

Abu Bakr Boys School

Kent Street, Walsall, West Midlands WS2 7AN

Inspection Dates

4 July 2017

Overall outcome

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

Main inspection findings

Part 1. Quality of education provided

Paragraphs 2(2)(d)(i), 2(2)(d)(ii), 2(2)(e), 2(2)(e)(i), 2(2)(e)(ii), 2(2)(e)(iii), 2(2)(i)

- The inspection in September 2016 found that the school did not actively encourage respect for other people, particularly in relation to the nine protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Equality Act. In addition, pupils had limited access to up-to-date impartial careers information, advice and guidance. Consequently, the inspection found that the school was not doing enough to prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in modern Britain.
- In response, leaders have revised the school curriculum so that it incorporates planned lessons about protected characteristics and the implications of these on the way we treat others. Pupils are taught to respect other people and show an informed understanding of the importance of fairness and equality of opportunity. During this inspection, for instance, pupils in Years 7 and 10 readily engaged in discussions about the problems caused by discrimination and explained how a helpful acronym, 'DR GRAMPSS' (disability, race, gender reassignment, religion and belief, age, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, sex, sexual orientation), helped them to recall each of the nine characteristics.
- Furthermore, the school's newly introduced pupil development programme, which pulls together aspects of citizenship, careers guidance and personal, social, health and economic education, serves to prepare pupils with the knowledge and attitudes they need in order to make the most of the opportunities open to them. In order to support this improved aspect of the school's work, staff have created a dedicated careers area where there are displays of well-chosen literature and relevant guidance to help pupils to make choices about what to do when they leave school. Since the previous inspection, visiting speakers have come into school to talk about apprenticeship schemes and sixth-form study options. On top of this, representatives from different professions, including the armed forces, the fire service and legal services have been into school to deliver presentations about future opportunities, necessary qualifications and life in the workplace. Pupils report that they are able to take part in work experience and say that the guidance provided at school helps them to make informed decisions about training, study and careers.

- These standards are met.

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

Paragraphs 5, 5(a), 5(b), 5(b)(iii), 5(b)(iv), 5(b)(vi)

- The previous inspection found that, as well as not doing enough to promote pupils' understanding of the nine protected characteristics, leaders had allowed inappropriate sectarian material to come into school. There was no suggestion that pupils had access to such material or that any partisan political views were being promoted in school. Nevertheless, school leaders and inspectors agreed that the material should not have been in school.
- This inspection found no evidence of inappropriate material in school. In response to the findings of the previous inspection, when inspectors found sectarian literature in a storeroom, school leaders have stopped taking in donated material. Leaders have also insisted that any new material that is purchased for use in school or is brought in by members of staff has to be seen and approved by the headteacher. In taking more control of reading material coming into school, leaders are confident that the books and literature available to pupils are appropriate. That said, this increased vigilance has led to the school putting its plans to develop an in-school library on hold. This is because, in the past, the school had relied heavily on donated material.
- It is worth noting that there is some very worthwhile work going on to teach pupils about the distress and damage caused by forced marriage, female genital mutilation and codes of honour that have no place in British society. During this inspection, and as part of a planned sequence of workshops led by the Muslim Women's Network (MWNUK), older pupils were provided with good-quality information about forced marriage and domestic violence. The session prompted some worthwhile reflection and debate as pupils considered how such behaviours work against fundamental human rights and British values. The session was supported by some well-informed leaflets, produced by the MWNUK, that pupils were able to take home and share with their families. Similar sessions are planned for parents as part of the school's work to engage with families and, where needs be, challenge stereotypical views or outdated attitudes.

- These standards are met.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraphs 7, 7(a), 7(b) and Part 6 paragraph 32(i)(c)

- The previous inspection found that the school's safeguarding policy did not meet statutory requirements because it did not include all the necessary information. Furthermore, some staff files had missing information, signing-in procedures for visitors were not adequate and the school had been slow to inform the local authority when pupils left the school.
- The missing information in the school's safeguarding policy has now been added. Specifically, there is now a section that explains what staff should do if they were to have a concern about the headteacher. The policy also includes a statement about the checks that must be carried out on any literature that comes into school. The current policy is available on the school's website, reflects the most recent guidance issued by the Secretary of State and meets statutory requirements. Leaders have also asked staff to complete short written tests to assess their knowledge and to inform training needs.

Leaders produce regular newsletters for staff, which remind them about their duty of care.

- The inspector checked a number of staff files by selecting names at random from a staff list. The inspector also checked files of staff who had worked overseas. All files seen were well-organised and included information about employment history, identity checks and qualifications. References had been sought and received from previous employers and all the information that the inspector requested was readily available.
- On arrival, unannounced, at the school at 8.30am, the inspector was met at the gates by a member of staff who asked to see identification before allowing entry to the site. This same process was followed in the reception area and the inspector was required to sign in and then issued with a visitor's badge. Checks on school records and conversations with staff and pupils revealed that these procedures are typical and that the current arrangements have been in place since October 2016.
- The school's attendance and welfare staff work together to make sure that pupils' attendance or absence records are correct. They also take appropriate steps to follow up unexplained absence and to supply the relevant agencies with the necessary information when a pupil leaves the school. When exclusion is used, as it has been on several occasions this year, all the proper processes are followed. Pupils and staff report that the school's expectations for behaviour are very clear and are fair. They also say that pupils who misbehave get help and support as well as reprimands.
- These standards are met.

