

Mehria School

23 Westbourne Road, Luton, Bedfordshire LU4 8JD

Inspection dates

20–22 February 2018

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Governors and leaders have not ensured that the school consistently meets all the independent school standards.
- Leaders and governors have not evaluated their work well enough. They have not sufficiently identified areas that will help the school to improve further.
- Governors do not yet provide effective support which sufficiently holds leaders to account for the progress pupils make.
- Systems for checking the progress pupils make from their different starting points are underdeveloped. Leaders cannot be sure pupils are making good progress or hold teachers to account for the progress of pupils.
- Teachers do not consider pupils' different starting points when planning activities that will help pupils to make the most progress.
- Current pupils' work is not always well presented. Work in books indicates that pupils should be making better progress.
- Pupils are not given enough opportunities to apply their writing skills across a wide range of subject areas.
- Pupils have limited opportunities to learn and apply skills in other subjects, such as science, history or geography.
- Leaders do not track or monitor the provision for pupils with additional needs well enough.

The school has the following strengths

- Leaders ensure that procedures and processes for keeping pupils safe are effective. Leaders have developed an environment which supports pupils' well-being and where they are safe to express their own views and opinions.
- Pupils enjoy school, are confident and engage well with their learning. They are polite and courteous and behave well around the school.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects of learning are well provided for.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school must take action to meet the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (the 'independent school standards') 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, by:
 - ensuring that the school checks its compliance against the independent school standards so that it meets all of them
 - ensuring that leaders and governors regularly evaluate their work and that of the school so that they have an accurate view of what the school needs to do to improve
 - producing a school improvement plan that identifies and details actions that will improve pupils' outcomes, which are rigorously monitored and regularly evaluated by school leaders against meaningful success criteria throughout the school year
 - improving assessment systems to ensure that they take into account the progress pupils make from their different starting points and subsequently hold teachers to account for the pupils' progress
 - ensuring that pupils with additional needs are identified and provision monitored and evaluated regularly so that they make the good progress of which they are capable.
- Improve teaching so that it is good, by:
 - developing teachers' knowledge and skills so that they are able to plan activities to meet the needs of all pupils to ensure pupils make good progress from their different starting points
 - giving pupils regular opportunities to apply their writing skills across the curriculum
 - enabling pupils to learn and practise skills in other subjects, such as science, history and geography.
- Improve pupils' outcomes, by:
 - ensuring that pupils take pride in the presentation of their work
 - raising teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve by providing activities which ensure pupils make good and better progress.
- Improve governance, by:
 - developing governors' knowledge and understanding so that they can sufficiently hold leaders to account for meeting all the independent school standards.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Leaders and governors have not thoroughly evaluated their work or prioritised areas for improvement well enough. As a result, they have not ensured that all the independent standards have been met. The unmet standards relate to the quality of education provided.
- Systems to check pupils' progress do not accurately measure the amount of progress pupils make in reading, writing and mathematics. In addition, they do not highlight the progress for different groups of pupils, such as the most able or those pupils who have additional needs. As a result, leaders and teachers do not know well enough the progress pupils are making from their different starting points.
- Leaders' monitoring of teaching, learning and assessment does not focus enough on pupils' outcomes. Therefore, teachers are not held to account for the progress pupils make.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher are determined and passionate about raising standards and fulfilling their leadership responsibilities. Since the previous inspection they have worked relentlessly to develop their own knowledge and skills further and secure improvements, particularly in regard to pupils' welfare.
- Leaders promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. The curriculum is carefully planned to ensure that each aspect is covered. Pupils learn about other faiths. They demonstrate confidence and a keenness to share ideas and can particularly recognise connections between Islam and Christianity.
- Pupils can talk about differences, acceptance and about treating people equally. They link the value of democracy with the election of the school council. Pupils are encouraged to share their thoughts, feelings and ideas, which they do freely and with confidence. This was evident across all year groups.
- Leaders manage pupils' behaviour well. The school's behaviour policy positively supports the school's ethos. It is woven into the teaching and learning and is demonstrated, particularly, through the way teachers manage classroom behaviour.

