

# Lady Aisha Academy

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

**Inspection dates**

13 February 2020

**Overall outcome**

**The school meets 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, 5(b)(i) and 5(b)(vi)*

- During the September 2019 emergency inspection, inspectors found that staff questioned pupils about their menstrual cycles in relation to non-attendance at prayers at the mosque. This personal questioning did not promote pupils' self-esteem and confidence. The practice did not encourage respect for women as set out in the Equality Act 2010.
- Leaders have taken effective steps to deal with these concerns. They have introduced suitable policies and procedures relating to pupils' attendance at prayers. This includes how and when registers will be taken. Leaders have also made suitable amendments to risk assessments and fire evacuation procedures to take account of the changes in the prayer policy.
- All staff have received training so that they understand and follow the prayer policy. The policy sets out clearly that staff should not ask pupils personal questions about why they are not praying, including questions specifically related to menstrual cycles. The policy also states that failure to comply with leaders' guidance may lead to disciplinary action.
- Discussions with pupils and pupils' responses to a school survey indicate that staff have stopped asking them why they are not praying and possibly linking this to their menstrual cycle. Staff are clear about the new policy and the new procedures for registration and fire evacuation. Further surveys of staff and pupils are planned to check that the policy and procedures continue to be implemented effectively.
- Through the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) curriculum, pupils gain an understanding of a wide range of issues. They learn about the importance of respect, including respect for the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010. Pupils know that it is against the law to discriminate against people, for example on the grounds of gender, ethnicity or religious belief.
- The atmosphere in school is friendly and welcoming. Pupils are confident and ambitious. They enjoy school, and are keen to do well. Pupils know that they can turn to staff for advice and support.

- The school strongly promotes the fundamental British values of democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. In PSHE lessons, pupils learn about the working of government at both the local and national levels. Pupils spoke about a recent visit to the Houses of Parliament where they had been present for Prime Minister's questions. They know why it is important to vote. If you do not vote, 'you don't have a say' is how one pupil put it. They also spoke positively about visits to other places of worship as part of learning about different faiths and cultures.
- Older pupils spoke positively of the careers advice and guidance they receive, and the help they get with applications.
- Leaders have made sure that the relevant standards in this part are now met.

### Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

#### *Paragraph 7, 7(a) and 7(b)*

- The emergency inspection in September 2019 found that the school's safeguarding policy reflected the Secretary of State's latest guidance and was available to parents and carers. Staff had regular training on safeguarding issues such as extremism, radicalisation and the 'Prevent' duty. They could explain the procedures should they have any concerns about pupils' safety or well-being. However, the questioning of pupils about their menstrual cycle in relation to attendance at prayers did not safeguard or promote pupils' welfare. Therefore, despite some strengths, the standards in this paragraph were not met.
- The website gives parents access to a wide range of information about the school. This includes a detailed safeguarding policy and information about related issues such as behaviour and mental health. These explain how the school promotes the well-being of pupils and ensures their safety.
- Pupils said that they feel safe in school and are taught how to stay safe out of school. They have a very clear understanding of safeguarding issues and risks. In discussion, pupils mentioned work on e-safety, knife crime and road safety. They could explain clearly why it was important to protect their personal information so that they stayed safe online.
- All staff have recently had training in safeguarding issues and on the latest guidance issued by the Secretary of State for Education. Any staff not able to be present for the training have had an individual briefing.
- The headteacher and staff keep safeguarding arrangements under review and amend them as necessary. For example, the lunchtime emergency evacuation procedures have been changed to take account of the changes to registration.
- Leaders have made sure that the relevant standards in this part are now met.

## Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

### *Paragraph 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b) and 34(1)(c)*

- The previous inspection found that leaders had not made sure that staff followed guidance regarding questioning of pupils about their non-attendance at prayers at the mosque. Leaders had not made sure that all standards in Parts 2 and 7 were met.
- Leaders have implemented their action plan effectively. They have taken prompt and suitable steps to address the shortcomings identified during the previous inspection. Staff have received clear and suitable guidance regarding the questioning of pupils. Leaders check that staff understand and follow this guidance. They make sure that pupils' welfare and safety are promoted effectively.
- Leaders have made sure that the standards in this part are now met.

## **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 that were checked during this inspection. This included the standards and requirements that the school was judged to not comply with at the previous inspection. Not all of the standards and associated requirements were checked during this inspection.

### **The school now meets the following independent school standards**

- 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;
  - 5(b)(vi) encourages respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Act.
- 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.
- 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.

## School details

Unique reference number	136746
DfE registration number	301/6003
Inspection number	10143805

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.

School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Girls
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Girls
Number of pupils on the school roll	98
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Naeem Aslam
Headteacher	Naeem Aslam
Annual fees (day pupils)	£3,600
Telephone number	07376 104 178
Website	<a href="http://www.ladyaisha.co.uk">www.ladyaisha.co.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:enquiries@ladyaisha.co.uk">enquiries@ladyaisha.co.uk</a>
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 adjacent to the 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 that time, the school was judged to be good and all the requirements of the independent school standards were met. An emergency inspection took place in September 2019 as a result of concerns about aspects of the school's provision for promoting pupils' well-being. The emergency

inspection found that the school did not comply with all the requirements of the independent school standards.

## Information about this inspection

- The registration authority required the school to prepare the action plan as a result of non-compliance with the independent school standards identified during the September 2019 emergency inspection. The action plan was evaluated by Ofsted in December 2019. The registration authority accepted the action plan in January 2020.
- This inspection was carried out at the request of the registration authority for independent schools. The purpose of the inspection was to monitor the progress the school has made in implementing the action plan and ensuring that the school complies with the standards that were judged to be unmet at the previous inspection. This was the school's first progress monitoring inspection.
- The inspection was conducted without notice.
- I held several discussions with the headteacher and senior staff responsible for safeguarding.
- I observed pupils informally during the day and held a formal discussion with a group of pupils from each year group.
- I scrutinised the school's single central record, safeguarding policy and arrangements. I looked at other policies and records, including the schemes of work and resources for PSHE.
- I held discussions with staff.

## Inspection team

Grace Marriott, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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