

House of Light

Independent school standard inspection report

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Reporting inspector	Jane Melbourne HMI

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Purpose and scope of the inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005, 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.^{1, 2}

Although the school has the nursery still registered with Ofsted, the inspection of registered provision was conducted as part of the independent school inspection and not under the Section 49(2) of the Childcare Act 2006.^{3, 4}

Information about the school

House of Light originally opened as a nursery provider in 2008. It was registered as a school in November 2009 and took pupils from January 2010. The school is situated in a residential part of Nuneaton. It is owned by Nuneaton Muslim Educational Trust, a registered charity. The school is based on the first floor of a Mosque; the building is shared with other community users at times outside of the school day. The Nursery and Reception children are together in the Early Years Foundation Stage unit for the majority of the morning sessions. The Nursery operates a three hourly session from 9.30am. The Reception children then join with the Year 1/2 class each afternoon for Arabic and Islamic Studies. The school day finishes in winter at 2.45pm, with slight alterations to timings in subsequent terms. The school is registered for 90 children aged from 3–8 years. There are currently 15 children on roll from 3–7 years of age; eight children receive funding for their nursery education. There are children on roll identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities, but none has a statement of special educational needs. All current pupils speak English as an additional language.

The school's aims include: *'To enable every child to achieve their potential by providing a balanced curriculum which is appropriate to their age and aptitude. The curriculum is designed to give pupils stimulating experiences in all the required areas of learning and within a very strong Islamic ethos. Pupils are cherished as individuals and supported to reach their full potential as learners and children of Allah.'* Although all of the children originate from Muslim families, the school operates an open door policy and is happy to accept pupils from any faith. This is the school's first inspection since registration as a school.

¹ www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2002/ukpga_20020032_en_14#pt10-ch1-pb4-l1g162

² www.opsi.gov.uk/ACTS/acts2005/ukpga_20050018_en_15#sch8

³ Schools which provide childcare for children from birth until the term in which they reach their third birthday must register this provision separately with Ofsted.

⁴ www.opsi.gov.uk/ACTS/acts2006/ukpga_20060021_en_4#pt3-ch2-pb4-l1g49

Evaluation of the school

The school provides a satisfactory quality of education, although there are a number of regulations not met. The overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactory; pupils make a satisfactory start to their education and generally satisfactory progress over time from starting points which are typically below average. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness and behaviour are good. Although staff try to be vigilant, there are ineffective security arrangements at the school and therefore the welfare, health and safety of pupils is inadequate. Teaching is satisfactory overall but the school is not currently fulfilling its aims as the curriculum is not adequate in Key Stage 1 and pupils do not achieve their potential. Despite these shortcomings, current parents and pupils hold the school in high regard.

Quality of education

The quality of education is satisfactory. There are some examples of good practice with the Nursery and Reception age children, for example in their active learning in a stimulating and well resourced indoor environment. Many aspects of education have receded since the school's registration visit. This can be attributed to the school not being fully prepared for the transition from being a nursery to a school and all of the implications for following through to a purposeful broad and balanced curriculum. At the time of the registration visit, the school was being judged solely on the quality of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The curriculum is satisfactory. While the curriculum in Key Stage 1 is heavily weighted on the core skills of literacy and numeracy, humanities are delivered through alternating geography and history topics. Schemes of work are directly lifted from Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) guidelines, but these are not all effectively adapted to the range of needs and aptitudes of the pupils. The science curriculum is sparse; technology is delivered mainly through design and technology. New high quality resources mean that the use of technological equipment is improving in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The physical education curriculum does not sufficiently build pupils' physical skills across the whole school and there is a lack of resourcing to implement this area of the curriculum. The Key Stage 1 pupils have a very basic aesthetic and creative curriculum, which is again limited by resourcing. Music is covered appropriately within this faith setting in the Early Years Foundation Stage and untuned instruments are available for the children to experience along with the singing of rhymes. Further up the school music is solely covered through Islamic Studies and the chanting of *surahs*. In Key Stage 1, there is minimal planning for children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and their personal, social and health education (PSHE), which is expected to be covered mainly through the daily routines and Islamic Studies rather than as distinct subject areas. This is more thoroughly covered and planned for in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The alternating of certain foundation subjects, many lacking in depth and some not covered discretely, and the total emphasis on Arabic and Islamic

