

# Iqra Academy

Enterprise Way, Peterborough, PE3 8YQ

## Inspection dates

25–27 February 2014

### 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

Adequate

3

Leadership and management

Good

2

## Summary of key findings

### This school is good because

- Since the last inspection, the senior leaders have worked systematically on improving teaching and raising standards. As a result, students make good progress. Self-evaluation is accurate and the headteacher knows how to improve the school.
- Students achieve well. They have high aspirations and work hard. They are served well by a broad curriculum that places great emphasis on core subjects and literacy and provides memorable experiences.
- The quality of teaching and assessment is predominantly good and an increasing proportion is outstanding. Students who joined with low starting points and those who have specific learning difficulties are helped to catch up quickly.
- Students behave well and feel safe. Their good personal development is supported by their good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Students are good ambassadors for their school.

### It is not yet outstanding because

- There is a small minority of adequate teaching and there is a need to improve teaching generally to help students to make outstanding progress.
- The curriculum requires improvement to develop students' physical and artistic skills fully.
- The leaders and managers monitor teaching and learning well but this monitoring needs strengthening to enable students to achieve outstandingly well.
- Students are generally very well looked after but procedures for risk assessment and accident recording require 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) (Amendment) Regulations 2012 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspection was carried out with one day's notice.
- The inspector observed 13 part lessons taught by 11 teachers and examined students' work. Meetings were held with the senior leaders, coordinators and teachers. Documentation relating to safeguarding, welfare, health and safety, curriculum planning, students' progress, and the school's self-evaluation was scrutinised.
- The inspector took account of the responses in 10 questionnaires completed by staff, 13 parental responses to Ofsted's on-line 'Parent View' survey, and the responses of 46 students to the Ofsted online survey in 2012. Current students' views were obtained directly through discussion during the inspection.

## Inspection team

Michèle Messaoudi, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Iqra Academy is an independent day Muslim secondary school for girls that opened in September 2009 and was initially registered for up to 205 students aged between 11 and 16 years. The school is located in the North Bretton area of Peterborough. The school admits non-Muslims. It is housed in a building that was formerly a nursery school and uses a local fitness centre for physical education. The school is currently exploring the feasibility of opening a sixth form in the future. To this end, it was granted permission to extend the age range to 19 years by the Department for Education in January 2013.
- The school's work is overseen by a charitable trust that consists of a sole proprietor and a board of directors. The current headteacher has been in post since September 2009 and teaches part time. The body of staff consists of 20 part time teachers.
- There are currently 68 girls on roll aged between 11 and 16 years. All are Muslims and are mainly of Pakistani heritage. Most have English as an additional language and none is at the early stage of acquiring English. There are no students with a statement of special educational needs but a very small minority have been diagnosed as having mild dyslexia. Before admission the vast majority of girls attended local schools in the city. The school had its first inspection in October 2010.
- The school aims to provide an environment where students can excel academically within an Islamic ethos and where students are prepared to represent Islam within British society.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that students can make outstanding progress by ensuring that:
  - all teachers make effective use of targets and success criteria when planning lessons to challenge all students appropriately, especially the more able
  - students are consistently given the opportunity to improve their work in the light of teachers' marking comments
  - academic reports for students, parents and carers always contain subject-specific comments that clearly show how much progress students are making and what they need to do to improve.
- Further improve the curriculum by:
  - broadening the provision for the physical and creative areas of learning so as to develop students' physical and artistic skills fully
  - ensuring that all of the strategies aimed at raising students' standards of literacy are implemented consistently throughout the school so that more students can achieve A to A\* grades in their GCSEs.
- Strengthen the leadership and management of the school and help students to achieve outstandingly well by:
  - further developing the skills of the curriculum coordinators so that they become very effective in checking the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school
  - sharpening the skills of the senior leaders so that they always give teachers written feedback that clearly shows them how to challenge all students in lessons
  - ensuring that the proprietor challenges the school more systematically in all aspects of its work, including all matters of welfare, health and safety.

## Inspection judgements

### Pupils' achievement

**Good**

Students' good achievement is the result of a strong focus on improving the quality of teaching and developing students' literacy skills in all subjects. Students report that the school encourages them to have high aspirations and they are eager to achieve highly.

In nearly all classes, one third to half of students left primary school with skills that were below national expectations in English and, occasionally, in mathematics and science. Very effective use of assessments to monitor their progress and identify the gaps they have in their knowledge and skills ensures students make good progress year on year in nearly all subjects, including English, mathematics, science, Qur'anic and Islamic studies, and Urdu. Students' progress in Arabic is mostly adequate and improving. An increasing proportion of students make outstanding progress. Those who joined with low starting points and those who have specific learning difficulties are supported well by individual learning plans and make at least good progress.

