

The Fountain School

109 - 111 New Cross Street, Bradford, West Yorkshire BD5 8BP

Inspection date

10 January 2023

Overall outcome

The school does not meet all of the independent school standards that were checked during this inspection

Main inspection findings

Part 1. Quality of education provided

Paragraph 3, 3(a), 3(b), 3(c), 3(e)

- At the previous inspection, inspectors found that leaders did not have a clear view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They found that leaders had not accurately evaluated the impact of weaknesses in teaching on the quality of education.
- At the previous inspection, there was a disconnect between curriculum intent as stated in the school's own policy documents and the information that pupils received in lessons. Inspectors found that teachers' weak subject knowledge in some areas was limiting how much pupils were able to learn. They found that a narrowed, watered-down version of the curriculum was being delivered in some subjects.
- During the previous inspection, inspectors found that pupils did not have a wide or varied general vocabulary. They were not being exposed to high-quality literature in English or texts written by experts in other subjects studied such as history.
- Leaders have made progress in improving the quality of education. They now monitor learning robustly and provide training and support where this is needed. The headteacher completes a daily tour of the school and visits all lessons. Senior leaders complete regular work scrutiny and lesson observations. This provides leaders with a clear picture of strengths and weaknesses in their curriculum.
- Leaders work closely with the teaching team and discuss what is working well and what needs to improve. These discussions are recorded, and training is provided to further support teachers with specific areas of development. While this has resulted in improvements, leaders' lesson observations identify that some lessons are less well planned and teaching methods are not always effective.
- The English team have broadened the English curriculum to include drama. They have purchased a recommended selection of high-quality texts for each classroom. They have also increased the variety of books in the school library that are available for all pupils to read. The curriculum now includes classic stories, poems and plays.
- In mathematics, the curriculum is well sequenced. However, COVID-19 had a negative impact on pupils' learning in mathematics. The key stage 4 leader has completed

detailed assessment of pupils' prior knowledge. This includes how well pupils can retrieve key knowledge. The mathematics leader can demonstrate how the delivery of the curriculum is adapted to meet the needs of pupils. This was not evident in all subjects.

- The learning of vocabulary is a priority in all classes. Each week, teachers and pupils are provided with a list of high-frequency words that they may see in written texts, as well as a list of subject-specific words. These words are used in lessons, and pupils are expected to use them purposefully in their writing. Pupils enjoy this opportunity and feel that it has improved their use and knowledge of vocabulary. In English lessons, teachers have noted improvements in pupils' written work.
- In the wider curriculum, teachers have attended carefully chosen training to support their subject knowledge. They have begun to build a stronger understanding of how pupils learn. Leaders are pleased with the impact that this is beginning to have on the quality of education. However, this is at an early stage. There is further training booked for this academic year. Leaders recognise the importance of continuing to strengthen teachers' subject and teaching knowledge. They know this is important in order to increase pupils' understanding and skills in all subjects.
- There is a written curriculum in place for all subjects in all year groups. In some subjects, this makes reference to what pupils have already learned. However, this is not well sequenced in all subjects. Pupils are not yet able to demonstrate what they know and remember. In almost all subjects, they are unable to talk about what they learned yesterday, last week or last term. There is further work needed to ensure that all pupils make good progress according to their ability and in fostering self-motivation.
- These standards were unmet at the last inspection. While progress has been made towards meeting these standards, they remain unmet.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraph 7, 7(a), 7(b)

- School leaders continue to ensure that safeguarding is effective. The school safeguarding policy is comprehensive and complies with statutory guidance.
- Senior leaders deliver regular safeguarding training in the weekly staff meetings that are attended by all staff. They share updates with staff and deliver face-to-face training. All staff also attend online safeguarding training. This is monitored and recorded.
- The school safeguarding policy contains all pertinent information, including who staff should contact, and when, if they have a concern. Key information is also displayed throughout the school.
- These standards were met at the previous inspection and continue to be met.

Paragraph 9, 9(c)

- At the previous inspection which took place in February and March 2022, the behaviour of pupils in class and around school was generally very good. However, inspectors found that when poor behaviour did occur, leaders did not record this with sufficient detail.
- Since the last inspection, leaders have set up an electronic system to record any instances of poor behaviour. This record includes the date of the incident, the event(s) that took place and any sanctions given. The records are maintained by the

administration manager, and all sanctions are approved by the headteacher. Parents are informed of any sanction before this takes place.

- Leaders and teachers review behaviour records regularly. If a pupil has had a number of sanctions in a short period of time, leaders contact parents and invite them into school. This is to allow leaders to have an opportunity to understand any underlying cause. It also allows them to work with the family to support individual pupils' needs. Pupils, teachers and leaders were able to clearly explain how this system works. Pupils and teachers both spoke positively of the behaviour strategy followed in school.
- The behaviour of pupils throughout this progress monitoring inspection was respectful and kind.
- These standards are now met.

Paragraph 15

- At the previous inspection in February and March 2022, inspectors found that the school did not meet the independent school standards in relation to the admissions register. Pupils older than 16 years of age were being taught in classes alongside pupils aged 16 and under during the morning study of the Islamic 'Alimah' curriculum.
- During the school day, 12 former pupils, aged 16 to 18, use the prayer hall within the school building. They attend classes as part of their Islamic studies with the madrassah. They do not attend any classes with pupils registered at the school. Appropriate safeguarding checks have been carried out and a risk assessment is in place for this use of the building.
- All pupils on site at the time of this inspection had their attendance marked using the appropriate codes on the school's register. The class lists and class registers matched.
- This standard is now met.

