

Al-Aqsa School

The Wayne Way, Leicester LE5 4PP

Inspection dates

11 July 2016

Overall outcome

Independent school standards met

Context of the inspection

- This inspection, which was conducted without notice, 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 Department for Education accepted the school's action plan in March 2016.
- This was the first progress monitoring inspection since the school's previous inspection, which took place on 14–16 October 2015.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, other senior leaders across the primary and secondary phases of the school, and a governor. He also met separately with a group of teachers and a group of pupils from the primary and secondary phases. The inspector observed lessons in the early years, as well as in Years 1, 3, 9 and 10. During these observations, he spoke with pupils and looked at their books. He also looked at English and mathematics books of pupils in Years 4 and 5. The inspector scrutinised the school's documents in relation to the quality of teaching, governance, staff training, achievement and safeguarding. He looked at the school's single central record.
- The inspector was commissioned by the registration authority to inspect the quality of the education that the school provides and the quality of leadership and management. In addition, the inspector was commissioned to check that the school's safeguarding policy was compliant with the independent school standards.

Main findings

Part 1. Quality of education provided

- Pupils receive regular opportunities to develop their communication skills across all phases within the school. For example, the introduction of the weekly 'Big Write' project in key stages 1 and 2 has enabled pupils to develop their communication skills through regularly discussing and writing about different topics. In the secondary phase, teachers have ensured that pupils have a more secure understanding of how to communicate their ideas clearly and accurately in their written work.
- All pupils now receive regular opportunities to respond to everyday problems using their mathematical skills and knowledge. For example, in one lesson the inspector observed, Year 3 pupils used their knowledge of analogue clocks to respond to everyday scenarios that involved telling the time. The pupils the inspector met said that teachers provide them with increased opportunities to apply their mathematical skills to solve real-life problems.
- Teachers have received wide-ranging opportunities to develop their classroom practice. This has included training on effective questioning, using pupils' performance information to plan future learning activities, and planning activities that engage pupils in their learning. Those teachers who met with the inspector spoke highly of the training they have received. They recognise the positive impact this has had on their classroom practice.
- Senior leaders have introduced systems by which teachers can establish more quickly the

aptitudes and skills of their pupils. Consequently, teachers are now able to set pupils targets that are more challenging. They are also able to design activities that provide pupils with appropriate stretch and challenge.

- Teachers regularly assess the progress that pupils make in their lessons. They do this through effective questioning and by regularly assessing pupils' work. By checking on pupils' progress, teachers are able to plan future learning to ensure that pupils make the progress they should. Teachers are also able to identify more quickly those pupils who are falling behind and provide them with appropriate support.
- Senior leaders have reviewed the school's marking policy. There is now a greater focus on providing effective feedback to enable pupils to develop their understanding further. The pupils the inspector met recognise the value of the more detailed feedback they receive. They understand how receiving clear feedback on how to improve their work is helping them to secure their understanding. They also value the opportunities they now receive in lesson time to reflect upon the feedback their teachers have given them.
- Teachers regularly meet with their colleagues to discuss pupils' progress. These meetings enable teachers to discuss in more depth those pupils who are not making sufficient progress and the support that these pupils require. Teachers also use these meetings to check the accuracy of each other's assessment of pupils' work, to share best practice and to prepare for those occasions where pupils move up from one year group to the next.
- Teachers work closely with colleagues from a local school to ensure that their assessment of their pupils' work is accurate.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

- Senior leaders and governors have acted swiftly to resolve the issues that inspectors raised at the previous inspection. Their actions have ensured that the school now meets the independent school standards that the school did not meet at the previous inspection.
- Governors have received training to secure their understanding of their responsibilities in ensuring that the school meets the independent school standards. They undertake regular checks on the quality of the school's provision. They provide senior leaders with appropriate challenge where they feel that the improvement in the school's provision is not quick enough.
- Senior leaders have refined the systems by which they check on pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching. These systems have enabled the leaders to develop a sharper understanding of the quality of education that the school is providing. For example, they are able to identify quickly where pupils are not making the progress expected of them, and ensure that these pupils receive appropriate support.
- Senior leaders have ensured that teachers receive the necessary training to enable their classroom practice to be effective. Teachers receive support where it is necessary, and are able to take advantage of opportunities to share best practice with their colleagues.
- Senior leaders have ensured that the school works closely with local schools to enable teachers to share best practice and to check the accuracy of their assessment of pupils' work. Working with local schools has also enabled senior leaders to secure their own leadership skills.
- The school's safeguarding policy is compliant with the independent school standards.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school meets The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and associated requirements

Inspection team

Simon Hollingsworth, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about this school

- Al-Aqsa school is a non-selective school, which promotes a Muslim ethos.
- The school is located in a residential area, close to the centre of Leicester.
- The school admits children in the early years through to Year 11.
- The school has 292 pupils on roll.
- The primary school is open to boys and girls. The secondary school admits girls only.
- Years 6 and the secondary phase are taught on a separate site to the pupils in the early years, key stage 1 and Years 3, 4 and 5.

School details

Unique reference number	134809
Inspection number	10020803
DfE registration number	856/6017

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	Muslim primary and secondary school
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	3–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	292
Number of part time pupils	1
Proprietor	Al-Aqsa Schools Trust
Chair	Ibrahim Hewitt
Headteacher	Ataullah Parkar
Date of previous school inspection	14–16 October 2015
Annual fees (day pupils)	Primary: £1,700 Secondary: £1,900
Telephone number	0116 2760953
Email address	headteacher@alaqsaschool.co.uk

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