

# Inspection of Bahr Academy

72 Sceptre Street, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Tyne and Wear NE4 6PR

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Inspection dates: 12 to 14 January 2022

**Overall effectiveness** **Good**

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The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection Good

Does the school meet the independent school standards? **Yes**

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

Pupils are proud of their school and attend regularly. They say everyone cares about one another 'like a family'. Leaders and staff set high expectations of how they want pupils to behave and learn. Pupils hold the same high expectations of themselves. They are respectful, courteous and have a strong work ethic. This helps them to achieve well and be ready to move on to further education or the world of work. However, pupils only get a limited range of experiences within the physical education (PE) curriculum.

Pupils say that the school is a safe and happy place to learn. Pupils learn to be aware of risks to their safety in and outside of school, as well as online. The friendships that pupils make are very important to them. They cannot recall any bullying incidents but say that staff would take any incident very seriously.

Pupils enjoy taking on roles and responsibilities. The student council organises fundraising events to support a range of charities. Pupils litter pick in the local area. Pupils say they are proud of their community and like to 'give something back'. Parents and carers appreciate the education and care their daughters receive. They say the staff are very approachable and will discuss any concerns they raise.

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

Senior leaders ensure that all pupils access a high-quality education. This includes the promotion of fundamental British values alongside Islamic values. Leaders have designed and implemented well-ordered, long-term curriculum plans. These include ambitious goals for pupils to reach at the end of each key stage. Pupils reach high standards in a broad range of subjects by the end of Year 11. The majority of subjects match the expectations of the national curriculum. However, this is not the case in PE where pupils only access games. Plans do not include opportunities for pupils to experience creative elements of the PE curriculum such as dance or gymnastics.

Teachers who have expert knowledge also lead their subjects. Leaders organise the timetable to maximise teaching opportunities. This includes after-school sessions which groups of pupils attend one evening per week. Work in pupils' books shows that they are working to a high standard across the curriculum. Pupils use an outdoor space near the school for fresh air and exercise at breaktimes. However, some pupils say that they do not get the chance to visit this very often. Other pupils lack interest in participating in these sessions.

Teachers use class novels to help pupils make links with other subjects. For example, pupils made links to crime and punishment in Victorian England when reading 'Great Expectations' by Charles Dickens. Pupils understand how people and events in history changed the world.

Teachers revisit the important facts that they want pupils to remember. They check how well pupils learn over time.

In mathematics, the leader and teachers have strong subject knowledge. They plan challenging work which builds on what pupils know and can do. This helps pupils to be confident with new learning. Pupils apply their knowledge to solve complex mathematical problems. They select appropriate methods and use correct mathematical terminology.

Pupils receive independent careers guidance and advice. Pupils gain GCSEs in academic subjects such as English, mathematics, history and biology. This prepares them well to study A levels or vocational courses at college.

Leaders plan a detailed programme of personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education. Pupils learn about different democracies, cultures and faiths. This encourages pupils to think, debate and reflect.

Leaders consulted with parents about the relationships, sex and health education (RSHE) curriculum. Staff have received some training to deliver this. Leaders have booked follow-up training for later this academic year. Pupils can talk about how lessons on RSHE enhance their knowledge and understanding. They learn about making safe choices, taking care of themselves and when to seek help and support. Pupils can talk with confidence about equality. They know that it is unfair to discriminate against someone, for example because of their gender, race, religion or sexuality.

No pupils currently attend with special education needs and or disabilities (SEND). Staff receive training on how to identify and support pupils with SEND. This helps them to support pupils if they find something difficult.

Staff are conscientious and are developing their leadership skills, regardless of their role. Staff work closely and support one another through strong teamwork. They say that leaders are considerate of their workload. The chair of governors checks that the leaders' workload is manageable.

