

Ebrahim Academy

77 Greenfield Road, London E1 1EJ

Inspection dates

1–3 February 2017

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Inadequate

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Outcomes for pupils are inconsistent across year groups and subjects. Though outcomes are improving, particularly in English and science, some pupils still do not achieve their full potential.
- Teaching does not consistently challenge the most able pupils, particularly in mathematics.
- Leaders have not sharply used all their evaluations of teaching, learning and assessment in their plans for improvement.
- Leaders and governors have not ensured that teaching is consistently strong enough to secure good progress for all pupils.
- Pupils' handwriting and presentation vary significantly in their quality. Leaders have not ensured that pupils consistently show pride in their learning across all subject areas.
- The newly formed senior leadership team are in the early stages of supporting the headteacher. Consequently, it is too soon to see the impact of their work.
- The proprietor has not ensured that all the independent school standards are met.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils have a comprehensive understanding of different careers that they can choose in later life. They understand their options for their next stages of education, training and employment.
- The school engages widely with the local community and a range of faiths. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Pupils know how to stay safe. Staff are vigilant in their work to promote pupils' safety. They have a strong understanding of local and regional risks to their pupils' well-being.
- Pupils enjoy reading a range of fiction and reference books. They have mature, well-developed preferences for their choice of reading material.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school must take action to meet the requirements of the schedule to The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and associated requirements. The details are listed in the full report.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of pupils' outcomes and the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that:
 - pupils make consistently good progress across subjects, especially in mathematics, science and humanities
 - teachers expect pupils, particularly the most able in mathematics, to justify and explain their thinking
 - pupils have sufficient opportunities to write at length in subjects beyond English
 - pupils' art work and experimentation is routinely captured to show skill development and progress over time.
- Improve pupils' behaviour, by:
 - ensuring that pupils consistently show care in their learning across subjects, but particularly in mathematics and science
 - increasing pupils' attendance over time.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management, by:
 - ensuring that the senior leadership team supports the headteacher in improving teaching, learning and assessment across the school
 - focusing more explicitly on pupils' learning while conducting checks on teaching, learning and assessment
 - more frequently updating the school's evaluations of its effectiveness in light of assessing pupils
 - more frequently updating the school's development planning as a result of this evidence to increase the pace of improvement in pupils' learning outcomes
 - ensuring that the school continues to meet all aspects of the independent school standards.

The school must meet the following independent school standards

- The proprietor must enable pupils to acquire new knowledge and make good progress according to their ability so that they increase their understanding and develop their skills in the subjects taught (paragraph 3, 3(a)).
- The proprietor ensures 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 (paragraph 34(1), 34(1)(a))
 - fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently (paragraph 34(1), 34(1)(b)).

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Leaders have not been effective in ensuring that the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is consistently good. As a result, pupils make different rates of progress across year groups and subjects. These differences are reducing over time, but are still significant, particularly in mathematics from Year 9 to Year 11.
- Checks on the quality of learning, teaching and assessment have not focused sharply enough on the impact of teaching on pupils' learning. Consequently, though teaching, learning and assessment have improved, they are still too variable across subjects and year groups.
- Leaders have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They plan for improvement. However, they do not update their evaluations and development plan frequently enough to make the best use of their ongoing work. Consequently, the strongest improvements have been in safeguarding, careers and engaging with the wider community around Tower Hamlets and London. Outcomes from teachers' assessments of pupils' work do not feed into leaders' development planning quickly or frequently enough.
- The headteacher has achieved much since his appointment after the previous inspection. There is now a clear assessment system that allows staff to check on pupils' learning. Leaders are able to use a 'flightpath' to check if pupils are on track to achieve their target grades in GCSE examinations. The headteacher's senior leaders began their work six months ago and are deepening the quality of checks on the school's work. Their work is still in its early stages and it is therefore too soon to see the impact of their work on pupils' learning.
- Staff are inducted well to the school's policies and expectations, including their responsibilities for safeguarding, preventing extremism, and teaching. Regular feedback is provided to ensure that staff have a clear understanding of their performance and targets for improvement. Consequently, staff are highly supportive of leaders and morale is high.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. It is enriched by a wide range of trips, visitors and workshops. Pupils have a strong understanding of democracy and how they can participate in elections and stand for Parliament as an adult. This was reinforced by a recent visit from the mayor of Tower Hamlets, which helped pupils develop a greater understanding of local government. Pupils in Years 9, 10 and 11 have a strong understanding of their career options. They understand routes into apprenticeships and their options for further and higher education. During the inspection, pupils talked maturely and ambitiously about their planned routes through further education, training and employment.
- Pupils have a clear understanding of how their own beliefs and culture may differ from other people in London and beyond. They understand and show respect for other people's beliefs, culture and protected characteristics. For example, pupils understand the key beliefs of a range of world religions, such as Christianity, Judaism, Sikhism and Buddhism. Visits from leaders of other faith groups have supported pupils' understanding of and respect for people from other backgrounds. Participation in sporting competitions has helped ensure that pupils meet people from different parts of London, different cultures and backgrounds. Pupils also have a well-developed understanding of protected

characteristics and talk about, with maturity, their understanding of disability, sexuality and gender. For example, one pupil explained: 'We all have the same rights in Britain. If we go for an interview, the best person will be appointed. That is equality. It doesn't matter about your religion, sexuality, gender or whether you are pregnant. It is about what skills you have. This protects us all from discrimination.'

