

Mazahirul Uloom London School

241–243 Mile End Road, Stepney, London E1 4AA

Inspection dates

3–5 October 2017

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- The proprietor and school leaders have not ensured that the school meets all of the independent school standards.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding are not effective. Staff's knowledge of the latest statutory guidance for safeguarding is limited. Records of the school's work to safeguard pupils' welfare are poor. Staff do not adhere to the school's risk assessment policy consistently and leaders have insufficient oversight of this work.
- Staff do not manage pupils' behaviour consistently. Teachers are not consistently effective in dealing with low-level disruption and pupils whose attitudes are poor.
- The school's anti-bullying policy is not implemented effectively. Some pupils have not been confident in reporting bullying incidents to staff in the past.
- The standard of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement. There is too much variability in pupils' progress across subjects. Staff do not apply the school's assessment procedures consistently and effectively to promote good progress.
- The curriculum is too narrow in Years 10 and 11. Subjects offered in Years 7 to 9 cease in Year 10. Pupils do not have a choice in the subjects that they study for GCSE if they remain at this school.
- Pupils' outcomes are improving slowly but have been weak in the past and remain inconsistent between subjects. Lower-ability pupils make less progress.
- Frequent staffing changes and ineffective training in the past have had a detrimental effect on the standard of teaching.

The school has the following strengths

- Recent improvements, including in pupils' behaviour, reflect the new headteacher's heightened expectations for pupils' performance.
- Pupils' knowledge and understanding of fundamental British values and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are secure.

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 leadership and management of the school by:
 - ensuring that all of the independent school standards are met
 - ensuring that the school's arrangements for safeguarding are effective by tightening up routine procedures, improving record-keeping of support given to pupils and ensuring that staff training effectively supports them in their work to keep children safe
 - improving the manner in which risk assessments are carried out and ensuring that staff are knowledgeable about how to identify and reduce risks
 - closely monitoring the quality of teaching, learning and assessment so that teachers' training and appraisal rapidly raise standards
 - broadening the curriculum options that pupils can choose at GCSE.
- Improve pupils' progress from their starting points, particularly that of lower-ability pupils, by:
 - ensuring that teachers apply the school's assessment procedures with precision and rigour
 - teachers planning lessons that account for pupils' needs
 - ensuring that time in lessons and throughout the school day is used productively
 - all staff holding high expectations for pupils' attitudes to learning and progress.
- Improve behaviour by embedding the new behaviour policy and ensuring that all staff and pupils adhere to it consistently.

The school must meet the following independent school standards

- The proprietor must ensure that 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; involves well-planned lessons and effective teaching methods, activities and management of class time; 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; utilises effectively classroom resources of a good quality, quantity and range; utilises effective strategies for managing behaviour and encouraging pupils to act responsibly (paragraph 3, 3(a), 3(c), 3(d), 3(f), 3(h)).
- 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) and 7(b)).
- The proprietor must promote good behaviour among pupils by ensuring that the policy is implemented effectively (paragraph 9 and 9(b)).
- The proprietor must ensure that bullying at the school is prevented, so far as is reasonably practicable, by the drawing up and implementation of an effective anti-

bullying strategy (paragraph 10).

- The proprietor must ensure that the welfare of pupils is safeguarded and promoted by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written risk assessment policy and appropriate action is taken to reduce the risks identified (paragraph 16, 16(a) and 16(b)).
- The proprietor must ensure that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school: demonstrate good knowledge and skills appropriate to their roles 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) and 34(1)(c)).
- The proprietor must ensure that the school complies with paragraph three of schedule 10 of the Equalities Act 2010 by having in place a written accessibility plan.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Inadequate

