

Inspection of Zakariya Primary School

447-451 Romford Road, Forest Gate, London E7 8AB

Inspection dates: 28 to 30 March 2023

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

The quality of education

Inadequate

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Inadequate

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Requires improvement

Does the school meet the independent school standards?

No

What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders' expectations of pupils' learning are too low. They do not ensure that pupils build up knowledge and skills in all subjects. Pupils in Year 6 have a narrow curriculum. They spend much of their lesson time preparing for tests in English and mathematics. The teaching of reading is inconsistent.

The premises are not fit for purpose. They are cramped. Pupils have to sit on the floor all day because there is not enough room for chairs and desks. Leaders said it is difficult for staff to maintain pleasant classrooms that encourage learning because the premises are shared.

Pupils generally behave sensibly, work hard and have positive attitudes. They attend well. Staff deal with any incidents of bullying appropriately. However, staff's management of behaviour is inconsistent. Disruption sometimes affects pupils' learning.

Pupils enjoy earning rewards, the occasional educational outing and their Islamic studies programme. However, leaders do not ensure that pupils have a wide range of opportunities and extra-curricular experiences.

Most pupils feel safe at school. However, leaders are failing to follow safer recruitment guidance. This may be putting pupils at risk.

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

New leaders are in the process of overhauling the secular curriculum. The curriculum lacks ambition and breadth. Leaders have not fully considered how to sequence learning in a logical and progressive order. Teachers do not receive the training they need to become subject specialists and make accurate checks on pupils' learning. As a result, the quality of education varies between classes. Pupils do not achieve well in a range of subjects. Pupils in Year 6 expressed their dismay at their current narrow curriculum offer. This focuses almost entirely on readying them for national assessments. Leaders and staff lack the required knowledge and skills to identify and support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Teachers and pupils have to manage with limited resources, including reading books. This restricts the promotion of a love of reading. Since the previous inspection, leaders have chosen a phonics programme to teach reading from the start of Year 1. Almost all pupils read well. However, the quality of early reading teaching is variable because of a lack of training, leadership and consistency. The few pupils who fall behind in reading do not receive swift support to help them to catch up quickly.

Pupils are respectful, well mannered and behave well most of the time. However, pupils' behaviour varies, depending on the expectations of individual teachers. Low-level disruption is too common. There is a lack of consistency in how teachers manage behaviour. The cramped premises make things worse. For example, pupils

have to pass through other classrooms to move around the building, which often disrupts learning.

Through personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education and Islamic studies, pupils are encouraged to develop strong and moral characters. They learn about British values and other religions. Pupils are taught to respect people's differences. The relationships education requirements are met. Pupils enjoy the few recent educational visits that have taken place, such as to a museum and the local library. Some pupils helped to organise a recent food sale for charity. However, experiences that enrich the curriculum are rare. Pupils were unenthusiastic about the limited after-school clubs offer on a Friday afternoon. They said how much they would like more trips and visitors. The current sparse provision limits pupils' social and cultural development.

Leaders have faced multiple challenges since the previous inspection. They have managed these challenges well, including formal complaints. However, there is a lack of leadership capacity and significant work to do in improving relationships with some parents and carers. The proprietor and leaders are committed to relocating the school to more suitable premises and improving the curriculum. They have the support of the new staff team, who are positive about their workload and well-being. An action plan has been drafted, and some external support has been put in place to bolster the leadership team.

Leaders, governors and the proprietor do not know and check the independent school standards well enough. Some are not met. The proprietor and governors do not monitor the school's effectiveness with any rigour.

The school complies with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

Leaders' record of pre-employment checks on staff is poorly maintained and disorganised. As the record is barely populated, it is unclear if all the correct checks have been carried out. Most checks are not dated. The safer recruitment process does not reflect statutory guidance. For example, the interview process is not documented and records of professional references are disorganised.

Despite the shortcomings, leaders and staff know what to do when they have a concern, and leaders follow up on any concerns appropriately. In the absence of a website, the school's suitable safeguarding policy is readily available in hard copy.

What does the school need to do to improve? (Information for the school and proprietor)

- Safeguarding is not effective because the proprietor and leaders have not ensured

that the staff recruitment process reflects statutory guidance. The single central record of pre-employment checks on staff suitability is not compliant. Record-keeping and organisation lack rigour. This poor safeguarding practice potentially puts pupils at risk. The proprietor, governors and leaders should rapidly improve safeguarding arrangements and ensure that they take full account of the latest statutory guidance.

