

Leicester Islamic Academy

320 London Road, Leicester, LE2 2PJ

Inspection dates

7–9 October 2015

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Inadequate
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Inadequate
Outcomes for children and learners	Require improvement
Early years provision	Inadequate

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Members of the governing body and senior leaders do not have sufficient knowledge about the independent school standards.
- Some standards that impact on pupils' welfare, health and safety are unmet.
- The designated persons for child protection have not undertaken recent training. Procedures for referring pupils to external agencies are not sufficiently rigorous.
- Opportunities for pupils to learn and understand about other faiths and cultures are too limited. As a result, pupils' understanding of British values requires improvement.
- Teachers do not use sufficient information about pupils' prior achievement to provide sufficiently challenging activities or effective questioning.
- School leaders do not follow up pupils' absence rigorously enough.
- The school improvement plan is not fit for purpose, and senior leaders are not sufficiently involved in school improvement.
- The school's systems for performance management are not rigorous enough.
- Teachers do not always mark in line with the school's policy, and incorrect spellings are often ignored.
- In 2015, at the end of Key Stage 2, pupils achieved levels in both mathematics and reading that were broadly in line with national figures. The most-able pupils did not achieve as well as they should in mathematics.
- In 2015, at the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' achievement in mathematics and reading declined slightly. This is because the quality of teaching is not consistently good.
- The school building is not sufficiently well maintained to ensure that pupils are safe at all times. The school's risk assessments are not thorough.
- Governors do not work effectively with the headteacher to determine the direction of the school.
- Provision in the early years is inadequate due to the unmet standards in relation to pupils' safety and well-being.

The school has the following strengths

- Children in the early years achieve well as a result of strong and effective teaching.
- The governing body has a clear understanding of its duty to ensure that pupils are not at risk of radicalisation but accepts the need to develop pupils' learning about other religions.
- Pupils have regular and appropriate homework.
- Pupils are very well behaved. The Islamic ethos of the school underpins pupils' mutual respect of others. Pupils are taught to tolerate other cultures and beliefs, despite their limited understanding of these. Pupils have a good understanding of the British parliamentary system and democratic process.
- There are some strong recent improvements in pupils' reading.

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.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of leadership and management by making sure that:
 - the trustees and members of the governing body are aware of their responsibilities in relation to the independent schools standards, so that pupils' health, safety and welfare are assured
 - the designated persons for child protection receive suitable and regular training to equip them for their role
 - referrals of pupils to external agencies are carried out diligently by the designated person and documented accordingly
 - the admissions register is maintained, and records of pupils who have left the school are notified to the local authority in a timely manner
 - school leaders follow up pupils' absence proactively
 - pupils have sufficient opportunities, both during and outside lessons to learn about and understand people with faiths and cultures different from their own
 - policies relating to health and safety and risk assessments are applied in practice
 - the school's systems for the performance management of staff are strengthened
 - the school improvement plan is fit for purpose and monitored by governors
 - governors work more effectively with the headteacher to determine the strategic direction of the school
 - an accessibility plan (a plan to remove discrimination against any pupils with disabilities, in their access to education) is drawn up.

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good, in Key Stages 1 and 2, to drive up pupils' outcomes, by making sure that:
 - teachers plan learning to take full account of pupils' prior achievements
 - teachers improve their questioning skills, particularly for the most-able pupils
 - teachers ensure that the most-able pupils are challenged, particularly in mathematics
 - the marking policy is applied consistently in order to improve pupils' spelling and accelerate their learning.

- Ensuring that the statutory requirements for the early years are met in full by making sure that:
 - all the independent school standards in relation to children's welfare, health and safety are met.