The proprietor and governing board have oversight of how well the school is doing. They hold regular meetings with the headteacher. They check on progress made against the school development plan priorities. The school meets the independent school standards. The proprietor ensures that the school provides the required information that parents need. For example, a statement on RSHE and the safeguarding policy are available on the school's website. The proprietor ensures that a suitable accessibility plan is in place which complies with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding across the school. Safeguarding training is an important part of the induction programme for new staff.

Leaders, staff and governors have accessed regular training relating to safeguarding. Staff know what to do if they have concerns about pupils who may be at risk of harm. The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) has put systems in place for all staff to follow.

The proprietor ensures that leaders keep the school premises safe. He ensures that leaders carry out all necessary safety checks on staff and visitors. Record-keeping for this is thorough.

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

### **(Information for the school and proprietor)**

- The PE curriculum is heavily based on developing health-related fitness, as well as knowledge and skills in a variety of different games. Long-term curriculum plans do not include developing pupils' knowledge of dance skills, gymnastics or athletics. As a result, pupils miss out on some of the expressive, creative and performance elements of physical education. Leaders should widen the scope of the PE curriculum to ensure pupils develop a broader range of skills, knowledge and experiences within this subject.
- Pupils have a limited choice of activities at breaktimes. As a result, some pupils lack interest in taking a break from their studies to take part in fresh air and exercise. Leaders should improve the facilities for pupils between lessons, by ensuring that planned activities interest pupils and provide more leisure opportunities at breaktimes.

## **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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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>	136258
<b>DfE registration number</b>	391/6040
<b>Local authority</b>	Newcastle upon Tyne
<b>Inspection number</b>	10217893
<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>	Girls
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	29
<b>Number of part-time pupils</b>	0
<b>Proprietor</b>	Bahr Academy Trust
<b>Chair</b>	Muhammad Abdulmuheet
<b>Headteacher</b>	Zakiah Chowdhury
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	£3,700
<b>Telephone number</b>	0191 2731907
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.bahracademy.co.uk">www.bahracademy.co.uk</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:info@bahracademy.co.uk">info@bahracademy.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	3 to 5 July 2019

## Information about this school

- Bahr Academy is an Islamic faith secondary school for girls located in the Elswick area of Newcastle-upon-Tyne. It is owned by the Bahr Academy Trust.
- There are no pupils with SEND currently on roll.
- The school consists of four classroom areas and a kitchen that doubles up as a first-aid room. The school makes use of local leisure centres for PE. For the past two weeks, the school has been unable to use a leisure centre due to circumstances beyond its control. During the inspection, the proprietor secured a new arrangement with a local leisure centre to provide suitable PE with immediate effect.
- The lead inspector toured the premises with the headteacher.
- The school intends to relocate to a new, purposely renovated property. This development has been underway since before the two previous inspections and requires further refurbishment. The proprietor and governors are unable to say when the building is likely to be ready.
- Leaders do not currently use any alternative provision for pupils.

## Information about this inspection

Inspectors 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.

This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.

- This standard inspection was commissioned by the Department for Education following a complaint related to concerns around safeguarding and pupils' well-being. The inspection was brought forward in the inspection cycle. It was conducted without notice.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, subject leaders and members of staff. The lead inspector had virtual meetings with the proprietor and the chair of the governing body.
- Inspectors met with all pupils currently on roll at various times during the inspection.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, PSHE and history. All other curriculum subjects were considered as part of the quality of

education offered to pupils. Inspectors met with subject leaders and teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning, visited lessons and reviewed pupils' work.

- Inspectors considered a range of documentation and evidence relating to safeguarding. This included the single central record, safeguarding policies, discussions with the DSL, conversations relating to safeguarding with leaders, staff and pupils and checking the procedures related to safeguarding and health and safety. Other documentation reviewed included behaviour and attendance records, curriculum plans, a range of policies and other information provided by school leaders.
- Inspectors considered the views of four parents during the inspection, one response to Ofsted's survey for staff and two responses to the pupil survey.

### **Inspection team**

Alison Aitchison, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Zoe Lightfoot

Her Majesty's Inspector

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