

Iqra High School

319 Waterloo Street, Glodwick, Oldham, Lancashire, OL4 1ER

Inspection dates

29 April–01 May 2015

Overall effectiveness	Inadequate	4
Leadership and management	Inadequate	4
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Inadequate	4
Quality of teaching	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils	Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings

This is an inadequate school

- The school's arrangements for safeguarding students do not meet statutory requirements.
- Leaders have not ensured that students are as safe and secure as possible because teacher prohibition checks have not yet been completed. Staff have not received sufficient training about child protection or first aid.
- The safeguarding policy does not include all the details required.
- Teaching overall is not good. Teachers do not set work that is challenging enough for the most able. Teachers sometimes set work which is too hard for the least able.
- Not enough of the guidance given by teachers to students about how they can improve their work is consistently good.
- Students, including the more able and the least able, do not make the progress they should.
- Students sometimes shout out answers during lessons, resulting in a few students not progressing swiftly enough.
- Leaders do not promote equal opportunities well enough. Curriculum plans do not pay particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010.
- Teachers and, as a result, their students do not benefit from a systematic approach to the professional development of teachers.
- Some of the Independent School Standards are not met.

The school has the following strengths

- Students enjoy attending school and have a real enthusiasm to learn. All the students are a pleasure to speak to.
- Many students have ideas for their future careers along with clear pathways of how to get there.
- Relationships between adults and students are strong.
- Leaders' vision for the school is strong. It is based on a commitment to provide an education that embraces the Muslim faith while ensuring that students benefit by contributing to modern Britain.
- There is no doubt that students demonstrate respect for, along with an understanding of, all beliefs and cultures that they have been introduced to.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school must take action to meet the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and associated requirements. The details are listed in the full report.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed a number of lessons taught by several teachers. One lesson was jointly observed with the headteacher.
- The behaviour of students was observed throughout the school day.
- Discussions took place with the proprietor, the headteacher, teachers, parents and students.
- Questionnaires completed by five teachers were considered. There were insufficient responses to the Ofsted online Parent View questionnaire for these to be taken into account.
- A number of school policies along with a range of other documentation provided by the school, were scrutinised in order to check compliance with the Independent School Standards and to provide other inspection evidence. Records relating to behaviour, sanctions, attendance and safeguarding were also checked.
- Details of teachers' records of students' attainment, along with some students' work books, were evaluated.

Inspection team

Drew Crawshaw, Lead inspector

Her Majesty Inspector

Yusuf Seedat

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Iqra High School is an independent Muslim day school for students aged between 11 and 16 years. The school is owned by Iqra Educational and Welfare Trust, which is a charity. The school is non-selective. It is located in the Glodwick area of Oldham on the same site as a Madrassah. The Madrassah is managed by the Khadija Education and Youth Centre and attended by both boys and girls. A good proportion of girls who attend Iqra High School also attend the Madrassah in the evening to undertake Qu'ranic and Islamic studies.
- The school was opened in September 2014. It is registered for 100 students. There are 24 girls on roll in Years 7 and 8. No student has a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan.
- All students are British and of Asian origin. All students speak English as their first language. The proportion of students eligible for free school meals has not been established.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision.
- The school offers secular and Islamic education.
- The school's vision, values and aims include: 'Iqra High School will become a centre of achievement for all pupils irrespective of their background and ethnicity. We sincerely intend to produce learners whom are confident individuals, responsible citizens and positive contributors to our own community and society at large. We will become a beacon of high quality in lifelong learning at all levels. All of our pupils will develop better understanding of Islamic faith, positive self-esteem, confidence, high aspirations and ambition to achieve their full potential.'
- The school's previous inspection was a pre-registration inspection in May 2014. This inspection is its first standard inspection since its registration.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and, as a result the achievement of students, so that it is consistently good by ensuring that:
 - activities are closely matched to the specific needs of students, including groups such as the most able and least able
 - there is a consistently high level of challenge in learning activities, particularly for the most able
 - guidance given to students by teachers on how to improve their work is consistently good in all subjects
 - teachers and, as a result, their students benefit from the sharing of good practice already seen in some subjects within the school along with that in other good and outstanding schools.
- Improve students' behaviour and safety so that it is consistently good by ensuring that:
 - teacher prohibition checks are completed as soon as online access to the necessary website is available
 - all teachers undertake the planned training in child protection
 - the safeguarding policy meets requirements
 - teachers' expectations, in terms of the standard and presentation of students' work, are high and applied consistently well in all subjects
 - all teachers apply the whole school behaviour management strategy consistently well, with particular regard to students calling out of answers
 - more adults are trained in the administration of first aid.
- Improve leadership and management of the school by ensuring that:
 - a systematic approach to the development of teachers and the quality of their teaching is swiftly established.

