

Al-Islamia Institute for Education

5–7 Evington Street, Leicester LE2 0SA

Inspection dates

2–4 February 2016

Overall effectiveness

Good

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The quality of teaching is consistently good and contributes effectively to pupils' good progress.
- Pupils make good progress in English and mathematics as a result of effective learning at Key Stages 1 and 2.
- Pupils particularly enjoy reading; they make strong progress in their understanding and interpretation of the books that they read.
- Senior leaders have implemented rigorous arrangements to ensure that teachers' planning and assessment meet the increased demands of the revised National Curriculum.
- There has been good improvement in the teaching of reading and mathematics since the previous inspection.
- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are exemplary. They demonstrate respect for their teachers from an early age and maintain their positive conduct throughout their years at the school.
- The proprietor and senior leaders have established a secure environment in which pupils feel safe and comfortable. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils are excellent.
- The governors' committee has recently introduced suitable new arrangements to improve the monitoring and evaluation of the school's provision and outcomes.
- The proprietor and senior leaders have ensured that all the independent school standards are met.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The quality of teaching and learning is not regularly outstanding.
- The level of challenge in pupils' work is not always based on sufficient understanding of their different levels of attainment.
- Teachers do not give sufficient attention to the quality of pupils' handwriting.
- New governance arrangements are not sufficiently embedded to have a robust, consistent impact on outcomes for pupils.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

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

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning to outstanding by:
 - providing learning activities which challenge all pupils to make accelerated progress from their various current standards of attainment
 - ensuring that marking consistently provides advice to pupils about how to improve their work in order to meet their individual targets
 - improving the quality of written work, through a whole-school approach to the teaching of handwriting
 - making sure that pupils of all ages have sufficient opportunities to find out things for themselves and record them in their own way.
- Strengthen the impact of governance by reviewing and extending the quality of the dialogue between governors and senior leaders.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management **is good**

- The headteacher and senior leaders are ambitious for the success of pupils. They have high expectations for what pupils can achieve and are determined that each pupil will be well prepared for secondary school and for adult life.
- Senior leaders have robust arrangements in place to monitor the quality of teaching and learning. They work effectively with teachers to raise standards and to eliminate any underperformance. As a result, staff know what is expected of them and are keen to continuously improve their practice. Staff are encouraged to improve their qualifications and to take part in professional development opportunities beyond the school.
- Senior leaders take an active part in consultations and development activities with leaders of other local schools. The school maintains an active learning culture in which current developments in education are embraced and implemented effectively.
- The curriculum at each key stage is sufficiently broad to ensure that pupils access all the required areas of learning. Academic excellence is combined with good opportunities for pupils to enjoy practical activities: for example, in art and design, physical education and computing.
- Senior leaders and staff ensure that the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils impacts on their learning in all curriculum areas. The school is highly committed to ensuring that pupils understand their Islamic faith and values, and that these are applied to their actions in all aspects of their lives. This is achieved successfully within a curriculum which also enables pupils to understand and respect diversity of beliefs, religions and lifestyles.
- Pupils are prepared well for life in modern Britain. They contribute to the democratic election of representatives to the school council. They benefit from regular use of local public services, including visits to the library, and visits from members of the police and fire services. Pupils enjoy off-site trips – for example, to a local museum to study ancient Egypt and to local places of worship – and contributing to a climate change exhibition in a local park.
- Arrangements for safeguarding pupils are effective. Senior leaders oversee robust arrangements for the recruitment of staff, appropriate training for all staff in child protection, and effective policies and procedures to ensure the safety of the premises and accommodation.
- Open discussion is encouraged and a balanced position ensured on any potentially controversial topics, taking appropriate account of the age of the pupils. Staff have been appropriately trained in the government's 'Prevent' programme (advice to schools to have due regard to the need to identify signs of extremism and radicalism).
- **The governance of the school**
 - Senior leaders are accountable to a governance committee. This has recently been established to provide more formal, independent arrangements for evaluating the school's provision and outcomes.
 - The internal monitoring of the school's activities by senior leaders is effective and ensures that suitable areas for development are identified and presented in a school development plan.
 - The governance committee has appropriate plans for reporting and review of the school development plan; their formal evaluation and oversight are at an early stage.
 - Senior leaders have effective links into a local network of school leaders who also contribute positively to the school's self-evaluation and improvement.
 - Areas identified for further improvement at the time of the previous inspection have been appropriately addressed and suitable changes implemented.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The proprietor and senior leaders have ensured that all the independent school standards have been met. Senior leaders demonstrate good capacity for continued improvement.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment **is good**

- The good quality of teaching is based on teachers' secure subject knowledge and their careful planning of tasks and activities which provide appropriate challenge for pupils.

