

# Avecinna Academy

106 Garrison Lane, Bordesley Green, Birmingham B9 4BS

## Inspection date

25 November 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 academy has made in implementing its action plan.
- The academy received a full inspection in September 2014. Failings were found in the curriculum provision for human and social aspects of education and in physical education.
- The academy submitted an action plan to the registration authority, which was evaluated in January 2015. It was judged to require improvement. A second plan, submitted in August 2015, was accepted.
- The academy submitted a request for a material change to move to new premises from September 2015. Ofsted visited the proposed new premises in August 2015 to assess whether the academy would be likely to continue to meet the independent school standards when the new building was opened to pupils. The inspector found that some regulations for pupils' welfare, health and safety were unlikely to be met.
- This progress monitoring visit, to ascertain whether the independent school standards are now met, was the first made since the inspections of September 2014 and August 2015. It was conducted, without notice, by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and an Ofsted Inspector.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and deputy headteacher to discuss aspects of the academy's work. They visited classrooms to talk to pupils about their work and to observe their learning. Documents were examined, including: information about pupils' attendance and punctuality, checks made on the suitability of staff and records relating to safeguarding.

## Main findings

### **Ensure that the curriculum policy is supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work and that pupils have access to all required areas of learning.**

- The inspection in September 2014 found that pupils did not have access to the full range of required learning. There were weaknesses in the planning for physical, human and social areas of learning.
- The academy's curriculum still does not meet this requirement. Schemes of work for humanities and for physical education are not being delivered as planned.
- The humanities curriculum is planned for use with Years 7, 8 and 9. However, Year 9 pupils are taught with pupils in Key Stage 4, so do not receive this content. This is narrowing their experiences.
- The new premises have not been sufficiently well adapted to enable physical education to be taught in the way that is stated in the plan. For example, the plan shows that pupils should be learning to play basketball this term. There are no facilities or equipment in use to allow this to happen.
- Not all pupils have equal access to the full range of physical education activities set out in the

scheme of work. Key Stage 4 boys have fewer opportunities for practical lessons than other groups.

- Pupils in Years 9 to 11 do not receive any structured aesthetic or creative education. Pupils say that they would welcome the opportunity to be creative in order to have an outlet to express themselves.

### **Compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.**

- When the inspector visited the new school building in August, there was still much refurbishment to be completed. The proprietor was unable to provide certificates relating to checks made on the electrical installation, gas appliances, the fire alarm system, emergency lighting, fire safety equipment or fire exit signage. These works have now been completed and relevant certificates produced.
- Nevertheless, the academy does not comply with other aspects of the order. Weekly checks should be made on fire alarms, emergency lighting and other safety systems. No checks have been carried out since pupils moved into the new premises. During this inspection, some fire doors were bolted shut, which means pupils would have no means of escape in the event of an emergency.

### **Ensure suitable accommodation is provided in order to cater for the medical and therapy needs of pupils.**

- A facility must be provided to allow for the short-term care of pupils when they are sick or injured. This provision must include a bed, a sink and be near to a toilet. When the inspector visited in August, the sink had yet to be installed in the designated area of the academy. This has now been done, so all requirements for this regulation are met.

### **Maintain the premises to a standard such that, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of pupils are ensured.**

- In August, the proprietor rightly identified improvements to the building that were necessary to ensure pupils would be safe. Actions have been taken to reduce risks caused by low bannisters on staircases, a disused goods lift and hazards in the playground. Staff have worked hard to ensure classrooms were suitably equipped for the beginning of the new term.
- When the inspector visited the academy in August, he noted that the proprietor had plans to eliminate further risks before admitting pupils to the academy. Some plans have now been implemented. For example, the reception area of the academy has been fitted with a controlled-access door. Visitors to the academy are required to show identification and to sign a register.
- However, this inspection found there to be a number of significant health and safety risks around the academy. Many of these have not been identified by the proprietor, so no action is planned to rectify them. Some are known, but work to remedy the issues is too slow. For example, inspectors found hazardous chemicals stored in an unlocked room. In the same room, a number of propane gas cylinders were being stored close to a radiator.
- The proprietor told the inspector in August that the side gate between the academy and the Madrassah would be closed while pupils were at school. This gate is not routinely closed. Members of the public have daytime access to the Madrassah building and so are able to access the academy grounds.

