

# Inspection of Mehria School

23 Westbourne Road, Luton, Bedfordshire LU4 8JD

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Inspection dates: 3–6 March 2020

## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Requires improvement**

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The quality of education

**Requires improvement**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Good**

Personal development

**Good**

Leadership and management

**Requires improvement**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Requires improvement

Does the school meet the independent school standards?

**No**

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

Pupils enjoy school and feel safe. Staff take good care of them. Pupils understand what bullying means. It rarely happens because everyone cares about each other. Pupils respond positively to leader's high expectations and behave well. They are polite and keen to talk about their school. Pupils try their best and want to learn.

All pupils are respectful and considerate of others. They understand that everyone is entitled to their own views. They speak knowledgeably and maturely when comparing their own faith with Christianity, acknowledging that 'everyone has things that are important to them even if they are different to your own'.

There are lots of things for pupils to do. They enjoy going swimming and horse riding. They visit local places of interest linked to their learning. Pupils learn important life skills, such as visiting a local bank to learn about budgeting and spending money wisely.

Despite some recent improvements, the quality of education that pupils receive is not good enough. Pupils do not achieve as well as they should. The curriculum is not planned in a way that helps pupils to build on what they know and understand.

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

The curriculum is suitably varied. Alongside English, mathematics and Islamic studies, pupils enjoy the range of subjects on offer, such as learning about the Romans in history and rainforests in geography. While the curriculum is sufficiently broad, it is not well enough organised. Leaders have recently developed plans for all subjects that identify the knowledge and skills that pupils will learn in each year group. However, these plans are very new and not firmly in place. Discussions with pupils and work in their books show that, currently, pupils have too few opportunities to build on their knowledge and skills overtime.

Teachers do not adapt leaders' plans to make sure activities are suited to pupils' needs and abilities. Teachers do not give pupils opportunities to apply their skills and deepen their learning in subjects such as science and history. Too often, pupils complete the same tasks and in the same way. They are not challenged to think for themselves. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are not given appropriate learning activities or the support they need to make strong progress. Leaders do not check that pupils who achieve less well are helped to do better.

In some subjects, such as science and history, staff do not have sufficient knowledge of the subjects they teach. They do not explain concepts clearly enough or help pupils if they misunderstand. Where staff do teach subject content well, particularly in upper key stage 2, pupils build on what they have learned before and are more successful.

The reading curriculum has improved. Staff training has led to phonics being taught more successfully. Younger pupils read simple texts well because they know the sounds that letters make. Staff use assessment appropriately to pinpoint the sounds that pupils need to practise. Pupils who find reading more challenging get extra help so that they catch up. Older pupils are confident readers. For example, pupils in a Year 6 literacy lesson were able to understand and analyse an extract from 'Oliver Twist'.

During the inspection, pupils worked hard in lessons and responded to teachers' instructions quickly, despite the additional excitement of World Book Day. Parents, pupils and staff all agree that behaviour is typically good. This is confirmed by school records, which show that misbehaviour is rare.

Pupils like the way each day starts at the school, when they all gather in the hall. Pupils volunteer or are encouraged to sing and recite Islamic verses. Pupils say this helps them to 'feel calm and be ready to learn'. The school offers many opportunities to support pupils' personal development. Examples of these opportunities include raising money for charity, being in a production or developing leadership skills through roles such as play buddies, school councillors, and junior road safety officers. Pupils show an understanding of British values and how these can be demonstrated in everyday life.

The proprietor, governors and leaders have not ensured that the school meets all the independent school standards. Attendance registers are not maintained appropriately. The required attendance and absence codes are not used consistently throughout the school. Fire drills are not recorded accurately or analysed closely enough to ensure evacuation of the building is conducted quickly and safely.

The proprietor, governors and leaders are dedicated to the ethos and work of the school. They want the school to get better. However, their systems for checking that the school meets the independent school standards and their monitoring of the quality of education are not good enough.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have worked with the local authority and acted on advice to make sure safeguarding practice is rigorous throughout the school. Leaders make sure that checks are made on the suitability of staff before they start working at the school. Staff receive regular training and know what to do if they have any worries about pupils' welfare. Concerns are followed up quickly and with the right people.

Pupils know how to keep themselves safe, including when online. They know who to speak with if they are worried. As a result, pupils are well placed to make good decisions when they feel at risk.

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

### (Information for the school and proprietor)

- Staff are not delivering the newly designed curriculum plans as leaders intend. Pupils do not learn or remember as much as they should over time. Leaders need to make sure that teachers deliver the intended curriculum so that lessons logically build on what pupils know and can do.
- Teachers often plan the same work for pupils. They do not take account of pupils' different starting points. Leaders need to make sure that teachers plan and provide well-chosen activities that meet pupils various learning needs. They need to ensure all pupils, including those pupils with SEND, achieve as well as they can.
- In some subjects, teachers do not have sufficient subject-specific knowledge. Pupils do not gain the knowledge and understanding they need to do well, and mistakes can go uncorrected. Leaders need to make sure that teachers have the expertise and confidence to teach the school's curriculum effectively.
- The proprietor, leaders and governors do not have a precise understanding of the independent school standards or understand how to meet all of them. They need to monitor the work of the school and improve the quality of education. Additionally, they need to make effective use of the information they gather to accurately identify weaknesses. They need to put appropriate actions in place quickly so that the curriculum and the outcomes for pupils improve.

