

Al Khair School

61–63 Causeway Green Road, Oldbury, West Midlands B68 8LA

Inspection dates

7–9 November 2018

Overall effectiveness	Inadequate
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Inadequate
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Inadequate
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Inadequate
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- The proprietor and leaders have not ensured that all the independent school standards are met. The proprietor has been slow to address significant weaknesses in the school.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is weak. Teachers do not use assessment information well enough to plan work that meets the needs of all pupils. Pupils make limited progress and standards are low.
- The curriculum does not develop pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding well enough in all subjects. Pupils do not deepen their understanding of mathematical concepts. They do not apply their English skills in different kinds of writing or subjects.
- Pupils' handwriting and presentation are weak.
- Pupils do not develop a love of reading. Pupils have not developed secure phonics knowledge to help them in their reading and writing.
- The most able pupils are not sufficiently challenged in their learning.
- Children in the early years benefit from a curriculum that is tailored to their interests. However, there are insufficient opportunities to practise and apply basic skills in literacy and numeracy in independent activities.
- Leaders' plans for improvement are not sufficiently focused on improving teaching, learning and outcomes for pupils.
- School leaders do not apply school policies consistently and do not provide all required information to parents and carers.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils are respectful and behave well.
- Pupils demonstrate a good understanding of British values.
- Parents are hugely supportive of the school and value the school's ethos.
- Pupils enjoy school and attend well.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school must take action to meet the requirements of the schedule to The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and associated requirements. The details are listed in the full report.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - the independent school standards are met consistently
 - parents have easy access to information through the school’s website or readily available hard copies
 - the proprietor provides effective support for school leaders and holds them to account for improvements in the school
 - leaders and staff apply school policies consistently
 - leaders develop an appropriate curriculum that deepens pupils’ knowledge, skills and understanding in all subjects
 - school improvement plans identify clearly the actions that will improve teaching and learning and outcomes for pupils.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that:
 - teachers use assessment information to plan work that meets the needs of all pupils and provides sufficient challenge for the most able effectively
 - pupils develop secure phonics knowledge and skills and apply these in their reading and writing
 - teaching requires pupils to present work to the best of their abilities and improve the quality of their handwriting
 - pupils develop a love of reading and have access to a range of literature that inspires them to read
 - pupils use and apply their mathematical skills in problem solving and reasoning in all areas of mathematics
 - pupils apply their English skills in a range of writing for different purposes and audiences and in other subjects
 - children in the early years practise and apply basic skills in literacy and numeracy in independent child-led activities.
- The school must meet the independent school standards, as set out in the annex of this report.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Inadequate

- Since the last inspection, there have been several changes. A new headteacher was appointed in September 2017 and several new staff have recently joined the school. During this time, the proprietor has not ensured that the independent school standards have been met. The quality of education has declined.
- The school is operating outside of its Department for Education (DfE) registration with regards to the age range and the number of pupils in the school.
- The proprietor's executive leaders correctly identified significant weaknesses in the school. However, these have not been addressed successfully. The proprietor has not provided the level of support required to make the necessary improvements or carried out regular checks to ensure that appropriate action is being taken.
- The proprietor has not ensured that plans to improve the school are strategic enough to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and outcomes for pupils. Teachers are not clear about the actions for improving teaching and learning because there are no whole-school strategies in place.
- Although Al Khair School has suitable policies in place, school leaders and staff do not apply them consistently.
- There are currently two websites from which parents can acquire information. However, they are confusing because they each contain different information and some information is missing. For example, information about the school's academic performance during the preceding school year is not available.
- School leaders have given some thought to the curriculum. They have introduced 'STEAM' projects so that pupils learn about science, technology, engineering, art and mathematics. Leaders have provided more opportunities for outdoor learning. Pupils learn Arabic. However, the curriculum is not broad and balanced. It provides little opportunity to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding in history and geography, for example. Pupils do not develop progression in this understanding over time.
- School leaders have developed an assessment system that records individual pupils' attainment on a regular basis against learning objectives in English and mathematics. However, teachers do not use assessment information to plan work that meets pupils' learning needs effectively.
- Pupils learn about different faiths and visit other places of worship. They have a good understanding of British values and are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Parents and carers appreciate the nurture and support that their children receive so that they grow and develop in confidence. Many describe the school as a 'safe and happy environment'.
- The headteacher has appointed staff to make specific improvements in safeguarding, the early years and special educational needs identification, assessment and provision. The knowledge, skills and experience of these staff are beginning to have a positive impact on their areas of responsibility. For example, the identification of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), and the provision for children in the early

