

Birmingham Muslim School

Bisley Works, Golden Hillock Road, Small Heath, Birmingham, West Midlands B11 2PZ

Inspection Dates

27 January 2017

Overall outcome

The school does not meet all of the independent school standards that were checked during this inspection

Main inspection findings

Part 1. Quality of education provided

Paragraph 2(1), 2(1)(a), 2(1)(b), 2(1)(b)(i), 2(1)(b)(ii).

- Inspectors were asked to inspect the school's curriculum, and the quality of teaching, to ascertain whether they equip pupils for the next stages of their education and prepare them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life in Britain.
- The school's curriculum is not sufficiently well adapted for some pupils. Teachers use published schemes of work which are not modified to cater for pupils' aptitudes or needs, including the most able pupils and the increasing number of pupils in the school for whom English is an additional language.
- As a result, these standards are not met.

Paragraph 2(2), 2(2)(a), 2(2)(b).

- The curriculum enables pupils to acquire secure reading, writing and numeracy skills. Pupils experience all the required areas of learning: linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic and creative education.
- These standards are met.

Paragraph 2(2)(d), 2(2)(d)(ii), 2(2)(i).

- Some aspects of the curriculum are superficial and pupils' understanding is limited as a result. For example, while the scheme of work for personal, social and health education promotes respect for disability and religion, it does not help pupils develop awareness of, or respect for, all the protected characteristics set out in Chapter 1 of Part 2 of the Equality Act 2010.
- Consequently, pupils are not fully prepared for the experiences of life in British society.
- As a result, these standards are not met.

Paragraph 3, 3(a), 3(b), 3(d).

- Teachers base their planning on a curriculum that is not sufficiently well adapted to

meet the needs of some pupils.

- Teachers work hard to plan interesting lessons, which pupils enjoy. Classrooms are inviting and contain helpful resources that pupils use to help them in their learning.
- Teachers collect information about how well pupils have done in lessons and tests. However, teachers do not use this information well enough to help them plan lessons that will give support to pupils who find learning more difficult or to challenge the most able pupils sufficiently. For example, during the inspection, inspectors listened to several capable readers; the graded books they were reading were noticeably too easy for some and so these pupils were not making as much progress in reading as they could.
- Teaching does not enable all pupils to make good progress.
- Therefore, these standards are not met.

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

Paragraph 5, 5(a), 5(b), 5(b)(i), 5(b)(ii), 5(b)(iii), 5(b)(vi).

- Inspectors were asked to evaluate whether the school meets all parts of the standard for promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Pupils learn about rules, laws, democracy and rights. They can name some high-profile political figures, but have limited understanding about the role of Parliament.
- Pupils know that it is important to treat people who are disabled with respect. They learn about other religions. However, they are not taught enough about different backgrounds and ways of life to fully prepare them to encounter the diversity of modern British society. For example, a group of older pupils told inspectors a family is always made up of a mother, a father and children. When shown a picture of a family without a mother, one pupil said, 'The mother is at home looking after the babies.'
- The school does not encourage pupils to understand and develop respect for people with some of the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Equality Act.
- Therefore, these standards are not met.

Paragraph 5, 5(d), 5(d)(ii), 5(d)(iii).

- Staff lack vigilance in being alert to the risks of pupils being radicalised. Consequently, there is the potential for pupils to be exposed to extremist views through contact with older pupils or adults out of school, such as when on school trips.
- As a result, the school is not taking all reasonable steps to protect pupils from exposure to partisan political views.
- Therefore, these standards are not met.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraph 7, 7(a), 7(b).

- Inspectors were asked to look specifically at this paragraph as concerns had been raised that pupils may be at risk of radicalisation.
- The weak culture of safeguarding is characterised by the lack of recording or reporting when pupils may be at risk. In the school's 16-year history, no concerns about welfare or safeguarding have ever been logged. This is inconceivable, given that the designated lead for safeguarding has knowledge of a specific risk to a number of pupils in the school.
- Safeguarding policies make reference to statutory guidance. However, they are not implemented as written. The school website displays an out-of-date version of the school's safeguarding policy. Staff have an inconsistent understanding of who to speak to if they have concerns. They show little awareness of the signs of possible abuse, neglect or radicalisation.
- During the inspection, at least two adults were seen unaccompanied in the school. Their details are not entered on the single central register of staff, governors and volunteers.
- While pupils appear to be happy at the school, their safety is not assured, and they are not protected from the risk of radicalisation.
- Consequently, the school does not meet the standards for safeguarding.

Paragraph 15

- As part of inspectors' checks on safeguarding, the admission and attendance registers were examined. These are not maintained in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006. This means that pupils are at risk of going missing from education and, as a result, are vulnerable to trafficking, exploitation and abuse.
- This means that the school does not meet this standard.