- The school must meet the following independent school standards.
 - The proprietor must ensure that the written polic[ies] on the curriculum, plans and schemes of work are implemented effectively, in relation to effective implementation of the curriculum policy to ensure that pupils have sufficient opportunities to explore other cultures (paragraphs 2(1) and 2(1)(a)).
 - The proprietor must ensure effective implementation of the curriculum policy so that pupils have sufficient opportunities to explore other cultures (paragraphs 2(1) and 2(1)(a)).
 - Ensure that the teaching at the school enables pupils to acquire new knowledge and make good progress according to their ability so that they increase their understanding and develop their skills in the subjects taught, and shows a good understanding of the aptitudes, needs and prior attainments of the pupils, and ensures that these are taken into account in the planning of lessons (paragraphs 3, and 3(a), 3(d)).
 - The proprietor must provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to acquire an appreciation of, and respect for, their own and other cultures and faiths (paragraphs 5, 5(b) and 5(b)(v)).
 - The proprietor must ensure that arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school, by ensuring that the designated persons for child protection have received up-to-date training; and such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State (paragraphs 7 and 7(a), 7(b)).
 - Ensure that the proprietor complies with relevant health and safety laws by implementing the health and safety policy effectively (paragraph 11).

- Ensure that the proprietor maintains an accurate admissions register in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (paragraph 15).
- Ensure that the welfare of pupils at the school is safeguarded and promoted by ensuring that risk assessments are specific and that appropriate action is taken to reduce risks that are identified (paragraphs 16 and 16(a), 16 (b)).
- Ensure that the proprietor provides accommodation for the short-term care of sick and injured pupils, that includes a facility in the medical room for obtaining hot water (paragraphs 24(1) and 24(1)(b)).
- Ensure that particulars of the school's academic performance during the preceding school year, including the results of any public examinations are made available to parents (paragraphs 32(1) and 32(1)(b)).
- Ensure that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently, fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently, and actively promote the well-being of pupils by protecting them from harm (paragraphs 34(1) and 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b), 34(1)(c)).
- Make arrangements to meet the requirements of paragraph 3 of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010, by ensuring that an accessibility plan is in place.
- The proprietor must ensure that the statutory requirements of the early years are met, specifically the safeguarding and welfare requirements that apply to the whole school. In section 3 of the statutory requirements, providers must ensure that the designated persons for child protection receive suitable and regular training to equip them for their role (paragraph 3.5). In addition, if the school has concerns about children's safety or welfare, then they must notify the appropriate agencies in a timely fashion and document it accordingly (paragraph 3.7). Leaders must ensure that the school building is sufficiently well maintained and complies with health and safety legislation (paragraph 3.54).

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is inadequate

- Governors and school leaders are unfamiliar with the requirements of the independent schools standards. They have failed to ensure compliance with a significant number of the standards.
- Safeguarding procedures are ineffective. Prior to the inspection, the designated persons for child protection had not updated their training since 2010. Procedures for reporting child protection concerns to external agencies lack rigour. The Chair of the Governing Body seeks advice from the local authority, but no records of these conversations are available. He is not a senior leader, nor is he named as a designated person on the child protection policy. School leaders do not communicate as effectively as they could with parents and other agencies in order to keep pupils safe.
- The school's admissions register is not kept in line with the requirements. Pupils who have left the school are still on the register and the register does not always show where they have transferred to. School leaders do not inform the relevant authorities quickly enough when pupils are no longer attending the school.
- School leaders are not proactive in following up pupils' absences or analysing trends in attendance. As a result, school leaders acknowledge that they do not have an accurate picture of attendance and that there is potential for pupils to be 'lost in the system'.
- Risk assessments for classrooms and out-of-school activities are not sufficiently thorough. They do not take into consideration all the potential hazards. Children's health and safety is not always assured.
- School leaders and governors have not ensured that the buildings and grounds are maintained to a sufficiently high standard. The school's health and safety policy is not always applied in practice. There is no access to hot water in the medical room. Although school leaders are aware of potential health and safety risks, not enough is done to minimise them.
- The school improvement plan is not fit for purpose. The targets are not specific and no monitoring takes place. Senior leaders do not understand their role in securing school improvement.
- The school's systems for performance management require improvement. School leaders have an inconsistent approach to monitoring the quality of teaching. Newly qualified teachers are well supported. However, senior leaders do not use information about teachers' performance to provide relevant training and help them improve teaching.
- School leaders have not met the requirements of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010. No accessibility plan (a plan to remove discrimination against any pupils with disabilities, in their access to education) is in place. This is a statutory requirement.
- The school's website does not contain all the information required for parents. The school has a compliant and up-to-date safeguarding and child protection policy, which is published on the school's website. The website also contains a child protection policy that is out of date. In addition, the latest information about pupils' achievement does not refer to the most recent academic year.
- The school's recruitment procedures are robust. School leaders probe all the relevant child protection issues during the selection process. The single central record contains all the necessary checks.
- School leaders and governors are acutely aware of their responsibility to protect pupils from radicalisation and extremism. All staff have received recent and relevant training under the 'Prevent' initiative. Members of the school community are aware of the potential signs.
- The range of subjects taught includes most of the relevant areas but does not provide sufficient opportunities for children to learn in depth about faiths other than Islam. The curriculum policy states that they adhere to the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. However, 'schemes of work' (teachers' planning for what pupils will learn) for religious education and Islamic studies have not been updated recently. Pupils are taught to respect and tolerate those from different backgrounds from their own, but their understanding of the differences is limited.
- The school's systems for assessment require improvement. The assessment policy is weak and the school's systems for tracking pupils' progress are in their infancy. Leaders are unable to get an accurate picture of how well pupils are achieving across subjects and year groups.
- Pupils' spiritual and cultural development requires improvement. A successful 'World Cup' day was held in 2014 to enable pupils to learn about other cultures. However, pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to understand and explore other religions in any depth.
- The school operates a successful Madrasah after school. This is well attended and includes a fun 'play and pray' session for the younger children. The provision meets the needs of parents well.

