

# The Fountain

109–111 New Cross Street, Bradford BD5 8BP

## Inspection dates

26–28 February 2019

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders do not have any formal plans setting out how they will improve the school. This absence of a clear strategy for the school's improvement is limiting the scale and pace of change.
- Leaders do not systematically monitor, analyse and evaluate their effect on the quality of teaching, the curriculum and pupils' outcomes. As a result, leaders and teachers are not held to account fully for the progress pupils make.
- Leaders have been slow to act on some of the areas for improvement identified at the previous Ofsted inspection in 2017.
- At times, the most able pupils are not challenged and stretched enough in their learning.
- Outcomes in GCSE-level mathematics for pupils who finished Year 11 in 2018 were poor in comparison with English, science, religious education (RE) and languages.
- Staff are aware of their safeguarding responsibilities but leaders' records of the training that staff have received are incomplete.

### The school has the following strengths

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is, overall, good. Teachers generally set work which is well matched to pupils' abilities.
- Pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare are a strength of the school. Pupils are confident learners, proud of their school and want to do well.
- In the GCSE examinations in 2018, pupils' attainment in Urdu and Arabic was high. Across most subjects and year groups, pupils currently in the school are making good progress for the majority of the time.
- Leaders ensure that the independent school standards are met consistently.

### Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets all of the independent school standards as set out in the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and associated requirements.

## Full report

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
  - ensuring that the information gathered by leaders is analysed and evaluated accurately to plan, monitor and refine actions for the school's improvement, particularly for checking the progress of pupils of different abilities and the quality of teaching and learning
  - increasing levels of accountability in the school by sharpening the focus on pupils' progress so that staff at all levels are held to account for the progress pupils make.
- Further improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that teachers set work which consistently stretches and challenges the most able pupils so that their attainment and progress improve.
- Build on the recent improvements in the teaching of mathematics so that outcomes improve.
- Ensure that all staff receive basic safeguarding training from an appropriate body, in addition to the training already undertaken, so that records of training are complete and provide a 'baseline' for ongoing safeguarding updates.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Requires improvement

- Since the previous inspection, leaders have acted to improve most of the areas of weakness identified during the inspection. Leaders do not have, however, an overview of how to further improve the school or an accurate evaluation of the quality of education in the school.
- While the headteacher has some ideas about how to improve pupils' outcomes further, there is no formal school improvement plan in place which sets out the actions leaders are taking or plan to take. This means that leaders do not systematically monitor, analyse and evaluate the school's performance. As a result, leaders' understanding of how to raise the school's performance further is limited.
- Leaders do not analyse and evaluate effectively the information the school gathers. For example, leaders do not evaluate the quality of teaching and learning well enough. Although the headteacher meets with teachers regularly, the records of these discussions are focused primarily on what topics have been covered, not on how well pupils are progressing and what actions need to be put in place to support any pupils who fall behind.
- Leaders have ensured that teachers can access some training for their professional development. However, it is limited in its scope and, consequently, teachers do not have sufficient opportunity to further develop their teaching.
- Leaders have a system in place to evaluate the progress pupils make from their starting points, which was an area for improvement identified at the previous inspection in 2017. Leaders have rightly recognised that this current system is not helpful in enabling them to effectively evaluate pupils' progress. To address this, leaders have very recently implemented a new system. It is too soon to say whether the new system is effective because it is not working to its full potential.
- The headteacher, supported by the proprietor, has a commitment to the achievement of all pupils in the school. The school staff share this determination and their morale is high.
- The curriculum is effective in supporting pupils' personal development and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural growth. Pupils spoke positively to inspectors about how the curriculum educates them about other faiths and cultures. To further support pupils' personal development, there is a range of visits and extra-curricular activities which allow pupils to experience life beyond their own community and to prepare them for life in modern Britain. For example, recently, pupils have visited a home for older people, a local church and cathedral, museums, a neighbouring co-educational school, an apprenticeship fair and a careers skills event.

