

Al-Huda Primary School

3 Hennon Street, Bolton BL1 3EH

Inspection dates

20–22 September 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
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Al-Huda Primary is a thriving school. Leaders share a strong vision to educate pupils in such a way that they are well prepared to make a valuable contribution as citizens in modern Britain.
- Islamic values of tolerance, respect, kindness and honesty are at the heart of all this school does.
- The headteacher and deputies have the full commitment of an enthusiastic and motivated staff. Senior leaders and the proprietor know the school's strengths and weaknesses and have been conscientious in pursuing continual improvement.
- Assessment has much improved since the previous inspection. Consequently, leaders and teachers know their pupils well. As a result, pupils achieve well throughout the school.
- Pupils rise to the high expectations that teachers successfully model and they benefit from the good teaching they receive. Teachers' subject knowledge is good and lessons are well resourced.
- Leaders are attentive in their responsibilities around safeguarding. As a result, pupils feel very safe in school.
- Parental involvement is a strength. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about how well the school teaches, supports and looks after their children.
- The importance of nurturing pupils' personal development and welfare is very evident in all aspects of school life.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. They are gracious and extremely respectful to adults and peers. They take pride in their appearance and are very proud of their school.
- Parents and pupils value education highly. As a result, absence is rare.
- There are strengths in the early years. As a result, children settle well and make an excellent start to school life.
- Pupils are not always challenged to think deeply and practise their reasoning skills.
- Pupils sometimes lack confidence to work on their own.
- Outdoor space is too limited and does not maximise opportunities for pupils to play and learn outside.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

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

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning, by ensuring that teachers:
 - provide activities that challenge pupils in lessons, including the most-able pupils, to think more deeply about their work and practise their reasoning and problem-solving skills
 - encourage pupils to develop confidence in working independently.
- Improve leadership and management by ensuring that leaders build on current plans to develop the outdoor space further so that all pupils can make better gains in their learning.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Al-Huda Primary is a good school. The commitment of the headteacher, other senior leaders and the trustees of the school to provide high educational standards for their pupils is paramount. Their vision and hard work have led the way so that, together with staff, they provide good opportunities for pupils to achieve and develop as well-rounded individuals.
- The school weaves the Islamic faith values of tolerance, respect, kindness and honesty through every aspect of school life. Through these, leaders promote equality and diversity well. There is a strong culture of celebrating difference in people, religion and beliefs that results in pupils who are caring, considerate and respectful of each other and the wider community.
- Leaders have the total commitment of staff, parents and pupils. Staff are enthusiastic and motivated to make sure that there is continual improvement. Relationships between staff are strong; they are proud to work at Al-Huda. All feel well supported and that the school is led and managed well.
- Senior leaders and the proprietor of the school have been diligent in ensuring that all the independent school standards are met and are up to date. This has been achieved through good-quality procedures and checks that are in place in the school and that are monitored regularly.
- The premises of the school are tidy, clean and well organised. Resources are plentiful and appropriate for the varying ages of pupils and to spark their interest, curiosity and learning.
- Outdoor space for pupils to play and receive physical education in is available, but is too limited. The school uses the school hall for much of the pupils' physical education, and pupils also make frequent visits to the local park. School leaders have invested in a range of external sports provision to support this aspect of pupils' development. For example, all pupils learn to swim. Pupils of all ages recognise the value of physical activity as a part of being healthy.
- Senior leaders know their school well. The strengths of the school and areas for improvement are clearly identified in their self-evaluation, which is accurate, honest and reflective. Checks on the quality of teaching and learning are thorough. Staff are encouraged to work together to develop the school, resulting in staff that feel motivated and part of its ever-growing success.
- Accelerating and improving outcomes for pupils are a constant focus. Senior leaders and the proprietor of the school have worked hard to improve the way pupils are assessed and their progress is tracked. Assessment information is used regularly by senior leaders to talk to teachers about pupils' learning and to plan opportunities to help pupils catch up if needed. Leaders have also built in a number of occasions for teachers to discuss their assessments with each other and with teachers in other schools. As a result, teachers' assessment of pupils' work is accurate.