years have now improved.

- Staff are very committed to the school and are proud to work at Al Khair.

The school's application to make a material change to its registration

- The proprietor has applied to the DfE for a material change to its registration. Leaders wish to admit younger pupils, two-year olds, to the school and to increase the number of pupils on roll.
- Part 1. Quality of education. Standards in this part are not met for the whole school. If the material change for increased capacity was implemented, the school is unlikely to meet the standard because it has been unmet in the existing provision. However, in the early years, these standards would likely be met. Although the early years requires improvement, early years practitioners have the appropriate skills to improve teaching and learning further and ensure that the quality of education will meet the needs of the pupils it intends to admit. The quality of education is better than in the rest of the school because teachers plan a curriculum that is tailored to children's interests and needs. Teachers use the information they have about children when they join the school to plan appropriate learning activities in the early years.
- Part 2. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils. This standard is likely to be met if the material change to admit younger pupils is implemented since it has been met in the existing provision. There is evidence of purposeful learning in this area in the early years. For example, children develop self-confidence, follow well-established routines, play together well and take turns.
- Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils. This standard is likely to be met if the number on roll is increased because leaders have ensured that procedures for safeguarding, health and safety, fire safety, supervision and risk assessments are appropriate. Safeguarding is effective. Leaders have worked with parents, for example to ensure that the school site is secure and access to the school is safe. Leaders discuss safeguarding in staff briefings regularly so that pupils are kept as safe as possible.
- Part 4. Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors. This standard is likely to be met. By the end of the inspection, the school's single central record was fully compliant. The school is likely to meet the relevant independent school standards if the material change to increase the number of pupils on roll is implemented.
- Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools. This standard is likely to be met since it has been met in the existing provision. However, the size and suitability of the accommodation would suggest that pupil numbers should increase to no more than 128.
- Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools. This standard is currently not met and is unlikely to be met while the school remains inadequate.
- Statutory requirements for the early years foundation stage. This standard is likely to be met, provided leaders ensure that the level of staffing to meet requirements is planned for appropriately.

Requirements unlikely to be met if the material changes relating to the school provision are implemented

- Part 1. Quality of education.
2(1), 2(1)(a), 2(1)(b), 2(1)(b)(i), 3, 3(a), 3(b), 3(c), 3(d), 3(e), 3(f), 3(g)
- Part 6. Provision of information.
32(3)(e)
- Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools.
34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b)

Governance

- The proprietor and executive leaders oversee the school. They have not held the headteacher to account as well as they should and have not ensured that the independent school standards are met. They have allowed the school to operate outside its registration. There is no governing body.
- Until recently, executive leaders have not had the capacity to provide the school with the level of support it has needed. This is now being addressed. Executive leaders have plans and procedures in place to hold the headteacher to account. They have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and know what needs to be done to improve it.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The school has a safeguarding policy that reflects current legislation. This policy is published on the school's website and parents can request a paper copy of the policy from the school.
- The school has two appropriately trained designated safeguarding leads. Staff have recently completed updated training and understand their responsibilities to keep children safe. All staff are trained in recognising and reporting indicators of abuse, neglect or the risks associated with radicalisation. Minutes of staff briefings show that safeguarding is a regular agenda item.
- Appropriate checks are made on people who work within the school to protect pupils from harm. Procedures are in place to ensure that people recruited to the school do not pose a risk to pupils. Minor amendments were made to the school's single central record during the inspection. Risk assessments are in place where needed and the school site is secure.
- The school has suitable fire prevention strategies in place. The premises are safe, clean and hygienic. Parents have recently raised funds to provide secure fencing around the school. Leaders have cleared an alternative pathway to school so that pupils and parents have safer access to the school site.
- Pupils say they feel safe and parents agree. Pupils are confident to tell an adult if they have a worry. They explained how teachers look after them and check that they can play safely. For example, teachers have taped off an area where it is not safe to play. Pupils

