

# Inspection of Al-Furqan Solihull

1021 Warwick Road, Solihull B91 3HG

---

Inspection dates: 28–30 January 2020

## **Overall effectiveness**

**Inadequate**

---

The quality of education

**Inadequate**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Inadequate**

Personal development

**Inadequate**

Leadership and management

**Inadequate**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Outstanding

Does the school meet the independent school standards?

**No**

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Al-Furqan Solihull is a small school located in a converted cottage. Several classrooms, such as the science laboratory, are cramped and cluttered. Pupils and parents told us they feel the school day is too short. There are no after-school activities, and there are few opportunities for pupils to explore the world around them. Some pupils are unhappy about this because they feel they are missing out.

Pupils behave well in lessons and treat each other with respect. During breaktime and lunchtimes they chat pleasantly in an area called 'the canopy'. Very occasionally pupils fall out, but when this happens, issues are resolved quickly. Pupils feel safe in school. They told us that they would speak to each other or a member of staff if they were worried. However, their safety is not assured because leaders do not monitor their attendance accurately, and they do not always know where pupils are.

Staff do not have high enough expectations of pupils. Some pupils are frequently late, and almost half are persistently absent. Teachers do not plan or deliver work that is suitable for all pupils. Pupils complete the same work regardless of their ability, and sometimes the work is too easy.

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

Since the previous monitoring inspection, leaders have ensured that the school site is safe. Previously, the school used wooden cabins for teaching. The cabins did not have any heating or a fire alarm. These cabins are no longer used by the school. Previously, the school used a classroom on the first floor with windows that opened dangerously. This classroom is now locked and no longer used. During breaktime and lunchtimes, pupils sometimes play outside. They play in a space that is also used by members of the public to access a mosque which shares the same site. Leaders have ensured that pupils do not use this space at the same time as the public. There is also a locked gate between the mosque and the school.

Leaders have addressed some of the independent school standards that were previously unmet, and the school now complies with schedule 10 of The Equality Act 2010. However, they have not ensured that they are meeting all of the independent school standards. They have not checked attendance well enough and cannot be certain that pupils are safe. There has been insufficient focus on the quality of education and making sure that pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

The quality of education is inadequate. Pupils are split into two groups: pre-GCSE and GCSE. Pupils in Years 7 and 8 begin their GCSEs in some subjects, including Arabic, in Year 7. They begin the rest in Year 8. Pupils have a very short and limited experience of key stage 3. Furthermore, what they study in Year 7 does not connect to the rest of the curriculum. For example, pupils study geography for a term and a half in Year 7, but then never again.

The curriculum is poorly designed, and pupils in key stage 3 are not well prepared for key stage 4. They start key stage 4 without the broad knowledge and skills they need to be successful. This is notable in history and mathematics. Some teachers are required to teach subjects that they are not specialists in. They have not had the training they need to be able to teach these subjects well.

The curriculum is poorly sequenced. In most subjects, teachers use a text book to plan lessons. They work through the text book topic-by-topic and rarely deviate from it. Teachers do not consider whether this is the best order to teach the topics, or how each segment of learning will help pupils in the future. In other subjects, topics jump around in a disjointed way. For example, in English pupils learn how to write persuasive arguments in one lesson before moving onto describing characters from a story in the next. Pupils take tests regularly, but these tests do not always reflect the topics they have been studying.

In key stages 3 and 4, all pupils are given the same work to do, regardless of their ability. The most able pupils are not given opportunities to broaden their knowledge and deepen their understanding. The lower-ability pupils are not given the help that they need to do as well as they could. The curriculum for pupils beyond age 16 is weak. Furthermore, pupils do not receive any careers advice or guidance.

There are a small number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They are not provided with the support they need. Expectations are too low, and the activities they are provided with are sometimes inappropriate. For example, one pupil was asked to learn a glossary in a text book. Communication between leaders and staff is poor. Leaders have not ensured that staff know the pupils' needs, or what they should do to help them learn.

Pupils do not have a rich set of experiences beyond the taught curriculum. There are currently no extra-curricular activities available. A small number of activities have been offered in the past, but very few pupils have benefited from them. There are very rarely any opportunities to take part in trips. Last year, some pupils got fed up of the lack of opportunity and asked if they could go to a science fair. Their request was refused. Leaders have a plan for teaching personal, social, health and economic education. However, they do not follow it. For example, pupils are not taught about how to lead healthy lifestyles. Leaders do not have any plans in place to teach pupils about the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. There are limited opportunities for pupils to learn about other faiths and cultures. Moreover, there are no opportunities for pupils to work with the local community, or to learn about public institutions. Pupils are not being prepared for adult life as well as they should be.