## 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>	134289
<b>DfE registration number</b>	821/6010
<b>Local authority</b>	Luton
<b>Inspection number</b>	10125216
<b>Type of school</b>	Day primary school with a religious ethos
<b>School category</b>	Independent school
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	93
<b>Number of part-time pupils</b>	None
<b>Proprietor</b>	Mahboob Khan & Abdul Qazi
<b>Chair</b>	Farqain Shah
<b>Headteacher</b>	Zia Qazi
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	£1,800
<b>Telephone number</b>	01582 484 617
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.mehriaschool.org">www.mehriaschool.org</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:info@mehriaschool.org">info@mehriaschool.org</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	20–22 February 2018

## Information about this school

- Mehria School is registered with the Department for Education (DfE) as a school with a Muslim ethos, for boys and girls. The school admits pupils of any or no faith. It opened in 2006. In October 2019 the DfE agreed to increase the maximum number of pupils on roll at any time from 90 to 110 pupils.
- There are five classes. Year 1, Year 2, Year 5 and Year 6 are taught in separate classes. There is one combined Year 3 and 4 class.
- The school is located in a residential neighbourhood of Luton. A mosque and a funeral service are located within the school's grounds. Classrooms for learning are in entirely separate buildings from the mosque and the funeral service. The

school uses one hall in the mosque building for playtimes, physical education and lunchtime activities.

- Wonderland Nursery (URN EY438249) operates in a separate part of the school building. The nursery provides day care for children up to five years old. This is inspected and reported on separately.
- No pupils have an education, health and care plan.
- All pupils speak English as an additional language and all are bilingual.
- The school aims to 'produce hardworking, well-mannered and well-informed young Muslims who are able, through their knowledge, skills and good character to benefit from the opportunities that Allah provides and to go on to be a positive force in society'.
- Since September 2019, three of the six class teachers have joined the school.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school does not use supply staff.
- To date, Ofsted has conducted a pre-registration visit and nine inspections, and has evaluated four action plans. The details of these are:
  - 30 May 2006, a pre-registration visit was carried out and registration was not recommended
  - 28 March 2007, a standard inspection when the overall effectiveness of the school was judged to be good
  - 9 December 2009, a standard inspection when the overall effectiveness of the school was judged to be good
  - 5 December 2012, a standard inspection when the overall effectiveness was judged to be outstanding
  - 26 January 2016, a standard inspection where the overall effectiveness was judged to be inadequate, with several unmet standards about the suitable recruitment of staff
  - 30 June 2016, an evaluation of an action plan which was judged to require improvement
  - 19 October 2016, a monitoring inspection when independent school standards were not met
  - 23 February 2017, an evaluation of an action plan which was judged as not acceptable
  - 15 May 2017, a monitoring inspection when independent school standards were met
  - 20 February 2018, a standard inspection where the overall effectiveness of the school was judged as requires improvement and independent school standards were not met
  - 27 July 2018, an evaluation of an action plan which was judged as not acceptable

- 7 February 2019, a monitoring inspection when independent school standards were not met
- 29 May 2019, an evaluation of an action plan which was judged to not be acceptable
- 10 July 2019, a monitoring inspection when independent school standards were met.

## 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.

- This inspection was carried out with a day's notice.
- As part of this inspection, we held meetings with the headteacher and deputy headteacher, who is also the designated safeguarding leader.
- We had a phone conversation with the chair of the governing body and met with one other governor. Additionally, we had a phone conversation with a local authority safeguarding adviser to discuss their work with the school.
- The proprietors were not available to speak with us during the inspection.
- We did deep dives in reading, writing, science and history. We met with curriculum leaders for these subjects, visited lessons, looked at a range of pupils' work and met with teachers and pupils. We also heard some pupils read and talked to pupils about their reading habits.
- We spoke to pupils informally in class and around the school at breaktimes to seek their views about the school.
- We scrutinised the school's website and a range of school documents, including the school's own improvement plans, school policies, child protection and safeguarding information, curriculum plans, attendance and admissions registers, and minutes of governors' and staff's meetings.
- We considered the 14 responses made by parents to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, and the 10 responses to Ofsted's free-text system. We also spoke to some parents at the start of the school day. We took account of the four responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff. There were no responses to Ofsted's online pupils' survey.

## **Inspection team**

Fiona Webb, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Kim Hall

Her Majesty's Inspector



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

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

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

- 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(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; and
  - 3(f) utilises effectively classroom resources of a good quality, quantity and range.

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

- 12 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.
- 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.
- 16 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that–
  - 16(b) appropriate action is taken to reduce risks that are identified.

#### **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.

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