

Al-Furqan Primary School

Reddings Lane, Tyseley, Birmingham, West Midlands B11 3EY

Inspection dates

7–8 June 2017

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The executive headteacher and the leadership team provide determined and purposeful leadership. As a result, there have been significant improvements to the quality of teaching and the progress that pupils make.
- Leaders and the interim executive board know the school well and successfully address weaknesses. This provides good capacity for continued improvement.
- The leadership and teaching in the early years are outstanding. Children make rapid progress and are exceptionally well prepared for Year 1.
- Teaching is typically good because leaders support staff to improve through carefully planned training. Teachers and teaching assistants use skilful questions to deepen pupils' understanding.
- Teaching in mathematics leads to strong progress for pupils. Pupils have a good grasp of basic skills and apply these skilfully when solving problems.
- Teachers are developing a reading culture in classrooms. Pupils are enthused about the books they read and they enjoy the challenge of reading comprehension questions. However, the teaching of some higher-level reading skills, for example inference, does not enable pupils to show a sufficient depth of understanding.
- Pupils make good progress in writing, particularly when developing and applying vocabulary, punctuation and grammar in longer pieces of work. The quality of presentation and handwriting in pupils' books is not consistently high enough across the school.
- Some teachers do not intervene quickly enough to support pupils who may need more help in lessons. Conversely, some pupils, particularly the most able, are not moved on to more challenging work when they are ready.
- The quality of teaching in lower key stage 2 is not as consistently strong as in other year groups in the school.
- Teachers' assessment of pupils working at the higher standard is not accurate enough in some year groups.
- Leaders provide incisive support for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. As a result, this group of pupils make good progress.
- Pupils' behaviour and conduct are exemplary. They are extremely courteous and caring. Pupils feel safe and are happy because of the excellent relationships evident in school.
- Pupils are proud of their own faith and also show a high level of tolerance and respect for other faiths and cultures. They have mature views about the world around them.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate pupils' progress and raise standards even higher by making sure that:
 - teachers know when to move pupils on to more challenging work or when to offer further support to pupils who do not fully understand their learning
 - the teaching of higher-level reading skills, such as inference, enables pupils to answer with sufficient depth
 - the quality of handwriting and presentation in pupils' books is of a consistently high standard.
- Further improve the impact that leadership and management have on the quality of teaching by making sure that:
 - teaching in lower key stage 2 is as consistently strong as it is in other year groups in the school
 - teachers develop further accuracy in assessing pupils who are working at the higher standards.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The executive headteacher provides strong leadership and is instrumental in the continued improvement of the school. The head of school has galvanised parents and staff to work towards a common vision where 'every student can discover and realise their full potential'. The deputy headteacher, along with other leaders, has driven significant improvements in the quality of teaching.
- Leaders and staff have high expectations for pupils and the community. This is complemented by strong teamwork between staff, governors, pupils and parents. As a result, pupils are making good academic progress, as well as developing into well-rounded citizens.
- Leaders have a thorough and accurate view of how the school is performing because they regularly evaluate their work. Furthermore, leaders' improvement plans are precise and target appropriate priorities. This work is evaluated by external consultants, and leaders are quick to respond to any suggested improvements. As a result of these processes, there is good capacity for continued improvement.
- Performance management is used effectively to support and develop staff. Targets for improvement are incisive and professional development is well matched to teachers' needs. For example, one teacher spoke about how her questioning has improved because of the tailored support she received from another leader. Staff appreciate the training that they receive and it has a positive impact on the quality of their teaching.
- Leaders carry out effective checks on the quality of teaching. They observe lessons, scrutinise pupils' books and offer relevant advice to teachers on what needs to be improved. Teachers are motivated and make the necessary improvements to their classroom practice. Leaders have improved teaching considerably since the last inspection. However, some teaching in lower key stage 2 is not as consistently strong as in other year groups.
- Leaders use external support to good effect. For example, staff observe good practice in other schools, and specialists from a teaching school deliver bespoke training. This approach is contributing well to the school's improvement.
- Leaders' systems for assessing pupils' work and analysing pupils' progress are effective. Teachers and leaders meet to review assessment information and identify pupils who require additional support. Consequently, pupils' progress is accelerated. The vast majority of assessments are accurate. However, in some year groups, teachers' assessments of pupils working at the higher standards are not secure enough.
- Middle leaders are supported in their professional development and have a positive impact. They know the strengths of their respective subject areas and are working on appropriate priorities. Some leaders are new to their positions but are being well supported to understand their roles.
- The provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is a strength of the school. The leader of this area of provision makes good use of additional funding and provides strong support to staff, pupils and families. Her knowledge of pupils' needs, some of which are very complex, is strong. Consequently,