Part 4. Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

Paragraphs 18(2), 18(2)(a), 18(2)(b), 18(2)(c), 18(2)(c)(i), 18(2)(c)(ii), 18(2)(c)(iii), 18(2)(c)(iv), 18(2)(d), 18(2)(e), 18(3), 20(6), 20(6)(a), 20(6)(a)(i), 20(6)(a)(ii), 20(6)(b), 20(6)(b)(i), 20(6)(b)(ii), 20(6)(b)(iii), 20(6)(c), 21(1), 21(2), 21(3), 21(3)(a), 21(3)(a)(i), 21(3)(a)(ii), 21(3)(a)(iii), 21(3)(a)(iv), 21(3)(a)(v), 21(3)(a)(vi), 21(3)(a)(vii), 21(3)(a)(viii), 21(3)(b), 21(4), 21(6), 21(7), 21(7)(a), 21(7)(b)

- Leaders carry out the required checks on staff before they commence work at the school.
- The single central record is compliant with the relevant legislation and guidance. It records the recruitment checks made on staff. This is up to date and completed accurately.
- The headteacher has undertaken safer recruitment training and leads the recruitment of all new staff.
- These standards were met at the previous inspection and continue to be met.

Part 6. Provision of information

Paragraph 32(1), 32(1)(c)

- The school does not have a website, so it ensures that a copy of the safeguarding policy

is available to parents and carers upon request.

- Hard copies of all policies are also available at parent consultation evenings. There is also a notice board in the reception entrance to the school which details all of the policies that are available for parents to access. In addition, at the start of the academic year, parents are informed by text message of how they may access all school policies, including the safeguarding policy.
- These standards were met at the previous inspection and continue to be met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraph 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b)

- At the time of the previous inspections in February and March 2022, inspectors found that the proprietor had not ensured that the school had improved sufficiently following the inspection in February 2019. The school did not meet several of the independent school standards in relation to the admissions register, the recording of sanctions and the quality of leadership.
- During the previous inspection, inspectors found that records of meetings between the proprietor and trustees had too great a focus on operational issues, with little evidence of challenge to leaders about school improvement. Inspectors found that the proprietor and trustees had not placed enough emphasis on making sure that teaching staff had sufficient expertise.
- Leaders and managers have undertaken a wide range of work since the last inspection. The headteacher has recently begun the National Professional Qualification for Headship and has completed a number of modules successfully.
- Senior leaders work closely with the teaching team to provide training. Lesson visits and professional development meetings are used to support all staff in improving their subject knowledge. Leaders also use this time to review the different teaching approaches used to deliver the curriculum.
- The headteacher meets regularly with the teaching team and with the proprietor. Meeting records demonstrate the work being undertaken and the improvements that have been made. However, this work has not yet brought about the necessary changes needed. Therefore, a number of the independent school standards that were unmet at the previous inspection remain unmet.
- These standards were unmet at the last inspection and remain unmet.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school does not meet the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements that were checked during this inspection. This included the standards and requirements that the school was judged to not comply with at the previous inspection. Not all of the standards and associated requirements were checked during this inspection.

School details

Unique reference number	134587
DfE registration number	380/6116
Inspection number	10265600

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.

Type of school	Other independent school
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	10 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	41
Proprietor	Mohammad Afsar
Headteacher	Abeer Niehad
Annual fees (day pupils)	£1,945
Telephone number	01274 735913
Website	None
Email address	admin@fountainschool.co.uk
Date of previous standard inspection	15 February to 30 March 2022

Information about this school

- The last school inspection took place on 15 to 18 February and 30 March 2022. This was a standard inspection carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008. At this inspection, the school was graded inadequate for overall effectiveness.
- The Fountain School is an Islamic school providing education currently for girls between the ages of 11 and 16 years.
- The school building is used in the mornings, evenings and at weekends as a Madrassah. The proprietor is one of the local Imams leading the studies in the Madrassah.
- In the mornings all school pupils undertake Islamic 'Alimah' curriculum. This includes Islamic religious studies, as well as the study of Urdu and Arabic languages. In the afternoon, pupils study a range of national curriculum subjects, as well as religious education.

- There are no pupils currently on roll with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out at the request of the registration authority for independent schools. The purpose of the inspection was to monitor the progress the school has made in meeting the independent school standards and other requirements that it was judged to not comply with at its previous inspection.
- The previous standard inspection took place on 15 to 18 February and 30 March 2022 and the school was judged not to meet some of the requirements of the independent school standards.
- This was the first monitoring inspection to take place following this standard inspection.
- The inspection was conducted without notice.
- The inspector met with the proprietor, the headteacher, the personal assistant to the headteacher and teaching staff. The inspector also met with the administration manager.
- The inspector reviewed safeguarding documentation, checked the schools' processes for the safer recruitment of staff and reviewed the school's systems for acting on safeguarding concerns and recording behaviour sanctions.
- The inspector also talked to a range of pupils, looked at pupils' work, reviewed curriculum documents and visited lessons.

Inspection team

Zoe Lightfoot, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Annex. Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school does not meet the following independent school standards

Standards that were not met at the previous inspection and remain un-met at this inspection

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(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(e) demonstrates good knowledge and understanding of the subject matter being taught.

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.

The school now meets the following requirements of the independent school standards

Part 3 Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 9 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor promotes good behaviour amongst pupils by ensuring that-
 - 9(c) a record is kept of the sanctions imposed upon pupils for serious misbehaviour.
- 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[13].

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