Pupils are compliant and conduct themselves well. At times, they are required to teach themselves and each other because their teachers are busy helping others. When this happens, they are well motivated and encourage one another. However, pupils are frequently absent. Almost half of the pupils on roll are persistently absent from school. Leaders were unaware of this. Leaders do not record the reasons why

pupils are not in school. Occasionally, pupils leave the school mid-year to attend another school, or their parents elect to home-educate them. When this happens, leaders do not keep a written record of where the pupil has gone or the reasons why they have left. Moreover, they do not inform the local authority, or communicate with the pupil's new school. Leaders' disorganisation and poor communication, particularly around attendance, is leaving pupils at risk of harm.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

The school's safeguarding policy reflects current statutory guidance and is made available to parents on request. The proprietor ensures that staff appointed to work in the school are suitable to work with children. All staff receive safeguarding training. They know what to do if they are concerned about a pupil. They told us that they would pass their concerns on to the designated safeguarding lead quickly.

However, pupils are not safe because staff do not monitor their attendance carefully enough. Staff do not record the reasons why pupils are absent from school. Some pupils choose to leave the school mid-year. Leaders do not keep written records of where they have moved to or inform the local authority.

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

- Key stage 3 has been reduced to one year in most subjects and removed almost completely in others. This is preventing pupils from securing the knowledge and skills they need to be successful in key stage 4. Therefore, leaders should ensure that pupils are taught the knowledge, and develop the skills in key stage 3 that they will need to be successful in key stage 4.
- The curriculum is poorly sequenced, and topics are taught in a disjointed way. Teachers do not give enough consideration to how the knowledge that pupils gain in one lesson can be used in future lessons. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum is sequenced in a way that enables pupils to build up their knowledge over time.
- Teachers do not use assessment well to check what pupils know and can do. Assessments do not always reflect the topics that pupils have studied. Therefore, teachers should ensure that assessment is used to accurately identify and address gaps in what pupils know and can do.
- Some teachers are required to teach subjects outside of their specialism. They have had no training in how to teach these subjects. This is preventing teachers from planning lessons as well as they could. Leaders should make sure that all teachers have the necessary knowledge, understanding and expertise to successfully deliver the curriculum in the subjects they have been asked to teach.
- The curriculum is not ambitious enough for all pupils. Pupils with SEND and lower-ability pupils are not supported effectively, and the most able pupils are not challenged appropriately. Leaders should ensure that they share information

about pupils with SEND and the lower-ability pupils with all staff so that these groups of pupils receive the support they need. Leaders and teachers should also ensure that the most able pupils are provided with work that is suitably challenging so that it deepens their knowledge and understanding.

- Leaders do not monitor attendance accurately or carefully enough. They do not use the Department for Education (DfE) codes when recording absence from school. This leaves pupils vulnerable and at risk of harm because leaders do not have a record of where they are, or why they are absent. Leaders should ensure that they take accurate attendance registers using the correct DfE codes.
- Almost half of the pupils on roll are persistently absent from school. This results in pupils missing a lot of work. Therefore, leaders should reduce the number of pupils who are persistently absent from school.
- Occasionally pupils leave the school mid-year. Leaders do not inform the local authority when this happens or keep a written record of any communication with the pupil's new school. This leaves pupils vulnerable, and places them at risk of missing education. Therefore, leaders should improve their record-keeping and communication. They should ensure that they always inform the local authority when a pupil leaves the school and keep a written record of communication.
- There are no extra-curricular activities. There are also limited opportunities for pupils to learn about fundamental British values, public institutions and different cultures and faiths, and they do not have opportunities to engage with the local community. This means that they are not provided with the opportunities that will prepare them well for life in modern Britain. Leaders should ensure that pupils have sufficient opportunities to learn about fundamental British values and institutions, other faiths and cultures and opportunities to engage with the local community.
- Pupils do not receive enough careers advice and guidance. This limits their horizons. Therefore, leaders should ensure that pupils receive appropriate careers information, advice and guidance.

## 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 has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

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

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	103592
<b>DfE registration number</b>	334/6084
<b>Local authority</b>	Solihull
<b>Inspection number</b>	10136871
<b>Type of school</b>	Other independent school
<b>School category</b>	Independent school
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	11
<b>Number of part-time pupils</b>	0
<b>Proprietor</b>	Amjad Ahmed
<b>Headteacher</b>	Amjad Ahmed
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	£6,000
<b>Telephone number</b>	0121 709 2694
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.alfurqancc.org.uk/">http://www.alfurqancc.org.uk/</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:admin@afq.org.uk">admin@afq.org.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	26 May 2010

## Information about this school

- Al-Furqan Solihull is registered as an 11 to 16 girls' school. The school has an Islamic ethos.
- Following an amalgamation with Al-Furqan Community College (Boys) in August 2019, the school now admits boys and girls between the ages of 11 and 18. The school is currently operating beyond its registration agreement with the Department for Education (DfE). It is operating as coeducational and has admitted pupils above the registered age range. The provision for pupils beyond age 16 is not appropriate.
- The sole proprietor is also the headteacher of the school.
- The school operates on a single site. The school's address is 1021 Warwick Road, Solihull, B91 3HG. The school uses Tudor Grange Leisure Centre, Blossomfield Road, Solihull, B91 1NB for physical education.

