

Inspection of Imam Muhammad Zakariya School

2 Bairstow Street, Preston, Lancashire PR1 3TN

Inspection dates: 12–14 November 2019

Overall effectiveness

Good

The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Early years provision

Requires improvement

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

Does the school meet the independent school standards?

Yes

What is it like to attend this school?

The school is a very happy and welcoming community. Pupils are extremely polite and friendly. They talked with pride about all the good things in their school. Pupils' enjoyment of their learning and confidence in their achievement are shown by the happy smiles seen in every classroom.

Pupils' behaviour is excellent. This means that everyone can make the most of their experiences in school and do well. Pupils told us that they get along together very well. Bullying hardly ever happens but, if it does, pupils have confidence in the staff to sort it out. Pupils told us that they feel safe because of the way teachers look after them.

Adults' expectations of pupils are very high. This encourages pupils to have high expectations of themselves. Pupils try their very best to do well in their learning and to live up to the school's positive values. These values reflect important Islamic principles, such as kindness, tolerance and respect.

Children start to build up their knowledge right from the start of the early years. However, the space available for learning outdoors on the school site is quite limited. Similarly, the facilities for them to learn in this space are uninviting. The outdoor yard area next to the school's basement is not a good enough environment for children to learn in.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Pupils have extremely positive attitudes towards school and everyone in it. They enjoy learning and want to come to school. When they are at school, their impeccable behaviour helps everyone to succeed. Very few pupils are absent.

Staff successfully build up pupils' knowledge in the subjects they study. For example, Year 6 pupils learn about the scientific theory of evolution by considering the ideas of scientists from different cultures across the world. This is part of a well-planned topic that first looks at the differences between a variety of plants and animals. Pupils and children in the early years extend their learning outside school in interesting and exciting ways. For example, pupils often visit local parks. This helps pupils to understand themselves and their place in the wider world. Leaders make sure that the curriculum for citizenship gives pupils the knowledge they need to be active in the community now and in the future. It helps them to understand how they can make a difference. For example, staff make pupils' learning about pollution memorable by arranging for them to take part in litter-picking in the local community.

Pupils learn the same subjects as in the national curriculum. Leaders have chosen the schemes of work carefully. They make sure that teachers know what to teach. Pupils do very well in the national curriculum assessments at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. They learn a lot and remember what they have learned. This is a strength of

many subjects. For example, in mathematics, we saw pupils in Year 5 building and using their knowledge about angles from Year 4. However, pupils do not always use their knowledge as confidently. Sometimes, as in the early years, teachers do not make the most of how experiences set out in the scheme of work link together to build pupils' knowledge. More focus on this would help pupils to think even more like an 'expert' scientist or historian, for example.

Pupils enjoy their artistic and creative education. We saw Year 6 pupils developing their knowledge and skills as they produced increasingly complicated drawings and paintings based on American artists' work. However, pupils' learning in music is narrower. They have limited opportunities to find out about different types and styles of music. Their learning is restricted to different types of Islamic songs and recitations.

Teachers in the early years know the children well. They talk to the children's new teacher before the start of Year 1. This helps pupils to continue to build on their strong reading skills as they get older. They quickly become confident readers. Teachers successfully make sure that pupils are ready for Year 1 by the end of Reception. Nevertheless, teachers could sometimes build more strongly on the knowledge pupils already have when they move into Year 1.

Leaders have not identified any pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities in the school. Teachers are skilled at making sure that pupils of different abilities learn well.

Leaders, including the trustees, make sure that the school meets the independent school standards (ISS) and other requirements, including those about equality and the suitability of the early years provision. They systematically check that the ISS are met as part of their routine work. This has helped them to improve the school, for example by making sure that all inside areas are well maintained and warm, and have the resources needed for pupils' learning. Even though the school does not have a website, its comprehensive set of policies is available to parents and carers on request. Leaders make sure that staff can do their best for the pupils.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and teachers know what is needed to keep pupils safe. Leaders provide regular training and updates in staff meetings. This means that staff build their confidence about safeguarding.

The school's systems for checking that new members of staff are suitable to work with pupils are thorough.

If staff identify that a pupil may be affected by a safeguarding problem, they are persistent in following this up. They work with other professionals when they need to. Leaders make sure that any such pupils get the help they need to be as happy

and safe as possible.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and proprietor)

- Leaders have improved the school's outdoor area for children in the early years since the previous inspection. However, it is still not completely suitable. Leaders need to ensure that this area provides the most effective opportunities for children to learn in an environment that fully supports their physical, learning and welfare needs.
- Teachers of different year groups work together, particularly to prepare for pupils moving class at the end of each year. This did not work as well as possible for all pupils moving into Year 1 this year. Leaders must ensure that teachers in the early years and key stage 1 continue to work closely together so that children and pupils continuously build their knowledge in mathematics and other subjects as they move through the school.
- Leaders are successful in making sure that the school provides pupils with a wide range of knowledge. However, in music, this is not as wide as that experienced by most pupils across the country. Leaders must ensure that the curriculum offered is suitably broad in all subjects.
- Teachers are successful in helping pupils to build deep knowledge about the different things they study. They also provide some effective opportunities for pupils to develop subject-specific skills, for example in practical work in science and by using maps in geography. However, pupils' subject-specific skills are less well developed than their knowledge. Leaders must ensure that the planning and teaching of the curriculum ensure that pupils develop stronger subject-specific skills.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education (DfE) has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you're not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

School details

Unique reference number	132738
DfE registration number	888/6047
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10092283
Type of school	Islamic faith school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	70
Number of part-time pupils	None
Proprietor	Madrasa Tul Imam Muhammad Zakariya
Chair	Bilal Nakhuda
Headteacher	Ayesha Desai
Annual fees (day pupils)	£1,200
Telephone number	01772 881 968
Website	None
Email address	info@imz.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	10–12 January 2017

Information about this school

- This is an Islamic faith primary school.
- The school's previous standard inspection took place on 10–12 January 2017.
- The name of the proprietor on 'Get information about schools' (GIAS), the Department for Education's public record of schools' details, is not accurate. The proprietor is Madrasa Tul Imam Muhammad Zakariya. The proprietor named on GIAS is the chair of this charitable trust.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008. The purpose of the inspection is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

The school meets the independent school standards. These are the requirements set out in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

- On the first two days of the inspection, we looked closely at how the curriculum is provided in citizenship, mathematics, reading and science. We talked with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, teachers and pupils. We looked at plans for the curriculum. We visited lessons and examined pupils' books.
- On the final day, we sought further evidence to test our ideas about the quality of education in the school. We also completed gathering evidence about pupils' behaviour and attitudes, their personal development, the effectiveness of the early years and the leadership and management of the school. We met with leaders to discuss these topics, held a discussion with a trustee and talked with pupils.
- We checked the school's compliance with the independent school standards throughout our inspection activities. As part of this, we completed a tour of the school buildings, accompanied by the headteacher and deputy headteacher. We made additional visits to parts of the premises, including the outside yard used by children in the early years.
- We looked closely at the arrangements for safeguarding pupils. To do this, we met with leaders, talked to other staff and checked with pupils that they felt safe. We looked at documents, such as the school's record of safeguarding checks made when staff are appointed and the safeguarding policy.
- We examined other documents, including the school's self-evaluation document, policies, details of risk assessments, summaries of pupils' success in national curriculum tests and records about pupils' behaviour.

Inspection team

David Selby, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Sue Eastwood

Her Majesty's Inspector

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