pupils receive precise individual support and they make good progress.

- Leaders analyse pupils' behaviour thoroughly and have a good understanding of how to support pupils who have complex needs. Leaders put in place plans to support these pupils to manage their own behaviour. As a result, there is a marked improvement in behaviour over time and pupils' behaviour is now outstanding.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. Leaders and staff plan interesting lessons for pupils, which are complemented by relevant trips. One pupil commented, 'Trips make learning exciting.' For example, when Year 5 pupils learned about the Tudors in their history topic, they visited Bosworth battlefield. Pupils also take part in enterprise projects to develop life skills such as problem-solving, teamwork and communication. As a result of this wide-ranging curriculum, pupils are developing good skills, knowledge and understanding across a range of subjects.
- Leaders have developed an impressive approach to preparing pupils for life in modern Britain. Pupils have regular opportunities to consider the importance of their own faith. They also learn about other faiths and cultures, and have a strong understanding of British values. Pupils have tolerant and inclusive views about the world around them.
- Leaders make effective use of the pupil premium funding. Some funding is used for additional staffing to meet the needs of particular pupils. Additionally, pupils have been provided with their own reading books to start a home library. Leaders' thoughtful actions are securing good progress for disadvantaged pupils across the school.
- The sport premium funding is used well to raise the profile of school sport and to improve the quality of physical education (PE) teaching. The school employs specialist staff to teach PE, which has improved the quality of provision for pupils. There are also a range of sports clubs on each evening, including alternative activities like fencing and archery. The PE staff have increased the amount of competitive sport for pupils, which has resulted in success in local and regional competitions.

Governance of the school

- The interim executive board are astute, knowledgeable and ambitious for the school. Alongside the executive headteacher, they have successfully steered the school through a fragile period. Each board member has a specific skill set which is well matched to appropriate areas of school improvement. For example, one of the board uses her human resources background to enhance recruitment procedures. The effectiveness of the interim executive board has had a clear impact on the school's improvement.
- The interim executive board are accurate in their evaluation of the school because they know the school well. They provide an effective level of challenge to leaders through meetings and on their visits to the school. Board members complete 'impact logs' with leaders so that the impact of visits is clearly evidenced. Members' skills, along with the actions they take, are providing further capacity for continued improvement.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders have created a strong culture for keeping pupils safe. Staff are diligent and report any concerns in a timely manner. Leaders follow up concerns tenaciously through well-organised systems and by involving relevant external agencies. As a result, pupils are safe and extremely well cared for.
- Leaders and staff have a good understanding of relevant safeguarding risks. This is because they receive regular training from the safeguarding lead. Furthermore, staff receive frequent updates on the latest statutory guidance and leaders make checks on the extent to which this guidance is understood.
- Leaders are extremely thorough when carrying out recruitment checks. Staff and visitors' checks are completed with attention to detail. External agencies, as well as board members, add further reassurance by auditing the system on a regular basis.
- The designated safeguarding lead provides sensitive guidance for families. For example, workshops are put on to address relevant topics on safety and the school's family support worker engages effectively with families who require additional support.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Leaders' unwavering and systematic approach to improving teaching has been key to raising standards and improving outcomes for pupils. The improvement in teaching is reflected in the quality of work evident in pupils' books.
- Teachers' and teaching assistants' questioning skills are a strong characteristic of the good teaching that takes place. The vast majority of staff ask probing questions or make pupils justify their answers with specific evidence. The overall quality of questioning enables pupils to deepen their understanding and think for themselves.
- Teachers display good subject knowledge when teaching writing. Pupils are accurately taught how to include the correct grammar and punctuation into their writing. The impact of this is clear in pupils' books because they apply their understanding effectively in longer pieces of writing. Pupils' handwriting does not progress as strongly over time.
- The teaching of reading is effective. Teachers plan stimulating reading activities and texts are matched to pupils' abilities. Leaders and teachers have created a culture where pupils enjoy reading. Pupils spoke with enthusiasm about different authors and the books that they have read. Pupils are tackling increasingly challenging questions and, as a result, make good progress in reading comprehension. However, the teaching of higher-level reading skills, such as inference, does not enable pupils to justify their answers with sufficient depth.
- Staff teach phonics accurately. Pupils use their phonics understanding to decode unfamiliar words. Consequently, pupils' progress in phonics is strong and pupils are able to read appropriate books as they move through the school.
- Teachers are confident in their mathematics teaching. Teaching enables pupils to be fluent in their written and mental calculation skills. Pupils regularly apply their skills