- The school does not currently use any alternative providers.
- Since the school's last full inspection by Ofsted in May 2010, it has been inspected by the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI). The school received an integrated inspection on 10 to 13 November 2015. During this inspection, the contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety, and the quality of governance were judged to be unsatisfactory. The school received an ISI monitoring inspection on 9 December 2016, and a further compliance visit on 10 and 11 October 2018. During the compliance visit the school was judged not to be meeting the independent school standards. The most recent Ofsted inspection was a progress monitoring inspection on 19 November 2019. The school was judged not to be meeting the independent school standards.

## 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 has failed to meet the independent school standards. These are the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

- We met with the proprietor, who is also the headteacher of the school. We also met with every member of staff who was on site during the inspection, and every pupil to discuss their views of the school.
- We focused on English, mathematics, history and religious studies during the inspection. We considered the school's curriculum plans, visited lessons and scrutinised pupils' work. We also met with pupils to discuss their learning in these subjects.
- We reviewed a range of documentation, including school policies and the school's records of attendance and behaviour.
- When inspecting safeguarding, we reviewed the school's procedures for recruiting staff. We also considered the quality of staff training, as well as the school's procedures for keeping pupils safe. We considered the suitability of the school building, and leaders' work to reduce the risks that have been identified.
- We considered the views of parents by evaluating their responses to the parental survey and discussed their views of the school by telephone. There were no responses to the pupil or staff surveys.

## Inspection team

Niall Gallagher, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Julie Griffiths

Ofsted Inspector

## **Annex. Compliance with regulatory requirements**

### **The school failed to meet the following independent school standards**

#### **Part 1. Quality of education provided**

- 2(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if–
  - 2(1)(a) the proprietor ensures that a written policy on the curriculum, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work, which provides for the matters specified in sub-paragraph (2) is drawn up and implemented effectively; and
  - 2(1)(b) the written policy, plans and schemes of work–
    - 2(1)(b)(i) take into account the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils, including those pupils with an EHC plan.
- 2(2) For the purposes of paragraph (2)(1)(a), the matters are–
  - 2(2)(d) personal, social, health and economic education which–
    - 2(2)(d)(i) reflects the school's aim and ethos; and
  - 2(2)(e) for pupils receiving secondary education, access to accurate, up-to-date careers guidance that–
    - 2(2)(e)(i) is presented in an impartial manner;
    - 2(2)(e)(ii) enables them to make informed choices about a broad range of career options; and
    - 2(2)(e)(iii) helps to encourage them to fulfil their potential;
  - 2(2)(g) where the school has pupils above compulsory school age, a programme of activities which is appropriate to their needs;
  - 2(2)(h) that all pupils have the opportunity to learn and make progress; and
  - 2(2)(i) effective preparation of pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British society.
- 3 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that the teaching at the school–
  - 3(a) enables pupils to acquire new knowledge and make good progress according to their ability so that they increase their understanding and develop their skills in the subjects taught;



- 3(b) fosters in pupils self-motivation, the application of intellectual, physical and creative effort, interest in their work and the ability to think and learn for themselves;
- 3(c) involves well planned lessons and effective teaching methods, activities and management of class time;
- 3(d) shows a good understanding of the aptitudes, needs and prior attainments of the pupils, and ensures that these are taken into account in the planning of lessons;
- 3(e) demonstrates good knowledge and understanding of the subject matter being taught;
- 3(f) utilises effectively classroom resources of a good quality, quantity and range;
- 3(g) demonstrates that a framework is in place to assess pupils' work regularly and thoroughly and use information from that assessment to plan teaching so that pupils can progress.

## **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(a) actively promotes the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs;
  - 5(b) ensures that principles are actively promoted which–
    - 5(b)(i) enable pupils to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence;
    - 5(b)(iii) encourage pupils to accept responsibility for their behaviour, show initiative and understand how they can contribute positively to the lives of those living and working in the locality in which the school is situated and to society more widely;
    - 5(b)(iv) enable pupils to acquire a broad general knowledge of and respect for public institutions and services in England;
    - 5(b)(v) further tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions by enabling pupils to acquire an appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures.

### **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.
  
- 15 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that an admission and attendance register is maintained in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006[13].

### **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 role 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.

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 <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

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 1231  
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 2020