The school can demonstrate that standards are rising consistently and, in each year group, the vast majority of students are on course to achieve highly in their GCSEs. This compares favourably with national expectations. Students took their GCSEs in 2013 for the first time and achieved particularly highly in English literature, religious education (RE), additional science, information and communication technology (ICT) and psychology. However, a few of the students who joined with the highest starting points did not achieve A to A\* grades, often due to relative weakness in literacy.

Students are encouraged to apply and develop their English literacy skills through additional activities including attending a reading club and a debating society, entering national writing competitions, running radio shows and making public presentations, for example at interfaith events and in local schools. In all these activities, the students do well.

### Pupils' behaviour and personal development

**Good**

Students' behaviour and personal development are good. Students say that they love their school and their attendance is high. They enjoy the family atmosphere provided by the staff and appreciate having caring, supportive and aspirational teachers. Students say that the school encourages them to have high ambitions and they rightly feel that the good education and careers guidance they receive prepares them well for their future. Most demonstrate that they take their education seriously by working hard in lessons, doing their homework regularly and taking pride in the presentation of their work. Most students behave extremely well, show the utmost respect for others and abide by school rules. However, on occasion, a few do not exercise the expected levels of self-discipline and self-restraint. Students are very clear about all forms of bullying, including cyber-bullying, and feel free from harassment. They are taught how to keep safe in the community, and when using computers and equipment.

Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Through the Islamic ethos, the curriculum, assemblies and collective prayers, students develop a strong sense of identity and clear spiritual and moral values. They demonstrate that they apply the tenets of their religion in their daily lives by being hard-working, respectful, tolerant of others' views, sociable and friendly. Students gain a good awareness of public institutions through citizenship, educational visits and community projects. They practise democracy through the activities of the student council. They demonstrate high levels of self-confidence and self-esteem when expressing their views and speaking in public, for example on peace and unity. They successfully negotiate improvements to school life. Students have rich annual interfaith experiences that bring together all faith communities. They demonstrated good enterprise and leadership skills when preparing an

exhibition on Pakistani heritage at the local museum. The proprietor ensures that in teaching materials and where there are debates, balanced views are presented and no political bias is promoted.

### Quality of teaching

### Good

Teaching is predominantly good and improving and enables students to make good progress. The school has successfully established a culture in which teachers reflect on teaching strategies, act as critical friends to each other, and are eager to develop their skills. Teachers benefit from a rich and varied programme of professional development that has recently centred on the use of assessment to accelerate students' learning and strategies to raise students' standards of literacy. Those who join with little experience are supported well by experienced colleagues and senior leaders.

Teaching is mostly characterised by good subject knowledge, positive working relationships, well-paced lessons and high expectations of what students can achieve. Consequently, students work hard, make lively contributions and strive to achieve as well as they can. Teachers give clear explanations and ask probing questions that make students think more deeply about the subject matter. Teachers know their students well and use the information from assessments effectively to meet their needs.

When planning lessons, teachers take into account students' various learning styles and guide students to achieve targets by giving them criteria against which students can measure their success. However, while the targets set provide a good level of challenge for most students, they are not always sufficiently challenging to enable more students to make outstanding progress. In the few instances where the teaching is adequate rather than good, the work is insufficiently demanding to enable students to make more than adequate progress. Not all of the wide-ranging strategies aimed at improving students' speaking, reading and writing skills are implemented to the same high standards by a minority of teachers.

Well-established and secure assessment procedures enable the school to check on students' learning and progress every half term. The quality of marking is consistently good. While marking comments show students exactly what to do to raise their standards, students are not always given the opportunity to improve their work in the light of this written feedback.

### Quality of curriculum

### Good

The curriculum is good. It is relevant to students' needs and supports their personal development very effectively. It covers all the required areas of learning. It is well balanced between National Curriculum subjects and Islamic subjects that include Qur'anic and Islamic studies and Islamic history and there is suitable focus on literacy and numeracy. In addition, all students learn Arabic and some also study Urdu. The curriculum is reviewed annually and modified to enable all students to gain a wide range of qualifications. In Key Stage 4, all students take full GCSE or IGCSE examinations in at least eight subjects and have the option to take short courses. Personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) is a comprehensive programme that reflects the ethos of the school and provides students with a wide knowledge base, rich experiences and good careers advice. Through the 'Islam and citizenship' programme, students learn to contextualise Islam in Britain and that to be a good Muslim is to be a good citizen. Students have the opportunity to become ambassadors for the environment and Islam through a 'faith and the environment' project run by the city council. They have received 'eco' awards for their work. Students' career choices are informed by visits to careers fairs and from professionals and university representatives. The curriculum is enhanced well by a wide range of educational visits including a trip to Spain.

