

# Bahr Academy

72 Sceptre Street, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Tyne and Wear NE4 6PR

## Inspection dates

3–5 July 2019

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Good</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Good</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- Leaders have ensured that the independent school standards (ISS) are met.
- The overall quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good. Teachers know pupils very well and create a positive atmosphere for learning. Pupils are able to answer questions and ask questions in an environment where they feel safe to do so.
- Leaders ensure that a comprehensive programme of personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) is in place. Consequently, pupils learn about life in modern Britain and are aware of, for example, the protected characteristics in the Equalities Act (2010) and how to stay safe online.
- Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. Pupils are polite and courteous and want to do well in their education and so try hard. Work is beautifully presented in both the Islamic curriculum and the secular curriculum.
- Pupils find out about a broad range of careers but are less clear on the pathways they need to take to access them.
- Pupils' attainment for GCSE is broadly in line with national averages for English and mathematics. Attainment in GCSE science and history is not as strong and has declined from the previous academic year.
- Current pupils' books show that they are making better progress in science and history than they have previously. However, there are still too few opportunities for practical work in science. Progress in mathematics and English remains strong.
- The trustees ensure that they are trained appropriately so that they can hold leaders to account for the quality of education in the school.
- Teachers plan to meet the needs of pupils. However, on occasion, work is not challenging enough, particularly for the most able pupils.
- Leaders have a good awareness of the strengths and areas for development in the school. However, they do not analyse the impact of their actions on pupils' progress sufficiently well.

### 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.

## Full report

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

- Improve the quality of leadership and management by continuing to develop the school self-evaluation by carefully analysing the impact of leaders' actions on the progress pupils make.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning by ensuring that all teachers have the highest expectations of what pupils can achieve and plan learning that challenges all pupils.
- Further improve pupils' outcomes by:
  - improving the quality of teaching and learning in science and history
  - ensuring that teachers raise expectations and challenge pupils more in their learning, particularly those pupils who are the most able
  - ensuring that there are more opportunities for pupils to take part in practical work in science
  - providing more opportunities for pupils to learn about and visit a range of post-16 education providers.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- Leaders have successfully created a school culture in which pupils want to succeed. Leaders of the Islamic curriculum and the school curriculum work well together to ensure that pupils are keen to do well in all aspects of their studies.
- Leaders have taken on board the areas for improvement from the previous inspection. They have improved the quality of the school development plan, improved access to careers education and broadened the curriculum, and there are more opportunities for pupils to discuss their learning in class.
- Staff receive regular training throughout the academic year. Training is based on leaders' findings from observations of teaching and learning. Staff also receive regular safeguarding training.
- The headteacher ensures that pupils have opportunities to develop their social, moral, spiritual and cultural understanding. For example, there are opportunities to visit places of worship of different faiths and opportunities to fundraise for charity and to make traditional food to share with the local community.
- Leaders acknowledge the disappointing outcomes in science and history for the previous Year 11 cohort of pupils. They have taken swift action to improve the quality of teaching and learning in these subjects.
- Parents and carers say that they are very happy with the quality of education that their child receives. One parent said: 'Bahr Academy is a unique school with a beautiful ethos and if I had 10 children I would send all of them there.'
- The curriculum on offer is compliant with the ISS. Since the previous inspection, leaders have made curriculum improvements by adding GCSE citizenship, first-aid training and sports leadership awards. However, leaders have not ensured that there are sufficient opportunities for pupils to do practical work in science.
- Although leaders have improved the quality of the school self-evaluation and development plan, the plan still does not fully analyse the impact of leaders' actions on improving pupils' progress.

### Governance

- Trustees are knowledgeable about the work of the school. They work with the headteacher and the head of Islamic studies to ensure that the school provides a good quality of education for pupils.
- Minutes from meetings show that there is wide-ranging discussion between the headteacher and the trustees. The trustees ensure that they hold the headteacher to account; however, they are not always sufficiently focused on the progress pupils make.
- Trustees have ensured that they have had training relating to safeguarding and the ISS. This helps them to have the appropriate knowledge to support and challenge the headteacher.

## Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The proprietor has ensured that there is a safeguarding policy that is up to date with the latest Government guidance. This is available to parents on request and will be available on the website when it goes live.
- Staff receive appropriate safeguarding training and are aware of the signs to look out for that may indicate that a pupil is struggling or vulnerable. Paperwork to deal with safeguarding incidents is in place and staff know how to use it.
- A 'Prevent' risk assessment is in place. Leaders have thought carefully about the potential vulnerabilities of pupils and have appropriate actions in place to reduce the risks. For example, through assemblies and the PSHE programme, pupils are aware of how people can become radicalised. Pupils are confident that they have staff to go to if they have any worries or concerns.
- The site is secure, because there is an appropriate system in place to control entry to the building and appropriate signing-in procedures. Pupils and staff say that they feel safe in the school.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

