

Al-Huda Primary School

Hennon Street, Bolton, BL1 3EH

Inspection dates	19–21 November 2013	
Overall effectiveness	Good	2
Pupils' achievement	Good	2
Pupils' behaviour and personal development	Good	2
Quality of teaching	Good	2
Quality of curriculum	Good	2
Pupils' welfare, health and safety	Good	2
Leadership and management	Good	2

Summary of key findings

This school is good because

- Pupils' achievements are good because they benefit from a mainly good quality of teaching and a good curriculum.
- In the short time since the school opened pupils have made good progress in their personal development. They demonstrate good behaviour and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and taking part in the wide range of activities provided. Provision for their welfare health and safety is good. They attend regularly and indicate that they feel safe.
- Leaders and managers, including the trustees, have made a good start. They ensure pupils achieve well, are safe and that the quality of teaching is mainly good. They are improving the school quickly.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Leaders have not created good systems capable of identifying and recording pupils' small steps of progress. Consequently, teachers do not always plan sufficiently precisely for the learning of individual pupils.
- Teachers do not make full use of the opportunities to develop pupils' skills in literacy and numeracy in all subjects.
- The headteacher's evaluations of the school do not take full account of the regulations and judgements about quality for independent schools. Consequently, leaders, managers and trustees are not as accurately informed as they might be about the school's strengths and weaknesses, and the priorities for improvement.

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) (Amendments) Regulations 2012 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection occurred with one day's notice. The inspectors met with the headteacher, school staff and two trustees.
- The inspectors spoke with pupils, and spent more than three hours in classes observing them taught by two teachers in seven lessons. Pupils' work, records of progress and homework folders were examined.
- Staff views were gained through discussions and by examining responses in their questionnaires. There were insufficient responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire (Parent View) to make an evaluation, but two parents wrote to the inspectors.
- Documents and records concerning the management of the school were studied.

Inspection team

Terry McKenzie, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Yusuf Seedat

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Al Huda is an independent Muslim day school for boys and girls aged from five to seven years who come from different Asian heritages but all of whom have an Islamic background. It was registered for up to 20 pupils by Ofsted in December 2012 and opened in September 2013. Currently there are 12 pupils on the roll. None have a recognised special educational need or a statement of special educational needs.
- All of the pupils who entered Year 1 came from the on-site nursery. Pupils in Year 2 transferred from another school.
- The school is owned and operated by a charitable trust and is co-located with a nursery also owned and operated by the trust. The school and nursery share some space and resources but are separately registered. All of the staff on site are employed by the trust.
- Al Huda Trust sets out to educate Muslim pupils according to the Islamic faith. It aims to influence pupils from an early age and to help them make decisions and form judgements according to the faith as they become older.
- The school uses alternative provision for some physical education activities.
- This is the school's first inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve the quality of teaching and pupils' learning by ensuring leaders devise and implement a system to identify and record pupils' small steps in progress.
- Ensure teachers raise achievement by:
 - taking better account of the individual needs and abilities of pupils in their planning and teaching
 - identifying and recording pupils' smallest steps in their learning
 - developing pupils' skills in literacy and numeracy in subjects across the curriculum.
- Ensure leaders gain a more accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and how to improve it by making better use of the framework of regulations and judgements of quality for independent schools.

Inspection judgements

Pupils' achievement

Good

Pupils' achievement is good. Boys and girls have made consistently good progress in their studies since the school opened as a result of mainly good teaching and an effective curriculum. The school succeeds in meeting its aims as a faith school, helping pupils to progress in their studies in the context of Islamic belief and practice. The indications from teachers' records are that the Year 1 and Year 2 pupils who entered the school in September did so with attainment at around the national average. Records show that all groups, including the most and least able, have learned and made good progress in all areas of the curriculum including English and mathematics. Observations of lessons undertaken by inspectors support this view. Teachers' records, however, do not make the rates of pupil progress in the very short term very clear or make it easy to compare the rates of progress between subjects. The headteacher agreed that the systems for tracking and recording pupils' progress are not sufficiently refined and do not include details about pupils' small steps in progress. Better systems are to be developed that will enable teachers to help pupils understand and improve their rates of progress even further.

