

Mehria School

23 Westbourne Road, Luton, Bedfordshire LU4 8JD

Inspection Dates

15 May 2017

Overall outcome

The school meets all of the independent school standards that were checked during this inspection

Main inspection findings

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

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

- The previous progress monitoring inspection found that leaders and governors lacked understanding of the latest Secretary of State's statutory guidance 'Keeping children safe in education' for schools and colleges that came into effect in September 2016. The designated lead professional for safeguarding was not, as required, a member of the senior leadership team and had not been trained to the required level in safeguarding to fulfil the role. Staff lacked knowledge of the latest statutory guidance. Not all of the employment checks on staff had been carried out or recorded as required. Leaders had been too slow in creating a safe culture in the school.
- The school's action plan, dated 23 February 2017, stated that the headteacher and deputy headteacher would attend training and that they would take on the role of the designated safeguarding leads. The plan also stated that the safeguarding policy would be updated and that the school would register with Luton Borough Council to receive notification of any further changes to statutory guidance. Governors would also develop their understanding and role in monitoring the work of leaders. In the most recent revised action plan, dated 18 April 2017, leaders identified how they would monitor the effectiveness of the school's safeguarding arrangements.
- Leaders' and governors' action to meet the previously unmet standard has been effective. The most senior leaders are now the two designated safeguarding leads. They understand their responsibilities to actively promote the well-being of pupils. They have received relevant training and started to work with officers from Luton Borough Council. Systems are in place to monitor and update the safeguarding policy published on the school's website. All staff have signed a document to say that they have received and read the latest guidance.
- Links with Luton Borough Council ensure that leaders receive updates to inform them of statutory changes. The council has conducted a safeguarding audit and clarified how to report children missing education. A package of further safeguarding training, bespoke to the school, is planned, although a date for this has not yet been set.
- The school gives high priority to safeguarding matters. Staff are kept updated through frequent meetings. They understand that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Scrutiny of incident files show that staff record and refer any concerns promptly to the

designated safeguarding lead. Staff understand that they must be vigilant. The inspector spoke to a large group of pupils. They feel safe in school and understand how to keep safe.

- The safeguarding policy is available on the school's website. It is comprehensive, with useful flowcharts, displayed in classrooms, to ensure that staff are clear about how to make referrals and to whom. The policy was revised further during this inspection to indicate links with other relevant policies, such as the anti-bullying policy, and to highlight essential telephone contact numbers, including that of the multi-agency safeguarding hub.
- Leaders have ensured that this independent school standard is now met.

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

Paragraph 18(2), 18(2)(a), 18(2)(b), 18(2)(c), 18(2)(c)(ii), 18(3)

Paragraph 20(6), 20(6)(a), 20(6)(a)(i), 20(6)(a)(ii)

Paragraph 21(1), 21(3), 21(3)(a), 21(3)(a)(ii), 21(3)(a)(iii), 21(3)(b), 21(4), 21(6), 21(7), 21(7)(a), 21(7)(b)

- The previous progress monitoring inspection found that leaders were unclear about the difference between a disclosure and barring check and a prohibition order check. Consequently, the later had not been made on teaching staff and this did not comply with requirements for the vetting of staff. The school was not able to provide evidence that a person's medical fitness had been checked on appointment.
- The school's action plan stated that the proprietor would contact the Department for Education to obtain the reference number for secure access and make prohibition order checks on all staff. It also stated that a new check for medical fitness would be added to the school's pre-employment documentation.
- Leaders have significantly improved the way they check and record staff's suitability to work with pupils. The inspector scrutinised the school's single central register of vetting checks of staff, including governors. The deputy headteacher has taken personal responsibility for the effective management of the single central record. Leaders are clear about the difference between a disclosure and barring check and a prohibition order check. The single central register now meets requirements.
- All staff have signed a declaration of medical fitness. This information has been added to the single central register. In addition, other useful checks, such as pre-employment references and staff qualifications, are also clearly logged on the register.
- Leaders have ensured that these independent school standards are now met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraphs 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b), 34(1)(c)

- At the first progress monitoring inspection in October 2016, leaders and governors had not made sure that all of the independent school standards were met regarding the welfare, health and safety of pupils. Leaders and governors had not made the necessary checks on staff to comply with statutory requirements. Some progress had been made, but it had been too slow. Roles and responsibilities for the leadership team to promote the well-being of pupils were still unclear.
- The action plan that followed the first monitoring inspection was judged not to be

acceptable because success criteria and the processes to check progress were vague. Training and specific dates for leaders and governors to develop their leadership skills had not been identified.

- A revised action plan was scrutinised during this monitoring inspection. A leadership structure is in place and now includes the curriculum leader, thus enhancing the capacity of senior leaders to monitor the school's work. Leaders responsible for each action are identified on the plan. The monitoring role of governors, particularly of the chair of the governing body, is specified.
- Senior leaders have received additional training focused on the unmet standards.
- In its current format, the action plan does not include robust measurements for the impact of actions on pupils' outcomes. Governors know that they need to hold leaders to account more rigorously and that they need further training to improve their effectiveness.
- Leaders have ensured that this independent school standard is now met.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school meets 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. This included the standards and requirements that the school was judged not to comply with at the previous inspection. Not all of the standards and associated requirements were checked during this inspection.

