

# Islamic Shakhsiyah Foundation

Lion House Petersfield Avenue, Slough, Berkshire SL2 5DN

## Inspection dates

3–5 November 2015

## Overall effectiveness

**Requires improvement**

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- Teaching is not consistently good in all classes. Some teachers do not assess pupils' learning during lessons well enough.
- Some teachers' subject knowledge is insecure.
- Not all pupils make the progress they should. This is because some teachers do not plan work to match pupils' learning needs well enough.
- The most-able pupils in the school are not challenged sufficiently well. As a result, they do not make the rapid progress of which they are capable.
- Effective teachers provide support for less experienced colleagues but their middle leadership role has not been established to enable them to support senior leaders and undertake a more active role in leading school improvement.

### The school has the following strengths

- School leaders have a strong vision and are passionate about improving the school. They have successfully addressed the unmet standards identified at the previous monitoring inspection.
- Pupils behave well, they have positive attitudes to learning. They are polite, well-mannered and courteous.
- Pupils feel safe and make a positive contribution to the school and the local community.
- Children in the early years get off to a good start. Adults support their learning well. They make good progress.
- The headteacher accurately judges the quality of teaching; she provides effective feedback to teachers to help them to improve.
- The school ethos makes a strong contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

### Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and associated requirements.

## **Full report**

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

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that all teachers:
  - have good subject knowledge
  - make effective use of assessment information to create well-planned lessons to meet the learning needs of all pupils
  - assess pupils' learning during lessons to adjust tasks and challenge their thinking
  - plan suitably challenging work for all pupils, especially the most able.
- Establish the role of middle leaders to support school leaders and to strengthen and sustain improvements in teaching, learning and assessment.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The headteacher conveys a strong commitment to ensure that pupils learn and develop within a nurturing and encouraging environment. The focus on promoting respect for one another within the school and the wider community is a high priority.
- Leaders and trustees have high expectations for pupils. There is a strong emphasis on respect, courtesy and dignity which is evident in the positive school culture. Leaders promote diversity and difference through the Halaqah curriculum. Relationships between leaders, staff and pupils are respectful and supportive.
- School leaders are ambitious for the school and for all pupils. Effective work to tackle the issues relating to the independent school standards which were not met at the previous monitoring inspection means that these have now been addressed. Leaders placed a relentless focus on staff training and developing a creative, broad and balanced curriculum to ensure that British values and balanced viewpoints are promoted well. The improvement in this aspect of the schools' work demonstrates a good capacity to secure further improvements. All the independent school standards are now met.
- The curriculum has been reviewed and is organised in a range of themes to ensure that pupils gain all the required knowledge and skills appropriate for their age and stage of development. There is now a more coherent approach, fostering enquiry and creativity, to ensure that pupils enjoy their learning and develop new knowledge in interesting and engaging activities. Further development continues to improve pupils' conversational and debating skills through the Halaqah circle time sessions. The school actively prepares pupils for life in modern Britain. The curriculum supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.
- A range of visits to places of interest enhance the curriculum. Pupils visit the local Anglican Church in their theme of Europe and Christianity. Year 6 pupils visit the Houses of Parliament in the theme of Britain: Empire to democracy. In addition, visits to the science museum and Kew Gardens serve to broaden pupils' experiences. All pupils in Key Stage 2 access a weekly session of Wing Chun to support their physical development.
- Leaders make effective use of information they gather about all aspects of the school's work and are mainly accurate in identifying what needs to be better, developing relevant improvement plans, and in checking the impact made.
- The headteacher is aware that not all teachers have the necessary skills to plan and assess pupils' learning effectively enough. She provides good support, particularly to new and inexperienced teachers to help them to improve their teaching. Checks on the performance of all teachers take place through discussions, observations of their teaching and scrutiny of pupils' work. Further training is identified and provided to support teachers to improve.
- The recently introduced system for tracking pupils' progress supports school leaders to identify pupils who are not making the progress of which they are capable. However, the new assessment system is at an early stage of development and some teachers' skills in assessment are underdeveloped.
- Leaders have engendered a culture of nurture and support for pupils and their families. Parents are encouraged to attend regular coffee mornings and discussions about their child's work. Their responses to surveys are taken seriously and action is taken to address any concerns. School leaders have established good links with outside agencies and point families with children who have particular needs toward additional help from these services if necessary.