## Governance

- The proprietor has taken effective action to ensure that all of the independent school standards are met.
- The proprietor meets regularly with the headteacher to discuss all matters relating to the school's work. However, there are no written records of these discussions. Consequently,

the proprietor is not in a position to hold the headteacher to account because he has no systematic means of doing so from one meeting to the next. This weakness was identified at the previous standard inspection.

- While the proprietor has an awareness of the school's strengths and weaknesses, the absence of any formal plans for improvement limits his ability to improve the school's performance.
- The proprietor is committed to the success of the school and to the provision of a safe, nurturing environment for pupils. He has ensured that pupils have access to a broad and balanced curriculum which provides opportunities for them to become active British citizens.

## Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. There is a strong culture of safeguarding throughout the school.
- Leaders carry out the necessary checks on the suitability of staff to work in the school. This vetting procedure meets legal requirements.
- Leaders ensure that the staff with particular responsibility for child protection matters have accessed training and that appropriate safeguarding information is shared with staff. Leaders maintain records of communication with external agencies, such as the local authority's children's services, and record any actions taken by the school.
- Staff have a secure understanding of their safeguarding responsibilities. They know the signs of abuse to look out for and the steps they should take if concerned. For example, staff spoken to by inspectors have a good understanding of issues such as extremism, honour-based violence, forced marriage and female genital mutilation.
- While staff knowledge of safeguarding issues and their responsibilities is sound, leaders' records of who has accessed what training are incomplete. This makes it hard for leaders to determine which updates are necessary and when.
- The school has a safeguarding policy that is in line with the latest guidance from the government. This policy is available to parents and carers on request.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

**Good**

- Teachers demonstrate strong subject knowledge across a range of subjects, in both Islamic studies and the national curriculum subjects such as English, mathematics, science, languages and RE. As a result, pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding are typically well developed.
- Most of the time, teachers assess pupils' understanding at regular intervals before moving on to the next part of the lesson. Frequently, teachers make effective use of questions to check pupils' understanding. Sometimes, teachers use questions to encourage pupils to think hard and be challenged in their learning. On occasions, pupils do not have enough time to apply their skills and consolidate their learning before the teacher moves the lesson on.
- Overall, teachers have high expectations of what most pupils can achieve. As a result of

these expectations, for much of the time, pupils take pride in their work and its presentation. This is particularly the case in pupils' work in Islamic studies. Teachers expect pupils to have positive attitudes to learning and pupils meet their expectations for the large majority of the time. Throughout the inspection, inspectors saw evidence of strong relationships between staff and pupils.

- Teachers' lesson planning is typically effective in meeting the different needs of most pupils. Teachers ensure that lesson content is well matched to the school's programmes of study across a range of subjects, including Islamic studies and national curriculum subjects. On occasions, however, the level of challenge in tasks is not as high as it could be for the most able pupils. At these times, pupils do not make the strong gains in their learning that they are capable of.
- Homework is set regularly across the curriculum and its completion is carefully monitored by teachers. As a consequence, pupils' understanding of how they should take some responsibility for their own learning is well nurtured.
- Across a range of subjects and year groups, pupils are given opportunities to read aloud. Sometimes, this involves reading aloud their own work. At these times, pupils are encouraged to comment on each other's work so that it might be improved and for others to learn from. Due to the strong relationships between pupils and teachers, pupils engage in this activity respectfully and positively.
- Occasionally, some literacy errors are not picked up by teachers. There is some inconsistency in the extent to which all teachers apply the school's policy for correcting literacy errors.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are confident and have positive attitudes to their learning. They value their education. During the inspection, the large majority of pupils were punctual and equipped for learning. Typically, pupils take pride in their work.
- Leaders have ensured that pupils are educated about how to stay safe when online. Pupils who spoke to inspectors could demonstrate a strong understanding of the potential risks of social media and of the internet. Pupils have been taught about the risks associated with radicalisation and extremism, although their understanding is more variable than that of general e-safety. Leaders have also taught pupils about the dangers of drugs and alcohol.
- Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe at school and that bullying is rare. They are confident that, should it happen, it would be dealt with quickly and effectively. All of the pupils spoken to by inspectors said that they would feel able to tell an adult if worried about anything.
- Leaders have maintained the improvements they made to careers education, information, advice and guidance identified in the progress monitoring inspection in March 2018. As a result, pupils are knowledgeable about a wide range of possible career options open to them, including medicine and engineering. A programme of appropriate work experience