- The curriculum lacks ambition and breadth. Leaders have not carefully thought through what pupils need to learn and when. Pupils in Year 6 receive a curriculum that is too narrow. Assessment is weak. Leaders have not ensured that staff are well trained to plan and deliver an effective curriculum, including for pupils with SEND. The proprietor, governors and leaders should review the curriculum, assessment and professional training provision. They should ensure that a well-sequenced curriculum enables pupils, including those with SEND, to learn well in all subjects.
- Arrangements for the teaching of early reading are inconsistent. There is a lack of leadership, training and consistency in approach. This means that pupils receive a varying quality of provision. Pupils who have fallen behind do not receive timely and effective support that helps them catch up quickly. Pupils have a limited selection of reading books. Leaders should ensure that the teaching of reading is consistent across the school and that more effort is made to promote a love of reading.
- Staff manage behaviour inconsistently. This means that pupils' behaviour varies throughout the school and low-level disruption sometimes affects learning. Leaders should ensure that training is provided to ensure that the school's behaviour policy is implemented consistently.
- The provision for personal development is limited. Pupils do not have many opportunities to help them explore and broaden their interests and talents. Leaders should review and improve their work to support pupils' personal, social and cultural development.
- The proprietor has not put consistent and effective systems in place to check the effectiveness of leaders' work. The proprietor should strengthen governance and ensure that governors more rigorously support and check the quality of leaders' work.
- The school's premises are not fit for purpose. They do not provide a pleasant learning environment. They are cramped, and pupils have to sit on the floor all day because there are no desks and chairs. Pupils must pass through other classrooms to move around the building, which can disrupt learning. The proprietor, governors and leaders should realise their plans to move to more appropriate premises as quickly as possible.
- Some of the independent school standards are not met. These are listed in the annex to this report. The proprietor, governors and leaders should ensure that they know the independent school standards and take action to ensure that they are all met consistently.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	134577
DfE registration number	316/6063
Local authority	Newham
Inspection number	10262337
Type of school	Independent school
School category	Other independent school
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	108
Number of part-time pupils	None
Proprietor	Asif Choudhury
Headteacher	Sufyan Rashid (Acting Headteacher)
Annual fees (day pupils)	£2,880
Telephone number	020 8555 6258
Website	None
Email address	info@zakariyaschool.org
Date of previous inspection	18 to 20 May 2021

Information about this school

- Zakariya Primary School is an independent primary day school with an Islamic ethos. The school is situated in the same building as Forest Gate Mosque.
- The previous headteacher left the school in August 2021. An acting headteacher has been in position since then.
- The sole proprietor delegates governance to a governing body.
- The proprietor and governors are in the process of seeking temporary premises. Once found, the school will move to them while the current premises are demolished and rebuilt.
- The school's most recent inspection was a standard inspection in May 2021.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

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.

Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- This standard inspection was brought forward at the request of the Department for Education. It was announced with one day's notice.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these areas: reading, mathematics and PSHE education. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, observed and listened to pupils and considered evidence of pupils' learning. Inspectors also considered curriculum plans and pupils' work in geography and science.
- Inspectors met with the acting headteacher and another senior leader throughout the inspection. They also met with groups of staff and pupils. The lead inspector met with the proprietor.
- Inspectors considered a wide range of evidence to check compliance with the independent school standards.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

James Waite, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Jonathan Newby

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Andrea Bedeau

His Majesty's Inspector

Annex. Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school failed to 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(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;
 - 3(h) utilises effective strategies for managing behaviour and encouraging pupils to act responsibly.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 7 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that-
 - 7(a) arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school; and
 - 7(b) such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

- 9 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor promotes good behaviour amongst pupils by ensuring that-

- 9(b) the policy is implemented effectively.

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

- 18(2) The standard in this paragraph is met if-

- 18(2)(a) no such person is barred from regulated activity relating to children in accordance with section 3(2) of the 2006 Act where that person is or will be engaging in activity which is regulated activity within the meaning of Part 1 of Schedule 4 to that Act;
- 18(2)(b) no such person carries out work, or intends to carry out work, at the school in contravention of a prohibition order, an interim prohibition order, or any direction made under section 128 of the 2008 Act or section 142 of the 2002 Act, or any disqualification, prohibition or restriction which takes effect as if contained in either such direction;
- 18(2)(c) the proprietor carries out appropriate checks to confirm in respect of each such person-
 - 18(2)(c)(i) the person's identity;
 - 18(2)(c)(ii) the person's medical fitness;
- 18(2)(d) the proprietor ensures that, where relevant to any such person, an enhanced criminal record check is made in respect of that person and an enhanced criminal record certificate is obtained before or as soon as practicable after that person's appointment;
- 18(2)(e) in the case of any person for whom, by reason of that person living or having lived outside the United Kingdom, obtaining such a certificate is not sufficient to establish the person's suitability to work in a school, such further checks are made as the proprietor considers appropriate, having regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

- 18(3) The checks referred to in sub-paragraphs (2)(c) and (except where sub-paragraph (4) applies) (2)(e) must be completed before a person's appointment.

- 21(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor keeps a register which shows such of the information referred to in sub-paragraphs (3) to (7) as is applicable to the school in question.

- 21(2) The register referred to in sub-paragraph (1) may be kept in electronic form, provided that the information so recorded is capable of being reproduced in legible form.

- 21(3) The information referred to in this sub-paragraph is-

- 21(3)(a) in relation to each member of staff ("S") appointed on or after 1st May 2007, whether-
- 21(3)(a)(i) S's identity was checked;
- 21(3)(a)(ii) a check was made to establish whether S is barred from regulated activity relating to children in accordance with section 3(2) of the 2006 Act;
- 21(3)(a)(iii) a check was made to establish whether S is subject to any direction made under section 128 of the 2008 Act or section 142 of the 2002 Act or any disqualification, prohibition or restriction which takes effect as if contained in such a direction;
- 21(3)(a)(iv) checks were made to ensure, where appropriate, that S had the relevant qualifications;
- 21(3)(a)(v) an enhanced criminal record certificate was obtained in respect of S;
- 21(3)(a)(vi) checks were made pursuant to paragraph 18(2)(d);
- 21(3)(a)(vii) a check of S's right to work in the United Kingdom was made; and
- 21(3)(a)(viii) checks were made pursuant to paragraph 18(2)(e),
- 21(3)(b) in relation to each member of staff ("S"), whether a check was made to establish whether S is subject to a prohibition order or an interim prohibition order, including the date on which such check was completed.

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; and
 - 34(1)(c) actively promote the well-being of pupils.

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