

Rabia Girls' and Boys' School

Portland Road, Luton, LU4 8AX

Inspection dates 15 January 2015

Overall outcome **Independent school standards not met**

Context of the inspection

- This inspection was conducted by Ofsted at the request of the registration authority for independent schools. It was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008.¹
- The school was last inspected in May 2014 and was judged inadequate.
- The school submitted its action plan detailing the actions it intends to take in order to address the independent school standards it failed to meet.
- The action plan was evaluated on 26 September 2014 and found to require improvements.

Main findings

Quality of Education provided

- The inspection of May 2014 found that pupils were not taught a broad range of subjects in sufficient depth to ensure that they achieve their academic potential. In its action plan, the school indicated that it would review the curriculum policy and schemes of work in order to provide for teaching and learning in history, geography, design technology and personal, social, citizenship and health education.
- The school has implemented part of its plan. It now provides lessons in history and geography. There is now a wider range of learning opportunities for pupils to develop personally and culturally.
- The school has extended the timing of the school day to provide more time to study English, mathematics and science.
- Leaders have plans to develop the curriculum further by making links with organisations beyond the school, including the police and local politicians. The school is beginning to address weaknesses found at the previous inspection with regard to teaching pupils about what it means to be a good citizen in Britain.
- The previous inspection found that girls and boys were not treated equally because they did not have the same educational experiences and opportunities at school. The school stated in its action plan that it aims to provide equality of access to a broad and balanced curriculum. However, the inequality found at the previous inspection persists.
- The balance between the secular curriculum and Islamic studies differs between the boys and girls. Boys have more time to study the national curriculum subjects.
- Older girls do not have the same opportunities to study science in a practical way because they do not have the same access to laboratory facilities that the boys have.
- The newly introduced design and technology curriculum limits girls to activities related to knitting and sewing.

¹ www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2008/25/contents.

- Opportunities for girls to develop a range of skills in physical education are limited because of the available outside space on their site. Boys visit a local sports centre with greater facilities and they have the opportunity to learn how to swim.
- At the time of the previous inspection, girls had too little career guidance and their work experience opportunities were limited to placements in a local nursery. Boys and girls have begun to receive better careers guidance including from external agencies. They have aspirations and ambitions for the future. However, girls are less clear about how to achieve their ambitions. The leaders plan to extend work experience opportunities for girls but this has not yet taken place.
- The quality of teaching was found to be inadequate and it has not improved significantly. Some of the reviewed and newly formulated schemes of work provide too little guidance to teachers about how to provide learning opportunities to meet pupils' needs and challenge all pupils, particularly the most able.
- Significant weaknesses in teaching remain. This is particularly the case in the teaching of English for some of the pupils aged 11 to 16. Pupils' books show that the curriculum is too limited and work that pupils produce does not improve well enough over time.
- School leaders' plans to improve marking and feedback to pupils have not been wholly successful. Teachers' marking is not consistently helpful to pupils and, in some subjects, books are rarely marked.
- The school has appointed curriculum coordinators to improve the quality of teaching and leaders observe lessons more frequently. However, the work of the coordinators is at an early stage. Leaders now give teachers targets for improvement but they do not always identify weak teaching and only provide additional training to those who request it.
- Pupils now have more opportunities to take responsibility in order to prepare them for life in modern Britain including by becoming house captains and monitors.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

- At the time of previous inspection the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development did not adequately help pupils understand what it means to be a good citizen in Britain. The school undertook to improve this aspect of its work including by developing links with outside agencies, better teaching of religious education and more opportunities to take on responsibilities, to provide visits to and from contrasting localities and more opportunities to learn about democracy.
- Pupils have a better understanding of British institutions including those connected to our system of government. Democratic elections were held to elect a representative from each year group to the newly formed school council.
- Visits from local councillors have taken place and there is a planned visit from a Member of Parliament. A visit from the police promoted a better understanding of the rule of law.
- Pupils have a growing awareness of people with different backgrounds. Religious education provides opportunities for pupils to learn about faiths other than Islam. Pupils have studied Christianity and Buddhism to help them understand and respect difference.
- However, the school's own work undermines the promotion of fundamental British values in its unequal treatment of girls and boys, so that requirements in this standard are not met.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- At the May 2014 inspection pupils were not always aware of how to keep themselves safe, including when using the internet. The school planned to review and update the e-safety and anti-bullying policies. Pupils now understand more fully how to protect themselves online and in school.
- Staff have been trained in how to protect pupils from extremism and radicalisation and all staff have received appropriate child protection training.

