

Lady Aisha Academy

2 Victoria Road, (Annex Building), Barking, Essex IG11 8PY

Inspection dates

26 September 2019

Overall outcome

The school does not meet all of the independent school standards that were checked during this inspection

Main inspection findings

Part 2. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

Paragraph 5(b)(i), 5(b)(vi)

- Pupils who do not attend daily prayers at the mosque remain in school. A register is taken. Pupils reported that, after a certain number of days, staff question if the reason for non-attendance is their menstrual cycle. This personal questioning does not promote pupils' self-esteem and confidence.
- Nor does this practice encourage respect for women, as set out in the Equality Act 2010.
- Following a visit from the local authority in April 2019, the headteacher – who is also the proprietor – put a policy in place to stop this practice of questioning pupils about the duration of their menstrual periods. This guidance has not been followed by staff and the practice continues. At the time of this inspection, the headteacher was not aware of this.
- The standards in this part of the regulations are not met.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraph 7(a), 7(b)

- The school's overarching safeguarding policy is up to date and reflects the Secretary of State's latest guidance. The safeguarding policy is available on the school's website.
- Staff receive regular training on safeguarding issues such as extremism and radicalisation and the 'Prevent' duty. Staff know the procedures to follow if they have any concerns about a pupil's safety or well-being.
- The questioning of pupils about their menstrual cycles in relation to attendance at prayers does not promote pupils' welfare. This practice does not reflect the Secretary of State's guidance that governing bodies and proprietors should ensure that appropriate policies and procedures are adopted to safeguard and promote children's welfare.
- The standards in this part of the regulations are not met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraph 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b), 34(1)(c)

- Leaders have not ensured that staff follow guidance regarding the appropriate questioning of pupils. As a result, standards relating to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and to the promotion of pupils' welfare are unmet. Paragraphs 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b) and 34(1)(c) are unmet.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school does not meet the requirements of the schedule to The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements that were checked during this inspection, as set out in the annex of this report. Not all of the standards and associated requirements were checked during this inspection.

School details

Unique reference number	136746
DfE registration number	301/6003
Inspection number	10119826

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 status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Girls
Number of pupils on the school roll	98
Number of part-time pupils	None
Proprietor	Naeem Aslam
Headteacher	Naeem Aslam
Annual fees (day pupils)	£3,600
Telephone number	07376 104 178
Website	www.ladyaisha.co.uk
Email address	enquiries@ladyaisha.co.uk
Date of previous standard inspection	6–8 November 2018

Information about this school

- Lady Aisha Academy is an independent day school for girls, with an Islamic ethos. The school is located in the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham.
- The school is situated in its own building on the site of Barking Mosque.
- The headteacher is also the proprietor. There is no governing body.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school's last full inspection was in November 2018. At this time, the school was judged to be good and all the requirements of the independent school standards were met.

Information about this inspection

- This emergency inspection was carried out at the request of the regulating authority, the Department for Education (DfE). The DfE had received information that the school was tracking pupils' menstrual cycles.
- This inspection was conducted with no notice.
- I reviewed the school's arrangements for safeguarding and child protection, including the school's policies, referrals made to the local authority, internal registers, staff training and the effectiveness of the school's work to protect pupils from risk of harm.
- During this inspection, I held meetings with the headteacher, a safeguarding lead and a group of staff. In addition, I met with 12 pupils from key stages 3 and 4. I also spoke on the telephone with a representative from the local authority.

Inspection team

Carolyn Dickinson, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex. Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school does not meet the following independent school standards

Part 2. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

- 5 The standard about the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils at the school is met if the proprietor-
 - 5(b)(i) enables pupils to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence; and
 - 5(b)(vi) encourages respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Equality Act.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 7 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that-
 - 7(a) arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school; and
 - 7(b) such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

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 roles so that the independent school standards are met consistently;
 - 34(1)(b) fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently; and
 - 34(1)(c) actively promote the well-being of pupils.

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