The school must meet the following independent school standards

- The proprietor must ensure that all curriculum plans, including that for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students, pay particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010 (paragraphs 2(1), 2(1)(a), 2(2)(d)(ii), 5, 5(b), 5(b)(vi)).
- The proprietor must ensure that teaching at the school shows a good understanding of the aptitudes, needs and prior attainment of pupils, and ensures that these are taken into account in the planning of lessons, so that students make good progress (paragraphs 3, 3(a), 3(d)).
- The proprietor must ensure that arrangements are made to safeguard students, that such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State and include teacher prohibition checks for all teachers (paragraphs 7, 7(a), 7(b), 18(2), 18(2)(b), 21(3), 21(3)(a), 21(3)(a)(iii), 21(3)(b)).
- The proprietor must ensure that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate with their role, fulfil their responsibilities effectively, and actively promote the well-being of students so that the independent school standards are met consistently (paragraphs 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b), 34(1)(c)).

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are inadequate

- Leaders have not made sure students are as safe and secure as possible. The headteacher, who is the designated senior person for safeguarding, has received appropriate training in the safeguarding of children and all teachers have read the most recent guidance on keeping children safe in education. However, teachers have not received appropriate child protection training. While the proprietor has received appropriate training in first aid, this has not been completed by an adequate number of other adults. The safeguarding policy published on the school's website does not include all the required details.
- Senior leaders have not yet ensured that the quality of teaching is consistently good. Systems to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and to give constructive feedback to teachers following lesson observations, are not fully embedded. Two of the regulations relating to the quality of education are not met fully and, as a result, the regulations related to leadership and management are not met.
- The school's own records and analysis of students' attainment are limited due to the short time the school has been open. However, scrutiny of data relating to mathematics, literacy, science, citizenship and personal, social and health education shows that progress, by all groups of students, is variable.
- Leaders have employed an educational consultant who is experienced in independent faith schools in order to provide training to teachers on how to improve their work. Leaders have an accurate view of the progress the school has made in the short time since opening. They also understand what the school needs to do to improve further. The lack of a systematic approach to teachers' professional development, for example in how to plan for lessons, has resulted in a few students not progressing as well as they should.
- Leaders' commitment to preparing students for life in a diverse modern Britain is unquestionable. Students are tolerant and respectful of the views of others. Most Year 8 students know what they want to achieve when they leave school and many have a clear pathway towards this goal. Leaders are working effectively towards the school's aim to 'provide equal opportunities for all'.
- However, leaders have not embraced fully, for example in curriculum plans, all of the protected characteristics identified in the Equality Act 2010. The regulation relating to students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is not met and, therefore, this aspect requires improvement.
- Good attention is given to preparing students for their life in a democracy. Students have taken part in elections for members of the school council with candidates speaking openly about why they should be elected. The citizenship curriculum includes aspects such as a comparison of different political systems, how the United Kingdom is governed and how its laws are made and upheld.
- Leaders scrutinise students' work books and other examples of students' work, for example, on students' posters displayed in the entrance hall. These actions, though, are not robust and have not identified which students are not progressing swiftly enough or where students need more precise information about how to improve their work.
- The school's curriculum provides an appropriate balance between secular academic studies and faith based studies. The range of subjects includes science, computing, physical education, Urdu and citizenship. This variety ensures that students have a broad choice of future pathways and is contributing to students' thirst for knowledge and an obvious love of learning.
- Regulations relating to the safety of students are not met and, as a result, regulations relating to leadership and management are not met. The school's arrangements for safeguarding students do not meet statutory requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**

The proprietor has a strong vision for the school. The proprietor is present in school on a daily basis and, consequently, both knows the school well and is known well by the students. He makes a significant contribution to the school's work including the delivery of Qu'ranic studies each morning.