Part 4. Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

Paragraph 20(6), 20(6)(a)(i), 20(6)(a)(ii), 20(6)(b), 20(6)(b)(i), 20(6)(b)(ii), 20(6)(b)(iii), 20(6)(c), 21(6), 21(7), 21(7)(a), 21(7)(b).

- While not specifically asked to report on standards in this part, inspectors made checks on the suitability of staff as part of their evaluation of safeguarding arrangements.
- While checks on employed staff are thorough, the school is unable to demonstrate similar diligence has been exercised with regard to the proprietor. Consequently, those responsible for conducting the school have not been adequately vetted.
- The headteacher reports that 'The Albayan Educational Foundation' (a registered charity – 'The charity', also a registered limited company) is the proprietorial body of the school. This is also shown on the school's website. However, the charity is not

officially registered as the proprietor of the school.

- The headteacher is a trustee of the charity. However, she is not the person named as proprietor on records held by the registration authority. The name recorded in the registration authority's database is that of the headteacher's husband. He is not a trustee of the charity and told inspectors that he has nothing to do with the school. Therefore, the headteacher, as trustee of what is claimed to be the proprietorial body of the school, has not been subject to the additional checks made on proprietors by the Department for Education (DfE). These checks are over and above the standard checks made on all staff. The requirement for these checks to be made has been introduced since the school was established.
- The charity has three registered trustees: the headteacher and two others. The headteacher told inspectors that the other trustees are not proprietors and have no connection with the school. She also stated that she is not a proprietor, but that she is the director of the charity which is, itself, the proprietor.
- This lack of clarity is highly misleading to parents, who are unlikely to know who to hold accountable for the safety of their children and the quality of education provided.
- These standards are not met.

Part 6. Provision of information

Paragraph 32(1), 32(1)(a), 32(1)(b), 32(1)(c), 32(2)(a), 32(2)(b), 32(2)(b)(i), 32(2)(b)(ii), 32(2)(c), 32(3), 32(3)(b), 32(3)(c), 32(3)(d).

- Although inspectors were not asked to inspect these standards, the lead inspector referred to the information on the school's website to assist the preparation of the inspection.
- Since the school has chosen to have a website, there is a requirement for specific information to be included.
- Not all the required information is published on the website. The missing details are: information about how the school meets the needs of pupils supported by an education, health and care plan (EHC plan) or pupils who speak English as an additional language; particulars of the school's policy to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness; and particulars of how the school promotes good behaviour, prevents bullying, cares for pupils who are unwell or in need of short-term medical attention and how it ensures pupils' health and safety.
- Some information is very difficult to locate, or is misleading. Contact details for the school are not easy to find.
- At the time of the inspection, it was not made clear on the website that the name assigned to the headteacher was the Muslim name used by the trustee of The Albayan Educational Foundation. This has subsequently been clarified. Similarly, the website did not contain the name of the chair of the governing body. This is now shown.
- The omission in publication of required information means these standards are not met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraph 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b), 34(1)(c).

- The quality of leadership was a key focus in the DfE's commission for the inspection. In particular, the DfE asked inspectors to examine governance arrangements.
- Governance of the school is ineffective at holding leaders to account. At the time of the previous inspection in June 2016, the inspector recommended taking urgent action to improve governance. A new governing body was set up in response. However, the board is made up of the headteacher, the school administrator and a teacher. Inevitably, given their roles within the school, this group is not objective and does not bring a sufficiently broad outlook to provide close enough scrutiny of leaders' actions to ensure that pupils are safe or that they receive a good quality of education. An additional person has been approached with a view to being appointed to the board. Nevertheless, governance is currently weak and pupils are at risk as a result.
- The relationship between governors, charity trustees, the headteacher and the directors of the company called 'The Albayan Educational Foundation Ltd' is very opaque. It is not clear who the proprietor is and, thus, who is accountable for the work of the school.
- Leaders have not ensured that all the independent school standards are met, nor do they demonstrate the knowledge and skills to ensure that this happens. Through their unwillingness to take action when risks are known about, leaders have failed to promote the welfare of pupils.
- The standards for the quality of leadership and management are not met.

Statutory requirements of the early years foundation stage

- School-wide weaknesses in safeguarding mean that paragraphs 3.2 and 3.4 of the statutory requirements of the early years foundation stage (EYFS) are not met.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school does not meet the requirements of the schedule to The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements that were checked during this inspection. Not all of the standards and associated requirements were checked during this inspection.