Pupils' work in English, from the start of the term, shows that their handwriting has improved since September and their spelling is considerably more accurate. In class pupils are encouraged by staff to read as often as possible so that more proficient readers have the confidence to read aloud and discuss their reading. Teachers' test results indicate that almost all pupils' development in reading is appropriate for their ages. In mathematics, pupils in both year groups are gaining proficiency in handling numbers. For example, there have been clear improvements for most in Year 2 in the accuracy with which they apply numbers. All in Year 2 have progressed from using two-plus-one digit additions in September to operating with two-plus-two digit calculations recently, including subtraction. Their developing mathematics skills were observed in an effective mathematics practical activity about odd and even numbers. All pupils enjoy Islamic studies. Observations by inspectors indicate all achieve well in religious education and make good progress in learning about the Qur'an. Pupils use and learn the Arabic language in specialist lessons and when teachers include aspects of it in other lessons.

Pupils' behaviour and personal development

Good

Pupils' behaviour and personal development is good overall but in some lessons, where the pace slackens or teachers talk for too long, pupils' concentration occasionally wavers. Pupils are polite to each other and welcoming to visitors. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and sometimes outstanding. Excellent relationships exist in the school between all pupils and staff and pupils readily accept the school rules and code of conduct. Misbehaviour is very rare and pupils' high moral standards are supported by the Islamic ethos of the school that constantly reminds them of behavioural expectations and the proper treatment of others.

Pupils enjoy coming to school. Rates of attendance are slightly higher than for mainstream schools. In class, pupils are very well guided and supported by the adults and this encourages them to be always willing to join in and contribute effectively. Consequently, their self-confidence grows and they gain self-esteem through becoming even more successful in their studies. The school's motto 'together we can be successful' and its mission statement 'love everybody regardless of gender, religion and faith' are put into practice. Staff promote pupils' tolerance towards diversity and harmony between themselves and others from different backgrounds through undertaking regular trips and visits away from the school. Consequently, pupils are brought into close contact with others from different communities. Although very new as a school, Al Huda has already established links with a nearby Church of England school and plans are established for joint enterprises with pupils from this school. Visitors into school represent other local communities such as a Chinese chef and an African cook. In these ways pupils are being prepared for life in a modern multicultural

democratic Britain. Pupils learn about the public institutions and services of England in ways appropriate to their age. Visits have taken place to the local fire station and members of the police force have visited the school. Appreciation for their own and other cultures is being reinforced through learning in religious education and personal, social and health education about how others live, work and worship. The school ensures that where any political or controversial issues are brought to the attention of the pupils, steps have been taken to offer a balanced presentation of opposing views.

Quality of teaching

Good

A work scrutiny and lesson observations indicate that teaching is good overall but that there is some variation in quality. Usually, teachers match work accurately to pupils' different needs and in line with the expectations for pupils in Key Stage 1. This helps pupils to make good progress and achieve well. Teachers provide interesting lessons, often incorporating Islamic stories and values in pupils' everyday work, skilfully maintaining pupils' interest in the subject content. Teachers regularly check pupils' understanding with accurate questioning and this helps to ensure that all pupils are fully included in the learning taking place. All staff have undertaken training in the use of phonics (the sounds that letters make) and this is instrumental in providing pupils with the confidence to read aloud in class and to make good progress in reading and writing. Observations of lessons confirmed that even where spellings are not yet accurate, pupils use phonics with increasing effect to build words that are more difficult.

In the few weaker lessons seen, teachers do not plan tasks which are exactly matched to individual pupils' levels of ability, and sometimes all undertake the same task. Scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' records indicates that this shortcoming is because the school does not have refined systems to capture pupils' very small steps of progress in lessons so it can then identify the next steps that should be undertaken.

Work is marked regularly and often offers good guidance in helping pupils to improve. For example, teachers use helpful colour codes that indicate pupils' strengths and weaknesses in their work. Very occasionally, comments may be less helpful, for example in stating 'be more careful with spellings', when incorrect spellings are not corrected by the teacher.