- Leaders have been working with teachers to ensure that the curriculum is more relevant to the world of work. For example, the science curriculum is now making greater use of data logging. The teacher is working with a multinational computer company and a charity to develop pupils' understanding of water pollution. Pupils are using data logging equipment and monitoring water pollution within the Olympic Park in Stratford. The use of computers and a range of monitoring equipment is engaging pupils in considering how their learning can prepare them for the world of work. This unit of work is an example of the school's effective promotion of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils maturely reflected on how humans were impacting on the planet and how technology and science could help reverse pollution.

Governance

- Governance has improved significantly since the previous inspection. After the previous inspection, the proprietor secured a range of new governors who work in maintained schools. This has helped bring a range of educational expertise to the governing body.
- Governors have placed a high importance on ensuring that pupils have high-quality careers guidance and information. They have regularly checked that the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is improving and have provided regular challenge on the progress of pupils over time. However, their work has not ensured that teaching, learning and achievement are good across all subjects and year groups.
- Governors' regular visits to the school and conversations with pupils and staff have supplemented information provided by leaders. Their regular challenge of leaders has directly ensured that the new assessment system is providing leaders with an accurate and sharp understanding of pupils' ongoing progress across subjects.
- Significant funding has improved the premises and accommodation to a high standard. Classrooms, toilet and washing facilities are now of a high standard and provide pupils with a safe and clean environment in which to learn.
- Governors and the proprietor fulfil their statutory responsibilities well. For example, they ensure that safeguarding is promoting pupils' safety. However, they accept that the school needs to update more frequently the school's development planning in light of pupils' outcomes. Furthermore, they need to track more explicitly the school ongoing compliance with the independent school standards.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Staff have a deep understanding of the school's safeguarding policy. Training throughout the academic year has ensured that they understand the updated expectations of the 2016 statutory guidance for safeguarding from the Secretary of State. Leaders ensure that the school's internet filtering systems block inappropriate content. They review

blocked websites to ensure that they understand what pupils and staff have been aiming to access. If concerns arise from the process, leaders understand how to make appropriate referrals to relevant authorities.

- Staff work closely with pupils, parents and other relevant professionals to share information about pupils. For example, leaders have ensured that when pupils leave the school they know where they will next be educated. The relevant local authority is notified when concerns arise, helping to ensure that pupils do not go missing from education.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Leaders have not ensured that the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good across all subjects or year groups.
- Teachers do not expect pupils, outside their work in English, to write or explain their thinking at length. This limits the ability of pupils to develop their ideas. In mathematics, pupils have very few opportunities to explain the thinking behind their calculations. As a result, this important skill is underdeveloped and impacts on their ability to consider the efficiency of their mathematical methods. This limits the progress of the most able mathematicians in particular.
- Leaders do not ensure a progressive capturing of pupils' art work or skill development over time. Consequently, staff cannot be sure how well their pupils' artistic skills are progressing over time. Individual pieces of displayed art work and those available around school demonstrate that pupils' sketching, painting and art skills are typical of those expected for their age.
- Scrutiny of pupils' work shows that pupils do not consistently show high levels of care when completing their work. Where teachers have the highest expectations of behaviour and conduct, pupils respond well to their expectations. In these classes pupils present their work with care and attention; their handwriting is neat and well formed. However, too many of pupils' books show careless mistakes and poor presentation that goes unchallenged by staff, particularly in mathematics and science.
- Art teaching is playing an important part in promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, pupils recently developed a greater appreciation of motherhood, pregnancy, and disability through considering and responding to Marc Quinn's 2015 sculpture of Alison Lapper in Trafalgar Square.
- Teachers demonstrate sound subject knowledge. Their questioning of pupils in class extends pupils' learning. Teachers are developing their use of pupils' prior knowledge in order to ensure that planned learning secures further progress in learning.
- The teaching of reading is effective and is ensuring that pupils develop mature and well-developed opinions about a range of genres and authors. The school has helped to ensure that pupils read regularly, both fiction and non-fiction texts. The teaching of English further promotes this love of reading, with pupils able to discuss their views about recent texts they have studied. Pupils are increasingly using the ideas they explore in reading to develop their own creative writing.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils have a clear understanding of democracy, the rule of law, British institutions and different groups within society. They have a clear understanding of the electoral process. For example, pupils understand how to become a candidate in parliamentary or local council elections. Pupils are encouraged to express their opinions and beliefs, for example through actively engaging with their elected pupil council.
- The school's improved personal, social, health and economic education curriculum has helped pupils develop a clear understanding of how to be a good citizen. Pupils are clear that demonstrating tolerance is a key value of British citizenship. They are able to explain and exemplify how they model this value in their everyday life.
- Staff demonstrate a good awareness of their role in keeping pupils safe from harm. Staff and pupils have a firm understanding of how and when to raise concerns internally in school. Whistleblowing procedures are clear and understood by both pupils and staff. Governors, leaders and staff have a robust understanding of the duties that 'Prevent' legislation places upon them. They have clear processes and systems to engage with authorities when concerns arise. A clear two-way process of information sharing has been built with the local authority since the previous full inspection. Leaders understand local risks to their pupils and have clear plans in place to reduce them.
- Pupils understand how to stay safe in and beyond the school, including from different forms of bullying.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Some pupils do not show consistent care and attention in their learning across all subjects. This is particularly evident in pupils' recording of their work. This limits their ability to make good progress over time.
- Pupils' attendance and punctuality have improved over the last three years. However, they are still below average for secondary pupils nationally and this impacts negatively on their ability to make good progress.
- Pupils are polite and courteous as they walk round school and during social times. They say the school is like a family where pupils know each other well, regardless of their year group. Bullying is rare, but dealt with well when it occasionally occurs. Parents agreed with this view in their online survey, Parent View.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Outcomes for pupils require improvement because the progress made by pupils is inconsistent across subject and year groups. While the progress of pupils is consistently good in reading, it varies in other subjects.
- Pupils in Years 9 to 11, who have suffered from historical underachievement, make