Physical education (PE) currently includes one weekly hour in a fitness centre and martial arts, archery and horse-riding clubs. However, sports clubs have a low take-up and students' commitment to regular physical activities does not match their commitment to healthy eating.

The 'creative curriculum' is built around six- to eight-week blocks of art, design and technology/textiles, cookery and horticulture. Students also learn to sing nasheeds in Arabic, English and Urdu which they often perform in public. The 'creative curriculum' is enriched by a programme of activities designed by a Cambridge museum, which enables students to widen their horizons, deepen their knowledge of a topic and discover new talents. However, students do not have sufficient opportunities to make things and explore a wide range of media and artistic heritages.

The curriculum is monitored effectively by the senior leaders. A strong focus on developing students' literacy skills has a measurably positive impact on students' achievement in all subjects. However, more work is required to help students to achieve A\* to A grades in their GCSEs. As recognised by the school, not all of the wide-ranging strategies aimed at improving students' speaking, reading and writing skills are implemented consistently by all teachers.

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

### **Adequate**

The school makes adequate provision for students' welfare, health and safety overall. All the statutory requirements are met. Health and safety provision is good and students are supervised well. Students are encouraged to participate in a health awareness programme designed by the NHS and six have been awarded 'health champion' status. They and their parents and carers trust the teachers' ability to promote good standards of behaviour and prevent bullying. Instances of bullying are rare. The school does not hesitate to apply serious sanctions on the rare occasions when a student infringes school rules. Consequently, students feel safe and well cared for. Arrangements for child protection and the recruitment of staff are satisfactory. All the required security checks on staff and other adults are recorded properly in a single central register. Policies and procedures for health and safety, fire safety, behaviour, anti-bullying and child protection are up to date and implemented consistently. Staff are properly trained in safeguarding. The policy for first aid is well written and there is a sufficient number of staff trained in first aid. Few accidents occur and they are recorded adequately, although not in a form that enables easy analysis of accidents. Risk assessments for off-site visits and the premises are also adequate though lack consistency in detail.

### **Leadership and management**

### **Good**

The leadership and management of the school are good and ensure that students achieve well. The proprietor, headteacher, senior leaders and teachers work well together to meet the school's aims. Teachers, students, parents and carers are very positive about all aspects of the school's work. Good pastoral care ensures that students feel happy and safe and behave well. The good curriculum gives students memorable experiences owing to very useful links with the wider community. There are effective policies to ensure students overcome their barriers to learning and make good progress in literacy.

The leadership of teaching is good. The headteacher can demonstrate that he develops teachers very effectively. As a result, teaching is good and improving, and so students make good progress. However, in a very few instances, the feedback which the senior leaders give to teachers is verbal and not always focused sufficiently sharply on ways to challenge students in lessons to help them make outstanding progress. Teachers contribute to self-evaluation which is accurate.

Improvements are identified clearly and supported by a useful management plan. The headteacher recognised the need to strengthen the leadership and management of the school and coordinators were appointed in September 2013 to help with monitoring activities. The arrangements are working well even though coordinators' leadership skills are not yet fully developed. The proprietor meets frequently with the headteacher to check on the performance of the school.

Parents, carers and others receive all the required information. However, the academic reports which parents, carers and students receive do not always give a clear view of students' progress because teachers' comments are not consistently subject-specific and do not always indicate what students need to do to improve. The school has effective procedures to manage complaints. The premises are maintained well and provide safe and effective teaching accommodation.

The proprietor has ensured that all standards for independent schools are met.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	136023
<b>Inspection number</b>	422824
<b>DfE registration number</b>	874/6003

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.

<b>Type of school</b>	Day Muslim secondary school
<b>School status</b>	Independent school
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–19 years
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Girls
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	68
<b>Number of part time pupils</b>	0
<b>Proprietor</b>	Mr Muzaffar Hussain
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Abdul Razaq
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	19–20 October 2010
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	£3,000
<b>Telephone number</b>	01733 331433
<b>Email address</b>	arazaq@iqraacademy.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](http://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](mailto: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](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk), or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://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](mailto: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](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2014