- Time is used well in lessons and pupils respond positively to the variety of learning activities which require them to think, to discuss, to listen carefully, and to record their knowledge and understanding.
- Teachers expect pupils to behave appropriately and pupils respond with interest and respect. They remain engaged in their learning and work cooperatively with each other.
- The quality of teachers' questioning is extremely effective. Pupils are encouraged to think deeply and to extend their thinking as ideas are developed through discussion.
- Pupils are provided with many suitable opportunities to read. They particularly benefit from their weekly visits to the local library. Pupils of all ages develop reading skills which are appropriate to their age. They enjoy reading stories and are mostly confident when using reference books to support their learning.
- Teachers provide a range of appropriate opportunities for the development of pupils' writing skills. There are many opportunities for pupils to interpret written text, and to examine the literary structures used and the ways in which writers convey meaning.
- However, there is no consistent approach to the teaching of handwriting. Teachers do not always have high enough expectations of the care taken by pupils in the presentation of their written work.
- Pupils are provided with good opportunities to develop their numeracy skills. The curriculum is appropriately broad to ensure that pupils at Key Stage 1 develop skills in mental mathematics, confidence with number bonds and understanding the vocabulary of the subject. Pupils at Key Stage 2 demonstrate confidence in the use of fractions and decimals, and the ability to calculate ratios and proportions in a range of problems.
- The broad curriculum enables pupils to develop their knowledge and understanding across a range of human and social issues. The Islamic ethos of the school permeates teaching and learning effectively in each year group. Pupils learn about their faith and cultural heritage in a way which has a positive impact on their behaviour, their relationships and respect for others within and beyond the school.
- Throughout the curriculum, teachers place a strong emphasis on equality of opportunity, understanding and respect for diversity, and openness to new ideas.
- Teachers place a strong emphasis on the measurement of pupils' attainment against the standards expected nationally for their age. As a result, teachers' expectations are high and good opportunities are provided for pupils to make rapid progress, particularly with their literacy and numeracy skills.
- The marking of pupils' work mostly provides clear feedback about accuracy and whether the objectives of the task have been completed. There are good examples of helpful written feedback which guides pupils clearly towards the next steps required to improve their work to the next target level.
- On occasions, teachers have insufficient understanding of pupils' individual starting points and the different rates at which they develop their skills and understanding. Consequently, limited opportunities are sometimes provided for most-able pupils to find out things for themselves and record them in their own way. Similarly, demanding literacy or numeracy activities are not always sufficiently simplified to enable slower pupils to demonstrate what they know and understand.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding. From their earliest years in the school, pupils develop confidence in their teachers and respect for each other. They are proud of what they can do and keen to demonstrate the new skills that they learn.
- Older pupils are able to discuss in a mature manner, listening to the views of others and adding their own ideas to discussion. In conversation they demonstrate a clear understanding of how their learning is helping to prepare them for the future, including their transfer to secondary school.
- Teachers are skilled in linking the teachings and expectations of Islam with the values of modern Britain. There is continuous attention to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils across the full range of subjects taught.
- Pupils understand how their conduct reflects who they are and how they are seen by others in the wider community. This is evident, for example, in their openness with visitors and their courteous manner in addressing adults.
- There are excellent opportunities in the curriculum for pupils to learn about healthy diets and lifestyles. They are confident about how to use internet access safely and understand how the school ensures that computers are used as positive tools to support their learning and personal development.

