

# Inspection of Al-Mizan School

46 Whitechapel Road, London E1 1JX

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Inspection dates: 7 to 9 June 2022

**Overall effectiveness** **Good**

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The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Outstanding**

Personal development **Outstanding**

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 appreciate the care staff show towards them and the actions they take in keeping them safe. Attendance and punctuality levels are high because pupils enjoy coming to learn at school.

Leaders have high expectations and show determination in their pursuit of excellence. Many pupils share the view that teachers provide learning experiences that are demanding.

Behaviour is exemplary. Pupils aim for the 'rainbow', with great motivation and pride. This is a feature of the school's behaviour policy. Pupils have a clear understanding of what bullying is. It is very rare because leaders have created a respectful environment. Pupils feel assured that they can approach the staff with their concerns. They are confident that the adults take them seriously and deal with matters swiftly.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is at the centre of the school. Leaders use this to underpin every strategic decision that they make. The school's values and 'Tarbiyyah' topics are interwoven seamlessly through the curriculum and in lessons. These topics reflect the approach leaders take in developing the character and 'human nature' of pupils and staff. These opportunities take place through direct learning experiences, or through the positive characteristics and qualities that adult role models exemplify in the school.

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

Leaders have high expectations of what pupils should learn and achieve. They offer a broad curriculum, including creative subjects such as art, drama and music. Pupils rightly acknowledge the balance leaders have achieved in the teaching of the national curriculum subjects, Islamic studies and 'Tahfiz' lessons (memorisation of the Qur'an). Teachers follow commercial schemes of work. Leaders have adapted them to make sure the delivery and assessment in English, mathematics and science are secure. The impact of the pandemic has delayed leaders' plans in achieving a systematic delivery of the foundation subjects. Leaders have resumed actions in ensuring that teachers put in place the curriculum intentions in a coherent and consistent way. This is still ongoing.

Leaders are keen to provide a 'normative' Islamic education. This refers to the way in which the school 'embraces a rainbow of cultures and practices that prevents all forms of extremism'. Pupils learn about other faiths and enjoy visiting other places of worship. Islamic scholars challenge pupils to learn all the chapters of the Qur'an in 'Tahfiz' lessons. This is an ambitious feat in which many pupils excel. Teachers place a strong focus on the accuracy of the pronunciation and fluency of the words recited. Leaders from local mosques invite pupils to recite the Qur'an, sometimes in

front of thousands of people. Many pupils share the aspiration to become Islamic scholars.

Leaders ensure that reading is a priority. Most pupils enter the school with reading skills in line or above age-related expectations. Teachers check to make sure that pupils' knowledge of phonics is secure when they enter the school. The staff support pupils to catch up with their peers. Teachers use intervention programmes to help pupils identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Pupils love reading and appreciate the exposure they have to the rich and diverse texts. They enjoy taking part in debates to develop their confidence in speaking and listening skills.

Teachers use probing questions to check pupils' understanding in lessons. They address misconceptions well. They provide pupils with opportunities to develop their reasoning skills in mathematics. Teachers relate learning to real-life situations. For example, they linked the teaching of fractions and percentages to the concept of 'Zakat'. This means sharing a proportion of your wealth with others. Pupils show a strong commitment to the principle of 'servitude' by giving to others. They take part in fundraising for local community and national charities.

Adults forge strong relationships with pupils. Teachers make learning fun and there are instinctive moments of laughter shared between staff and pupils in lessons. Pupils appreciate the value of learning. This underpins the exemplary behaviour in the school. They show intense concentration and engagement in lessons. Disruptions to learning are rare.

Staff organise outings and visits that enrich pupils' educational and cultural experiences. For example, pupils in Year 3 visited the Neuron Pod at the Centre of Cell when learning about the body in science. Pupils are immensely 'grateful' for these opportunities.