- The leadership of provision for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is effective. The leader of this area ensures that processes for reporting, target setting and enlisting external support are robust. As a result these pupils are well supported both in and out of lessons.
- All members of the school community display high degrees of tolerance and respect for everyone. The school's welcome pack says 'Nobody is better than anybody else. Everybody should be treated with the same respect as one would expect for oneself.' This commitment to equality is underpinned by the strong Islamic ethos.
- School leaders take effective action to promote pupils' social and moral development. The school is adorned with vibrant displays about British values. The school council take their leadership responsibilities very seriously. Pupils clearly understand the rule of law and the democratic process. There are opportunities in the curriculum for pupils to explore the work of charities and to get involved in their own fund-raising for those who are less well off than themselves.
- The very large majority of parents speak highly of the school, the leadership and its teachers. All staff agree with results of the parent survey. Parents say that that teachers go out of their way to 'ensure that the character of the children is enhanced' so they can become valuable members of society.
- The headteacher is highly resilient, but faces constraints. Due to the organisation of governance she does not have sufficient freedom of action to influence the direction of the school.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governors are unclear of all their responsibilities in relation to the independent school standards.
 - Governors have an inaccurate view of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and are not sufficiently involved in school improvement planning.
 - Governors do not ensure that the health and safety policy is applied rigorously and that health and safety issues are dealt with promptly. Risk assessments are not always thorough.
 - Governors do not appear to provide the headteacher with consistent support. The Chair of the Governing Body meets with her regularly but she does not attend full governing body meetings.
 - Governors are passionate about their commitment to British values and to ensuring that mutual tolerance and respect are the norm. However, governors understand the necessity to improve pupils' understanding of British values by ensuring that pupils become more aware of the broad range of faiths and cultures in British society.
 - They are well informed of their 'Prevent' duty and have taken active steps to ensure that all staff are aware of the potential warning signs.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

requires improvement

- Not all teachers take sufficient account of pupils' starting points or prior learning when planning lessons. For example, in some classes, all pupils tackle identical work, regardless of their ability. As a result, the most-able pupils finish their work early, do not benefit from being fully occupied, and are not challenged sufficiently well.
- Teachers do not always apply the school's assessment and marking policies consistently. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly but do not always correct their misspellings, or check that they have understood their suggestions for improvement. Marking does not always help pupils to improve their learning.
- Teachers use questioning to help support and build pupils' confidence. However, teachers were not always able to challenge the most-able pupils sufficiently through their questioning skills.
- On a few occasions, particularly in the older year groups, pupils do not always get on with their work quickly enough. However pupils usually respond well to teachers' instructions and undertake their work willingly.
- Teachers are increasingly effective in developing pupils' reading. A new reading scheme is in place and teachers now give pupils appropriate opportunities to practise reading out loud. As a result, pupils are starting to become more confident and fluent in their reading.
- All teachers demonstrate correct elocution. Pupils also have timetabled elocution lessons which provide them with further useful opportunities to improve their reading skills in class. The quality of pupils' spoken English is good.
- The teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) is effective. Inspectors observed how teachers found opportunities for pupils to identify and practise specific sounds.

