

Lady Aisha Academy

2 Victoria Road, Annex Building, Barking, Essex IG11 8PY

Inspection dates 19–21 April 2016

Overall effectiveness **Good**

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher leads the school with quiet, thoughtful yet ambitious leadership. As a result, staff are motivated and proud to work at the school and pupils achieve well.
- Staff share in the headteacher's vision to ensure that the pupils fulfil their academic potential, develop their understanding of their Muslim faith and contribute to the community as young citizens.
- Teachers are highly qualified and have very good subject knowledge. Pupils enjoy learning and make good progress. Teaching, learning and assessment are good.
- Pupils make good progress in all subjects, particularly in science, religious education and English, as a result of good teaching.
- Pupils have good relationships with each other and with their teachers.
- Pupils' conduct around the school and behaviour in lessons is good.
- All adults in the school are diligent in their care for the pupils and keep them safe. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe as a result of good teaching and clear information.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development exceptionally well. This is through the subjects taught and the wide range of clubs and opportunities for pupils to take the lead.
- Good citizenship is at the heart of the school's aims. The headteacher is clear that 'to be a good Muslim is to be a good citizen'.
- British values are well promoted. All pupils study other faiths in religious education lessons and show tolerance of and respect for the range of lifestyles in the diverse local community.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers do not always give pupils enough opportunities in lessons to develop their speaking skills. As a result, pupils do not always make the progress they should.
- Some of the school's management systems are not yet having a full impact on pupils' outcomes because not enough staff are involved in leading these initiatives.

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 so that pupils make more progress in developing their speaking skills by ensuring that teachers give pupils enough time to:
 - answer questions fully
 - share their ideas with each other and the class after group discussions.