**Good**

- Teachers take every opportunity to support and develop pupils' literacy skills. Pupils have the opportunity to read out loud, present to their peers and frequently check and improve their spellings. Leaders have also implemented a reading lesson into the curriculum so that pupils further develop their reading skills.
- Regular assessment takes place in the Islamic and secular curriculums. Teachers use this information from assessments and their knowledge of what pupils can and cannot do to plan lessons. If pupils fall behind, teachers provide them with opportunities to catch up.
- Staff have high expectations for pupils' conduct. Consequently, pupils apply themselves to their studies and have very positive attitudes to learning.
- Teachers' promote fundamental British values at every opportunity. This is seen in pupils' work books and also in Islamic studies lessons, where modern society was discussed and contrasted alongside aspects of the Muslim faith.
- Most teachers check pupils' understanding by asking questions; however, there are missed opportunities for teachers to ask questions that probe and deepen pupils' understanding further, particularly for the most able.
- In some lessons, activities do not always challenge pupils well enough. For example, teachers do not always begin the lessons with the highest expectations for what pupils can do and what pupils can achieve.
- Pupils' work books show that they have an understanding of science and are making progress in their learning. However, there are too few opportunities for pupils to take part in practical work.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- There is a comprehensive programme of PSHE education in place. It is woven effectively through Islamic studies and the secular curriculum and helps pupils to develop a good understanding of life in modern Britain, how to keep themselves healthy and safe and how this links with their religious values.
- Most pupils are confident. In lessons, they offer answers to questions and are not afraid to get things wrong. Pupils are happy to present to one another, because the atmosphere for learning is positive.
- Pupils are confident to deal with risks they may face in the future. They are clear about risks in the local area and more widely and confident on how to stay safe online.
- Pupils are confident in using language associated with the protected characteristics, for example those describing sexual orientation. However, there are missed opportunities for pupils to discuss and debate in depth to deepen their understanding of this topic.
- Pupils have access to independent careers advice through a variety of different sources, for example through teachers, external visitors and from an independent careers adviser. There is, however, insufficient opportunity for pupils to find out about and visit a variety of post-16 providers.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Throughout the day, in lessons and in social times, pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They are committed to their studies and are very polite and welcoming to visitors.
- Pupils take great pride in their work, and this exemplifies their excellent attitudes to learning that are seen throughout the day. Pupils are smart in their school uniforms.
- Pupils are punctual to school. The small number of incidents when pupils are late are dealt with swiftly by school leaders.
- Pupils attend exceptionally well, and attendance is well above the national average for secondary schools.

## Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Most pupils make good progress from their starting points in English, mathematics and Urdu. Pupils make good progress in the Islamic curriculum.
- Last year, pupils' GCSE attainment in science and history did not align well with attainment in other subjects. Science and history attainment was weak in comparison. Senior leaders took immediate action, and current pupils are making much stronger progress and are on track to attain more highly.

- Following school, most pupils choose to continue their Islamic studies course alongside some A-level study. They do this through home education. Few pupils progress to college, sixth form or into employment, although all remain in education.
- The school has a very small library that contains a variety of books. Teachers make good use of these resources in reading lessons, and pupils frequently borrow books from the library. This means that pupils read widely and often and consequently expand their vocabulary.

## School details

Unique reference number	136258
DfE registration number	391/6040
Inspection number	10105726

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	Girls
Number of pupils on the school roll	28
Proprietor	Muhammad Abdulmuheet
Chair	Sadiq Rahman
Headteacher	Syeda Akhter
Annual fees (day pupils)	£3,700
Telephone number	0191 273 1907
Website	<a href="http://www.bahracademy.co.uk">www.bahracademy.co.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:info@bahracademy.co.uk">info@bahracademy.co.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	14–16 March 2017

## Information about this school

- Bahr Academy is an Islamic faith secondary school for girls located in the Elswick area of Newcastle-upon-Tyne. It is owned by the Bahr Academy Trust.
- The school is registered to accept up to 30 girls and currently has 28 pupils on roll. Pupils come from the local area and are all of Asian heritage. No pupils speak English as an additional language and no pupils have an education, health and care plan.
- The school aims to have a culture of excellence, where all pupils are kind and British values intertwine with the Islamic ethos of the school.
- The school does not use any alternative education provision.

- The school intends to relocate to a new, purposely renovated property. This development has been underway since before the previous inspection and requires further refurbishment. The trustees are unable to say when the building is likely to be ready.
- The school was previously inspected in March 2017 and was judged to be good.



## Information about this inspection

- This standard inspection was commissioned by the DfE, following a complaint related to vandalism of the potential new school and consequently the inspection was brought forward in the inspection cycle.
- The inspector observed teaching and learning, met with pupils, staff, the headteacher and the head of the Islamic curriculum. The inspector also met with the trustees and a group of parents.
- A tour of the premises internally and externally took place.
- There were no responses to Ofsted's staff or pupil questionnaire. There were 21 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents, which were considered during the inspection.

## Inspection team

Debbie Redshaw, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

### Parent View

You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit [www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk), or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted).

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/), write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

This publication is available at [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted).

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2019