for pupils in Year 10 is in place, which further prepares them for life in modern Britain.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils conduct themselves well throughout the day, in both lessons and around the school. They respond quickly to teachers' instructions. Low-level disruption is rare.
- The rate of pupils' attendance during the academic year 2017/18 was close to the national average. In the academic year to date, the rate of pupils' attendance is slightly below the national average for the full year. The figure has been affected by pupils' illness and unauthorised family holidays. Leaders monitor pupils' attendance carefully and take appropriate, reasonable steps to work with parents when pupils are absent.

## Outcomes for pupils

**Good**

- The absence of nationally published information about some pupils' attainment before they started at the school presents some challenges in evaluating the progress made by pupils in their GCSE subjects of English, mathematics, science, RE, Urdu and Arabic.
- Information presented by the school suggests that, for pupils finishing Year 11 at the end of the academic year 2017/18, their attainment in Urdu and Arabic was high, with most pupils achieving GCSE grades A\* and A.
- Leaders' information indicates that, in 2018 in GCSE English, science and RE, most Year 11 pupils' attainment was at least broadly in line with their starting points. In mathematics, however, pupils' attainment was poor in comparison with their other subjects.
- The pupils currently in school, across a range of subjects and year groups, are making typically good progress. This is the case in both Islamic studies and in national curriculum subjects. While there is still more to be done, the progress of pupils in mathematics is improving quickly following leaders' actions after disappointing GCSE outcomes in 2018.
- The most able pupils sometimes make less progress than that of which they are capable. This happens when the work does not challenge or stretch them enough.
- At the end of Year 11, pupils progress to a variety of colleges for A levels or other studies such as a teaching assistant course, or to complete further Islamic studies. Given their GCSE results, pupils have moved onto courses which are appropriately challenging for them.

## School details

Unique reference number	134587
DfE registration number	380/6116
Inspection number	10061267

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	10 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	87
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Mohammad Afsar
Chair	Not applicable
Headteacher	Abeer Niehad
Annual fees (day pupils)	£1,795
Telephone number	01274 735 913
Website	Not applicable
Email address	admin@Fountain.School.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	17–19 January 2017

### Information about this school

- The Fountain is run by the proprietor and the headteacher and is an Islamic school for girls aged between 10 and 16 years.
- The school received an Ofsted progress monitoring inspection in March 2018, following the previous standard inspection in January 2017.
- The school building is used in the evenings and at weekends as a madrasa. The proprietor is one of the local imams leading the students' studies at these times.
- During the school day, 15 former pupils, aged 16 to 18, use the school building to attend classes as part of their Islamic studies. They do not attend any classes with the registered pupils. Appropriate safeguarding checks have been carried out.

- There are no pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. All pupils speak English as an additional language and are fluent in English.
- The school's aims state that it intends to provide 'a balanced high-quality Islamic and national curriculum...within a secure Islamic all-female environment'. It also aims to 'create in her [the pupil] an emotional attachment to Islam and enable her to follow the Koran and Sunnah and be a law-abiding British citizen prepared to contribute to society'.
- The school does not use any alternative educational provision.

## **Information about this inspection**

- Inspectors visited a range of subjects and year groups, in both Islamic studies and the

English national curriculum subjects.

- During these visits to lessons, inspectors looked at pupils' books and spoke to them about their learning.
- Inspectors met with two groups of pupils formally, from Years 7 to 11. An inspector spoke informally to pupils at lunchtime.
- An inspector met with a group of staff.
- Inspectors met with the proprietor and the headteacher.
- Inspectors looked at a sample of pupils' books from different subjects.
- Inspectors reviewed a wide range of documents, including: safeguarding information; behaviour and attendance information; pupils' attainment information; school policies; school information for parents and the community; and records of meetings.
- Inspectors took into account the two free-text responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents, Parent View, the eight responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for staff and the 24 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for pupils.

### **Inspection team**

Steve Shaw, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Debbie Redshaw

Her Majesty's Inspector

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