

Inspection of London Islamic School

18–22 Damien Street, London E1 2HX

Inspection dates: 8 to 10 February 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

Does the school meet the independent school standards?

No

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy attending school. They talked about how supportive their teachers are. They said that they can speak to them if they are worried about their academic work or personal matters. They know that teachers will help them.

In Years 7 and 8, the time allocated to study secular subjects does not enable pupils to study subjects in depth. Pupils' learning is limited as a result. From the time pupils join the school, an emphasis on preparing pupils for GCSE examinations reflects leaders' overall lack of curriculum ambition. Leaders do not provide breadth and richness to pupils' learning beyond the requirements of GCSE.

Pupils respond well to the high standards of behaviour set by leaders. They are friendly and well mannered. Staff take any incidents of bullying or disrespectful behaviour seriously. They make sure that pupils are safe at school.

Prior to the pandemic, pupils went on a range of educational outings. These included visits to the Houses of Parliament and travel abroad. Pupils take part in annual football and athletics tournaments with local Islamic schools. However, pupils have few opportunities to develop their interests and talents, such as in sport or the creative arts.

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

Pupils study a broad range of subjects up to the end of Year 9. Pupils have no choice in the subjects they can study in Years 10 and 11. Subjects such as geography, citizenship and the creative arts are not taught beyond Year 9. All pupils take GCSE examinations in English, mathematics, science, history, Arabic and computing at the end of Year 11. The curriculum also includes physical education. Older pupils do not have the opportunity, including through wider enrichment activities, to pursue all the subjects they may be interested in.

The content of the subject curriculum in Years 7 to 8 is not ambitious. Leaders have not ensured that the timetable provides sufficient time for pupils to study subjects in a deep and meaningful way. Teachers follow curriculum plans that are logically sequenced. However, leaders have not identified the specific knowledge and skills that pupils need to know and remember over time. Teachers do not check that pupils have fully understood what they have been taught. As a result, subject learning and assessment are not typically purposeful. Teaching does not focus on the crucial knowledge pupils need to learn. Pupils' learning in many subjects is superficial.

Pupils start their GCSE studies in Year 9. Staff do not extend pupils' learning beyond what is needed for GCSE. Lessons have a narrow focus on examination skills and GCSE subject content from Year 9 onwards. By the end of Year 11, pupils are well prepared for their final examinations and they achieve highly. Some pupils have the chance to study additional mathematics at GCSE.

Reading is not a high priority for leaders. Few pupils read for pleasure. In English, pupils understand the main themes and contexts of the texts they study. In Years 7 and 8 the lack of curriculum time available for English limits pupils' opportunities to study a wide range of literature. The school has a selection of appropriate texts for pupils to read. Pupils are encouraged to read at home, but it is not an expectation.

Leaders do not carefully check the effectiveness of staff training. The school's programme of staff development is focused on generic teaching skills. Leaders have not provided sufficient training on the teaching of curriculum subject content. Training has not ensured that staff are confident to teach their subjects beyond narrow subject content in Years 7 and 8 or beyond GCSE requirements in older years. Training has not ensured that staff know how to teach key concepts and skills specific to their subjects, such as practical experiments in science and historical enquiry in history.

Leaders and staff give extra help to pupils who may be falling behind in their work. Teaching assistants in class support pupils effectively. Staff also provide additional sessions before and after school to help pupils catch up.

Lessons are calm and pupils focus on their work. They have warm working relationships with their teachers and respond well to instructions. Staff have a consistent approach to managing poor behaviour so that it rarely disrupts learning.

From Year 7 onwards, pupils receive appropriate careers guidance. Pupils are encouraged to consider a range of post-16 destinations and different career choices. Leaders promote pupils' wider personal development. Pupils are taught to respect people's differences and challenge stereotypes and the importance of following the law and doing what is right. Pupils have opportunities to contribute to the local community, for example as youth travel ambassadors and through fundraising events.

In Years 7 and 8, leaders have a well-planned programme of personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education. From the start of Year 9, the PSHE programme is not as coherently thought through, although all statutory content for relationships and sex education (RSE) is covered. Leaders have drafted a policy for the RSE programme but have not finalised it or published it. They have not followed statutory guidance to consult with parents and carers in all year groups about the RSE programme.

Staff did not report any concerns about workload. They felt very well supported by leaders and enjoy working at the school.

Leaders and the proprietor body lack comprehensive oversight of the school's work. Their evaluation of the school's effectiveness is overly reliant on pupils' GCSE outcomes. Leaders do not monitor the quality of education nor the impact of their actions with much rigour. Plans to improve the school are not based on robust evaluations.

Leaders and the proprietor body have not ensured that all the independent school standards are met. Unmet standards relate to the quality of education and leadership and management.

Leaders have ensured that the school meets the requirements of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff know the pupils well. They are alert to any changes in the behaviour of individual pupils and the signs that may suggest that a pupil could be at risk. Staff know and follow leaders' safeguarding arrangements, including with regard to any allegations against staff. This means that leaders have the information they need to help them make decisions about safeguarding. Leaders with responsibility for safeguarding ask for advice from external agencies, if it is needed.