Quality of curriculum

Good

The good curriculum is broad and balanced, covers all required areas of learning and is based on the National Curriculum for Key Stage 1. Teachers' plans and schemes of work are good and meet requirements. The curriculum provides opportunities for all groups of pupils to learn and make good progress. The focus in both year groups is on the development of initial skills in literacy and numeracy. Nevertheless, teachers occasionally miss opportunities to encourage pupils to use and practise their reading, writing and mathematical skills in different subjects. For example, in a whole-school practical session on using numbers, staff missed chances for pupils to write numbers in English words as well as recording them in Arabic numerical formats.

Religious observances occur as a regular part of each lesson and through corporate acts of worship. Staff skilfully utilise Islamic references and contexts to help pupils understand the curriculum content better. The religious and Islamic aspects of the curriculum are good, supporting pupils' spiritual and cultural developments effectively. For example, in addition to religious education in which pupils are taught about the Qur'an and Islamic traditions, teachers weave into other lessons the traditions of the faith and examples of the hadith. The school's programmes of study are very well supplemented by regular off-site visits and experiences. These have included visiting a mosque and visits to history and science museums, an aquarium, a zoo and a library.

Pupils' welfare, health and safety**Good**

Provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety is good and all independent school regulations are met. Pupils are supervised well in school and when undertaking trips and visits off site. The required policies and procedures which relate to pupils' welfare, health and safety, including those to prevent and address any bullying, are implemented in full and have recently been reviewed by trustees. Clear guidance is provided to staff in the policy on the prevention of bullying; this defines the different forms of bullying and how to deal with it.

The required recruitment practices are in place, including for the co-located nursery staff. All of the necessary checks are made on the suitability of prospective staff and recorded as required on a single central record. Arrangements for safeguarding meet all requirements and all staff are trained appropriately. The headteacher and deputy headteacher are the designated persons for safeguarding. Both have undertaken higher levels of training as required and attend meetings with other agencies that support and protect children. Good relationships are being established between the school and the local authority safeguarding board.

Staff and pupils know how to report any concerns to a designated person. Through the curriculum, pupils learn to keep themselves safe in respect of bullying, harassment and relationships with others. Appropriate risk assessments are in place for when pupils undertake off-site visits for physical education and for other visits. The arrangements and risk assessments produced for the visit that took place during the inspection were of a very high standard. The required arrangements for first aid, fire safety and the maintenance of fire fighting equipment are in place. Regular practice evacuations are undertaken and correctly recorded.

Leadership and management**Good**

Leadership and management are good. The senior leaders and trustees have ensured that in the short period of time since the school opened pupils achieve well and all of the regulations for independent schools are met. Arrangements for managing staff performance are underway and these have already improved the quality of teaching. The morale of the staff is high and staff are supportive of the school's managers. The trustees play an active and supportive role in the school, for example, by checking the arrangements and risk assessments for off-site trips and visits. Trustees visit regularly and hold school managers to account about the quality of teaching and the progress pupils make in lessons by, for example, sitting in on performance management meetings with teachers. The headteacher and trustees understand that the next step in improving the school must include devising and implementing a better system for recording pupils' small steps of progress and encouraging teachers to use the information gathered to design lessons that take even more account of pupils' individual needs. Nevertheless, good procedures are already in place to judge pupils' standards compared to national averages when they enter the school and managers have confirmed their accuracy through having their work checked by the local authority.

Leaders and managers understand the school well and plans have been put in place for further improvements. However, the strengths and weaknesses of the school could be identified better and more precise targets for improvement set if the self-evaluation was more firmly based on the judgements and regulations for independent schools. The parents and carers who communicated with inspectors value the work of the school. One wrote: 'I am very pleased, especially with regard to my children's progress'. The premises and accommodation of the school are entirely safe and suitable for learning. Arrangements are in place to provide parents and carers with all of the required information and procedures for handling complaints fully comply with the regulations.

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	139017
Inspection number	422844
DfE registration number	350/6002

This inspection was carried out 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.

Type of school	Independent Muslim day school
School status	Independent School
Age range of pupils	5–7 years
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	12
Number of part time pupils	0
Proprietor	Al-Huda Academy
Chair	Hanif Mangera
Headteacher	Mrs Hafiza Mohamed
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Annual fees (day pupils)	£1,000
Telephone number	01204 841377
Fax number	N/A
Email address	info@alhuda-academy.org.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2013