studies every afternoon for pupils in Reception and Years 1 and 2, means that the curriculum is insufficiently broad and balanced. The subject matter only just meets ages and aptitudes of the pupils; there is rarely any effective adaptation of the expectations for different groups or individual children and it is not sufficiently planned to build on their existing knowledge and skills. There are few cross-curricular links between the Early Years Foundation Stage and the Key Stage 1 curriculum and the afternoon Islamic curriculum is also kept very separate. This impacts on pupils' ability to make effective connections in their learning.

The quality of teaching and assessment is satisfactory overall but inconsistent across the school. Much of the teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good, with the exception of delivering an effective outdoor curriculum and some of the input for Reception children. It is satisfactory at best across the rest of the school and some teaching is inadequate. The teaching of physical education is weak across the school due to a lack of effective planning and poor resourcing. The school has little awareness of the quality of teaching and learning overall as this has not been effectively monitored. Planning for Key Stage 1 pupils is ineffective. Long-term plans for Key Stage 1 bear little resemblance to what is happening in lessons. Daily plans are weak and frequently without learning objectives or success criteria. Pupils are not given targets to work towards. Those pupils who learn quickly are frequently held back by the necessity for others to repeat and consolidate their learning. The work is not sufficiently adapted for the range of pupils' needs. There has been no moderation of the work in pupils' books to check standards. The marking of work is unhelpful and does not support children's improvement. Often teachers' expectations are too low.

Pupils mostly show interest in their lessons. They are well motivated and are able to work independently in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Their interest fluctuates further up the school. Reception and Year 1 pupils' interest trails off in Arabic and Islamic studies as they are sitting passively for extended periods. Planning is weak in these lessons. Pupils understand the importance of reading Arabic and appreciate the teachings of Islam and other faiths. They do not, however, always specifically understand what they are learning on a daily basis as learning objectives are only shared at the beginning of each unit and not at the beginning of each lesson. Pupils do not always comprehend what they are chanting from the Qur'an but are given support when they do not understand and are taught the meanings of some supplications. Some subject areas are overly reliant on worksheets and, in Islamic studies, on workbooks. Some teachers are not asking open-ended thought-provoking questions. This therefore impacts on children's ability to solve problems. Teachers do not make good use of the time available in all lessons and some of the activities presented to the children have little learning value. Pupils in Key Stage 1 make satisfactory gains in their reading and spellings, which is aided by good levels of parental support. They are helped to develop confidence in their reading in Arabic at school and are making good progress in this.

The quality of assessing children's progress is inconsistent across the school. It is very rigorous in the Early Years Foundation Stage and has been moderated for accuracy. There has been no moderation of pupils' progress in literacy and numeracy

further up the school. Work in books confirms pupils are making satisfactory progress over time. The school does not follow the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice in respect of any pupils not making satisfactory gains in their learning and for whom there are any concerns.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

The school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The Islamic ethos of the school promotes pupils' spiritual and moral development well. Staff take advantage of opportunities to reinforce guidelines for good behaviour and have high expectations in this area. Consequently, pupils' behaviour is good overall. The school provides a clear moral code which is reinforced by the school's Islamic ethos; pupils understand the school rules and can distinguish right from wrong. Pupils' relationships with each other and their teachers are positive and they show consideration and respect for others. Lunchtimes provide enjoyable social opportunities. Most pupils play together showing courtesy and respect to each other, hence raising children's self-esteem. Good relationships exist between the school and members of other faiths. The school also promotes tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions through its Islamic studies curriculum and the celebration of a wide range of cultural and religious festivals.