show a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe on the internet. During this inspection, for instance, they described how people may not be who they say they are and discussed in detail why they should not share personal information online.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Inadequate

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is inadequate because teachers do not plan work that meets the needs and aptitudes of pupils well. Teachers do not demonstrate secure subject knowledge, and activities and next steps are sometimes inappropriate. Teachers in the early years, however, have stronger subject knowledge.
- Sometimes work is too easy and sometimes it is too hard because teachers do not take sufficient account of pupils' prior learning. English and mathematics are taught through a scheme that requires pupils to practise skills. However, pupils do not deepen their understanding sufficiently well because teachers do not challenge pupils to apply their learning in different contexts. Too often, the focus is on pupils completing repetitive tasks, rather than on the application and development of their knowledge and skills.
- In mathematics, pupils complete pages of simple sums with limited opportunities to reason or problem solve. Pupils do not develop different mental strategies to calculate number and rely heavily on formal methods. Pupils do not learn about other areas of mathematics, such as shape, measures, algebra and data, in sufficient depth. The most able pupils complete simple activities when they could extend their learning and think harder for themselves. Some pupils move on too quickly to the next task before they have understood a mathematical concept fully. There is little evidence to show that lower-attaining pupils have access to, or use, a range of practical resources to support their learning in mathematics when they encounter difficulties.
- In English, pupils practise grammar and punctuation but have limited opportunities to apply the skills they have learned in longer pieces of writing. Inspectors found little evidence in pupils' books of different types of writing, such as poetry and story writing. Pupils have insufficient opportunities to write for different audiences and purposes.
- Pupils do not take a pride in their work because teachers' expectations are not high enough, although this is better in Years 5 and 6. Pupils' work is generally not well presented. The quality of handwriting is weak.
- Pupils have not developed a love of reading in school. This is because reading for pleasure is not a high priority. Pupils generally read when they have finished their work. The most fluent readers do not have access to books by their favourite authors in school. Less fluent readers have not developed appropriate phonics strategies to help them decode unfamiliar words. Pupils do not read books which are matched to their phonics ability.
- Pupils are encouraged to contribute their ideas in lessons such as personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 discussed with great enthusiasm how to help someone who is in trouble.
- Pupils enjoy their 'STEAM' projects and are enthusiastic about their learning. They talked with great excitement about how they made 'volcanoes' and 'lava lamps' and why they were successful or not.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are well cared for and respond well to adults. Classroom routines are well established because pupils know what is expected of them. Pupils display positive attitudes towards their learning. They work hard and remain focused even when activities do not match their ability.
- At breaktimes, pupils play together well. They play football, ride bikes, play hopscotch or entertain themselves in the leaves. They are well supervised.
- Pupils are proud to be members of the school council. They take their roles seriously and say their job is to help other people on the playground and in the classroom. They say that it is okay to be different at their school and it is a nice, kind place. One pupil said, 'I love the way everyone gets along with each other. I have never felt left out.'

