

Al-Ihsaan Community College

1 Kamloops Crescent, Leicester LE1 2HX

Inspection dates

14 June 2016

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 school has made in implementing its action plan.
- The school was last inspected by the Bridge Schools Inspectorate in June 2015. At this inspection, the school was judged not to be meeting some of the independent school standards.
- The proprietor submitted an action plan to remedy those standards the school had failed to meet at the inspection. This was evaluated on 20 April 2016 and was judged to require improvement.
- This was the first monitoring inspection of the school and it was conducted without notice to the school.
- The inspectors held meetings with the deputy headteacher, who is currently the school's acting headteacher, the school's designated safeguarding lead and teaching staff. They toured the premises of the school and visited classes. Inspectors met formally with two groups of pupils, and spoke informally with others at breaktimes. They examined a range of documentation relating to the school's progress since the previous inspection and the steps it has taken in order to meet the failed standards. They also examined safeguarding documents including the single central register of staff checks, the safeguarding policy and the complaints policy. They looked at pupils' work in art, English and citizenship.

Main findings

Part 1. Quality of education provided

- The previous inspection found that the curriculum was too narrow. There was no art or music on the timetable, and there were limited opportunities for pupils to develop creative responses in their English work. Consequently, pupils had insufficient opportunities to experience an aesthetic and creative curriculum.
- Leaders have taken some action to remedy these weaknesses. Pupils in Years 7 to 9 now study art, and there is now a dedicated space in the school hall for displaying their work. The programme of work in English has been adapted to allow more opportunities for pupils to develop their creative skills. For example, pupils in Year 9 have written and acted out their own scripts based on 'Macbeth'.
- However, this work is still in development. As yet, there is no planned scheme of work for art, so teachers have not planned how they will develop pupils' artistic skills through the curriculum. There is only limited time available for this subject, as it is shared with physical education and citizenship on a rotational basis. Pupils' work shows that they make only limited progress in gaining appropriate knowledge, skills and an appreciation of this subject. They have very few resources in order to learn about the work of different artists.
- Pupils who spoke with inspectors said that they would like to study technological subjects and learn important life skills such as cookery. Currently, there are no opportunities for them to do so. The time available for physical education is also very limited.
- The school offers some careers advice and guidance to pupils. A nurse and a police officer have

visited the school to speak about their careers. There is some information available in the library about applying to college and to university. Teachers help older pupils with their applications to local colleges.

- However, pupils do not receive enough information to help them to make informed choices about their future. There is very little impartial advice available to guide pupils in their choices. Those who spoke with inspectors expressed the view that their teachers do not encourage them to follow their aspirations, but to follow what the teachers feel to be 'good' careers. As one pupil put it, 'Their dreams are not our dreams.' One pupil was told that her dream job 'was not a job for women'.
- Pupils who spoke with inspectors were not prepared for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British society. They expressed anxiety at the thought of being educated in a mixed-gender, multi-cultural setting, and did not feel that the experience of being in a single-sex school had prepared them for this. One felt 'cut off from the outside world'. This connects to a number of the outcomes in Part 2 of the independent school standards that were also found to be not met at this inspection.

Part 2. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

- These standards were found to be met at the last inspection. The report noted strengths in pupils' spiritual and moral development, and some weaknesses in their social and cultural development.
- Pupils who spoke with inspectors stated that they have very few opportunities to mix with people from other faiths and cultures, or to learn about these at school. There are very few visitors to the school and pupils have limited opportunities to visit places of cultural interest or worship, or to leave the school for any purpose.
- Consequently, pupils are not enabled to develop their self-esteem and self-confidence in a way that will enable them to fulfil their potential. Pupils have very few opportunities to contribute positively to the lives of those living and working in the locality in which the school is situated and to society more widely and they have too few opportunities to acquire an appreciation of other cultures. Their limited social and cultural development means that they are not well prepared for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British society.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- The previous inspection found that that these requirements were not all met, as the designated senior person for safeguarding had not undertaken the relevant training.
- This training has now been completed. In addition, staff have undergone regular training in safeguarding issues and generally have a good understanding of their role. The safeguarding policy reflects local multi-agency arrangements and is in keeping with the relevant legislation.
- However, not all staff understand the processes for whistleblowing. The policy on allegations against staff lacks clarity.
- Pupils who spoke with inspectors said that they would not raise safeguarding concerns with teachers, as they did not feel that they would be listened to, or their concerns taken seriously. Pupils spoke about opportunities to learn about radicalisation in the curriculum. However, they told inspectors that they would not tell their teachers if they were worried about one of their friends being drawn into extremist ideology.
- Leaders and staff have a clear understanding of local safeguarding risks. They know, for example, that the risk of female genital mutilation (FGM) is high in the communities that the school serves. They have led training with staff, display information about FGM in school and understand their statutory reporting duties in relation to this issue. However, there are too few opportunities for pupils to learn about FGM. Not all pupils who spoke with inspectors knew what FGM was. They stated that they would not tell teachers if they had concerns about FGM.
- Therefore, while the school's policies and procedures are in keeping with local arrangements and comply with the relevant legislation, the school has not created a culture in which pupils feel safe to raise concerns. There are too few opportunities in the curriculum for pupils to learn

how to stay safe.

