's application to make a material change to the age range from five to nine years to five to 11 years of age, and the number of pupils from 55 to 75, was considered as part of this inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement in English and mathematics, to at least good, by:
 - improving the teaching of phonics
 - ensuring pupils are clear what they are to learn in each lesson, checking how well learning is proceeding and making less use of worksheets
 - using assessment information to plan lessons that challenge pupils of all abilities, particularly the most able
 - improving teachers' marking and use of targets so that pupils always have a clear picture of what to do to improve to attain the next level.
- Improve pupils' behaviour and personal development by:
 - widening the range of activities that will improve their social skills, such as Islamic adab (manners) during break times
 - providing regular opportunities to contribute to the wider community and have first-hand practical experiences of other cultures and faiths.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
 - strengthening systems for improving punctuality by working with parents, carers and pupils to convince them of the importance of coming to school on time every day
 - improving the school's self-evaluation so that it reflects its needs precisely
 - ensuring that plans for improvement include targets for pupils' achievement, timelines and criteria to measure the success of actions taken
 - ensuring policies and procedures with regard to welfare, health and safety are applied rigorously and consistently.

Inspection judgements

Pupils' achievement

Adequate

Pupils' achievement is adequate due to teaching and curriculum being adequate over time. While pupils' progress is good in Arabic and Islamic studies, it is only adequate in reading, writing and mathematical skills. Although phonics activities (learning the sounds that letters make) are taught daily with some effect, phonics teaching is still developing as some activities are too difficult and do not fully meet the needs of all pupils, especially the younger pupils. Too many worksheets are used in workbooks; as a result, pupils have too few opportunities to gain skills such as writing at length and higher mathematical skills. More able pupils are too often given tasks that are too easy and, as a result, their progress slows.

Attainment in the Arabic language and other Islamic subjects is good because of the strong teaching and additional support pupils receive, particularly the good phonics teaching of the Arabic alphabet. The progress made in memorising of the Qur'an is also good. Pupils' attainment is adequate in secular subjects, although some pupils do well, especially as a result of small classes and teachers' good subject knowledge. Whilst early in the term for much assessment, lesson observations during the inspection indicate that pupils are making reasonable progress in reading, writing and mathematics. The school provides effective extra support in an after-school club for those who find learning more difficult and this makes sure that they do not get left behind. Pupils who are persistently late and miss vital learning time often do not make as much progress as other pupils. Effective additional support is given for pupils learning English as an additional language so that they make similar progress to their classmates. Pupils are actively encouraged to engage in discussions in class. As a result, they have strong speaking and listening skills.

Pupils' behaviour and personal development

Adequate

Pupils' behaviour and their personal development are adequate. Pupils' behaviour in Key Stage 1 is good. Pupils respond well to teachers' high expectations and, as a result, they have positive attitudes to learning, are thoroughly engaged and enjoy lessons a great deal. Good behaviour is not as consistently evident in Key Stage 2 because clear routines and high expectations are not always the norm. School leaders are aware that many pupils arrive late to school and that they need to work with parents and carers to improve punctuality.

Pupils' spiritual and moral development is good. Their social and cultural development is adequate. During lunchtime, pupils enjoy spending time in *Zuhr salah* (lunchtime prayer). However, during break times, pupils are not always well managed to reinforce Islamic *adab* (good manners) and how to interact socially, especially when eating. There are plans to take part in the life of wider community, such as cleaning the local park they use for sports and physical education activities. There are too few opportunities to visit places of cultural interest and other places of worship to better promote their cultural development.

Pupils say that they feel safe and secure at school because they know that adults follow appropriate procedures to keep them safe. Parents and carers endorse these positive views. Pupils understand the different forms that bullying can take and say that incidents are rare and dealt with swiftly. They are equipped with good knowledge of practices in Islam through the study of the Qur'an, religious education and the Islamic ethos of the school. The impact of this is strongly evident in the pupils' practice of giving regular praise to one another and the Islamic greeting of 'peace be upon you'. The vast majority of pupils are respectful and caring towards each other and to adults around them. There is an appropriate programme for personal, social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship. Pupils learn how to respect the criminal and civil law, and the importance of holding balanced views on controversial issues. The school teaches its pupils about other cultures and religions, and how to live in harmony with other communities through the

teaching of religious education, PSHE, Islamic studies and a daily assembly. There are regular visits, for example to the local library and British Museum, that help pupils to develop their understanding of English public institutions.

Quality of teaching

Adequate

The quality of the teaching is adequate and results in adequate achievement. Some good teaching was seen during the inspection, but there is not enough of this good practice to secure consistently good progress for all pupils in both key stages. The best lessons involved teachers planning activities that involved sharing with pupils what they are to learn. These lessons were conducted at a brisk pace and used key words and resources well. The school now has more resources, such as liquid crystal display (LCD) projector and laptop computers, to engage pupils. Teachers use their strong subject knowledge to ensure accuracy and inspire pupils both in the National Curriculum subjects, and in Arabic and Qur'anic studies. Pupils, teachers and other adults have good relationships. However, in some lessons, teachers do not make clear exactly what they want pupils to learn, and do not check often enough if everyone in the class is learning as well as they should. Although pupils who find learning more difficult get appropriate help to complete tasks, the most able are not stretched to reach their full potential.