- Over time, leaders have not ensured that the independent school standards are met and that the school's arrangements to safeguard pupils' welfare are effective. The new headteacher has accurately identified a number of areas of the school's work that need rapid improvement. However, there has not yet been time for significant developments and for new policies and procedures to become common practice.
- Leaders have not ensured that staff training has been effective in raising the standard of teaching and learning across the school. Pupils' progress has been too vulnerable to a lack of consistently good teaching and changes in staff.
- The curriculum meets the requirements of the standard and is well organised, alongside the Islamic curriculum. However, the secular curriculum offer is too narrow at GCSE, and pupils are unable to choose which subjects they study. The curriculum is not well balanced by an adequate range of enrichment and extra-curricular activities.
- Leaders have not ensured that the behaviour is consistently well managed by staff. Consequently, behaviour in the past is reported to have been poor, and recent improvements are not embedded. Variability in the quality of teaching, combined with inconsistent behaviour management, means that behaviour is not yet good.
- Leaders have ensured that the standards relating to the school's premises are met. The school is a tidy and welcoming environment. However, risk assessments for external activities, including breaktime and physical education, are poor. The spaces themselves are suitable; however, the risk assessments for the use of those spaces do not account for day-to-day changes that may affect pupils' welfare.
- There is no written accessibility plan in place. This means that the school does not meet the requirements of the Equalities Act 2010, including having plans in place to ensure that the curriculum is accessible to pupils who have a disability. Currently, the school has no pupils identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Leaders have ensured that pupils have opportunities to consider the values and attitudes of people from their own and others' backgrounds. Pupils have gone on trips and undertaken work to explore British institutions, the rule of law and democracy. Pupils discussed with inspectors their respect for people from all backgrounds, including their religion, race, gender and sexuality.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good because leaders have ensured that pupils experience a range of opportunities to explore global and local issues. Through both the Islamic and secular curriculum, pupils have the chance to collaborate, reflect and develop their understanding of the world around them.
- The capacity for improvement is developing due to recent appointments and more focused plans of action. The headteacher's evaluation of the school is accurate.

Governance

- Trustees have not held leaders to account rigorously enough for the performance and welfare of pupils. Trustees were conscious of recent weaknesses in behaviour and

standards. They have sought to appoint new staff to resolve these issues. However, over time, the trustees have not probed deeply enough to ensure that leaders rapidly raise pupils' performance. Trustees have not ensured that the school meets all of its responsibilities to safeguard pupils.

- Governors have a secure understanding of local and regional risks. They have supported the school in underpinning some of the stronger aspects of the school's safeguarding work, including the 'Prevent' duty and working with the local authority, to secure pupils' safety in the area outside the school. Trustees are active in the local community and consider pupils' personal development and involvement in local projects to be essential parts of pupils' education.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.
- Over time, the school's practice for safeguarding pupils' well-being has not been rigorous enough to reduce risks adequately. Records of the school's work internally and with external agencies are incomplete, and administrative errors in the school's single central record and off-rolling procedures were only discovered during the inspection. Pre-employment checks are now recorded accurately and meet the standards. No member of staff had undertaken safer recruitment training prior to the inspection. This has now been completed by the principal and headteacher.
- The school's risk assessments, particularly for off-site activities, including physical education, are poor. They do not provide the means for staff to identify, and then manage, the risks associated with activities with accuracy. The school's anti-bullying policy does not reflect recent practice, and some pupils told inspectors that they have not felt confident in the past to tell staff about bullying.
- Recent staff training is improving staff's knowledge and understanding of how to use procedures effectively to safeguard pupils. However, staff do not have enough knowledge of the latest statutory guidance to ensure that they can identify and respond to emerging signs of concern.
- The school works actively with the local authority to fulfil its 'Prevent' duty. Pupils have a good understanding of risks associated with the local area, extremism and using the internet. The school's policy is up to date and published on the school's website.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is variable across subjects. This hinders pupils' progress overall. In some subjects, teachers do not pay enough attention to pupils' starting points.
- Teachers do not consistently plan activities that support good progress because they do not all hold high expectations for what pupils can and should achieve.
- Teachers' use of the school assessment procedures is inconsistent. Consequently, pupils' understanding of their progress is weak, and teachers' use of assessment information fails to inform effective strategies to improve pupils' outcomes.
- Some assessment information is inaccurate, and some pupils' targets likewise. Changes in staff have not helped this situation. Pupils are sometimes unclear about how much

progress they are making from their starting points.

- Teachers do not use class time effectively. In some cases, too much time is wasted at the start of lessons because routines for managing pupils' entry to class are poor. Low-level disruption in some sessions further reduces the time pupils have to learn well.
- Teachers do not all use the learning resources available consistently well. This limits pupils' learning experiences in subjects such as science and physical education.
- Teachers use questioning with varying degrees of success. Some probing questioning helps the most able to make better progress over time. However, some teachers do not shape their questioning to support lower-ability pupils. Teachers who are more skilful provide effective support to individuals, based on their assessment of pupils' progress across a period of learning.
- In mathematics, religious studies and Arabic, teachers are more skilled at getting the most out of their pupils through careful planning and more rigorous assessment practice.
- Most pupils are ambitious and want to learn. Pupils' work is typically neat and tidy, well presented and cared for.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Inadequate