Governance

- New governors in post, including the chair of the governing body, do not yet have sufficient knowledge and understanding of the independent school standards. Therefore, they do not know how well these are being met.
- Governors' understanding of how well the school is doing is over-reliant on the information they are given by school leaders. As a result, they are not holding leaders to account for aspects of the school's work.
- The school website is out of date and confusing, and therefore not helpful to parents or the general public when trying to find information about the school. Leaders have acknowledged this and will be taking action immediately to rectify this.
- The new chair of the governing body brings a wide range of skills. He is now aware of the school's priorities and has the potential to support leaders to make improvements.

Safeguarding

- Since the previous inspection, leaders and governors have ensured that all safeguarding procedures and processes are robust. The newly appointed safeguarding governor has a wealth of experience and has supported leaders with improving the effectiveness of safeguarding so that all arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The school carries out appropriate checks on those appointed to work at the school. Leaders ensure that staff undertake regular training so that their knowledge of child protection procedures and protecting children from radicalisation is up to date.
- The school's processes for child protection are effective. For the very few pupil concerns, information is well organised with actions recorded well and followed up to an end result.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is not good. Teachers do not use the information about pupils' different starting points to plan activities which will move pupils' learning on quickly enough.
- The teaching of English and mathematics is variable across the school. Some teachers do not provide work that is challenging enough early in lessons. As a result, pupils, particularly the most able, do not make the progress of which they are capable.
- Pupils are taught a range of writing skills including spelling, grammar and punctuation. However, there was little evidence seen for pupils to practise these skills in a variety of ways across a range of subjects.
- Teachers are not always clear about what they want pupils to learn. Although teachers set learning objectives in lessons, these are not always specific enough to show what the expected outcome should be or which skills are being taught.
- Pupils in key stage 2 learn about a range of topics through subjects such as history and science. For example, they are taught about the Second World War, remembrance and ancient civilisations. They learn about habitats, plants and famous scientists. However, they are not regularly taught skills in these subjects, such as using and comparing the validity of information from primary and secondary sources in history, or having opportunities to learn about scientific enquiry.
- Additional adults are not always directed effectively by teachers when supporting pupils who need to catch up. This was particularly the case when work had not been planned well enough to meet the needs of individual pupils.
- Pupils' reading skills in key stage 1 are variable. Some are fluent and confident readers and are able to discuss their understanding of the text. Provision for those who find reading challenging is not always well thought through. Reading sessions are often too noisy and do not support those pupils who have specific needs in speaking and listening.
- In key stage 1, pupils were learning about the Great Fire of London and Samuel Pepys. Their books show they can recall some key facts about the fire, and where and how it started. Classroom displays show they have deepened their learning by creating their own fire scenes using different materials.

- Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge in English and mathematics. Pupils' fluency skills are well developed. For example, one Year 2 pupil was able to explain very clearly what an 'array' is and demonstrated a good knowledge of recalling times tables. Pupils in Year 3 are able to write their own mathematical word problems, using addition and subtraction, and relate the problems to real-life situations.
- Where learning is effective, teachers build on pupils' prior learning through a sequence of progressive activities. For example, in key stage 2 pupils were able to compare the work of two poets, identifying features of free verse in order to plan and write their own poems. Pupils openly shared their opinions, justifying their responses. As a result, pupils demonstrated a deeper understanding of poetry.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Staff at the school know the pupils and families well. There is mutual respect between pupils and adults. Consequently, pupils feel safe and are confident to participate positively in lessons.
- Personal, social, health and economic education is taught regularly in lessons and during assemblies. For example, pupils are taught about bullying, teamwork and how to keep healthy.
- Teachers understand the vulnerabilities within the community, not least the potential possibilities of radicalisation. In key stage 2, in particular, pupils are given opportunities to ask questions about extremist events that they may have heard about or seen in the media.
- Pupils attend school regularly. They are keen to come into school and are enthusiastic about their learning. As a result, attendance is in line with national averages.
- Pupils know about the different types of bullying; however, bullying is rare. Pupils are taught to be kind and respectful to each other and to those inside and outside of their community.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are welcoming and friendly towards visitors. They are happy to talk about their work and share their learning.
- Playtimes are sociable affairs. Pupils play well in the limited space available and effective supervision ensures that pupils are safe during the less structured times of the day.
- Incident logs show that poor behaviour is rare and there are few recorded incidents. Any incidents are followed up in a timely fashion.
- The behaviour policy permeates throughout the school. Pupils are encouraged to be kind to each other and respect each other. Teachers use circle time to discuss moral values. Islamic studies teaches pupils valuable lessons. For example, pupils learn about greed, to be thankful, respectful to each other and patient. Teachers use opportunities in these lessons to remind pupils to listen carefully to their peers.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Pupils' work books show that most pupils are completing the standard of work which is expected for their age. However, it is not evident that pupils are making good or better progress, or the progress of which they are capable.
- Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are not always high enough. Therefore, pupils, including the most able and those pupils with additional needs, do not make as much progress as they could in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Although pupils' work shows that they are taught skills in grammar, punctuation and spelling, there is little evidence to demonstrate that pupils can apply these skills widely in their writing activities across a range of topics.
- Pupils' achievement in subjects other than mathematics and English is too variable. This is because teachers do not always set high enough standards of work for pupils in subjects such as history and science. Pupils' work in these subjects is limited. In addition, they do not have enough opportunities to learn or apply skills widely to help them develop a deep understanding.
- The school's assessment attainment information for 2017 suggests that pupils attain well at the end of key stages 1 and 2 in reading, writing and mathematics. Current pupils are confident learners and are ready to move on to their next stage of education.

School details

Unique reference number	134289
DfE registration number	821/6010
Inspection number	10043520

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 category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	85
Proprietor	Jamia Islamia Ghousia Trust
Chair	Abdul Qazi
Headteacher	Zia Qazi
Annual fees (day pupils)	£1,800
Telephone number	07930 672266
Website	www.mehriaschool.org
Email address	zmqazi@hotmail.com
Date of previous 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.
- There are 5 classes. Years 1 to 4 are taught in separate classes. There is one combined Year 5 and 6 class.
- 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 (EHC) 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 conducted with one day's notice. The school was last inspected in January 2016, when it was judged to be inadequate.
- Inspectors observed pupils' learning across all year groups. Inspectors observed some lessons jointly with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher.
- Meetings were held with the school's senior leaders, the chair of the governing body, the safeguarding governor and a group of pupils.
- Inspectors scrutinised school improvement documents, policies, information on pupils' achievement, pupils' work, records of the quality of teaching and minutes of meetings of the governing body. They also analysed the school's risk assessments and the single central record of recruitment checks of staff.
- There were insufficient responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, for inspectors to undertake any analysis of parental views. No members of staff responded to the staff questionnaire. Inspectors spoke with several parents at the school gate before school.

Inspection team

Cindy Impey, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Heather Yaxley

Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex. Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school must meet the following independent school standards

Part 1. Quality of education provided

- 2(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if:
 - 2(1)(b) the proprietor ensures that the written policy and schemes of work:
 - 2(1)(b)(i) take into account the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils, including those pupils with an EHC plan.
- 3 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that the teaching at the school:
 - 3(a) 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
 - 3(c) involves well planned lessons and effective teaching methods, activities and management of class time
 - 3(d) 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 and
 - 3(g) demonstrates that a framework is in place to assess pupils' work regularly and thoroughly and uses information from that assessment to plan teaching so that pupils can progress.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

- 34(1) The standard about the quality of leadership and management is met if the proprietor ensures that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school:
 - 34(1)(a) demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently; and
 - 34(1)(b) fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently.

The school must meet the following requirements

- The proprietor ensures that arrangements are made to meet the requirements of paragraph 3 of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

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