Pupils feel safe in all areas of the school. Leaders have assessed possible risks to pupils, for example from the school's shared premises. They have put appropriate measures in place to mitigate these risks. Pupils talked about the practical ways they are taught to keep themselves safe, including online.

The school's safeguarding policy is written in line with the latest statutory guidance and is available online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and proprietor)

- Leaders have not given sufficient time to the secular curriculum in Years 7 and 8. Staff do not have enough time to teach subjects in depth and pupils lack essential knowledge and skills. Leaders should ensure that pupils have the opportunity to learn subjects in greater depth at key stage 3.
- Leaders do not consider carefully what subject content they want pupils to know and remember over time. This hinders pupils' understanding of key concepts. Leaders should review their curriculum thinking so that they identify what pupils need to know and remember in each subject.
- Leaders have not ensured that teachers have access to and benefit from subject-specific training. As a result, teachers do not know enough about how to teach their specialist subjects and are reliant on closely following GCSE exam specifications. They do not routinely use teaching and assessment methods that are appropriate to their subject. Leaders should review the staff training programme and ensure that staff have access to high-quality, subject-specific training.

- Pupils have limited opportunities to nurture their interests and talents. This is particularly the case in sports and the creative arts. Leaders should ensure that pupils have wider opportunities to develop their talents and interests.
- Many pupils do not enjoy reading. They are not expected to read beyond the minimum requirements of the curriculum. The lack of curriculum time for English limits the amount of literature that pupils study. Leaders should encourage pupils to read a wide range of literature and actively foster a love of reading.
- While leaders ensure that statutory RSE content is covered, they have not followed statutory guidance with regard to RSE. Leaders have drafted an RSE policy after consultation with parents of pupils in Years 7 and 8 in October 2021. Leaders have not finalised or published the school's RSE policy within the timescales set out by the Department for Education. Leaders now need to consult with parents of pupils in Years 9 to 11, finalise and implement the policy on RSE and make it available to parents.
- The PSHE/RSE programme is well planned in Years 7 and 8. In Years 9 to 11, leaders have not clearly mapped out what content is taught and when. Leaders should ensure that they have a cohesive programme which pulls together their provision for PSHE/RSE in all year groups.
- Leaders do not evaluate the school's effectiveness and impact of their actions with enough rigour. The breadth and depth of the curriculum in key stage 3 has not been assessed carefully. Too much emphasis is placed on GCSE outcomes, rather than on the quality of education that pupils receive during their time at the school. As a result, weaknesses have not been identified. Leaders should monitor more effectively the quality of education and sharpen their improvement planning.

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

Unique reference number	132797
DfE registration number	211/6390
Local authority	Tower Hamlets
Inspection number	10210815
Type of school	Other independent school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Boys
Number of pupils on the school roll	131
Number of part-time pupils	None
Proprietor	Esha'atul Islam Board of Trustees
Chair	Guljar Alam
Headteacher	Abdulhadi Mamon
Annual fees (day pupils)	£3,200
Telephone number	020 7265 9667
Website	www.londonislamicschool.org
Email address	info@londonislamicschool.org
Date of previous inspection	6–12 March 2018

Information about this school

- This is an Islamic secondary school for boys. The school is registered for up to 150 pupils, aged 11 to 16.
- The school is located on the first and second floors of the Esha'atul Islam Mosque in Whitechapel.
- The school had its last standard inspection in March 2018 when it was judged to be good and all independent school standards were met.
- On 26 June 2019 the school had an unannounced emergency inspection. All the independent school standards that inspectors checked were met.
- Leaders do not use any alternative provision.
- The proprietor body is not listed on the government's 'Get information about schools' website.
- Pupils study a secular curriculum in the morning of each school day. Islamic studies are taught in the afternoon.

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 has failed to meet the independent school standards. These are the requirements of 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.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, other school leaders and members of staff. An inspector met with representatives from the proprietor body.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in English, history, art and citizenship/PSHE. They met with subject teachers, considered curriculum plans, visited lessons, and spoke to pupils and reviewed their work.
- Inspectors talked to staff and pupils about other subjects. They looked at curriculum plans and visited lessons in geography, computing, science, Arabic and mathematics.
- Inspectors met with leaders with responsibility for safeguarding and reviewed a range of safeguarding documentation, including pre-employment checks on staff and employee files. Discussions were held with pupils and staff to consider the school's safeguarding arrangements.

- Inspectors considered a range of evidence to check compliance with the independent school standards.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted Parent View and the online staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Jude Wilson, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Sam Hainey

Ofsted Inspector

Annex. Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school failed to meet the following independent school standards

Part 1. Quality of education provided

- 2A(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor–
 - 2A(1)(d) in making arrangements for the purposes of paragraphs (a), (b) or (c), has regard to any guidance under section 80A of the Education Act 2002 that applies in relation to the provision of education by maintained schools
 - 2A(1)(e) makes and keeps up to date a separate written statement of its policy with regard to the provision of education as required by each of paragraphs (a) and (b)
 - 2A(1)(f) consults parents of registered pupils at the school before making or revising a statement under sub-paragraph (e), and
 - 2A(1)(g) publishes a copy of the statement on a website and provides a copy of the statement free of charge to anyone who asks for one.
- 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.

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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