

Mazahirul Uloom London School

241–243 Mile End Road, London, E1 4AA

Inspection dates

8 July 2015

Overall outcome

Independent school standards not met

Context of the inspection

- This inspection was undertaken at the request of the registration authority for independent schools in order to monitor the progress the school has made in implementing its action plan.
- The school was inspected in October 2014 and the inspection identified a large number of regulations as not being met. These related to a range of safeguarding and welfare concerns, the quality of the curriculum and teaching, compliance with the equalities law, students' understanding of fundamental British values and laws, and the cleanliness and maintenance of the school's premises.
- The Department for Education asked the school to submit its action plan in two parts detailing the steps it planned to take to rectify these concerns. The two parts were submitted on 5 December and 24 December 2015. Part one was evaluated on 16 December 2015 and judged to be satisfactory subject to the checking of its implementation. Part two was evaluated on 5 January 2015 and found to require improvement.
- The school was inspected in March 2015 to assess the school's progress in its implementation of both parts of the action plan. The inspector focused on Parts 3, 4 and 5, and checked the school's safeguarding procedures for compliance with the independent school standards. A number of standards were found not to be met.
- This present inspection focused on the school's progress in its implementation of the parts of the action plan relating to Parts 1 and 2 of the independent schools standards. Inspectors also checked on progress in relation to unmet standards identified in the March 2015 inspection.

Main findings

Quality of education provided

- The inspection of October 2014 found the curriculum to be too narrow and focused solely on Islamic themes. The curriculum did not enable students to develop their creative and aesthetic skills, knowledge and understanding. The provision for physical education (PE) was not well planned or structured. Leaders did not have a suitable system for comparing students' performance against national norms and teaching did not challenge learners, including the most able, to think for themselves. As a result, with the exception of mathematics, students were not making progress. The provision for students with special educational needs was found to be weak.
- The school has broadened its curriculum to include a wider range of subjects and has increased the allocation given to National Curriculum subjects. Scrutiny of work shows students now receive a more balanced education than previously, but the time allocated to these elements of the curriculum is insufficient and limits the progress students make.
- Schemes of work do not always take account of differentiation, assessment, marking and

monitoring. Planning at all levels does not take sufficient heed of the different starting points and needs of students. Discussions with students, and scrutiny of their work, shows teachers do not follow the schemes of work in a significant number of subjects. The school has not considered progression as students move through the school. For example, in art, students in three different year groups do the same work. Leaders recognise the need for schemes of work to be more effective in supporting learning and, within the last month, a leader with responsibility for the delivery of the National Curriculum has commenced in his post at the school. It is too early to ascertain the impact of this action. In a bid to meet the needs of the new curriculum, the school has made a significant number of teaching appointments; these staff have not yet started at the school.

- Scrutiny of work reveals that, in a significant number of subjects including English, work in books has never been marked. This absence of feedback means students do not know how well they are doing or what they need to do to improve. This has a significant and detrimental effect on the progress they make.
- The school now uses an external system of standardised testing. This provides detailed information about potential future outcomes. However, the school does not use this information in its own progress assessment systems or to inform teaching. The newly introduced systems for tracking assessment focus on attainment and do not include detailed information about students' progress. The lack of rigour and coherence in these systems means the information provided to parents about the achievement of their children is not founded on a firm base of evidence.
- A lack of specialist resources or expertise means the development of students' aesthetic and creative skills, knowledge and understanding is poor. Scrutiny of students' work in art shows they have very limited skills and few opportunities to be creative or use their own imagination. The school uses a public space near the school for the delivery of the physical education curriculum. The lack of rigour and of emphasis on the effective teaching of this element of the curriculum limits the progress that students make.
- The provision for those students with special educational needs is weak. The school has engaged with relevant local authorities and organisations, but significant deficiencies remain. Additional funding to support the learning of those with special educational needs is not used effectively.
- The introduction of discrete personal, social and health education (PSHE) lessons in all year groups and the remodelling of the religious education (RE) curriculum are effective in helping to prepare students for life in modern Britain.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

- The inspection of October 2014 found that the curriculum did not promote understanding of fundamental British values or tolerance and understanding of other cultures and faiths. Students expressed the thought that it would be wrong to learn about other religions and the Principal acknowledged that the curriculum did not include any elements about those of different sexual orientations. Students expressed a narrow view about the role of women in society. No system was in place to check on the suitability of external speakers visiting the school.
- The school has purchased resources, including a scheme of work, to support with the delivery of the PSHE curriculum. This, together with other activities, is effective in helping students gain a better understanding of, and respect for, fundamental British values. In discussions with inspectors, students conveyed a greater tolerance, understanding and respect for other religions, cultures and lifestyles.
- A student council is now in place and plays an active role in the school. Students speak positively about the changes they have instigated, for example the introduction of work experience. The election of representatives and the manner in which the council operates helps students to gain a better understanding of the democratic process. A visit to the Houses of Parliament has contributed to their understanding of democracy and of British institutions.

Students have reflected on such experiences and were able to convey their learning to inspectors.