The school now meets the following independent school standards

- 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 the suitability of staff and members of the governing body, so that:
 - no such person is barred from regulated activity relating to children in accordance with section 3(2) of the 2006 Act where that person is or will be engaging in activity which is regulated activity within the meaning of Part 1 of the Schedule 4 to that Act
 - no such person carries out work or intends to carry out work at the school in contravention of a prohibition order or any direction made under section 128 of the 2008 Act or section 142 of the 2002 Act, or any disqualification, prohibition or restriction which takes effect as if contained in either such direction
 - appropriate checks are carried out to confirm in respect of each such person the person's medical fitness
 - in the light of the information from the checks referred to above, the proprietor considers that the person is suitable for the position to which the person is appointed and
 - the checks must be completed before a person's appointment
 (paragraphs 18(2), 18(2)(a), 18(2)(b), 18(2)(c), 18(2)(c)(ii), 18(3), 20(6), 20(6)(a), 20(6)(a)(i), 20(6)(a)(ii)).
- The proprietor must keep a register which shows that all appropriate checks have been carried out on staff and members of the governing body:
 - in relation to each member of staff ('S') appointed on or after 1 May 2007
 - whether S's identity was checked
 - whether a check was made to establish whether S is barred from regulated activity relating to children in accordance with section 3(2) of the 2006 Act
 - whether a check was made to establish whether S is subject to any direction made under section 128 of the 2008 Act or section 142 of the 2002 Act or any other disqualification, prohibition or restriction which takes effect as if contained in such a direction
 - in relation to each member of staff, whether a check was made to establish whether S is subject to a prohibition order or an interim prohibition order, including the date on which such check was completed

- in relation to each member ('MB') of a body of persons named as the proprietor appointed on or after 1 May 2007, whether the checks referred to in paragraph 20(6)(b) were made, the date they were made and the date on which the resulting certificate was obtained
- in relation to each member of a body of persons named as the proprietor in post on 1 August 2007 who was appointed at any time before 1 May 2007, whether each check referred to in sub-paragraph (6) was made and the date on which any check was completed or certificate obtained

(paragraph 21(1), 21(3), 21(3)(a), 21(3)(a)(ii), 21(3)(a)(iii), 21(3)(b), 21(4), 21(6), 21(7), 21(7)(a), 21(7)(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 and
- actively promote the well-being of pupils

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

School details

Unique reference number	134289
DfE registration number	821/6010
Inspection number	10034308

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	Day primary school with a religious ethos
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	75
Proprietor	Jamia Islamia Ghousia Trust
Chair	Amna Uddin
Headteacher	Zia Ul Mustafa Qazi
Annual fees (day pupils)	£1,800
Telephone number	01582 484617
Website	www.mehriaschool.org
Email address	info@mehriaschool.org
Date of previous standard inspection	26–28 January 2016

Information about this school

- Mehria School is registered with the Department for Education (DfE) as a school with a Muslim ethos, for boys and girls. The school admits pupils of any or no faith. It opened in 2006 and is registered to take a maximum of 90 pupils.
- The school is located in a residential neighbourhood of Luton. A mosque and a funeral service are located within the school's grounds. Classrooms for learning are in entirely separate buildings from the mosque and the funeral service.
- No pupils have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan.
- All pupils speak English as an additional language and all are bilingual.

- The school aims to 'produce hardworking, well-mannered and well informed young Muslims who are able, through their knowledge, skills and good character to benefit from the opportunities that Allah provides and to go on to be a positive force in society.'

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out at the request of the registration authority for independent schools. The purpose of the inspection was to monitor the progress the school has made in meeting the independent school standards and other requirements that it was judged not to comply with at its previous inspection.
- The school's most recent standard inspection was in January 2016, when the school's overall effectiveness was inadequate and six independent school standards were not met. Following the inspection the school submitted an action plan. This was evaluated in June 2016 and judged inadequate.
- This is the second progress monitoring inspection since the standard inspection in January 2016. The first monitoring inspection took place in October 2016. At that time, five of the independent school standards were not met.
- Following the first progress monitoring visit, the school submitted an action plan to the DfE to address areas for improvement identified in the inspection. This was evaluated by Ofsted in February 2017. The action plan was judged as not acceptable. A revised action plan, dated 18 April 2017, was checked during this second monitoring inspection.
- This second monitoring inspection was conducted without notice.
- The inspector met the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, two classroom teachers and the chair of the governing body. The meetings focused particularly on unmet standards in connection with pupils' welfare and safety, the suitability of staff and the quality of the school's leadership and management.
- The inspector spoke to a group of pupils about their welfare and well-being.
- The inspector checked whether the school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils met the relevant independent school standards. Policies and processes were evaluated. The school's website was checked for compliance with statutory information that should be available online.

Inspection team

Marianick Ellender-Gelé, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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