The school's personal, social, health and economic programme is a strength of the school. It encourages pupils' understanding of values such as honesty, accountability and piety. The proprietor ensures that the requirements identified in the Equality Act 2010 are an integral part of the school. They ensure staff create opportunities that promote tolerance, acceptance and equality. Pupils are proud that they can learn, work and play together.

Staff surveys show that they take great pride in working in the school. They have made reasonable adjustments in managing their workload and work-life balance. Parents were overwhelmingly positive in their opinions of the school. Many shared the same view as inspectors, that teachers are 'passionate and dedicated'.

The proprietor is diligent in meeting all the independent school standards. The premises are suitable and well kept. The governing body consists of skilled practitioners working within the primary education sector. They are instrumental in forming the strategic vision of the school. Governors work with staff in developing teachers' expertise in areas such as phonics and inclusion. Staff observe exemplary

practice in other local schools, and they value the opportunities to learn from one another. Leaders are considering plans to strengthen the subject leadership capacity within the school.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The proprietor and governors fulfil their statutory safeguarding duties. They carry out the proper checks when appointing staff. Staff complete risk assessments for activities in and beyond the school premises.

Staff are aware of the risks in the local community. They know the procedures and actions to take should pupils or staff be in danger. Pupils know how to stay safe online, including the knowledge of keeping their personal details private.

Pupils have a clear understanding of the choices people make in relationships. They show tolerance in knowing that protected characteristics are the law of the country, to look after all types of people. One pupil said, 'We must protect and respect people equally.'

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

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

- There is some variation in the implementation of the foundation subjects. This has an impact on the coherent progression of the knowledge and skills that pupils learn. Leaders must continue to develop the curriculum and subject leadership. They must secure the consistent implementation of the foundation subjects for all pupils.

## **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>	133646
<b>DfE registration number</b>	211/6392
<b>Local authority</b>	Tower Hamlets
<b>Inspection number</b>	10226758
<b>Type of school</b>	Other independent school
<b>School category</b>	Independent school
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	111
<b>Number of part-time pupils</b>	0
<b>Proprietor</b>	East London Mosque Trust
<b>Chair</b>	Hussain Shefaar
<b>Interim headteacher</b>	Mohammed Badrudduza (Badr)
<b>Head of primary</b>	Fazal Mahmud
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	£3,200
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 7650 3070
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.eastlondonmosqueschools.co.uk">www.eastlondonmosqueschools.co.uk</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:admin@eastlondonmosqueschools.co.uk">admin@eastlondonmosqueschools.co.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	9 to 11 May 2018

## Information about this school

- Al-Mizan is a selective Islamic junior school situated in the London Muslim Centre. The centre also accommodates the London East Academy, an independent Islamic secondary school for boys. Both schools are led by the same interim headteacher who was appointed in June 2021.
- The school's most recent inspection was a full standard inspection in May 2018, when its overall effectiveness was judged to be good.

## 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.

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.

- The inspectors held meetings with the interim headteacher, the head of primary and teaching staff.
- The lead inspector held a remote meeting with the chair of governors, a trustee representing the proprietor and the chair of the curriculum committee.
- Inspectors met with the designated safeguarding leader and a group of administrative and support staff.
- The inspectors held meetings with four different groups of pupils, including two single-sex groups, and spoke with pupils informally during lessons and social times.
- Inspectors reviewed safeguarding arrangements by scrutinising documentation and records, the single central record, talking to leaders and staff, and through discussions with pupils.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, English, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, inspectors met with leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work across a range of subjects. Leaders accompanied the inspectors on these visits to lessons and in looking at curriculum plans.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documents, including the action plans and self-evaluation of the work carried out at the school.
- Inspectors considered the opinions of parents and staff through Ofsted's online surveys, including 24 free-text responses to Ofsted Parent View, and 14 responses from members of staff to the surveys.

- Inspectors toured the premises and reviewed key documentation, including documents related to health and safety and risk assessments, to check the school's compliance with the independent school standards.

### **Inspection team**

Lascelles Haughton, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Jo Franklin

Ofsted Inspector

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