- Improve the quality of leadership and management by ensuring that staff develop their leadership skills and have more opportunities to lead aspects of the school's work in bringing about improvement.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The headteacher has a clear vision for the school and its pupils. He has developed the school with thoughtful, measured leadership so that pupils can grow in their understanding of their Muslim faith, achieve well academically and make a valuable contribution to society as confident young women.
- Staff are very well qualified in their subjects. They are fully supportive of the school and its leadership and work hard to deliver the very best for pupils. A high proportion of the staff are part-time and so the school runs online, interactive staff meetings every week to ensure that all staff are up to date with news and training. Staff who responded to the survey are unanimous in their strong support of the school and how it is led.
- Some school management systems are relatively new. The headteacher recognises that to provide the capacity for the school to improve further, staff need training to take up more leadership roles.
- The learning environment has a significant impact on pupils' learning. Facilities are well designed and maintained and are kept spotlessly clean. Pupils have access to good-quality equipment, materials and resources.
- Throughout the school there is a strong culture of keeping pupils safe and all staff are fully aware of their responsibilities. Risk assessments are in place. The complex multi-user site is rigorously and proactively managed by the headteacher and his staff. Pupils are encouraged to understand and manage risk for themselves.
- The safeguarding requirements for recruitment are met. Checks are rigorous and timely and staff are familiar with key legislation and relevant publications. All staff are trained in safeguarding and child protection and have received training from the local authority about the prevention of radicalisation and extremism. Concerns are followed up with the local authority.
- Teaching is well led. The headteacher and deputy headteacher correctly evaluate the strengths and areas for development in teaching. They make good and consistent use of the teachers' standards in giving feedback to teachers and planning training for them. The language of the teachers' standards was used throughout discussions during the inspection. All staff are familiar with them and this helps to ensure consistency in the quality of teaching across the school.
- Staff are regularly observed teaching and their strengths and areas for development contribute to appraisal targets. Teacher performance is well managed and effective in securing high-quality outcomes for pupils.
- The curriculum has a positive impact on pupils' achievement and personal development. Pupils study a very broad range of subjects. As the school expands and the curriculum is reviewed, the headteacher is keen to widen the range of subjects leading to the award of GCSE. The curriculum in lessons is supplemented by a broad range of clubs and activities at lunchtime and after school, including Spanish, drama and art.
- All students study citizenship to GCSE level. They have a very good understanding of the public institutions of Britain and local and national government. Last year, the whole school visited the Houses of Parliament, and councillors from Barking and Dagenham regularly talk to the students on a variety of locally relevant topics, such as recycling and religious tolerance.
- Together with the other compulsory subjects of personal, social and health education (PSHE), Islamic studies and religious education, pupils are very well supported and prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Pupils receive good impartial careers guidance. They say that they feel well prepared for the next stage of their education. Pupils attend careers fairs and have support to write their applications. They go onto to a range of colleges and sixth forms for further study.
- Parents who responded to the Parent View survey were unanimous in their support of the school and all said they would recommend it to others. Parents say their daughters are safe, happy and making good progress.
- The headteacher has ensured that all the independent school standards are met
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- This inspection also considered the application by the school to the Department for Education to expand the school and increase the maximum school roll from 80 to 120. The school is likely to meet the relevant independent school standards if this material change is implemented.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Teachers are highly qualified in their specialist subjects. Pupils enjoy learning and make good progress.
- Teachers' planning is exceptionally good. Teachers plan interesting and challenging activities for pupils in lessons with clear aims and purpose. Activities are sequenced effectively, which enables pupils to build on their knowledge and develop their skills more rapidly.
- Teachers select and design good-quality resources for pupils to use in lessons. In a Year 9 citizenship lesson, pupils watched the campaign videos for the London mayoral elections and recorded, on a well-designed writing frame, key features about the campaign issues and style of presentation.
- Teachers' questioning is good. Teachers use a range of different types of question to deepen pupils' understanding. In a Year 7 English lesson, pupils were studying an extract from the novel 'Twilight'. The teacher's very effective questioning of individuals enabled students to fully understand how the author had used punctuation to enhance the impact of the text. The teacher's attention to detail and probing questioning culminated in a challenging class discussion about the uses of hyphens in writing.
- Pupils' experimental and investigative skills in science are very well promoted. In a Year 8 science lesson, pupils were set a challenge to compare insulators and find which one would be best to use in a house with no central heating. Pupils responded very positively. They say they enjoy designing their own experiments and that it helps them to learn.
- In line with the school's policy, pupils' work is marked regularly with detailed comments and praise. Pupils almost always receive helpful feedback about how to improve their work and appreciate the helpful comments.
- Pupils say they enjoy discussion and group work and that it helps them learn. However, sometimes pupils do not make as much progress as they should in their speaking skills because teachers cut off their responses during feedback or move on to other activities too quickly.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils are developing into confident young women as a result of the support and care of staff.
- All pupils are expected to make the most of the range of opportunities the school offers to further their personal development. There is a talent show in assembly every week, when pupils prepare a performance for the audience. During the inspection, volunteers performed a song and presented riddles and word games.
- Pupils develop their own leadership skills very well. In the school council, pupils collaborate to produce and edit a newsletter which is published regularly for pupils and parents. Groups of pupils regularly organise events to raise money for charities.
- Pupils say they feel safe and they know what to do if there is bullying, name calling, racism and homophobic comment. They say that there is no bullying and that it is always dealt with when it happens.
- They are confident about dealing with inappropriate texts or internet messages and have had lessons in computer studies to keep themselves safe online. They understand about reporting inappropriate messages, blocking accounts and informing the police.
- Pupils are respectful of people of other faiths. They study all the major world religions in religious education lessons. In an assembly, Year 8 pupils gave a presentation about respecting your parents and included teaching from Hinduism as well as the Muslim faith. Pupils can describe the feelings of seeing things from another person's point of view and how that enables them to empathise with people with different lifestyles.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils conduct themselves well around the school site. They are self-aware and respectful towards each other and adults in the school and welcoming to visitors.
- They are very well presented in their uniform. They take care of their learning environment and there is no litter. They enjoy each other's company and pupils from different year groups get on well together.
- Behaviour in lessons is good. Pupils enjoy learning and like the way they can read, write and think for

themselves in lessons. They have positive attitudes to learning. Pupils and parents agree that there is very little or no disruption in lessons.