through problem-solving and reasoning. As a result, their progress in mathematics is strong.

- Some teachers do not respond with sufficient pace to pupils' needs during lessons. When this occurs, pupils are either not moved on to more challenging work when they are ready, or they are not given additional support with work that they do not fully understand. Consequently, some pupils' progress slows. This issue is more prevalent in lower key stage 2, where teaching is not as consistently strong as in other year groups in the school.
- The learning environment is excellent. Pupils are proud of their high-quality writing and artwork that are on display in corridors. Teachers also use displays in classrooms to prompt pupils or to introduce new subject-specific language. The quality of presentation in some pupils' books is more variable and, as a result, some pupils' progress is hampered by a lack of care in their work.
- Teachers' assessments of pupils' work are mostly accurate. This has been well supported by moderation internally and externally. However, in some year groups, teachers are not secure in assessing pupils working at the higher standards.
- Leaders and teachers are proactive in organising workshops for parents so that they can support their child's learning at home. For example, courses have been arranged for parents to learn English, as well as other sessions to help parents' understanding of how phonics and mathematics are taught. During the inspection, several parents told inspectors how much these sessions have helped them.
- Teaching in other subjects is lively and enjoyable for pupils. Leaders have focused on building teachers' subject knowledge and enthusiasm for subjects like music and art. Pupils enjoy these subjects and develop a broad range of skills and experiences.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Staff have created a culture in which pupils feel valued and happy. Pupils thrive because adults take very good care of them and encourage them to be the best that they can be. Strong relationships ensure that pupils' emotional health and well-being are well catered for.
- Pupils' spiritual and cultural development is a strength. They visit other places of worship, such as a gurdwara when learning about Sikhism and a temple when learning about Hinduism. Consequently, pupils display a deep sense of values about their own faith, while also appreciating the diversity of other faiths and cultures.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe and know who to go to if they are concerned. Pupils understand different types of bullying, including name-calling and cyber bullying. Their understanding of e-safety is good and pupils know how to stay safe on the internet. During the inspection, one pupil commented, 'Do not say where you live when you are online because it is like leaving your front door open.'
- Pupils are articulate and knowledgeable when talking about British values. For example, pupils talked about democracy in depth and related it to their own democratic

school council election process. Additionally, some pupils have been learning about the general election process and elements of each political party's manifesto. These meaningful experiences are supporting pupils' good understanding of British values.