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are polite, respectful and courteous. They listen carefully to each other and take turns to share ideas.
- Pupils are clear about the school's behaviour policy. They contribute to the school rules and know it is important to respect them. All of the parents who responded to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, agree that pupils are well behaved. Staff implement the school's anti-bullying policy well. Pupils say that there are very few incidents of bullying and that staff quickly and effectively address these. Pupils have a good understanding of bullying and cyber bullying and how to stay safe when using the internet.
- Pupils enjoy school and attend regularly. The vast majority of pupils are rarely absent. Leaders follow up absences appropriately to ensure that pupils are safe.
- A very small number of pupils are educated at home but attend the school on a flexible basis. Pupils attend for mornings or afternoons only, depending on the curriculum parents want them to follow. For example, some pupils join in with 'STEAM' activities. Leaders establish agreements with parents and use the approved code for registers correctly. Leaders monitor pupils' welfare well.

Outcomes for pupils

Inadequate

- Outcomes are inadequate because pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable. Teachers focus on completing curriculum content and schemes of work but do not adjust their plans to meet pupils' differing and changing learning needs. Consequently, pupils' work shows that, in almost all classes, pupils are making limited progress in all subjects. Teachers often give the same work in science, history and geography to all pupils, regardless of the different abilities in the class. This means that the majority of pupils do not make the progress that they should.

- Teachers do not build progressively on pupils' prior learning and this limits their progress. For example, some pupils in Year 1 were taught about question marks and exclamation marks before they were able to write simple words and sentences. Pupils do not consistently form letters accurately, so their handwriting is weak, especially in Years 1 and 2.
- The narrow mathematics curriculum, which focuses primarily on whole-number sums, limits pupils' ability to problem solve in all areas of mathematics. The lack of breadth in the curriculum, and the limited opportunities for pupils to apply their knowledge, skills and understanding in different contexts and in different subjects, mean that at the end of key stage 2, pupils are not well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Pupils complete baseline assessments in literacy and numeracy and an entrance test when joining the school. Leaders have devised an assessment system to record pupils' attainment against national curriculum objectives, but this is not well used to plan appropriate learning programmes for pupils. Leaders analyse pupils' progress in reading but cannot easily show or explain how well pupils achieve over time in writing and mathematics.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- The independent school standards are met in relation to the early years provision. However, the provision and outcomes require improvement.
- Leaders have ensured that early years staff are appropriately qualified. Teachers responsible for the early years evaluate their practice and set areas for development. They are beginning to establish a clearer understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in provision and outcomes. They work well with external agencies and have responded to advice and support to develop suitable provision for children.
- Children enter the early years with skills and abilities which are in line with those typically expected for their age. Almost all children in the early years attend Nursery, which the local authority funds. There are very few children in the Reception class.
- Children are prepared well for their start to the early years. Staff discuss children's interests and needs with parents and provide introductory sessions that parents attend with their child. This helps children to settle well.
- Teachers make accurate assessments after children have settled in so that they can plan an appropriate curriculum. The curriculum in the early years meets the needs of children better than it does in the rest of the school. This is because staff know children well and plan activities around children's interests and needs. Planning, however, does not show a clear learning purpose or expected outcomes in all activities. Teachers do not provide sufficient opportunities to consolidate basic literacy and numeracy skills in independent child-led activities, especially in the outdoor area.
- On occasion, the most able children complete activities in workbooks before they have secured their understanding well enough, particularly in mathematics. The very youngest children complete the same activities as other children, when sometimes a different activity would be more appropriate.
- Parents are involved in their child's learning. For example, this term, parents have accompanied children on a nature walk and a visit to the local library. Staff keep parents informed about their child's progress through regular parents' meetings.