- Attendance is just below the national figures for girls in secondary schools. Systems for monitoring attendance are fit for purpose. The attendance officer works diligently to ensure that parents and pupils understand the importance of good attendance. There is a system of detentions for pupils, fines for parents and rewards for good attendance. As a result, attendance and punctuality are improving.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- As a result of consistently good teaching pupils make good progress across all their subjects.
- In English, outcomes from mock examinations and controlled assessments show that in Year 11, the proportion of pupils on track to make good progress is higher than national figures. These standards are also shown in the work in pupils' books.
- In mathematics, pupils are developing their understanding of concepts and problem-solving methods very well in lessons. Three pupils have already achieved high grades in mathematics at the end of Year 10 and others are on track to make at least expected progress by the end of Year 11.
- Year 11 pupils were entered for GCSE examinations in science and religious education at the end of Year 10. The results indicate very high levels of attainment, with pupils making well above national rates of progress from when they enter the school in Year 7 in these subjects.
- The assessment tracking system for monitoring pupils' progress is relatively new but the initiative is having a positive impact on pupils' progress in all subjects and year groups. Pupils' achievement is remarkably consistent across all subjects, but where it does dip, action is taken to close any gaps. Additional support for pupils is planned with the class teacher and takes place in class and in booster sessions at lunchtime and after school.
- For younger pupils, information about their progress and their work in lessons show that most pupils are making more than expected progress and are on track to achieve well in English and mathematics.
- Standards of work in art are exceptionally high. Pupils of all ages commented positively on the opportunities they have in lessons and the art club to express themselves and follow their own creative interests. Pupils are highly motivated as a result of strong technical and appreciative art teaching, which includes African and Australian aboriginal art as well as the styles of well-known European artists.
- The school encourages pupils to be active and physical education is included in the curriculum for all pupils, although not all pupils are keen on the subject and physical activity. However, enthusiastic, skilful teaching ensures that pupils make progress in developing their physical skills and personal fitness.
- Pupils who have special educational needs make good progress in English, mathematics and science because the school adapts learning plans and the timetable very effectively and provides good advice to teachers on how to support pupils.
- Pupils' skills in reading and writing are well developed. Very few worksheets are used, but when they are, they are structured to support pupils' extended writing. The school has correctly identified that pupils' speaking skills need more focus and development.
- Pupils learn to apply their numeracy skills in science, PSHE and citizenship as well as mathematics.

School details

Unique reference number	136746
Inspection number	10012827
DfE registration number	301/6003

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	Faith
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Girls
Number of pupils on the school roll	76
Number of part time pupils	0
Proprietor	Naeem Aslam
Chair	N/A
Headteacher	Naeem Aslam
Annual fees (day pupils)	£3,300
Telephone number	07980 044786
Website	www.ladyaisha.co.uk
Email address	n.aslam@ladyaisha.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	24–25 April 2012

Information about this school

- Lady Aisha Academy is a Muslim secondary school for girls in the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham.
- The school opened in September 2011 and is located in a building within the grounds of Barking mosque. The main school building has purpose-built classrooms and facilities. The school also uses two floors of the community building located within the mosque complex.
- The school is registered for pupils from Year 7 to Year 11. There are currently 76 full-time pupils. Very few pupils have specific learning difficulties and none has a statement of special educational needs.
- The school promotes the Islamic values of peacefulness, honesty, gentleness and virtue through scholarship and learning. The school aims to prepare the girls for academic success and for them to be good role models and contribute as citizens to their community.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The proprietor of the school is also the headteacher. There are no governors.
- The school was previously known as Al-Futuwwa Girls Secondary School when it was last inspected in April 2012.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out with one day's notice
- The inspector observed pupils learning in seven lessons. For three of these visits, the inspector was accompanied by the headteacher and senior staff. In addition, the inspector made a number of shorter visits to lessons.
- The inspector visited an assembly, morning registration and after-school clubs.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher, the school administrative officer and staff with responsibilities in teaching and learning and assessing pupils' progress.
- A tour of the building and premises was undertaken with the headteacher.
- Two groups of pupils talked to the inspector about their views of the school. The inspector also talked informally with pupils at break and lunchtime.
- The inspector considered a range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plan, policies and information about pupils' achievement, progress, behaviour and attendance.
- The inspector took account of the views of 11 responses to Ofsted's online Parent View survey.
- The inspector took account of the 10 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Janet Hallett, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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