- Senior leaders have created a safe environment through, for example, suitable attention to routine checks and maintenance of fire safety equipment. Levels of supervision are high around the building, in the playground and when accompanying off-site activities. Pupils feel safe in school and are taught how to keep themselves safe.
- Senior leaders and staff maintain a continuous, effective dialogue with parents. Interim and end-of-year reports provide suitable information about pupils' progress and personal development. Teachers and leaders also ensure that there are appropriate opportunities for parents to express any concerns and to discuss their children's day-to-day needs informally.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Their behaviour in lessons and around the school demonstrates respect for adults and the ability to cooperate well with each other. They willingly join in games and activities in the playground, and quickly develop a sense of fairness and taking turns.
- Excellent behaviour in lessons contributes to the effective pace of lessons and the extent of pupils' progress. There is no low-level disruption and pupils demonstrate exemplary attitudes to their learning. They sustain their concentration when listening to teachers, and quickly develop the ability to take responsibility for completing their own work to the required standard.
- Attendance is high throughout the school. There are very few unauthorised absences and no pupils are persistently absent.
- Pupils state that bullying in school is almost non-existent, and incident records support this view. The school's reward system is used effectively. Pupils are keen to earn stars for positive behaviour and attitudes, and they understand how their individual behaviour contributes to team performance.
- Senior leaders ensure a high level of continuous communication with parents. Any concerns are addressed appropriately and immediately. Parents express no concerns about the school's management of pupils' behaviour.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- Pupils enter the school with a variety of starting points, mostly working at levels at or close to those expected for their age. They make strong progress through Key Stage 1, developing literacy and numeracy skills which equip them well for more challenging work at Key Stage 2.
- Pupils make excellent progress with their reading, speaking and listening skills throughout the school. They enjoy reading. The majority of pupils develop fluent reading skills and are able to talk confidently about the content and meaning of what they have read.
- There are frequent opportunities for pupils to respond to good-quality questioning by their teachers. The majority of pupils are keen to take part in discussion and, as they progress through the school, they demonstrate mature consideration for the views of others.
- Most-able pupils develop accurate spelling and grammar, and the ability to interpret text and summarise meaning. However, pupils' written work is not always presented legibly and neatly. Their handwriting is very variable in quality.
- There are no pupils with identified special educational needs. Those who find some aspects of their work challenging make good progress over time. Occasionally, their progress slows when written tasks are too complex and not broken down into manageable steps.
- Pupils' progress in mathematics and science is good at each key stage. Older pupils are able to interpret questions in real-life contexts, and apply their skills carefully and systematically.
- Pupils respond enthusiastically to practical activities which enable them to apply their skills, for example making electrical circuits in science. They talk confidently about what they have achieved and can explain the scientific principles behind their finished products.
- There are excellent examples of pupils' work in art and design on display around the school. They sing enthusiastically and tunefully during their nasheeds (Islamic songs).
- Pupils at Key Stage 2 are prepared well for moving on to secondary schools although not all are well equipped for working independently. They make good progress from their starting points and attain at the levels required to rise to the challenges of work at Key Stage 3.

School details

Unique reference number	135390
Inspection number	10007686
DfE registration number	856/6020

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 primary school
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	5–11 years
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	71
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Al-Islamia Institute for Education Trust
Chair	Mr Zubair Kola
Headteacher	Mr Zubair Kola
Annual fees (day pupils)	£1,450
Telephone number	01162 515101
Website	N/A
Email address	alislamiainstitute@live.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	4–5 October 2011

Information about this school

- Al-Islamia Institute for Education is a primary school in the city of Leicester. It is registered under the proprietorship of the Al-Islamia Institute for Education Trust, a registered charity.
- The primary school is located in the same premises as the Al-Islamia pre-school which provides part-time education and care for children aged three to five years.
- The school curriculum reflects an Islamic ethos and is based on the content of the National Curriculum. Separate Islamic subjects are not taught.
- Pupils are from practising Muslim families, mainly of British Indian, Bangladeshi and Black African heritage.
- The school is registered to admit up to 101 pupils in the age range five to 11 years. There are currently 71 pupils on the school roll.
- There are no pupils with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan.
- The school's last Ofsted inspection was in October 2011.
- The school aims 'to provide a full and interesting curriculum while safeguarding pupils' Imaan (Islamic faith) by instilling Islamic morals and etiquettes in them as they acquire their education'.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching and learning and looked at samples of pupils' work across a number of subjects and in each year group.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, who is also the proprietor, and with members of the senior leadership team. Informal conversations were held with a number of additional teachers. Discussions were held with pupils across the full age range of the school.
- There were insufficient responses to the Ofsted 'Parent View' questionnaire for these to be taken into account. Discussions were held with a small number of parents. The inspectors also took account of 11 inspection questionnaires completed by staff.
- The inspectors scrutinised a number of school policies, procedures and records in order to check the school's compliance with the independent school standards.

Inspection team

David Young, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Aileen King	Ofsted Inspector

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