- Teachers provide regular and appropriate homework. Parents are appreciative of this. These homework activities support pupils' learning and progress.
- Teaching assistants are deployed effectively in the classroom. Teachers ensure that they give tailored support to disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. As a result, these pupils make good progress in their learning.
- The relationships between pupils and teachers are strong. Pupils work well together in mixed gender groups. A collaborative working environment is well established.
- Pupils have good opportunities to learn about tolerance and respect for people who are different to themselves. In an assembly observed, pupils received rewards for showing respect for others. Pupils say that whatever their religion 'we will treat all people equally'.
- Pupils have regular opportunities to practise their extended writing. An inspector observed a 'WOW' writing morning, where children were well supported to improve their writing skills.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is inadequate

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is inadequate. There are delays in reporting pupils' absence and other concerns to the appropriate external agencies. In addition, risk assessments are not sufficiently rigorous. Pupils, therefore, are not always kept safe due to inadequacies in safeguarding procedures and safety issues related to the building.
- Pupils say that they feel safe. Parents and staff have no concerns about pupils' personal development and welfare. Pupils are taught how to take responsibility for their own and each other's safety. For example, they are provided with ample opportunities to learn about e-safety and the risks associated with going online.
- Pupils have an extensive understanding of the laws of the land and the parliamentary process. Members of the student council take on roles of responsibility in school, wear tabards and carry out their duties with great pride. They have led an initiative on recycling and all pupils clearly understand why this is important.
- Pupils are taught effectively to consider other people's feelings. For example, in a personal, social, health and economic education lesson they looked at contrasting views and emotions of people. Pupils are able to develop their emotional well-being as a result.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils' conduct around school and in assemblies is exemplary. They greet visitors and hold doors open for each other.
- All pupils exhibit, by words and deeds, the school's ethos of respect and tolerance of other people. This is underpinned by the Islamic ethos of the school. They have a clear understanding of all types of bullying and know that any form of bullying, including that categorised as homophobic, will not be tolerated. They say that bullying and derogatory language is rare and are confident that teachers will address it effectively should it occur.
- Pupils take great pride in their work. Their books are pristine and they are well prepared for learning.
- There are few incidents of poor behaviour. The numbers of fixed-term and permanent exclusions are low, and when they do take place they are conducted in line with the school's behaviour policy. Both parents and staff support the view that pupils' behaviour is consistently good.
- On rare occasions, pupils do not display sufficiently positive attitudes to learning. This is usually when teachers have not given enough consideration to pupils' learning needs. Despite this, pupils are quick to respond to teachers' instructions and moderate their behaviour as a result.
- Pupils' attendance for the last academic year is just below expectations. However, information provided by the school shows that pupils' attendance is improving rapidly this academic year.

Outcomes for children and learners require improvement

- Not all groups of pupils achieve as well as they should. In 2015, at the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' standards declined in mathematics. At Key Stage 2, the most-able pupils did not achieve as well as they should in mathematics and not enough achieved Level 6 in the tests. Scrutiny of pupils' mathematics

books demonstrates that pupils' current progress in mathematics has not improved.

- At the end of Year 6 last year, pupils' standards dropped slightly in reading.
- School leaders do not routinely monitor pupils' progress. As a result there is no information available on pupils' current achievements. The school could not provide historic or current information about pupils' standards in writing at the end of Year 6.
- School leaders did not provide inspectors with information about pupils' achievements in the phonics (the sounds that letters make) screening check.
- At the end of Year 6 last year, pupils achieved levels in mathematics that were broadly in line with national figures. The progress they made from their starting points was positive, but not good enough.
- Scrutiny of pupils' learning in Key Stage 1 indicates that pupils continue to achieve at age-related expectations in mathematics, but no more than that.
- There is a similar picture in reading at the end of Year 1. The school is taking effective action to address the drop in reading standards through the introduction of a well-considered reading scheme. Inspectors' observations of pupils' reading across the school indicated that there are some strong improvements in pupils' reading.
- Pupils' writing at the end of Year 1 is broadly in line with national expectations. The school has sensibly introduced 'WOW' writing activities for older pupils. These are serving to improve pupils' ability to write at length.
- Further scrutiny of pupils' books indicates that last year's standards have been maintained. Most pupils are sufficiently prepared for the next stage in their learning.