- Children behave well and are encouraged to use good manners. For example, at snack time, children pass fruit around and say 'please' and 'thank you'. They follow well-established routines and respond well to adults because relationships are strong.
- Children sit well and enjoy listening to stories because the teacher engages them effectively. In phonics, children are beginning to identify initial sounds in words. Children in the Reception class are beginning to build simple words, such as 'cat'.
- Teachers model and reinforce language well. For example, when children made triangles with sticks, the teacher named the shape and described out loud that children were 'wrapping the string around the stick'. Teachers engage children in conversation to develop their speaking and listening skills. For example, at snack time, children were encouraged to say the names of different fruits and describe how they tasted.
- Staff have begun to improve the outdoors provision to support children's creative development. Children develop language through small-world play and fine-motor skills through mark-making. They make shapes with natural materials and practise letter shapes in the sand.
- Children are confident. They play well together and on their own. Resources are easily accessible. For example, one child decided she would 'cook a pancake' and collected a spoon, a bowl and a teapot independently to make her mixture.
- Children are well cared for. Leaders have ensured that there are appropriate nappy-changing facilities and suitable toilets. Staff have received appropriate paediatric first aid and safeguarding training. They carry out daily health and safety checks to keep children safe.

School details

Unique reference number	141001
DfE registration number	333/6006
Inspection number	10047134

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.

The inspection of the school's provision in relation to the material change that the school has applied to make was carried out under section 162(4) of the Education Act 2002, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's likely compliance with the independent school standards relevant to the material change that the school has applied to make.

Type of school	Other independent school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	34
Number of part-time pupils	3
Proprietor	Qasim Rashid Ahmed
Chair	None
Headteacher	Mohammad Chaudhry
Annual fees (day pupils)	£2,376
Telephone number	0121 544 2361
Website	www.alkhairschool.org.uk/
Email address	admin.oldbury@alkhairschool.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	15 April 2015

Information about this school

- Al Khair Primary School is a Muslim day school for boys and girls. It is registered for 22 pupils aged 3 to 11. The school opened in May 2014.

- The school is currently operating outside of its registration. It has 34 pupils on roll and has admitted two-year-old children.
- Pupils are taught in four mixed-age classes with pupils from Nursery to Year 6.
- Three pupils are educated at home but attend Al Khair for a small number of sessions each week.
- There are no pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan. The school has recently appointed a special educational needs coordinator.
- The headteacher was appointed in September 2017. Three new teaching staff joined the school in September 2018.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school is one of three schools in the Al Khair Foundation, an educational charity. Another independent primary school and an independent secondary school are in Croydon, London.
- Executive leaders, based in Croydon, oversee the work of the school.
- The school's previous standard inspection took place in April 2015, when it was judged to be good.

Information about this inspection

- During the inspection, inspectors were asked to consider a material change to increase the capacity of the school and admit younger pupils.
- The inspection was carried out over two and a half days, with notice of one day.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, executive leaders, and staff responsible for the early years, safeguarding and special educational needs. The proprietor was abroad and unavailable.
- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all year groups and reviewed the work in pupils' books across all subjects.
- Inspectors toured the premises of the school and examined key policies, including those for safeguarding, curriculum, behaviour, complaints and bullying.
- A wide range of documentation was scrutinised, including: the school's own self-evaluation; the school's improvement plan; information on pupils' progress and attainment; records of behaviour and attendance; admissions and attendance registers; complaints logs and procedures for recording incidents of bullying; monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning; executive leaders' monitoring reports; and the single central record of staff recruitment and safeguarding information.
- Inspectors spoke to parents at the beginning of the school day and considered 31 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 17 written comments. Eleven responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire and 28 responses to the school's own pupil questionnaire were also considered.
- Inspectors observed pupils on the playground, talked to the school council and listened to pupils read.

Inspection team

Sue Cameron, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Peter Humphries

Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex. Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school must 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.
- 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 6. Provision of information

- 32(1) The standard about the provision of information by the school is met if the proprietor ensures that-
 - 32(1)(b) the information specified in sub-paragraph (3) is made available to parents of pupils and parents of prospective pupils and, on request, to the Chief Inspector, the Secretary of State or an independent inspectorate;
- 32(3) The information specified in this sub-paragraph is-
 - 32(3)(e) particulars of the school's academic performance during the preceding school year, including the results of any public examinations.

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.

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