- Pupils are provided with effective opportunities to discuss current affairs and moral issues. For example, pupils in Year 6 analysed and commented on a poem about terrorism. As a result of being able to discuss important issues, pupils have mature and balanced views about the world.
- Teachers are not consistent in providing opportunities for pupils to develop into confident and self-assured learners. In some lessons, pupils are not as active in the learning process as they could be. They wait to be directed by the teacher. Where teaching is stronger, more pupils take responsibility for their own learning and are self-assured.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils' conduct around school and in classrooms is impeccable. Low-level disruption is extremely rare because pupils listen well and are respectful. They are also extremely courteous and well mannered to staff and each other. Pupils' positive attitudes have a significant impact on their academic progress and their personal development.
- Staff manage behaviour skilfully and any rare incidents of low-level disruption are sensitively addressed using the school's behaviour policy. Pupils are highly motivated when they are rewarded for positive behaviour. Pupils receive green tickets when they behave well and are motivated to attend the 'pastoral party'. As a result of a range of strategies, behaviour has improved significantly over time.
- Pupils who have complex behavioural needs are managed extremely well. Leaders work in partnership with children, parents, staff and external agencies in order to put in place carefully matched provision. Consequently, fixed-term exclusions are decreasing and pupils are being gradually supported to manage their own behaviour.
- Leaders use very effective systems to analyse and monitor school attendance. They work with external agencies and with their own pastoral support team to challenge low attendance and support families. Furthermore, there are positive reward systems in place for those pupils who attend regularly. As a result of the school's strategies, pupils' attendance has risen sharply in recent years and no groups of pupils are disadvantaged by low attendance.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- In 2016, pupils achieved well in mathematics. In key stage 2, pupils' progress was slightly better than all pupils nationally and the proportions working at the expected standard and at the higher standard were above the national average. In key stage 1, a high proportion of pupils achieved the expected and higher standards when compared to all pupils nationally.
- At the end of key stage 2 in 2016, the achievement in English was varied. Pupils made less progress than other pupils nationally in reading and similar progress to others

nationally in writing. The proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in writing and reading was broadly similar to the national average in key stage 2 and higher than the national average in key stage 1.

- In 2016, the most able pupils did not make enough progress in reading at the end of key stages 1 or 2. The proportion reaching the higher standard was below the national average at the end of both key stages. Work in pupils' current books and the school's assessment information show that more pupils are now reaching the higher standard. However, some pupils are still not proficient in higher-level reading skills.
- Disadvantaged pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, are achieving well across the school. For example, in 2016 at key stages 1 and 2, a higher proportion of pupils achieved the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics than other pupils nationally who are not disadvantaged. This is because additional funding is spent well.
- As a result of effective teaching across the school, pupils' work and the school's assessment information indicate that the majority of pupils are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Staff support pupils who speak English as an additional language extremely well. As a result, they acquire language efficiently and make good progress.
- Standards in phonics are rising rapidly each year and, in 2016, the proportion reaching the expected standard in Year 1 was above the national average. Strong phonics teaching is enabling pupils to make good progress.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make progress that is similar to or better than that of other pupils in school. Staff meet their needs with precise additional support and some pupils quickly catch up with their peers.

Early years provision

Outstanding

- The quality of leadership and teaching in the early years is outstanding. Children get off to a flying start at Al-Furqan Primary School. Staff have designed an inspirational curriculum which challenges children and develops a sense of awe and wonder about the world around them. There is a love of learning that is shared by staff and children. Consequently, children make rapid and sustained progress during their Reception Year.
- The early years leader is purposeful and uncompromising in her pursuit of high standards for the children. She has a strong understanding of the key priorities for the setting and puts in place ambitious plans for improvement. For example, staff visit outstanding early years settings in order to see best practice and refine their own teaching. The leadership of the early years is highly successful in developing staff and improving teaching over time.
- Children settle into their Reception Year extremely well because the partnership between staff and parents is exceptional. Staff understand the needs of their community and offer an open-door policy. As a result, communication is excellent and staff are able to meet children's needs. Parents who spoke to inspectors were united in their positive views of the early years. One parent commented, 'My child's progress has been amazing, he is very happy. He is inspired to write when he gets home.'

