

Abu Bakr Boys School

72 Queen Mary Street, Walsall, West Midlands WS1 4AB

Inspection date

10 October 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

Paragraphs 2(1), 2(1)(a), 2(2), 2(2)(b), 2(2)(h), 3, 3(a), 3(c), 3(d), 3(f), 3(g)

- The previous inspection in June 2022 identified weaknesses in the curriculum. The school's curriculum was poorly planned. Leaders had not paid close enough attention to the precise knowledge they wanted pupils to learn. Leaders had not made sure that the curriculum took account of the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The curriculum was not being implemented suitably well across all subjects. As a result, pupils were not making strong progress through the curriculum.
- Leaders have revised the school's curriculum. However, in some subjects, the precise knowledge that pupils need to learn has not been identified, while in others, leaders have included a significant amount of content without giving thought to how much time will be needed to teach this to pupils. As a result, frequently, the knowledge that pupils encounter does not build upon the things they have been taught before, and pupils are taught new knowledge and skills too quickly. This hinders learning.
- Leaders assess pupils' mathematical knowledge and their reading age when they join the school. They use this information to identify pupils who may have SEND. However, these assessments do not provide leaders with the information they need to identify pupils' individual needs. Leaders recognise there is more to be done to ensure that their assessment of pupils on entry is fit for purpose.
- The provision for pupils who struggle to read is weak. Pupils who join the school at an early stage of reading do not make swift progress in their reading. Instead, they remain behind their peers for too long.
- Leaders have begun to address the weaknesses identified in the school's assessment processes at the previous inspection. However, too often, teachers do not check that pupils have understood the things they have been taught. As a result, gaps in learning go unaddressed and misconceptions in pupils' understanding persist.
- In books, pupils' work is often unfinished and illegible. Teachers do not challenge this. This means that too often, pupils do not take pride in their work and do not achieve as well as they should.

- These independent school standards (the standards) remain unmet.

Paragraphs 3(e), 4

- At the time of the previous inspection, leaders had not made sure that teachers were well equipped with the subject knowledge they needed to deliver the curriculum well. Leaders had also not made sure that they evaluated pupils' performance across the curriculum.
- Leaders have begun to develop teachers' subject knowledge. They have ensured that staff have the knowledge they need to teach the subjects they deliver.
- Leaders have developed a framework to evaluate pupils' performance. They share this information with parents periodically throughout the year.
- These standards are now met.

Part 2. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

Paragraphs 5, 5(a), 5(b), 5(b)(i), 5(b)(ii), 5(b)(iii), 5(b)(iv), 5(b)(v), 5(b)(vi), 5(b)(vii), 5(c), 5(d), 5(d)(i), 5(d)(ii), 5(d)(iii)

- Due to concerns received by the Department for Education (DfE), the inspector also considered part 2 of the standards during this inspection.
- Leaders are committed to developing pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding and have taken appropriate steps to ensure that the curriculum will not undermine fundamental British values. They make sure that pupils will not be exposed to partisan political views.
- Leaders have appropriate plans in place to cater for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils have personal development lessons every week, as well as additional citizenship lessons from Year 10 onwards.
- Leaders recognise the issues that pupils attending the school are likely to face as they grow up. They ensure that pupils benefit from a wide range of opportunities, specific to their needs, such as visits from local police officers and the development of a school council. These opportunities support pupils to develop as confident individuals who have a sound appreciation of British values.
- Leaders make sure that pupils benefit from a range of trips and visits to museums, libraries and places of worship. These opportunities enrich pupils' understanding of different cultures and faiths.
- These standards are met.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraphs 7, 7a, 11

- At the time of the last inspection, arrangements to safeguard pupils were not effective. Staff were not vigilant about pupils' welfare. Staff did not always report concerns about pupils' safety when they had them. Leaders had not made sure that the health and safety risks related to the school site were managed well to reduce the risk of harm.
- While records of concern are well kept, leaders and staff do not act on concerns about pupils' welfare in a timely way. Consequently, pupils do not always receive the help they need when they need it.

- Leaders check on pupils' attendance and are beginning to monitor trends and patterns in attendance. However, leaders do not do enough to assure themselves of the well-being of those pupils who are frequently absent from school.
- Leaders have not updated their health and safety policy to ensure it adequately reflects the new school site.
- Parts of the school site pose a risk to pupils' health. At the time of the inspection, there was broken glass overhanging the playground and there were gaps in the school fence surrounding the playground. Leaders had failed to manage these risks to pupils' safety.
- These standards remain unmet.

Paragraph 32(1)(c)

- As a routine part of the inspection, the inspector checked the availability of the school's safeguarding policy. The policy reflects current statutory requirements and is available on request.
- This standard is met.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraphs 23(1), 23(1)(a), 23(1)(c), 24(1), 24(1)(a), 24(1)(b), 24(2), 25, 28(1), 28(1)(b), 28(1)(c), 28(1)(d), 28(2), 28(2)(a),

- The school moved to new premises in March 2023. Some renovation work has begun, but this is far from finished. The building and the school site are not suitable for pupils.
- Classrooms are cramped. These portacabin classrooms are in a poor state of repair. The doorframe in one is hanging loose, while some classrooms have damp and black mould on the walls.
- The separate building where the school office, reception and medical room are located is in a poor state of repair. There is a large step which poses a potential trip hazard as you step outside onto the rear of the building. Leaders have not taken steps to reduce the risk of falling when using this step.
- A large broken pane of glass hangs precariously from a window frame above the school playground. This poses an immediate risk to pupils' welfare. Leaders failed to identify this prior to this inspection. This was not resolved by the time the inspector left the school site.
- The medical room is not fit for purpose. The room is primarily used as a storage space for various items, including cleaning chemicals. The space is overflowing with objects that leaders have stored in the room. There is little space to move. The room does not have a suitable sink and is some distance from the nearest toilet. This toilet is in an extremely poor state of repair, with large sections of broken tiling on the floor and walls. There is no sink within this space.
- Leaders have not ensured that the cleanliness of spaces such as the medical room and toilets are maintained. For example, the floor around the medical bed was littered with used tissues at the time of the inspection.
- Leaders have not made sure that there is a suitable space for pupils to wash or shower should they need to.
- The temperature of water from taps in the pupils' toilet facilities poses a risk of scalding.