Early years provision

is inadequate

- There are one or more unmet independent school standards in the school which have a negative impact on the welfare, health and safety of children in the early years.
- The early years leader has an accurate picture of the strengths and weaknesses of the provision. She takes prompt action to identify and implement appropriate staff training. This serves to ensure that the quality of teaching in the early years is consistently good.
- Teachers make regular and precise assessments of children's learning needs. The local authority has confirmed the accuracy of these assessments. Teachers use assessment information effectively to build activities which stretch and challenge all children.
- Leaders ensure that they communicate regularly with parents. Parents value the information contained in pupils' 'learning journeys'.
- Children are making a good start to their phonics development.
- Children's behaviour is good. The vast majority of children settle well and show that they are able to concentrate for long periods of time. As a result they make strong progress in their learning.
- By the end of the early years, the proportion of children achieving a good level of development is above national averages. They enter the school with skills that are typical for their age. Children make at least typical or better progress from their starting points and are well prepared for Year 1.

School details

Unique reference number	120335
Inspection number	10007693
DfE registration number	856/6007

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	Islamic school
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	317
Number of part-time pupils	33
Proprietor	LIA Trust
Chair	Mr Hussein Suleman
Headteacher	Mrs N Shakir
Annual fees (day pupils)	£1700
Telephone number	0116 270 5343
Website	www.lia.uk.net
Email address	admin@lia.uk.net
Date of previous school inspection	21–24 June 2010

Information about this school

- Leicester Islamic Academy (LIA) was opened in 1982 by the LIA Trust who are the proprietors. The proprietors are also responsible for LIA Gems, which is a separate nursery provision, and the Madani secondary schools in Leicester.
- The Chair of the Governing Body, who is one of the trustees, is based at the site shared by Madani Boys' School and Madani Girls' School.
- The early years provision is part-time and operates separate morning and afternoon sessions.
- The school is registered for 400 pupils between the ages of three and 11. There are currently 317 pupils on roll.
- There are too few disabled pupils or pupils with special educational needs for their achievement to be reported on separately.
- The school operates a Madrasah after school for children from the ages of four to 11. A very small number of pupils who are not pupils at the school attend the Madrasah.
- The school was previously inspected by the Bridge School Inspectorate in June 2010 when it was judged to be good.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was commissioned by the Department for Education.
- The lead inspector toured the school with the headteacher in order to check compliance with the independent school standards.
- Inspectors visited an assembly, the Madrasah, form time, and 25 lessons or parts of lessons.
- An inspector toured classrooms to scrutinise pupils' work in English, mathematics and science. He also listened to pupils read.
- An inspector toured classrooms to assess pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural development.
- Meetings were held with the Chair of the Governing Body, two governors, the headteacher, senior leaders, the coordinator for special educational needs and the early years leader.
- Inspectors met with two groups of pupils, most of whom were members of the student council. They also spoke with pupils informally in lessons and around school.
- The lead inspector spoke with one parent, who requested a meeting. She also spoke with parents who were visiting the school as part of the school's 'meet and greet' afternoon.
- Inspectors reviewed a variety of documents including policies, behaviour records, the single central record, curriculum documents, performance management information, the school improvement plan, and the school's risk assessments.
- Inspectors took account of the 39 responses to the Ofsted survey, Parent View. They also evaluated the 33 responses to the staff survey, including the written comments.
- The lead inspector checked the school's website to confirm that the required policies and documents are available, including the school's safeguarding policy.

Inspection team

Julia Wright, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Jonathan Woodyatt	Ofsted Inspector
Martin Roberts	Ofsted Inspector

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