The proprietor has worked effectively with and for parents to begin to establish a school which reflects parents' desire for an education which embraces the opportunities of modern Britain while maintaining the teachings of the Muslim faith.

The proprietor, along with the headteacher, manages the school's modest budget effectively. Leaders use partnerships well to ensure best use is made of whatever resources are available.

A governing body has been established recently. As only one meeting of the governing body has taken place, it is too early to judge the impact it has had on the school.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are inadequate

- The behaviour of students requires improvement.
- A small minority of students do not take enough pride in their work; their presentation is not commensurate with their ability.
- The natural enthusiasm of some students is not successfully channelled by all teachers. This leads to a small number of students calling out the answers to teachers' questions before other students have had the opportunity to think for themselves. Subsequently, progress slows in some lessons.
- Relationships between adults and students are excellent. Adults, including the headteacher and proprietor, know the students by name. Students spoken with feel that any minor differences are dealt with quickly by adults so that falling out is uncommon.
- The school's own records show that any incidents of poor behaviour are few and far between. Those recorded have been resolved appropriately. There are no recorded incidents of bullying.
- Students engage well in discussions and respond positively to teachers' prompting. Students demonstrate the ability, in group work or in whole-class discussion, to listen effectively and to refine their ideas and understanding successfully. For example, in an Islam and citizenship lesson the teacher rephrased a student's idea in order to prompt further high quality discussions. This, in turn, led to students strengthening their knowledge of male and female stereotypes.
- Students' attendance is good overall and in comparison to all secondary schools. A high proportion of students demonstrate a positive attitude towards learning. The vast majority of students arrive at school early each morning. Students are well prepared and ready for their learning.
- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is inadequate.
- Three of the regulations relating to the safeguarding of children have not been met. While staff have been provided with information to ensure students are safe, planned external training has not yet taken place. Although the headteacher has registered with the Online Access Service to allow him to complete teacher prohibition checks, he is yet to receive his secure passcode and has therefore not completed these checks. While the proprietor has received appropriate training in first aid, too few other adults have been trained to provide cover in the event that the proprietor is not present. The safeguarding policy published on the school's website does not include all the required details.
- Other than the weakness in prohibition checks, arrangements for the safe recruitment of staff are robust. The headteacher has attended online safer recruitment training. Other required checks on staff suitability are implemented systematically and recorded on the school's single central register.
- Arrangements for health and safety, including fire safety, are appropriate. All staff have been trained in fire safety and regular checks on fire safety equipment are implemented adequately. Leaders have drawn up an appropriate health and safety policy which is supplemented sufficiently by several activity specific risk assessments. Leaders were observed to take swift action to replace a front door lock with one that provided improved safety to the students inside the school building.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- Teaching is not consistently good across the school. The standards relating to teaching and the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students are not fully met.
- Teachers' planning of lessons does not take sufficient account of their understanding of students' aptitudes, needs and prior attainment. As a result, while students as a whole make progress across a range of subjects, including mathematics and English, the more able and less able do not always progress at the rate they should.
- Activities sometimes lack adequate challenge to ensure that all students learn quickly enough and consistently reach the standards of which they are able. For example, more-able students were observed completing work comfortably and not being expected to extend their learning with harder activities requiring them to think deeply for themselves and to apply their knowledge.
- Students are taught in specific year groups with a broad range of ability. Teachers' planning does not always include the variety of needs within the group. Lessons are not adapted quickly or sufficiently well to ensure that all students make good progress. In one lesson, the rapid response to the teacher's questions by a few students led to a small proportion of students not thinking for themselves. This group of students were not able to cement their understanding of how to change fractions to percentages.
- Teachers' approach to the marking of students' work varies across the school and within subjects. Consequently, the quality of teachers' feedback, particularly on how students can improve their work, is inconsistent and does not always contribute sufficiently well to raising standards.