### **Provide external lighting in order to ensure that people can safely enter and leave the school premises.**

- It was not possible for the inspector to check the external lighting on the inspection visit in August as work on these systems was ongoing. These works have now been completed and there is sufficient external lighting to ensure people can safely enter and leave the building.

Therefore, this regulation is now met.

**Ensure that toilets and urinals have an adequate supply of cold water and washing facilities have an adequate supply of hot and cold water; cold water supplies that are suitable for drinking are clearly marked as such; and the temperature of hot water at the point of use does not pose a scalding risk to users.**

- Similarly, it was not possible to check the hot and cold water supplies to the sinks, toilets and showers on the inspection visit in August as work on these systems was ongoing. Water supplies are now adequate and temperatures are safe. Drinking water is available and clearly labelled. Therefore the academy now meets this regulation.

**Ensure that suitable outdoor space is provided in order to enable physical education to be provided to pupils in accordance with the school curriculum; and pupils to play outside.**

- The space beyond the side gate (between the academy and the Madrassah) is allocated to the boys for playtime and physical education. This space is not safe. An accumulation of rubbish remains in one corner. Two porch areas overhang this part of the playground. The slates on these porches are very loose and are slipping towards the ground below.

**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**
- **actively promote the well-being of pupils.**

- This inspection identified many failings of leaders to ensure the independent school standards are met. For example, many health and safety issues have not been identified, so are not risk-assessed or remedied.
- There are significant weaknesses in safeguarding processes. The academy's safeguarding policy is not being implemented. There is no single central register of staff. No staff, including the designated safeguarding lead (DSL), are appropriately trained beyond the most basic elements of safeguarding. Training for the DSL was scheduled for the day after the progress monitoring visit and an agreement was in place with the local authority to cover the role until the DSL's training is completed.
- Required checks on staff are not recorded appropriately. Many criminal record checks on staff are very out of date. Leaders are in the process of recruiting new teachers, yet are unaware of the required processes needed to ensure appointed staff are suitable to work with young people.
- Leaders do not keep adequate information about pupils to ensure they are kept safe. For example, there is no admissions register. Individual files kept for each pupil contain minimal information. For some, this is limited to an application form for admission to the academy. Little is known about where pupils come from or their destinations when they leave the academy. The proprietor is aware that some pupils have recently been placed at the academy following the closure of a nearby unregistered school. Neither he nor the DSL knew the exact number. The lead inspector worked this out from attendance registers.
- Attendance registers show worrying patterns of lateness and unauthorised absence for girls. Leaders have not noticed this so have not looked into the causes. As a result, leaders do not know whether these pupils are safe when they are not at school.
- A safeguarding audit carried out three weeks ago by the local authority identified some, but not all, of the safeguarding failings. However, no action has been taken to urgently put in place

essential processes, such as checks on staff suitability, or on the welfare of pupils who are late or absent.

## Compliance with regulatory requirements

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

- Ensure that the curriculum policy is supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work and implemented effectively (paragraph 2(1)).
- Provide 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 (paragraphs (2)(1)(a), 2(2) and 2(2)(a)).
- Ensure that arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school and that such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State (paragraphs 7, 7(a) and 7(b)).
- Ensure that relevant health and safety laws are complied with by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written health and safety policy (paragraph 11).
- Ensure compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (paragraph 12).
- Ensure that an admission and attendance register is maintained 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 the drawing up and effective implementation of a written risk assessment policy (paragraphs 16 and 16(a)).
- Ensure appropriate action is taken to reduce risks that are identified (paragraphs 16 and 16(b)).
- Ensure no person is barred from regulated activity relating to children in accordance with section 3(2) of the 2006 Act where that person is or will be engaging in activity which is regulated activity within the meaning of Part 1 of Schedule 4 to that Act (paragraphs 18(2) and 18(2)(a)).
- Ensure no person carries out work, or intends to carry out work, at the school in contravention of a prohibition order, an interim prohibition order, or any direction made under section 128 of the 2008 Act or section 142 of the 2002 Act, or any disqualification, prohibition or restriction which takes effect as if contained in either such direction (paragraphs 18(2) and 18(2)(b)).
- Ensure the proprietor carries out appropriate checks to confirm in respect of each person the person's right to work in the United Kingdom (paragraphs 18(2)(c) and 18(2)(c)(iii)).
- The proprietor should ensure that, where relevant to any such person, an enhanced criminal record check is made in respect of that person and an enhanced criminal record certificate is obtained before or as soon as practicable after that person's appointment (paragraph 18(2)(d)).
- In the case of any person for whom, by reason of that person living or having lived outside the United Kingdom, obtaining such a certificate is not sufficient to establish the person's suitability to work in a school, such further checks are made as the proprietor considers appropriate, having regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State (paragraphs 18(2) and 18(2)(e)).
- The checks referred to in sub-paragraphs (2)(c) and (except where sub-paragraph (4) applies) (2)(e) must be completed before a person's appointment (paragraph 18(3)).
- Keep a register which shows such of the information referred to in sub-paragraphs (3) to (7) as is applicable to the school in question (paragraph 21(1)).
- The register referred to in sub-paragraph (1) may be kept in electronic form, provided that the information so recorded is capable of being reproduced in legible form (paragraph 21(2)).
- In relation to each member of staff ('S') appointed on or after 1st May 2007, whether:
  - S's identity was checked (paragraphs 21(3), 21(3)(a) and 21(3)(a)(i))
  - a check was made to establish whether S is barred from regulated activity relating to children