- The leadership and organisation of provision of the small number of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are effective. Identification of need is appropriate and resources are of a good standard, ensuring that pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities succeed in their learning and their personal and social development.
- The school offers a broad and balanced curriculum that engages pupils and contributes to their enjoyment of learning. Subjects other than English and mathematics are taught by subject specialists and the quality of provision offered to pupils in these subjects is predominantly of a good quality.
- The curriculum is also enriched by additional opportunities for pupils to visit places such as museums. Pupils' understanding of the wider world is also enhanced by visitors to school such as the fire service and community police. Reading, writing and mathematics are woven across the curriculum effectively, to strengthen pupils' opportunities to practise their skills.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well. As a result, the school is a calm and welcoming environment where pupils mix happily together. Through assemblies and the curriculum, pupils learn about the wider community, tolerance, democracy and the rule of law. Pupils also enjoy taking on responsibilities such as being members of the school council.
- All parents who responded to Parent View, Ofsted's online parental questionnaire, or spoke to the lead inspector, felt very positive about the school in every aspect. They all felt that their child was well looked after and happy in school. There was a great deal of praise for the hard work and commitment of staff, the quality of teaching and progress their children were making. Parents felt well informed, saying that all staff are approachable and easy to talk to if ever they have a worry or concern.
- The school has productive and ever-developing relationships with other local schools. Teachers join in some local school networks to meet and discuss teaching and learning. They also receive useful training from the local authority and other external sources. The headteacher benefits from an opportunity to work and discuss leadership issues with an executive headteacher.

Governance

- The governance of the school is good.
- The proprietor knows the school well and is meticulous in ensuring that the school keeps abreast of all independent school standard regulations and provides a high standard of education. His expertise has been used very well to ensure that it benefits the school.
- The proprietor has a good understanding of performance management procedures and, as well as supporting the headteacher in holding staff to account, ensures that the management of teachers' pay is effective.
- The proprietor is conscientious and takes part in relevant training. He has a reasonable understanding about the progress pupils are making but has identified this as an area that he would personally like to improve.
- The proprietor is diligent in his responsibilities to safeguard pupils. He is also clear about his responsibilities with regard to internet safety and has ensured that filtering measures are in place for the school's internet and online services.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Robust systems are in place, which are understood by all staff. Up-to-date and appropriate training for staff is undertaken and is regularly revisited. Safeguarding is a high priority in school, particularly the care and welfare of vulnerable pupils. Displays highlighting the Prevent duty and the issue of female genital mutilation are prominent in the school's foyer and school leaders have taken effective action to ensure that all staff are well trained and vigilant regarding these issues.
- Leaders are persistent in cases where the school is concerned for a pupil's welfare. Effective relationships with other agencies and with parents ensure that pupils are kept safe and their welfare needs are met.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The quality of teaching and learning is consistently good across the school. This has resulted in pupils making good progress.
- Staff model high expectations for pupils' learning and behaviour. All pupils rise to these expectations by working hard and behaving extremely well. Pupils enjoy their learning, so much so, that they are sometimes disappointed when lessons end.
- The relationship pupils have with teachers is characterised by warmth and high levels of respect. Pupils are patient and wait their turn, but are also eager and have a thirst for learning.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is good. Adults ask the right questions to aid pupils' thinking, draw out learning and help them move on. Teachers provide good-quality learning resources and endeavour to make lessons interesting and fun. However, in some lessons, teachers do not plan activities that are sufficiently demanding. As a result, some pupils, including the most able, are not always stretched and challenged enough in their learning.
- Teachers and leaders check on pupils' learning much more regularly than at the time of the previous inspection. Overall systems are clear, simple and effectively used by teachers. This makes an important contribution to the progress pupils make. Pupils have appropriate targets set for reading, writing and mathematics. They are able to talk about these and discuss what they need to do as a next step in their learning.
- Where pupils struggle with their learning, support is immediate, often within the same lesson. There is also an effective range of learning opportunities to help those that need to catch up.
- Teaching assistants in key stages 1 and 2 are deployed effectively. They are knowledgeable and skilled and make a good contribution to pupils' learning. However, because of the number of adults available in classes, occasionally pupils are reluctant to work independently and can often rely on adults to guide them rather than being confident in their own ability.
- For the small number of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, the support they are offered is appropriate, clearly targeted and of good quality. Additional support is planned well, resulting in these pupils making good progress in lessons.
- Teachers mark pupils' work regularly, in line with the school's policy. They make clear to pupils what they have done well and offer clear guidance to help them improve their work further. Pupils are keen to get their teacher's feedback and have time to respond to the