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

Paragraphs 17, 18(1), 18(2), 18(2)(a), 18(2)(b), 18(2)(c), 18(2)(c)(i), 18(2)(c)(ii), 18(2)(c)(iii), 18(2)(c)(iv), 18(2)(d), 18(2)(e)

- The inspection in September 2016 did not identify any unmet standards under Part 4. However, due the concerns that were noted at that time about aspects of safeguarding and staff recruitment, the inspector decided to examine the single central record of checks on staff. The inspector checked the record against a staff list and also dipped into staff files to check the accuracy of information. In doing so, the inspector found that all the necessary checks had been completed and recorded properly. The single central record complies with requirements.
- These standards are met.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraphs 22, 23(1), 23(1)(a), 28(1), 28(1)(a), 28(2)(b)

- The previous inspection found that a toilet and washing facility open to pupils was in a poor condition and smelled unpleasant.
- This facility remains in a poor condition but has been permanently closed off to pupils. The door to the toilet is kept locked and pupils and staff confirm that this toilet has been closed for some time. The school has plans to renovate the room and convert it into a kitchen facility for staff. These plans are noted in minutes from governors' meetings but, currently, there are insufficient funds to proceed with the project. There are other toilets in the school and pupils have sufficient access to clean toilets and washing facilities. Drinking water is clearly marked as such.

- These standards are met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

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

- The previous inspection found that leaders had failed to ensure that all the independent school standards were met. In particular, the inspection noted significant weaknesses in aspects of teaching, safeguarding and pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- This inspection found that leaders had taken successful action to address all of the shortcomings identified in September 2016. Furthermore, there was strong evidence to show that leaders have taken the initiative to promote healthy attitudes and equip pupils with knowledge and skills that will help them to make the most of future opportunities and make a positive contribution to British society.
- In particular, the work that the school has initiated with the Muslim Women's Network is commendable. Such work does much to highlight the dangers of ignorance and prejudice and helps to challenge practices that discriminate against and harm others.
- All of these standards are 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 to not 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

- Part 1 Paragraphs 2(2)(d)(i), 2(2)(d)(ii), 2(2)(e), 2(2)(e)(i), 2(2)(e)(ii), 2(2)(e)(iii), 2(2)(i)
- Part 2 Paragraphs 5(a), 5(b), 5(b)(iii), 5(b)(iv), 5(b)(vi)
- Part 3 Paragraphs 7, 7(a), 7(b) and Part 6 paragraph 32(i)(c)
- Part 4 Paragraphs 17, 18(1), 18(2), 18(2)(a), 18(2)(b), 18(2)(c), 18(2)(c)(i), 18(2)(c)(ii), 18(2)(c)(iii), 18(2)(c)(iv), 18(2)(d), 18(2)(e)
- Part 5 Paragraphs 22, 23(1), 23(1)(a), 28(1), 28(1)(a), 28(2)(b)
- Part 8 Paragraphs 34, 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b), 34(1)(c)

School Details

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| Unique reference number | 135483 |
| DfE registration number | 335/6013 |
| Inspection number | 10035825 |

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.

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| Type of school | Secondary Islamic day school |
| School status | Independent school |
| Age range of pupils | 11 to 16 |
| Gender of pupils | Boys |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 212 |
| Number of part-time pupils | 0 |
| Proprietor | Mr Mohammad Luqman |
| Chair | Mr Mohammad Luqman |
| Headteacher | Mr Mohammed Ramzan |
| Annual fees (day pupils) | £1,700 |
| Telephone number | 01922 724149 |
| Website | https://abubakrboysschool.org |
| Email address | info@abubakrboysschool.org |
| Date of previous standard inspection | 4 November 2014 |

Information about this school

- Abu Bakr Boys School is an Islamic day school located in Walsall.
- The school is registered to admit up to 300 boys in the age range 11 to 16 years.
- The headteacher works in collaboration with other schools in the Abu Bakr Trust.
- The proprietor is also the chair of the governing body.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school's aim, as stated on its website, is to 'provide a strong Islamic environment in which our pupils achieve their full potential and go on to become outstanding

ambassadors for Islam. We are committed to creating a culture of learning in which pupils will strive and flourish, academically and spiritually’.

- When the school received a full standard Ofsted inspection in November 2014, its overall effectiveness was judged to be good. An emergency monitoring inspection took place in September 2016.

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 comply with at the previous emergency inspection.
- This inspection was carried out with no notice and lasted one day.
- This was the first progress monitoring inspection since the school's action plan was evaluated and found to be acceptable on 16 February 2017.
- The inspector checked store rooms and other rooms where books were kept. He also made a check on the toilet and washing facilities and the availability of drinking water.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, the welfare and safeguarding leaders, the school's attendance officer, the human resources manager and the proprietor. In addition, the inspector selected and met with a group of nine Year 10 pupils. The inspector also spoke to pupils and staff in classrooms and observed parts of a citizenship lesson, a religious education session and a workshop led by the Muslim Women's Network.
- Several documents were examined, including: attendance records, curriculum plans, schemes of work, minutes of governors' meetings, and health and safety records. In addition, records relating to staff recruitment, safeguarding, pupils' attendance, and exclusion were checked.
- The inspector also considered evidence relating to a parental complaint about the use of exclusion.
- Before the inspection, the inspector checked the school's website.
- The inspection was quality assured by a Senior Her Majesty's Inspector.

Inspection team

Martin Pye, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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