variable progress. Some pupils are making rapid progress and catching up with their target key stage 4 grades at GCSE, others are making slower progress and are at risk of underachieving. Leaders accept that these pupils need to make even better progress to achieve their full potential.

- The most able pupils are increasingly making better progress across the school. However, this is still too variable. Teachers do not expect pupils to fully explain, justify or write their views at length. This limits the ability of pupils to develop higher order skills and attain as highly as they could by the end of key stage 4. Leaders were already aware of this and it forms part of the school development plan for this year.
- Since the last inspection, attainment and progress have improved in the school. This is evident through the better progress that pupils are making in English, mathematics and science in Years 7 and 8. However, attainment is still lower than in secondary schools nationally and leaders were aware that more pupils needed to attain higher A* to C grades in their GCSE examinations.
- The headteacher and recently appointed senior leaders have introduced a rigorous tracking of pupils' learning and achievements. Their use of a 'flightpath' to track whether pupils are on track from their personal starting point in Year 7 has enabled more challenging conversations with staff and pupils. This has directly led to the improvements seen in Years 7 and 8 and progress speeding up throughout the school.
- Pupils are making good progress in their reading and personal, social, health and economic education. This is due to consistently good teaching, learning and assessment which ensure that pupils, regardless of their ability, achieve well.
- Teachers conduct assessments when pupils arrive in Year 7. These show that pupils typically arrive with skills and knowledge at or below those typical for their age in English and mathematics. Analysis of pupils' work suggests that this is broadly accurate and that pupils in Years 7 and 8 are currently making good progress.

School details

Unique reference number	136129
DfE registration number	211/6398
Inspection number	10026654

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	11–16
Gender of pupils	Boys
Number of pupils on the school roll	49
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Mohammad Uddin
Chair	Mohammed Bilal Abdulla
Headteacher	Hammad Ahmed
Annual fees (day pupils)	£4,500
Telephone number	020 73753584
Website	www.ebrahimacademy.co.uk
Email address	hammad.ahmed@ebrahimacademy.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	15–17 October 2014

Information about this school

- Ebrahim Academy is an independent secondary day school for boys.
- The school provides education for boys between the ages of 11 and 16.
- Most pupils are of Bangladeshi and Somali backgrounds, though a small number of pupils are from other ethnic backgrounds.
- There are no pupils with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan. No pupils are at an early stage of learning English.
- The school opened in September 2010. It received a full inspection in October 2014,

when the overall effectiveness of the school was judged to be inadequate.

- The school does not provide off-site training or alternative provision for pupils.
- The school aims to provide a stimulating learning environment and is committed to excellence so that every pupil has the opportunity to become a positive role model in society.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed learning in a range of subjects and year groups throughout the school. Observations took place in both religious and secular learning time. Pupils' workbooks were scrutinised during visits to classrooms to review their progress over time. The inspector observed pupils during break and lunchtimes and at lesson changeover times. A tour of the school and premises was undertaken, as well as a review of the school's response to fire risk assessments and health and safety audits.
- Documentation relating to the school's compliance with the independent school standards was reviewed. A range of policies were scrutinised and the school practice, in particular that related to behaviour, bullying, safeguarding, welfare, and health and safety, was considered.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, senior teachers, the proprietor, governors and teachers, including those newly appointed this academic year.
- The inspector spoke to pupils informally during visits to classrooms. A meeting was held with a large number of pupils to discuss the school's work. Meetings focused on: reading; spiritual, moral, social and cultural development; the curriculum; careers; British values, democracy and safeguarding.
- The inspection considered the views of 11 parents who completed Ofsted's online survey, Parent View. The inspector met with one parent who requested a meeting during the inspection. The views shared during this meeting were taken into account.

Inspection team

David Storrie, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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