comments made.

- The development of reading and writing is a high priority. Reading texts are used effectively in classes to create a range of interesting and stimulating activities that help pupils to learn and practise their skills. The development of mathematical skills is also a priority in school, particularly basic number skills, which are taught thoroughly and well. As a result, pupils are confident mathematicians. However, pupils do not have sufficient opportunity to apply these skills in problem-solving activities.
- In other subjects across the curriculum, pupils benefit from subject-specialist teaching in a range of subjects, for example history and geography, science, physical education, art, information technology and Arabic. The quality of teaching in these subjects helps to ensure that pupils make good progress. Teachers ensure that every opportunity is taken to extend and practise reading, writing and mathematical skills across the curriculum and a consistency of expectation and standards is evident in pupils' books.
- Parents who responded to Parent View or spoke to the inspector at the time of the inspection overwhelmingly felt that their children were taught well and made good progress in school. They said that they were well informed about how their child was doing in school and that they received this information on a regular basis.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- The importance placed on pupils' personal development and welfare is central and very visible in school. Staff and governors are conscientious in their responsibility to ensure that the school provides a safe, nurturing environment in which pupils can flourish and succeed.
- Staff treat pupils with consideration and ensure that the school makes everyone feel welcome and valued. Staff model a strong moral code of respect, tolerance and thoughtfulness to others, to which pupils respond well. As a result, pupils are thoughtful and compassionate citizens.
- All parents spoken to by inspectors and those that responded to Parent View expressed overwhelming praise for the school and the work of the staff. All parents felt that their children were happy and well looked after. They also felt that they were receiving a well-balanced education. The curriculum is taught through the Islamic faith with a strong emphasis on the importance of making a valuable and responsible contribution as a citizen in modern Britain.
- The vast majority of pupils are confident learners and are happy to talk about their learning. Pupils told inspectors how proud they were of their school and how they felt safe and well looked after by adults. They also talked with pride about helping each other in their learning and around school.
- Pupils spoken to during the inspection were very clear about what bullying was and said that incidents were unheard of. They were confident that teachers dealt with any unkind or negative language towards pupils quickly, but said that this behaviour was rare. Pupils were unanimous in their view that they felt safe in school and pupils of all ages know how to keep themselves safe, personally and online. All parents who responded to Parent View felt confident that the school would deal appropriately with bullying, should it occur. However, the overwhelming majority of parents were not aware of any bullying towards