Although some teachers give helpful spoken and written feedback to pupils, marking does not always help pupils to improve with clear guidance and the use of targets. Systems to assess pupils' learning have improved both in National Curriculum subjects and Islamic studies, for example, with an assessment at the start of the new school year so that pupils' progress can be measured during the year. However, assessment information is not always used well enough by teachers to plan their lessons so that all pupils make good progress. Arrangements for the full-time teaching and assessment of current pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 are adequate and meet requirements.

Quality of curriculum

Adequate

The curriculum is adequate, it covers all of the required areas of learning and enables pupils to make adequate progress. Throughout the school there is an appropriate balance between secular subjects and Islamic studies. Schemes of work meet requirements and ensure progression over time. However, the curriculum is not yet good because it does not result in good achievement for pupils in both key stages in English and mathematics. It does not ensure that enough more able pupils exceed the levels expected for their age. In Key Stage 1 the curriculum mostly meets pupils' needs well through the use of active, hands-on experiences and opportunities to develop pupils' ability to talk about their work, and to work successfully independently.

Strong outcomes are achieved through the religious studies programme. This is exemplified, for example, in pupils' high levels of enthusiasm for, and success achieved in, their study. The Islamic studies programme provides good opportunities for pupils to discuss their faith, moral codes and the challenges faced in life beyond school. A range of enrichment activities is offered. Good use is made of local facilities, such as the local park for outdoor pursuits where pupils enjoy playing cricket, jogging and football. The school has plans to use a local swimming pool to further promote a healthy lifestyle. The curriculum plans for the additional full-time pupils in Years 5 and 6 are adequate and meets the requirements.

Pupils' welfare, health and safety

Adequate

The provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety is adequate and all of the independent school regulations are met. Discussions with pupils indicate that they feel safe and secure at the school. Parent View confirms that they believe this to be the case. Strong bonds of trust and respect are evident between pupils and staff at the school.

Policies for child protection, health and safety and anti-bullying are effective, well known and

consistently implemented by staff. Welfare, health and safety are not good because, although the behaviour policy meets requirements and in much of the school it is correctly applied, not all staff are clear and consistent enough in the way they apply the system of rewards and sanctions in lessons and around the school, so as to ensure good behaviour. All child protection requirements are fully met. The designated officer has attended appropriate higher-level training and all other staff have been appropriately trained. All checks and other information about the suitability of adults for working with children are recorded on a single central register, as required. The admission and attendance registers meet requirements.

Risk assessments are carried out regularly for the school site and any issues are dealt with promptly. All off-site visits, including to the local park for physical education and play, are subject to risk assessments. An appropriate number of staff are trained in first aid and school leaders ensure that their training is kept up to date. All the checks relating to fire safety and maintenance are carried out on a regular basis and electrical appliances are checked by a qualified contractor.

Leadership and management

Adequate

Leadership and management are adequate and enable pupils to make adequate progress. Senior school leaders have played an effective role in the school's improvement since it opened this year. All necessary steps have been taken by the proprietor and leaders to ensure that the school meets all regulatory requirements. Leadership, the quality of teaching and the curriculum, and the quality of the environment for learning have been significantly improved since registration. Teaching is improving with more qualified teachers. However, leaders have recognised that leadership and management are not yet good because there is more to be done to ensure that the quality of teaching is consistently good and results in good achievement throughout the school.

Staff and parents and carers express their support for school leaders and for the positive ethos promoted in the school, along with a strong team spirit. Senior leaders know the school reasonably well and monitor the quality of classroom practice. Training is provided to help teachers to improve. Leaders keep track of pupils' attainment, but they have not looked closely enough at how quickly pupils make progress as they move through the different phases of the school. They have plans for improvement, but these do not include precise targets or deadlines or clear criteria to measure the success of actions taken. School leaders and staff work hard to promote equality of opportunity, but recognise that more needs to be done to ensure that all more able pupils achieve as well as they can.

Parents and carers are provided with all of the required information through a prospectus and website and can request it from the school. The premises and accommodation are suitable for safe learning. The complaints procedure meets requirements.

The school's request to make a material change to increase the numbers of pupils on roll from 55 to 75 pupils is not recommended as the accommodation is only suitable for a maximum of 55 pupils. The proposed increase in the age range from five to 11 years is recommended as there are suitable proposals for the appointment of new staff, for full-time teaching and the curriculum and assessment for pupils in Years 5 and 6.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	A school which provides an exceptional quality of education and significantly exceeds minimum requirements.
Grade 2	Good	A school which provides a high quality of education that exceeds minimum requirements.
Grade 3	Adequate	A school which meets minimum requirements but needs to improve the quality of education it provides.
Grade 4	Inadequate	A school where minimum requirements are not met and/or the quality of education has serious weaknesses.

School details

Unique reference number	139216
Inspection number	422851
DfE registration number	999/1346
Type of school	Muslim primary school
School status	Independent School
Age range of pupils	5–9 years
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	36
Number of part time pupils	6
Proprietor	Hameed Shaiju Puthumanakkal
Chair	Hameed Shaiju Puthumanakkal
Headteacher	Hameed Shaiju Puthumanakkal
Date of previous school inspection	This is the school's first inspection
Annual fees (day pupils)	£2,200 per annum
Telephone number	07852 277261
Fax number	
Email address	mail@eastlondonislamicschool.co.uk

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