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is inadequate.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils' welfare are not rigorous or thorough enough to ensure that pupils' welfare is not compromised.
- Pupils' physical development is supported by the physical education curriculum. However, the standard of physical education provided is weak. Opportunities for pupils to play at breaktime and take part in extra-curricular activities are too few. This hinders pupils' development.
- Pupils' personal development and welfare is improving over time due to better systems to manage behaviour and bullying. Some pupils told inspectors that, in the past, they would not have felt wholly confident in talking to staff about bullying. While bullying is now rare, they felt that this was a weak aspect of the school.
- During the inspection, inspectors witnessed pupils give speeches in the run up to school council elections. Pupils spoke openly and honestly to all pupils and staff about the issues they would like improved and the roles they want to play. This demonstrates pupils' confidence to speak up and their desire to make a difference to their school.
- Pupils' knowledge and understanding of how to keep themselves safe and of local risks are secure. Pupils discussed at length the work that they had done around e-safety and the benefit and impact of visitors who have informed them about staying safe outside school.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Staff and pupils told inspectors that behaviour in the past was poor. The school's records of incidents reflect this perception. This year, behaviour has improved markedly. Pupils and staff who spoke to inspectors were unanimous in their view that behaviour is now better than it was. They put this down to the heightened expectations of the headteacher and new strategies to manage behaviour.
- Staff's management of low-level disruption or defiant behaviour remains inconsistent. This gets in the way of effective learning, over time.
- Attendance was low last year. Appropriate strategies are in place to follow up absence, and pupils' attendance is improving. Leaders ensure that there is effective monitoring and follow up when pupils are absent from school
- Pupils' punctuality varies throughout the school day. Punctuality to school in the morning is typically in line with expectations. However, inspectors observed pupils moving between lessons and social times with varying degrees of urgency. The headteacher is correct in his assertion that too much time is wasted between lessons.
- During the inspection, pupils were consistently polite and courteous to inspectors. Pupils' conduct reflected the school's expectations, most of the time.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Pupils' outcomes have improved slowly over time. Last year, pupils at the end of their GCSEs achieved outcomes that were better than their predecessors in English, languages and mathematics. However, in history, attainment fell, according to the school's information.
- According to the Department for Education's information, outcomes between 2014 and 2016 were below average for secondary schools. Outcomes in English were particularly low in the past, but improved last year.
- Improvements in outcomes reflect leaders' accurate identification of weaknesses in teaching and learning. Action plans for English and to support new staff are raising standards so that pupils' progress is now better across year groups.
- Teachers who understand pupils' prior needs and accurately assess pupils' starting points support their progress well from Year 7. In languages, religious studies and mathematics, teachers' accurate use of assessment information and good planning supports good progress.
- The most able pupils do well in mathematics, science, English and humanities at GCSE because teachers are better at targeting those with higher starting points. However, lower-ability pupils do not make the gains that they should, because teachers do not expect enough of them or plan effectively for their needs.
- Pupils receive effective careers advice and guidance so that they are able to apply to appropriate colleges for their 16 to 19 study programmes. Pupils' outcomes have allowed them to gain access to the range of education, training and employment to which they aspire.

School details

Unique reference number	133307
DfE registration number	211/6391
Inspection number	10026290

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 to 16
Gender of pupils	Boys
Number of pupils on the school roll	106
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Mazahirul Uloom London
Principal	Imdadur Rahman Al-Madani
Headteacher	Khalil Goddard
Annual fees (day pupils)	£2,900
Telephone number	020 7702 8533
Website	www.mul.org.uk
Email address	info@mul.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	2 February 2016

Information about this school

- The school is an Islamic boys' secondary day school, located above the Mazahirul Uloom Masjid on the Mile End Road.
- None of the 106 pupils currently on roll are on the school's special educational needs register. No pupils have an education, health and care plan. No pupils are placed in the school by the local authority.
- The school does not use any alternative off-site providers.
- The current headteacher has been in post since September 2017. He is responsible for

the secular curriculum. The principal has overall responsibility for the school.

- The school aims to: foster 'a legacy of educational achievement' and 'prepare students for professional adult life'. It is a place where 'education is about both the individual and the community'.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 19 lessons to observe teaching, learning and assessment. Some of these were conducted jointly with the headteacher.
- Inspectors scrutinised pupils' work both inside and outside of lessons.
- Inspectors held meetings with leaders, staff and trustees. Inspectors met with pupils and held informal conversations with them throughout the inspection.
- The lead inspector spoke on the phone with a representative from the local authority's attendance and welfare service.
- Inspectors scrutinised documentation including: the single central record of pre-employment checks made on staff; the attendance and admissions register; the school's assessment and behaviour information; the school's policies and procedures; the school's website; curriculum plans; plans for development.
- Inspectors considered the views of two parents who provided written feedback via Ofsted's survey. No responses were received to the staff survey.

Inspection team

Matt Tiplin, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Gerard Strong

Ofsted Inspector

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