#### ■ The governance of the school

- The trustees have a strong commitment to the school. Regular monitoring visits take place and reports to the trustees are circulated and actions for improvement identified.
- The head of education, who is a trustee of both the Islamic Shakhshiyah Foundation in Slough and London, carries out the performance reviews of the headteacher, holding her to account for ensuring that plans for improvement are effectively achieved.
- Information about pupils' achievement is shared with trustees. They understand this information and provide challenge and support to school leaders, raising questions and identifying actions for consideration to support the cycle of school improvement.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. A recent review of the safeguarding policy has taken place. Safeguarding information is an integral part of staff induction.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is variable across the school. Some teachers are new to their role and some are inexperienced. In some lessons, teachers do not provide pupils with clear guidance on what they are expected to learn. This limits pupils' progress.
- In many lessons the work teachers plan is not matched well enough to the abilities of pupils. Teachers are not using the assessments they make of pupils' previous learning well enough to plan suitably stimulating tasks. Too often pupils are all expected to carry out the same task. This is not demanding enough for the most-able pupils and sometimes it is too difficult for pupils of lower ability. As a result, pupils lose concentration and begin to chatter amongst themselves.
- The subject knowledge of some teachers is insecure. In some lessons seen, teachers confused pupils' understanding because they used the incorrect technical language, mistaking verbs, adverbs and nouns. In some cases their own use of grammar was incorrect.
- Some teachers are not assessing children's learning well enough during lessons. As a result, task are not adjusted to support those who are struggling, or to provide greater challenge for those who find the work too easy. Some teachers use worksheets, resources and text books too readily without checking the appropriateness of the task for each child.
- Where teaching is stronger, teachers formulate a good balance of challenging questions directly related to pupils' previous learning. This encourages pupils to think more deeply and develop their understanding. Additional questions, in response to pupils' answers, provide further challenge which increases and strengthens their knowledge.
- Pupils benefit from small classes. This means that teachers know pupils very well. Skilled teachers are able to identify misunderstandings quickly and address misconceptions. However, less skilled teachers do not pick up on this quickly enough and pupils continue to repeat errors.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning, they are polite and respectful. They have a good understanding of right and wrong and support one another in lessons and around the school. They make a positive contribution to the local community through fund raising and charitable support.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe and have a good understanding of how to keep safe when using the internet. They know that in school there are plenty of adults who support them and take care of them, particularly during breaktimes and when making visits to local amenities. During the inspection, younger pupils visited the local library. They were well supervised and all the necessary checks to ensure their safety were in place.
- There are good systems to support pupils who are unwell during the school day. Any minor accidents or first aid requirements are carefully recorded and suitable plans are in place to deal with more serious incidents should they arise.
- Pupils learn how to keep healthy through curriculum themes such as health and growth in Year 2 and moving and growing in Year 4. Visitors, such as a dentist, serve to enhance pupils' understanding of keeping their teeth healthy.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school, which is evident in their high attendance rates. All parents are in agreement. They say their child is happy and feels safe in school.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They are usually attentive in lessons and move around the school calmly and quietly during the school day. Sometimes, when their learning in lessons is not matched well enough to their ability, their concentration lapses and they become fidgety.
- Pupils have a good understanding of behaviour that constitutes bullying. They say it is rare, but know that the adults in school quickly take action to resolve any issues. School records show that there are very few incidents and none that re-occur.
- Pupils are taught about mutual respect and this is demonstrated in the way they support one another in lessons. Older pupils are good role models to younger pupils. When pupils vote for representatives from their class to sit on the Shura Council, they know that to be a member of the school council they must set a

good example to others.

## Outcomes for pupils

## require improvement

- Pupils' progress is variable. In a few classes, many pupils are making better than the nationally expected progress for their ages, but this is not always the case. Evidence from pupils' work, which inspectors scrutinised during the inspection, showed that the progress of too many pupils currently in the school is slower than expected.
- The school information from assessments at the end of the summer term 2015 showed that most pupils reached expected levels of attainment and some were above expected levels. Outcomes in reading and mathematics were stronger than in writing.
- Some teachers do not always expect enough of pupils. This is evident because often the planned work is the same for all pupils in the class, irrespective of their ability. The impact of this is that pupils of lower ability are unable to complete the task and the most-able pupils finish the task very quickly. The learning of the most able-pupils is not developed further during the lesson.
- It is evident from pupils' work that some teachers are providing effective feedback to them, giving them guidance on what they need to do to improve their work and clearly expecting pupils to act upon their comments, which is in line with the school's preferred approach. The best examples show that pupils respond well to the marking comments and do indeed demonstrate that they are able to improve their work. This aids their progress. These pupils then make progress that is much faster over time.
- Pupils who have particular needs are provided with additional support. The additional needs support is effectively helping pupils who are falling behind to begin to catch up. Pupils benefit from individual support activities which are tailored to their abilities.