- in accordance with section 3(2) of the 2006 Act (paragraphs 21(3), 21(3)(a) and 21(3)(a)(ii))
- a check was made to establish whether S is subject to any direction made under section 128 of the 2008 Act or section 142 of the 2002 Act or any disqualification, prohibition or restriction which takes effect as if contained in such a direction (paragraphs 21(3), 21(3)(a) and 21(3)(a)(iii))
  - checks were made to ensure, where appropriate, that S had the relevant qualifications (paragraphs 21(3)(a) and 21(3)(a)(iv))
  - an enhanced criminal record certificate was obtained in respect of S (paragraphs 21(3), 21(3)(a) and 21(3)(a)(v))
  - checks were made pursuant to paragraph 18(2)(d); a check of S's right to work in the United Kingdom was made (paragraphs 21(3), 21(3)(a), 21(3)(a)(vi) and 21(3)(a)(vii))
  - checks were made pursuant to paragraph 18(2)(e), (paragraphs 21(3), 21(3)(a) and 21(3)(a)(viii))
  - including the date on which each such check was completed or the certificate obtained; and in relation to each member of staff ('S'), whether a check was made to establish whether S is subject to a prohibition order or an interim prohibition order, including the date on which such check was completed (paragraphs 21(3) and 21(3)(b)).
  - The information referred to in this sub-paragraph is, in relation to each member of staff in post on 1st August 2007 who was appointed at any time before 1st May 2007, whether each check referred to in sub-paragraph (3) was made and whether an enhanced criminal record certificate was obtained, together with the date on which any check was completed or certificate obtained (paragraph 21(4)).
- Ensure that the school premises and the accommodation and facilities provided therein are maintained to a standard such that, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of pupils are ensured (paragraph 25).
  - Ensure that suitable outdoor space is provided in order to enable physical education to be provided to pupils in accordance with the school curriculum; and pupils to play outside (paragraphs 29(1), 29(1)(a) and 29(1)(b)).
  - The proprietor should 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 (paragraphs 34(1) and 34(1)(a))
    - fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently (paragraphs 34(1) and 34(1)(b))
    - actively promote the well-being of pupils (paragraphs 34(1) and 34(1)(c)).

## Inspection team

Sandra Hayes, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Susan Lewis

Ofsted Inspector

## Information about this school

- AVECINNA Academy was first registered as an independent girls' Muslim day school in November 2013 to provide full-time education for up to 60 girls aged 11–17. Boys were first admitted in September 2014.
- In September 2015, the academy moved to new premises in the Garrison Centre in the Bordesley Green area of Birmingham.
- None of the pupils has a statement of special educational needs.
- The majority of the pupils are of Somali heritage. English is not the spoken language in the home of the great majority of pupils. However, the majority speak English fluently.
- All pupils attend the academy full time. No use is made of alternative provision for any of the pupils on roll.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	140382
<b>Inspection number</b>	10009904
<b>DfE registration number</b>	330/6016

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.

<b>Type of school</b>	Muslim day school
<b>School status</b>	Independent school
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–17 years
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	80
<b>Number of part-time pupils</b>	0
<b>Proprietor</b>	Mohamed Dahir
<b>Chair</b>	Not applicable
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mohamed Dahir
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	25 September 2014
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	£2,200
<b>Telephone number</b>	0121 771 4782
<b>Fax number</b>	0121 753 0097
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