their child.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils conduct themselves impeccably around school. They are extremely polite, and well mannered, and take great pride in their appearance. Staff and pupils know each other very well and are friendly and supportive. As a result, school is a calm, orderly and purposeful place to learn.
- Pupils take pride in their work. As a result, the presentation of work in pupils' books is of a consistently high standard throughout the school and in all subjects. Teachers place importance on offering pupils a range of experiences celebrating aspects of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, and work related to developing British values. They weave these effortlessly into the curriculum. For example, a lesson in Arabic was also an opportunity to celebrate and reinforce respect for the differences in languages that people speak.
- There is a productive atmosphere in the classrooms. Pupils are attentive and eager to participate in lessons. They see learning as being very important to them, while visibly enjoying their lessons and activities. Pupils have an excellent attitude to learning, typified by pupils eagerly imploring their teacher, during the inspection, to let them finish their work at the end of a lesson.
- Pupils are fully aware of how to behave and of the consequences of poor behaviour. However, incidents of inappropriate behaviour are very rare, dealt with quickly by teachers, and responded to by pupils appropriately. Pupils are responsive and highly respectful to adults and each other.
- Pupils' enjoyment of school is demonstrated by their high level of attendance, currently running at above that of other pupils nationally. The systems for monitoring absence are effective. Good attendance is rewarded and has a high profile in school. There are no pupils who are persistently absent and absence during term time is minimal.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils' achievement throughout the school is good. Senior leaders have high expectations for all pupils to do well. There is an emphasis on offering good-quality teaching in all subjects and, as a result, the vast majority of pupils make good progress.
- Many pupils start school with skills, knowledge and understanding below those typical for children of this age. The vast majority of pupils speak English as an additional language.
- Achievement is good at the end of key stage 1, with a large proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The proportion of pupils who reach the expected standard in the national screening check for phonics at the end of Year 1 is well above average, with the vast majority of pupils meeting the standard in 2016.
- The importance of the teaching of phonics is prominent in school. It is consistent and strongly linked to the good development of reading skills. As a result, pupils enjoy reading in school and talk enthusiastically about books. Pupils who struggle with reading have support to practise their skills and are able to talk about the progress they make.
- The most-able pupils are identified and checked to ensure that they make good progress through school. At the end of key stage 1, the majority of these pupils achieve well, with a good proportion achieving higher than the expected standards.

- Although the school does not receive pupil premium funding, it does identify disadvantaged pupils. These pupils make good progress in key stages 1 and 2. The most-able disadvantaged pupils also achieve well. This group of pupils do well in school because teachers effectively monitor their progress and ensure that they are supported well in class.
- There is a very small number of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and they make good progress from their starting points. The support offered by teachers and teaching assistants is effective and ensures that pupils succeed in their learning.

Early years provision

Good

- The early years was once a separately registered provision. In 2015, it was brought together with the Al-Huda Primary School. It has retained a number of strengths.
- The school caters for two- and three-year-olds as well Reception-age children. Many start school with skills and knowledge below those that are typical for their age and make good progress. The vast majority speak English as an additional language.
- Children benefit from a highly nurturing and stimulating indoor environment in which to learn. This is coupled with high expectations by adults to make sure that children thrive and enjoy a very positive start to school life.
- Children's achievement is good and they are well prepared and confident to start in key stage 1.
- The leadership of the early years is good. There is a clear view about the strengths and weaknesses of the provision. Where actions have been taken to tackle issues, these have been successful. A focus on the importance of good-quality training and development of staff has ensured that all adults are equally well skilled and are confident to get the best learning from children.
- Safeguarding is effective and welfare requirements are compliant. Risk assessments are thorough and the classrooms are a safe environment for children. Children's behaviour is good and adults are quick to provide support to children to help them understand the importance of being polite and treating one another with respect. This is often done through linking teachings within the Islamic faith to the good conduct and behaviour expected.
- Children are motivated to learn and play together well, although they are occasionally less inclined to work independently of an adult.
- Indoor provision is very well organised to create a rich and varied learning environment for all children within the classrooms. Activities are fun, capture the children's imagination and allow them to practise their skills. Children have plenty of opportunity to explore with a range of equipment that encourages them to build, create and try out their ideas.
- Adults capitalise on any chance to develop learning. For example, children drew plans for building a car and were then provided with all the junk materials they needed to create it. The adult took this cue to explore their cars with the children, and included chances to reinforce colour recognition, talk about 'bigger than' and 'smaller than' and to model speaking in sentences.
- Children are regularly offered outdoor provision and a range of activities is available to them. However, this space is too limited and the area is underdeveloped. As a result, it does not maximise the opportunities that children have to learn in an outdoor

environment.