## Early years provision

## is good

- Children have a positive start to their learning in the Tifley Day Care as well as in the Nursery and Reception classes. They arrive with skills and abilities that are typical for their age. They make good progress from their starting points. A large majority of children achieve a good level of development by the end of the Reception Year. This demonstrates that they are well-prepared for learning when they start in Year 1.
- Adults provide effective support. They know the children well and encourage them to sustain concentration and complete activities.
- Children behave well; they understand the routines of the sessions. Adults ensure children's safety. All are suitably trained to the correct level, including in administering first aid to young children.
- Early reading sessions help children to begin to recognise the sounds in words and this also supports their early writing skills well.
- Opportunities for learning to freely flow from inside to outside are limited for children in the Reception class; they are unable to access the outdoor space directly from the classroom. Nevertheless, planned sessions outside enable them to continue their learning across a range of areas. This is hugely beneficial to their progress and development.
- The early years leader has a clear vision for improving provision further. Regular evaluations of provision and outcomes lead to focused plans for improvement.
- Staff ensure that there are good links with parents, where home visits enable adults to quickly understand the needs of each individual child. Parents are usefully encouraged to contribute to assessments of their children's progress. Children's learning journeys show that regular assessments of children's learning take place. Next steps are planned for each child to ensure that they make good progress.
- Effective use is made of other agencies to support children with particular needs. Good links with the local authority have been established to ensure that judgements on children's learning and progress are accurate. External validation supports improvements well.
- All the statutory requirements for the early years are met.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	134085
<b>Inspection number</b>	10006763
<b>DfE registration number</b>	871/6003
<b>Type of school</b>	Muslim primary school
<b>School status</b>	Independent school
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	110
<b>Number of part time pupils</b>	24
<b>Proprietor</b>	Islamic Shakhsiyah Foundation
<b>Chair</b>	Farah Ahmed
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Tahreem Sabir
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	£3,660
<b>Telephone number</b>	01753 518000
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://isf.education/school-home">http://isf.education/school-home</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:Mail_slough@isfnt.org.uk">Mail_slough@isfnt.org.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	3–5 May 2013

## Information about this school

- The Islamic Shakhsiyah Foundation primary school was opened in 2002 in central Slough. It has a partner school in Haringey with which it shares its senior management team and trustees.
- There are 110 pupils on roll aged from 3 to 11 years. Twenty-four pupils attend part time in the Tifley Day Care.
- The school has a strong Islamic ethos reflecting the principles of Shakhsiyah education which underpins its curriculum and teaching approaches.
- The school endeavours to 'nurture the natural disposition (fitrah) of each individual child in order to develop his/her personal character (shakhsiyah) into a well-rounded, confident Muslim who has sincerity in intention and steadfastness in action'.
- A very small number of pupils have special educational needs.
- The school had its last standard inspection in May 2013. A progress monitoring inspection took place in October 2014.
- The Chair of Trustees resigned due to ill health in the summer. Currently there is no Chair of Trustees.

## Information about this inspection

- The Department for Education commissioned this inspection because there were unmet standards relating to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development in the progress monitoring visit in October 2014. All the inspection standards, including the statutory requirements for the early years were checked during this inspection.
- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 14 lessons, which included some longer observations and short visits to classes. Two lessons were jointly observed with the headteacher. Inspectors carried out a detailed scrutiny of pupils' work, both current work and work over time. Learning journeys for children in the early years were checked, as well as the learning journeys of older pupils in the school.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, the head of the early years provision, the additional support teacher, a group of teachers and two trustees. Phone calls to the local Prevent officer, the local safeguarding hub and the local authority designated officer were also made.
- Inspectors considered the views of pupils through a discussion with a small group of pupils and informal discussions during breaktimes and lunchtimes.
- The views of parents were taken into consideration through informal discussions at the start of the school day, a school survey and the 42 responses to the Parent View online survey. In addition, 14 parents made free-text comments which were also considered.
- A range of documents were scrutinised including the school's own evaluation of its work, records of trustee meetings and their monitoring work, curriculum plans and schemes of work, records of pupils' achievement and records of performance management, including that of the headteacher. Information about safeguarding arrangements, the single central record, risk assessments and a range of policies were also checked.

## Inspection team

Ann Henderson, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Robert Garrett

Ofsted Inspector

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