- The previous inspection found that the school did not implement risk assessments for the premises. There is now a new policy for health and safety that makes reference to the risk assessments that should be carried out. This policy is not implemented effectively. For example, the newly installed science laboratory contains numerous hazards. Leaders have not carried out an assessment of these risks or stated how they will be controlled.
- There is a risk assessment in place for the supervision of pupils at lunchtime. Staff on duty were not aware of this risk assessment.

Part 4. Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors

- The previous inspection found that leaders did not carry out medical checks on staff. The requirements for this part were otherwise met.
- All staff have now completed a declaration to confirm their medical fitness. A copy of this declaration is kept in the staff files.
- The requirements for this part are therefore met.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

- At the time of the previous inspection, the medical room did not have a sink. Leaders took appropriate action in response to this failing and have installed a sink with hot and cold running water in the medical room.
- The requirements for this part are therefore met.

Part 6. The provision of information

- The previous inspection found a number of unmet standards in relation to the provision of information. The school's website was not functional. Details of the governing body and an address for correspondence were not made available to parents. The school's policies, including those relating to safeguarding, were not available.
- The school's website is now up and running. It contains all the relevant information for parents. Policies are also available to parents in written form on request.
- The school therefore fully meets the standards for the provision of information.

Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

- At the time of the previous inspection the school's website was not functioning and the complaints policy was not available to parents. Leaders have taken appropriate action to address this failing, and the policy is now on the school's website.
- One minor change was made to the policy during this inspection. Leaders added the name and contact details for the chair of the governing body, as required.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

- The previous inspection found that the standards for leadership and management were not met as there were a number of unmet standards relating to the quality of education, the suitability of staff, premises and accommodation, the provision of information and the manner in which complaints are handled.
- Leaders have taken effective action to meet some of the previously unmet standards from the last inspection. Parts 4, 6 and 7 of the regulations are now met in full. However, standards relating to the curriculum, appropriate careers guidance and safeguarding requirements, and a number associated with the proprietor's responsibility for providing effective spiritual, moral, social and cultural education are not met. On this account, the standards for the leadership and management of the school are not met.
- The school's safeguarding policy is not implemented effectively. Leaders have not created a culture where it is safe to raise safeguarding concerns. They have not ensured that the processes for dealing with allegations against staff are clear. There are too few opportunities in

the curriculum for pupils to learn how to stay safe, and pupils are not clear of leaders' roles in relation to safeguarding. Currently, pupils do not trust staff to take their concerns seriously and respond appropriately. Consequently, leaders do not actively promote the well-being of pupils.

- The leadership of the school is uncertain. The headteacher has been absent from the school for several months. The acting headteacher is not certain whether the headteacher has resigned. Much rests with the expertise of a few key staff, notably the designated safeguarding lead. The uncertainty regarding leadership is hampering the school's ability to ensure that the independent school standards are consistently met, since roles and responsibilities are not clear.
- Governors are not effective in holding leaders to account for how well the school meets the independent school standards.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

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

- The proprietor must ensure that the curriculum:
 - gives pupils experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic and creative education (paragraphs 2(1), 2(1)(a), 2(2)(a))
 - enables the effective preparation of pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in modern Britain (paragraphs 2(1), 2(1)(a) and 2(2)(i))
 - for pupils receiving secondary education, provides access to accurate, up-to-date careers guidance that is presented in an impartial manner, enables them to make informed choices about a broad range of career options and helps to encourage them to fulfil their potential (paragraphs 2(1), 2(1)(a), 2(2)(e)(i), (ii) and (iii)).
- The proprietor must ensure that the standard about the spiritual, social, moral and cultural development of pupils at the school is met by actively promoting principles that enable pupils to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence (paragraphs 5, 5(b) and 5(b)(i)).
- The proprietor must ensure that the standard about the spiritual, social, moral and cultural development of pupils at the school is met by actively promoting principles that encourage pupils to accept responsibility for their behaviour, show initiative and understand how they can contribute positively to the lives of those living and working in the locality in which the school is situated and to society more widely (paragraphs 5, 5(b) and 5(b)(iii)).
- The proprietor must ensure that the standard about the spiritual, social, moral and cultural development of pupils at the school is met by actively promoting principles that further tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions by enabling pupils to acquire an appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures (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 and that these have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State (paragraphs 7, 7(a) and 7(b)).
- The proprietor must 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 and that appropriate action is taken to reduce risks that are identified (paragraphs 16, 16(a) and 16(b)).
- The proprietor must 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 (paragraphs 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b) and 34(1)(c)).

Inspection team

Deirdre Duignan, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Martin Finch

Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about this school

- Al-Ihsaan Community School Academy is an independent Muslim day school for boys and girls aged from 11 to 16 years old. To date, it has not had any male pupils on roll.
- The school was registered in 2011 for up to 80 pupils.
- There are no pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- No pupils are in the early stages of acquiring English. Most but not all pupils are of Somali heritage.
- The school offers the national curriculum for key stages 2 to 4 alongside Islamic studies.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision.

School details

Unique reference number	136823
Inspection number	10020620
DfE registration number	856/6006

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.

Type of school	Independent day school
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Girls
Number of pupils on the school roll	38
Number of part time pupils	0
Proprietor	Al-Ihsaan Community College
Chair	Mahamed Ali Farah
Headteacher	Mahamed Ali Weheliye
Date of previous school inspection	15–18 June 2015
Annual fees (day pupils)	£1,560
Telephone number	0116 2161494
Email address	admin@alihsaancollege.org

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