- These standards remain unmet.

Paragraphs 28(1)(a), 28(2)(b)

- At the time of the previous progress monitoring inspection in March 2023, leaders were ensuring that pupils had access to drinking-water through an installed water dispenser.
- This water dispenser is no longer in use. Instead, pupils only have access to drinking-water from a tap above a sink located in the toilet facilities.
- These paragraphs are now unmet.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraphs 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b), 34(1)(c)

- At the time of the previous inspection, it was found that the proprietor did not ensure that all the standards were met consistently. Leaders were not actively promoting the well-being of pupils.
- Leaders have begun to take action to address some of the areas of weakness identified. However, this work has yet to have the desired impact. There is still a great deal of work to be done to ensure the school meets all of the standards and that pupils' welfare is actively promoted.
- The school is operating from a new location close to the other schools in the trust. Leaders say this is because of financial challenges the school has faced. Leaders are operating outside of their registration agreement.
- These standards remain unmet.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- Leaders have not ensured that their accessibility plan reflects all the particulars of the new school site. Therefore, at present, they are unlikely to fulfil their duties under schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

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	135483
DfE registration number	335/6013
Inspection number	10304795

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	Islamic day school
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Boys
Number of pupils on the school roll	75
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Mohammed Luqman
Headteacher	Mohammed Ramzan
Annual fees (day pupils)	£3,500 to £3,900
Telephone number	01922724149
Website	None
Email address	abbs.info@abubakrschool.org.uk
Date of previous standard inspection	28 June 2022

Information about this school

- The school received its last full standard inspection in June 2022 and was judged inadequate for the quality of education and leadership and management. Since this time, the school has received one progress monitoring inspection prior to this inspection.
- The school is currently operating from 154 to 156 Wednesbury Road, Walsall, WS1 4JJ. The school has notified the DfE that it is operating beyond its registration agreement.
- Abu Bakr Boys School is an independent Islamic day school that caters for boys aged 11 to 16.
- The school is part of the Abu Bakr Trust.
- 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.
- As part of this inspection, inspectors also considered a concern that had been raised with the DfE regarding pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The inspector visited the school's new site where they are currently operating from.
- This progress monitoring inspection was carried out without notice and lasted one day.
- This was the school's second monitoring inspection since its last standard inspection in June 2022, when it was judged inadequate.
- The school was required to prepare an action plan as a result of non-compliance with the standards following the March 2023 progress monitoring inspection. The proposed action plan was judged satisfactory in July 2023 and was accepted by the DfE.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, the designated safeguarding lead and other school leaders. The inspector also spoke with a number of other staff who were on site on the day.
- The inspector checked the school's curriculum policy and subject plans. They visited a sample of lessons. They also looked at the school's personal development curriculum and other documentation relating to pupils' wider development.
- The inspector toured the school's premises and reviewed the school's accessibility plan.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.

Inspection team

Alexander Laney, 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 unmet at this inspection

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(2) For the purposes of paragraph (2)(1)(a), the matters are-
 - 2(2)(b) that pupils acquire speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills;
 - 2(2)(h) that all pupils have the opportunity to learn and make progress; and
- 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(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;

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
- 11 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that relevant health and safety laws are complied with by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written health and safety policy.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

- 23(1) Subject to sub-paragraph (2), the standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that-
 - 23(1)(a) suitable toilet and washing facilities are provided for the sole use of pupils;
 - 23(1)(c) suitable changing accommodation and showers are provided for pupils aged 11 years or over at the start of the school year who receive physical education.
- 24(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that suitable accommodation is provided in order to cater for the medical and therapy needs of pupils, including-

- 24(1)(a) accommodation for the medical examination and treatment of pupils;
- 24(1)(b) accommodation for the short term care of sick and injured pupils, which includes a washing facility and is near to a toilet facility; and
- 24(2) The accommodation provided under sub-paragraphs (1)(a) and (b) may be used for other purposes (apart from teaching) provided it is always readily available to be used for the purposes set out in sub-paragraphs (1)(a) and (b).
- 25 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that the school premises and the accommodation and facilities provided therein are maintained to a standard such that, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of pupils are ensured.
- 28(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that-
 - 28(1)(b) toilets and urinals have an adequate supply of cold water and washing facilities have an adequate supply of hot and cold water;
 - 28(1)(c) cold water supplies that are suitable for drinking are clearly marked as such; and
 - 28(1)(d) the temperature of hot water at the point of use does not pose a scalding risk to users.
- 28(2) The facilities provided under sub-paragraph (1)(a) will be suitable only if-
 - 28(2)(a) they are readily accessible at all times when the premises are in use; and

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.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- Arrangements made to fulfil duties under schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

Standards that were met at the previous inspection, but are now judged to not be met at this inspection

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

- 28(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that-
 - 28(1)(a) suitable drinking water facilities are provided;
- 28(2) The facilities provided under sub-paragraph (1)(a) will be suitable only if-
 - 28(2)(b) they are in a separate area from the toilet facilities.

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

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(e) demonstrates good knowledge and understanding of the subject matter being taught;
- 4 The standard in this paragraph is met where the proprietor ensures that a framework for pupil performance to be evaluated, by reference to the school's own aims as provided to parents or national norms, or to both, is in place.

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