Attendance is also good and pupils mostly enjoy their education. Consideration has been given to how they might make a positive contribution to the school by being confident to take on different roles and responsibilities, such as being a monitor. Preparation for pupils' future economic well-being is good overall as the school gives good emphasis to the core skills of literacy and mathematics. The emphasis on speaking and listening assists pupils' language development in English. They are becoming more competent in using information and communication technology in the Early Years Foundation Stage, although this is not currently used as well in Key Stage 1. Pupils are provided with a knowledge of public institutions and services in England through the curriculum and through a range of visits into the community and visitors into the mosque.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Provision for the welfare, health and safety of pupils is inadequate, although most of the welfare requirements in the Early Years Foundation Stage are met. While the school believes it gives this aspect high priority, not all of the independent school regulations are met and there are some inadequate security arrangements at the school. Risk is minimised in the Early Years Foundation Stage as staff always accompany children as they move around indoors and outdoors. Staff training in safe recruitment and in child protection is up to date. There is a named child protection officer and an appropriately qualified first-aider on the premises at all times. The school has all of the required policies in place for safeguarding pupils' well-being and which take account of the latest guidance, although the school has failed to include the requirement to notify Ofsted of any referral to the local area safeguarding team.

Because of the small scale of the school, and staff knowing pupils well, pupils mostly feel safe in school. There are some shortcomings in the recording of fire safety requirements. An attendance register has been maintained but the admissions register is not compliant. Pupils understand about eating healthily and Islamic values are shared about this. However, the provision for physical activity is lacking and there are no extra-curricular activities which encourage sports. Little use is made of local facilities for this. The school meets the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act, as amended.

Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors

The school complies with all of the regulations for the appointment of staff. All applicants, volunteers and trustees, are checked with the Criminal Records Bureau and their references and qualifications are corroborated. All the required information is kept on a single central record, which is easily accessible to the responsible authorities.

Premises and accommodation at the school

The accommodation is maintained to an acceptable standard and is suitable for school use, although due to being located on the first floor, there is no direct access to the outdoor play area for those children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. This compromises the effectiveness of the curriculum for the youngest children and the curriculum for physical development across the school. The environment is clean and orderly, although pupils cannot access resources easily in Year 1 and 2 due to restrictions in display and storage caused by the use of the building by others. The classrooms are of a good size, but there are no specialist teaching areas or direct access to a kitchen. This provides further restrictions on the curriculum. Washing and toilet facilities are satisfactory. There are appropriate facilities for pupils who are ill. Staff and pupils make regular use of local facilities such as the nearby shops and park. However, they have not exploited all of the potential of trips into the community or further afield.

Provision of information

The prospectus provides parents and prospective parents with an acceptable overview of the school's aims and its broader provision. The information supplied meets all but one of the regulations; a copy of the school's safeguarding policy has not been made available to parents and carers. The school understands that parents may request information about the number of formal complaints registered in the past year. Reports to parents are of high quality in the Early Years Foundation Stage and incorporate individual 'Learning Journals'. Reports for older children cover all areas taught but tend to lack detail on children's individual progress in some subject areas, such as information and communication technology and art. The school has not yet had children at the school long enough to reference their attainment to national norms at the end of the Key Stage 1. Despite the shortcomings of the school

found during the inspection, parental satisfaction with the school and the individual attention their child is getting is high.

Manner in which complaints are to be handled

The school has a written complaints procedure which meets all of the regulations. The school has received no formal complaints in the last year.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

The overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactory. The provision is satisfactory overall with many aspects being good, but the setting does not fully embrace all of the learning and development requirements as it is not providing effective learning outdoors and there is a lack of provision to promote children's physical development. There is a good quality indoor learning environment and a wide range of activities, including many opportunities for children's independent learning and self-selection.

Staff have regard for the majority of welfare requirements in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The unit is reasonably well resourced; new high-quality technological resources have been acquired. However, there is insufficient climbing or balancing equipment and no regular access to what is available. Children have a healthy snack daily but fresh drinking water is not routinely available from the school. Adults preparing and handling snacks are not competent to do so. The safeguarding policy does not make reference to notifying Ofsted in the event of a referral to the local area safeguarding team, as required. Staff are particularly vigilant of children's safety in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Children's enjoyment of the activities overall is good, although the Reception children enjoy the afternoon sessions to a lesser extent as they are listening for too long. This impacts on their overall satisfactory outcomes as they spend less time engaged in activities to promote the six areas of learning. Children's learning journeys and highlight charts indicate some good progress from low starting points in respect of personal, social and emotional development; communication, language and literacy; and creative development.

The leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are satisfactory overall. Staff engage well with parents and carers; they provide high quality displays and information. The team devised an improvement plan following the last Early Years inspection in December 2008 and have worked diligently towards this. Staff are well trained and committed to improvement. This is demonstrated in their sustaining systems of documentation effectively, including good systems for observing children; assessing their progress and using this information to inform the planning. The necessary risk assessments are completed regularly for most aspects of provision.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The proprietor has ensured that the school meets The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, schedule 1 ('the Regulations'), with the exception of those listed below.⁵

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of the quality of education provided (standards in part 1) and must:

- ensure that there is an effective curriculum policy for Key Stage 1 pupils which is supported with appropriate plans and schemes of work and implement it effectively (paragraph 2(1))
- ensure that the teaching involves well planned lessons, effective teaching methods, suitable activities and appropriate management of class time (paragraph 3(c))
- ensure that teachers have a good understanding of the needs and prior attainments of the pupils and take these into account in the planning of the lessons (paragraph 3(d))
- ensure that teachers demonstrate appropriate knowledge and understanding of the subject matter being taught (paragraph 3(e))
- ensure that classroom resources are an adequate quality, quantity and range and that they are used effectively to enhance learning (paragraph 3(f))
- implement a broader framework to assess pupils' work regularly and thoroughly in all subject areas and utilise information effectively to plan teaching so that pupils make improved progress (paragraph 3(g)).

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of provision for welfare, health and safety of pupils (standards in part 3) and must:

- make appropriate arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school (paragraph 7)
- ensure there are effective measures to ensure pupils' health and safety which have regard to the DfES guidance *health and safety: responsibilities and powers (DfES 0803/2001)* (paragraph 11)
- ensure that the school complies with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 by holding regular fire drills and recording them and by ensuring that all of the relevant alarms and electrical equipments are tested (paragraph 13)

⁵ www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2010/1997/contents/made

- Maintain an admissions register which is maintained in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (paragraph 17)

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of the premises and accommodation at the school (standards in part 5) and must:

- ensure that there are adequate security arrangements in place for the grounds and buildings (paragraph 23 (d))
- organise the school in such a way that the safety and welfare of pupils is safeguarded and their education not interrupted by other users (paragraph 23(e))
- ensure that there are appropriate arrangements for providing outside space for pupils to play safely (paragraph 23(s)).

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of the provision of information (standards in part 6) and must:

- make available to parents and carers a copy of the safeguarding children policy (paragraph 24(1)(c)).

In order to comply with the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage, the school must:

- develop the outdoor learning environment and provide good quality activities outdoors which are appropriately resourced
- develop the provision for physical development, particularly in relation to children's climbing and balancing skills.

In order to comply with the welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage, the school must:

- ensure that those persons responsible for preparing and handling food are competent to do so, for example by undertaking a basic food hygiene course
- make drinking water freely available
- make sure the safeguarding policy makes appropriate reference to notifying Ofsted.

Inspection judgements

outstanding	good	satisfactory	inadequate
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The quality of education

Overall quality of education			✓	
How well the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of pupils			✓	
How effective teaching and assessment are in meeting the full range of pupils' needs			✓	
How well pupils make progress in their learning			✓	

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Quality of provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development		✓		
The behaviour of pupils		✓		

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The overall welfare, health and safety of pupils				✓
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The quality of the Early Years Foundation Stage provision

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage			✓	
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage			✓	
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage			✓	
Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage			✓	

School details

School status	Independent		
Type of school	Primary		
Date school opened	29 December 2009		
Age range of pupils	3–8		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 6	Girls: 5	Total: 11
Number on roll (part-time pupils)	Boys: 3	Girls: 1	Total: 4
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
Number of pupils who are looked after	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
Annual fees (day pupils)	£750		
Address of school	House of Light, The Mosque, Frank Street, Nuneaton CV11 5RB		
Telephone number	024 7638 2372		
Email address	houseoflightnursery@gmail.com		
Headteacher	Mufti Muhammed Badat		
Proprietor	Nuneaton Muslim Education Trust		