- Staff teach reading, writing, mathematics and communication with absolute precision. One particular area of expertise is the quality of staff's questioning. During the inspection, a child found their mental mathematics challenge difficult and the teacher used highly effective questioning to enable the child to secure understanding. Children make rapid progress because of the high-quality teaching they receive.
- Staff make excellent use of observations in order to assess children's learning and what they need to do next. Teachers use this information to plan challenging learning activities for children. Moreover, staff analyse this assessment information in order to identify children that require additional support. This approach has supported significant improvement in outcomes for children.
- A high proportion of children enter Reception with skills and understanding below what are expected for their age. The proportion of children that achieve the expected level of development is increasing every year and, in 2016, was broadly in line with the national average. Children's work in books and assessment information show that they make outstanding progress. They are exceptionally well prepared for Year 1.
- Additional funding for disadvantaged children is used well. In 2016, a higher proportion of children achieved the expected standard than other children nationally who are not disadvantaged.
- Children enter Reception with considerable variation in the quality of spoken English. On arrival, some children have little or no English. Leaders and staff put in place highly effective additional support and children acquire English accurately and quickly.
- Children are captivated by a stimulating curriculum and the outstanding environment. For example, children spoke in great depth about minibeasts because they were fully immersed in the topic. One child was captured by the 'minibeast investigation lab' and was using her microscope to look at the parts of a spider so that she could write descriptive sentences. As a result of a well-planned curriculum, children are developing a high level of skills, knowledge and understanding about the world around them.
- Children are confident and self-assured because staff empower them to be independent. Routines are well established and children take responsibility for organising the environment and managing their behaviour. Children want to learn and their behaviour is outstanding.
- The early years team promotes children's safety and well-being. Staff provide high levels of supervision and care. All safety and safeguarding arrangements are robustly applied. Consequently, all children feel safe and secure at school.

School details

Unique reference number	131465
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10020034

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	600
Appropriate authority	Interim executive board
Chair	Sylvia Fry
Executive headteacher	Sue Barratt
Head of school	Sadyah Yafai
Telephone number	0121 777 2222
Website	www.al-furqan-pri.bham.sch.uk
Email address	enquiries@al-furqan-pri.bham.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	5 November 2014

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The school is an Islamic faith school and the designated religious character is Muslim.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium funding is above the national average.
- A large majority of pupils come from an Asian or Asian British background.

- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics for pupils by the end of Year 6.
- The interim executive board and the local authority oversee the strategic direction of the school.
- The executive headteacher has been leading the school since 2015. She is also the director of a teaching school which provides additional support to the school.
- The head of school takes responsibility for the day-to-day management of Al-Furqan.
- Al-Furqan Educational Trust is the religious authority for the teaching of Islamic, Koranic and Arabic studies.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed pupils' learning in 34 lessons or parts of lessons. A number of these observations were undertaken with senior leaders.
- The inspectors scrutinised work in pupils' books and listened to pupils read. They met with three groups of pupils to gain their views of the school. The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at breaktime, lunchtime and at the end of the school day, as well as in lessons and in an assembly.
- Meetings were held with the executive headteacher, the head of school, the deputy headteacher and five other leaders. The lead inspector met with three teachers. The lead inspector met with five members of the interim executive board, including the chair. The lead inspector spoke on the telephone with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspectors looked at a range of documentation, including assessments and records of pupils' progress, the school's checks and records relating to safeguarding, child protection and attendance, records of how teaching is monitored and the school's improvement plans.
- Inspectors took account of 47 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. Inspectors considered 37 free-text responses from parents. They also talked to parents at the start and end of the school day. Inspectors reviewed 37 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Matt Meckin, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Sue Cameron	Ofsted Inspector
Rebecca Nash	Ofsted Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2017