The school does not meet the following independent school standards

- The proprietor must ensure that the curriculum is sufficiently adapted to meet the aptitudes and needs of pupils so that all can make good progress (Paragraph 2(1), 2(1)(a), 2(1)(b), 2(1)(b)(i), 2(1)(b)(ii)).
- The proprietor must ensure that the curriculum encourages respect for all the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Act (Paragraph 2(1), 2(1)(a), 2(1)(b), 2(2), 2(2)(d), 2(2)(d)(ii), 2(2)(i)).
- The proprietor must ensure that the teaching at the school:
 - enables 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))
 - shows a good understanding of the aptitudes, needs and prior attainments of the pupils, and ensures that these are taken into account in the planning of lessons (Paragraph 3, 3(d)).
- The proprietor must ensure that pupils develop awareness of and respect for all of the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Act (Paragraph 5, 5(b), 5(b)(vi)).
- The proprietor must ensure that the school complies with the standard regarding the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils, by taking such steps as are reasonably practicable to ensure that where political issues are brought to the attention of pupils while they are taking part in extra-curricular activities which are provided or organised by or on behalf of the school (Paragraph 5, 5(d), 5(d)(ii)), or in the promotion of the school, including through the distribution of promotional material, of extra-curricular activities taking place at the school or elsewhere, (Paragraph 5, 5(d), 5(d)(iii)) that they are offered a balanced presentation of opposing views.
- The proprietor must ensure that arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school, and such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State (Paragraph 7, 7(a), 7(b)).
- The proprietor must ensure that admission and attendance registers are maintained in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (Paragraph 15).
- All persons who have proprietorial responsibility for the school should be identified to the registration authority and subject to all necessary checks. Checks on these persons must be recorded in the school's single register of staff, governors and volunteers (Paragraph 20(6), 20(6)(a)(i), 20(6)(a)(ii), 20(6)(b), 20(6)(b)(i), 20(6)(b)(ii), 20(6)(b)(iii), 20(6)(c), 21(7), 21(7)(a), 21(7)(b)).

- As a school website exists, the proprietor must ensure that all required information is published on it, including:
 - particulars of the arrangements for meeting the standard contained in paragraph 7 (Paragraph 32(1), 32(1)(a), 32(1)(c))
 - accurate information about the persons/organisations with proprietorial responsibility for the school (Paragraph 32(1), 32(1)(a), 32(2), 32(2)(b), 32(2)(b)(i), 32(2)(b)(ii))
 - particulars of educational and welfare provision for pupils with EHC plans and pupils for whom English is an additional language (Paragraph 32(1), 32(1)(b), 32(3), 32(3)(b))
 - particulars of the policy referred to in paragraph 2, that is for the promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (Paragraph 32(1), 32(1)(b), 32(3), 32(3)(c))
 - particulars of arrangements for meeting the standards contained in paragraphs 9, 10, 11 and 13 (Paragraph 32(1), 32(1)(b), 32(3), 32(3)(d)).
- 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 (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))
 - actively promote the well-being of pupils (Paragraph 34(1), 34(1)(c)).
- The proprietor must ensure that paragraphs 3.2 and 3.4 of the statutory requirements for the EYFS are met.

School Details

Unique reference number	133521
DfE registration number	330/6102
Inspection number	10030962

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	Primary
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	95
Proprietor	Unclear whether it is Ghunia Abdrabba, The Albayan Educational Foundation or Janet Laws (as trustee of the Foundation)
Chair	Mrs Amal Zeiada
Headteacher	Ms A Abdrabba (also known as Janet Laws)
Annual fees (day pupils)	£1980
Telephone number	0121 766 8129
Website	www.birminghammuslimschool.org
Email address	info@birminghammuslimschool.org
Date of previous standard inspection	7–9 June 2016

Information about this school

- Birmingham Muslim School is an independent selective Islamic day school for girls and boys aged four to 11 years old. It was opened in 2001.
- The named proprietor is Ghunia Abdrabba, the headteacher's husband. The registration authority has not been informed of any change to this; he is still the named proprietor on the DfE's database of schools. However, the school website shows the proprietor to be The Albayan Education Foundation.
- Inspectors were aware during this inspection that serious allegations of a child protection nature were being investigated by the appropriate authorities. While Ofsted

does not have the power to investigate allegations of this kind, actions taken by the school in response to the allegation were considered alongside the other evidence available at the time of the inspections to inform inspector judgements.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was commissioned by the DfE as a result of concerns about the quality of education; the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development; pupils' safety and welfare; and the quality of leadership and management in the school.
- The DfE requested inspectors focus particularly on governance arrangements and the extent to which pupils are safeguarded from the risks of radicalisation.
- The inspection was conducted with no notice.
- Inspectors met with senior staff, including the headteacher and the chair of the governing body. Inspectors also spoke with the headteacher's husband and another adult visitor to the school.
- Inspectors visited lessons, spoke with pupils and staff in classrooms, examined a selection of pupils' exercise books, heard some pupils read and scrutinised a range of documents related to the quality of education and arrangements for safeguarding.

Inspection team

Sandy Hayes, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Geraint Evans	Her Majesty's Inspector
Peter Humphries	Her Majesty's Inspector
Angela Westington	Senior Her Majesty's Inspector

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