- The assessment of students' progress is beginning to become established across the school. The school's own records show that frequency of assessing students' learning and the approach used to do this varies across subjects. Evidence in students' books, along with observations of lessons, demonstrates that teachers are using their evaluations of students' understanding to ensure lessons build on previous learning. For example, in English books, students improve their writing over time because of their appropriate responses to the teacher's comments.
- Teachers make effective use of their excellent relationships with all students in the school. Lessons start promptly because students are enthused about their learning. Teachers across the school engage students through whole-group discussions which value each student's contribution. In these lessons open-ended questioning, cooperation and opportunities for thinking are used to promote learning which is of the highest quality.
- The teaching of Islam and citizenship, religious education, and personal, social and health education, along with Qu'ranic studies, combine well to promote fundamental British values. Parents spoken to feel that the school is effective in ensuring their daughters are developing into 'British Muslims'. However, the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students requires improvement because not enough regard is paid to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010.
- The curriculum provides a good range of subjects which ensures that all the required areas of teaching are experienced by students. All of the students spoken to enjoy taking part in practical learning sessions. Students spoke enthusiastically about building electrical circuits in science and taking part in football, cricket and badminton during physical education lessons.
- Students are able to talk about their in-depth understanding of a range of different religions. Students are also able to describe the similarity of faiths such as Christianity, Muslimism, Hinduism and Judaism. A small group of students described how their reading book in English lessons, *Refugee Boy*, had led to discussion about recent and current conflicts and then to the production of a display about respect and tolerance. This aspect of teachers' work is contributing effectively to preparing students for life beyond school and in modern Britain.

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Students' achievement varies across the school. The school's own data show that the rate at which students' progress, based on their starting points, ranges from poor to excellent. The school's records show that the attainment of students on entry to the school is broad but below average overall, although none has been identified as having special educational needs. However, data is not yet available in sufficient quantity to evaluate accurately the achievement of different groups of students. Leaders are also not able to make comparisons with other students nationally or with national standards.
- Students have the opportunity to read frequently and across all subjects. Students were observed reading in a number of lessons. Students are able to discuss what they have read, including both fiction and non-fiction topics, and relate this to wider principles such as respect and tolerance.
- Students' verbal communication skills are excellent. Parents spoken to feel that their children have grown in confidence since joining the school. Without exception, students are willing and able to speak with visitors. Students are, on the whole, articulate and forthcoming with their opinion on a good range of topics ranging from school safety to current conflicts around the world.
- In some subjects, for example mathematics, teachers have used information about what students could do at the start of the year in order to set appropriate targets for students. In these instances, data are beginning to show signs of good and sometimes excellent progress. However, this approach is not embedded in all subject areas. For example, a record of students' performance in Islam and citizenship, combined with personal, social and health education, demonstrates that the vast majority of students have made some progress. However, it is difficult to judge the quality of this progress because what good or better looks like for each student was not established from the start.

What inspection judgements mean

School	
Grade	Judgement
Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Requires improvement
Grade 4	Inadequate

Detailed grade characteristics can be viewed in the *Non-association independent school inspection handbook* which is published on the Ofsted website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/non-association-independent-school-inspection-handbook.

School details

Unique reference number	141087
Inspection number	463022
DfE registration number	353/6002

This inspection was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, 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	Faith School
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	24
Number of part time pupils	0
Proprietor	Iqra Educational and Welfare Trust
Chair	Manzoor Ahmed Shakir
Headteacher	Mohammad Farooq
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Annual fees (day pupils)	£2000
Telephone number	0161 652 8563
Fax number	N/A
Email address	headteacher@iqrahs.org.uk

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