- Additional funding is used well to provide resources and support for disadvantaged children. Leaders have a good understanding of the impact this has on children's learning. Disadvantaged children, including the most able, make similarly good progress to that made by other children and achieve well.
- The quality of teaching is good. Although it is early in the term, routines are already being established well. The gentle manner and sensitive approach of adults are very conducive to helping children settle and are particularly effective for the very young children.
- Adults demonstrate good subject knowledge and a thorough knowledge of child development. The importance placed on reading, writing and mathematical skills is very evident, with regular chances for children to write, practise their letters and sounds and use number. The development of language and speaking is a high priority. Adults engage with children very well and are skilled at asking questions to draw out children's understanding and encourage them to talk. For example, while children built a house, an adult asked them about numbers on their own front doors and then extended this to where else in their house they could find numbers.
- Teachers' assessment of children's learning is of an extremely high quality. The online assessments carried out are meticulous and demonstrate a passion for ensuring that adults know as much as possible about the progress of children. It also ensures that adults effectively plan a curriculum that is both interesting and relevant. Parents make a regular contribution to these assessments and praise the school for the level of information they are given about their child and the advice on how best to support them in their next steps of learning.
- The strong emphasis on creating a caring and nurturing environment is evident from the very positive relationships adults have with children, and children have with each other. Leaders believe that high-quality parental involvement is crucial to the good development of children and their positive attitude towards future education. Adults have excellent relationships with parents; this is a strength. Parents describe the early years as 'wonderful', 'welcoming' and 'very approachable'. Parents are full of praise for how well their children have settled into school and the progress they have made.

School details

Unique reference number	139017
DfE registration number	350/6002
Inspection number	10020751

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	Other independent school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	2–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	61
Number of part-time pupils	62
Proprietor	Al-Huda Academy
Chair	Hanif Mangera
Headteacher	Nabeelah Pandor
Annual fees (day pupils)	£800 to £950
Telephone number	01204 841377
Website	www.alhudaprimary.co.uk
Email address	headteacher@alhudaprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	19–21 November 2013

Information about this school

- Al Huda is an independent Muslim day school for boys and girls aged from two to 11 years who come from different Asian heritages but all of whom have an Islamic background.
- The school opened in 2013 and was registered by the Department for Education for up to 20 pupils. In January 2015, it was granted a material change to extend provision to key stage 2, with a total approved maximum capacity of 70 pupils. The school does not presently have Year 6 pupils.

- In December 2015, the separately registered nursery unit was granted 'exemption from early years registration' by Ofsted. This has resulted in the early years becoming part of the primary school. The school now also caters for two- and three-year-olds.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is well below the national average.
- The school is owned and operated by a charitable trust. All staff on the site are employed by the trust. Al-Huda Trust sets out to educate Muslim pupils according to the Islamic faith.
- The school also employs an executive headteacher who offers support and challenge to the headteacher and senior leaders.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching in all classes. She also observed pupils' behaviour in classrooms and assessed the school's promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. She observed pupils in the playground and during lunchtimes.
- The inspector looked at the work in pupils' books and in the learning journals of children in the early years. She also listened to a number of pupils read.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, deputy headteachers, special educational needs coordinator, early years leader and curriculum leaders.
- The inspector met with the chair of the governing body, who is also the proprietor, and the executive headteacher.
- A group of pupils discussed their opinions about the school and their learning with the inspector. She also spoke informally with pupils around the school.
- The inspector took account of nine responses to a questionnaire completed by staff.
- The inspector considered the 11 responses from the online Ofsted questionnaire, Parent View. She also talked briefly with parents before school and in a short meeting.
- School policies and other documents were examined to check compliance with the independent school standards, and to provide other inspection evidence, including: minutes from meetings of the governing body; information on pupils' attainment and progress; the school's evaluation of its own performance; and its development plan. Behaviour and attendance records and information relating to safeguarding were also scrutinised.

Inspection team

Sue Eastwood, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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