- However, weaknesses at the time of the previous inspection in recruitment procedures are still evident. The document that records the important pre-employment checks on adults has not been fully completed. Those who recruit new staff do not always fully explore gaps in employment histories.
- At the time of the previous inspection, the school did not check pupils' attendance well enough. This is still the case on the girls' site. Systems to record the reasons for absence are not effective. The school does not follow up girls' absenteeism swiftly or systematically.

Provision of information

- The May 2014 inspection found that the school did not provide information to its parents about the curriculum and the school's academic performance. The school planned to address this by updating the website and the school's prospectus.
- The website now includes all of the required information about the curriculum and all of the subjects taught at the school.
- The website also includes information about pupils' performance, including the Key Stage 2 assessments and GCSE results. The school provides comparisons with local and national averages for parents to compare the school's results. The requirements for this standard are now met.

Manner in which complaints are handled

- The previous inspection found weaknesses in the school's complaints policy. The policy did not provide for independent panel members when complaints progress to the formal stage of a governors' panel. The school has reviewed its policy and it now meets the requirements for this standard.

Quality of leadership and management of schools

- Leaders and managers have addressed some of the standards not met at the previous inspection. They have plans to address the remaining unmet standards. However, some of the improvement plans lack the detail required to ensure that matters are properly addressed.
- Leaders have not addressed some of the school's weaknesses with sufficient urgency. The inequality of the provision for girls remains a key failure at the school.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school must take action to meet The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and associated requirements

- The proprietor must ensure that a written policy on the curriculum, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work, which provides for the matters specified in sub-paragraph (2) is drawn up and implemented effectively (paragraph 2(1), 2(1)(a)).
- The proprietor must ensure there is full-time supervised education for pupils of compulsory school age (construed in accordance with section 8 of the Education Act 1996), which gives pupils experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic and creative education (paragraph 2(2)(a)).
- The proprietor must ensure that, for pupils receiving secondary education, there is access to accurate, up-to-date careers guidance (paragraph 2(2)(e), 2(2)(e)(i), (ii) and (iii)).
- The proprietor must ensure the curriculum and schemes of work provide all pupils with the opportunity to learn and make progress (paragraph 2(2)(h)).
- The proprietor must ensure that the school provides effective preparation of pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British society (paragraph 2(2)(i)).

- The proprietor must ensure that the teaching at the school involves well planned lessons and effective teaching methods, activities and management of class time (paragraphs 3, 3(c)).
- The proprietor must ensure that the teaching at the school does not discriminate against pupils contrary to Part 6 of the 2010 Act (paragraph 3, 3(j)).
- The proprietor must ensure that the standard about the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils at the school is met by ensuring that the school actively promotes the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs by providing equally for girls (paragraph 5, 5(a)).
- The proprietor must ensure that arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school (paragraph 7, 7(a)) and such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State (paragraphs 7, 7(b)).
- The proprietor must ensure that that an admission and attendance register is maintained in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006² (paragraph 15).
- The proprietor must ensure that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently (paragraph 34(1), 34(1)(b)).

² S.I. 2006/1751, to which there are amendments not relevant to these Regulations.

Inspection team

Michelle Winter, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Jason Howard

Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about this school

- Rabia Girls' and Boys' School is a Muslim day school that is registered to provide full-time education for up to 330 boys and girls aged four and a half to 16 years. There are currently 269 pupils on roll. The school operates on two sites, one for boys and the other for girls. Boys are taught by male staff and girls by female staff.
- The school was set up in 1996 to serve the local community in Luton and to provide Islamic education for young Muslims. It aims to give pupils an opportunity to study and develop their academic and spiritual potential in an Islamic environment.
- Pupils have diverse cultural backgrounds and most are of Pakistani or Bangladeshi heritages. All pupils speak English as an additional language and many are multi-lingual.
- There are no disabled pupils or pupils who have special educational needs. There are no pupils with a statement of special educational needs or education, health and care plans.
- The school receives a range of voluntary support from Muslim teachers in local schools and from the Association of Muslim schools.

School details

Unique reference number	130331
Inspection number	455222
DfE registration number	821/6001

This inspection was conducted at the request of the registration authority for independent schools. It was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008.

Type of school	Muslim Day School
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	5–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	269
Number of part time pupils	0
Proprietor	Rabia Trust
Chair	Mr Khan
Headteacher	Mirza Akbar
Date of previous school inspection	15 May 2014
Annual fees (day pupils)	£2,000
Telephone number	01582 481730
Email address	mz@rabiaschool.com

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