- A wide range of activities and visits from speakers has taken place. These include visits to a local hospice, a shelter for the homeless and talks from the police on the dangers of gun and knife crime. Students contribute to, and engage with, their local community in a range of ways. Examples include charity fundraising, work with a local shelter for the homeless and litter picking.
- A new approach to rewards and sanctions is now in place. Students are grouped in 'houses' and 'house points' are used well to help students to understand the difference between right and wrong.
- The school is engaging with the 'Prevent' strategy. The newly appointed leader with responsibility for the National Curriculum has recently completed training about the dangers of radicalisation and extremism. Plans are in place for all staff to be trained in the autumn term.
- The updated curriculum and other activities serve to promote equality and evidence of this exists in different subject areas. For example, in Year 8 History, students learn about the suffragette movement.
- The school has clear procedures in place for the vetting of any visiting speakers to the school to ensure partisan views are not promoted. Plans for PSHE and RE serve to reinforce this and students are encouraged to form their own views on a range of different topics.

Welfare, health and safety

- The inspection of March 2015 found that some risk assessments were incomplete or missing. These included arrangements for the safe management of the daily break time trip to a local park. It also found that the school's records relating to fire safety were incomplete.
- The school has now completed a number of risk assessments including those linked to activities in a local park. However, this inspection revealed that other risk assessments were missing. Windows on the upper floors have unrestricted opening. Leaders have not identified the potential danger to students of this in their risk assessments. In addition, leaders were unable to show how to stop the supply of gas to the science laboratory in the event of an emergency. The requirement for the effective assessment of risk to ensure the safety of students is still not met.
- The school now has complete records relating to fire safety. Routine checks are carried out in line with the school's policy.

Premises and accommodation

- The March 2015 inspection found the school had only one shower for use by up to 24 boys at any one time. This was rightly judged as being insufficient.
- The school has now installed three additional showers for students to use. These are clean, well maintained and offer privacy to any student using them. The school provided inspectors with detailed evidence of future plans to develop changing and shower facilities further.

Quality of leadership and management

- Leaders have failed to ensure that all the regulations are met. The safety of students is not assured. The associated standards for the leadership and management of the school are not met.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

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

- Ensure that there is a curriculum policy set out in writing which is supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work, and that the curriculum is implemented effectively (paragraphs 2(1) and 2(1)(a)).
- Ensure that the subject matter is appropriate for the ages and aptitudes of pupils, including those with a statement of special educational needs, and that where a pupil has a statement of special educational needs, education is provided which fulfils its requirements (paragraph 2(1)(b)(i)).
- Ensure that the curriculum gives pupils experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic and creative education (paragraphs 2(2), 2(2)(a)).
- Ensure students receive access to accurate and up-to-date careers guidance that is: presented in an impartial manner, enables them to make informed choices about their future careers and encourages them to fulfil their potential (paragraph 2(2)(e)(i), 2(2)(e)(ii) and 2(2)(e)(iii)).
- Ensure work is assessed regularly and consistently so that students have the opportunity to learn and make progress (paragraph 2(2)(h)).
- Ensure that teaching fosters in pupils the application of intellectual, physical or creative effort, interest in their work and the ability to think and learn for themselves (paragraphs 3, 3(b)).
- Ensure that teaching involves well-planned lessons and effective teaching methods, activities and management of class time (paragraph 3(c)).
- Ensure that teachers show a good understanding of the aptitudes, needs and prior attainments of the pupils, and ensure that these are taken into account in the planning of lessons (paragraph 3(d)).
- Ensure that a framework is in place and used effectively to assess pupils' work regularly and thoroughly, and use information from that assessment to plan teaching so that pupils can progress (paragraph 3(g)).
- Ensure that there is a framework in place by which pupils' performance can be evaluated accurately by reference to either the school's own aims, as provided to parents, and/or by national norms (paragraph 4).
- Ensure that the welfare, health and safety of students at the school is secured by the implementation of an effective risk assessment policy (paragraphs 16 and 16(a)).
- Ensure that leaders and trustees demonstrate good skills and knowledge so that the independent school standards are met consistently, fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met and actively promote the well-being of pupils (paragraphs 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b) and 34(1)(c)).

Inspection team

Sai Patel, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

John Lamborn

Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about this school

- Mazahirul Uloom is an Islamic boys' secondary school. The school is located in premises adjacent to and above the Mazahirul Uloom Mosque.
- The school admits students in Year 7 through to Year 11. It operates a selective admission system by ability.
- The number of students with special educational needs is minimal.
- The school has a number of aims including 'to promote a culture of achievement', 'to prepare students for adult Muslim life', and 'to prepare students who can live by the Islamic code of life and participate fully in British society without compromising their faith'.

School details

Unique reference number	133307
Inspection number	465397
DfE registration number	211/6391

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 secondary school
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Boys
Number of pupils on the school roll	95
Number of part time pupils	0
Proprietor	Mazahirul Uloom London
Chair	Jamshed Ali
Headteacher	Imdadur Rahman Al-Madani
Date of previous school inspection	10–11 March 2015
Annual fees (day pupils)	£2,700
Telephone number	020 7702 8533
Email address	info@mul.org.uk

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