

Zakariya Primary School

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

Inspection date

6 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(1)(b), 2(1)(b)(i), 3, 3(a), 3(c), 3(d), 3(e), 3(f), 3(g)

- At the school's previous graded inspection in March 2023, the curriculum lacked ambition and breadth. Leaders had not carefully thought through what pupils need to learn and when. Pupils in Year 6 received a curriculum that was too narrow. Assessment was weak. Leaders had not ensured that staff were well trained to plan and deliver an effective curriculum, including for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Arrangements for the teaching of early reading were inconsistent because there was a lack of leadership and training resulting in variability in approach. This meant that pupils received an uneven quality of provision. Pupils had a limited selection of reading books.
- Leaders' post-inspection action plan included a number of suitable actions relating to their wide-ranging review of the curriculum, assessment processes and professional training provision.
- This inspection found the curriculum policy and long-term teaching plans to have been overhauled to ensure the curriculum provided is broader and more ambitious. All pupils of all ages, including those in Year 6, now follow a sufficiently broad curriculum. A range of ongoing training has been provided to staff, including in the teaching of phonics and reading. Checks on pupils' learning are more regular and focused. A SEND coordinator has been appointed and is receiving ongoing training. A range of strategies and processes have been put in place to support the very few pupils with SEND. A new programme of team teaching and coaching is helping to improve teachers' curriculum thinking and subject expertise. Leaders have invested in teaching resources and reading books. Pupils now visit their local library every half term and are enthusiastic about the new reading book corners and the increased access that they now have to a wider range of reading books than in the past.
- Overall, leaders have taken a range of suitably ambitious actions to improve the curriculum and quality of education. The school has taken appropriate steps towards ensuring a well-sequenced curriculum enables pupils, including those with SEND, to learn well in all subjects and that the teaching of reading is consistent across the school. However, the many changes will take time to become fully embedded. For example,

training for staff is ongoing, and curriculum plans that sit beneath the long-term plans continue to be a work in progress.

- As a result, other than paragraph 3(f), the independent school standards checked in this part remain unmet at this time.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraphs 7–7(b), 34(1), 34(1)(c)

- At the previous inspection, some of the school's safeguarding practice was weak. The safer recruitment process did not reflect statutory guidance. Record-keeping and organisation lacked rigour.
- Leaders' action plan outlined their intention to update the recruitment process to align with statutory guidance. However, the actions lacked detail, and it was not sufficiently clear whether the revised process would be suitably rigorous.
- This inspection confirmed that the school's recruitment process, including the application form, the take up of professional references, the documented interview process and the completion of all the required pre-employment checks, is now thorough, organised and effective. The process reflects the guidance outlined in 'Keeping children safe in education' (September 2023).
- Wider checks on safeguarding found that leaders prioritise pupils' safety and well-being. Leaders and staff continue to know what to do when they have a concern, and leaders follow up on any concerns appropriately. Pupils feel safe. In the absence of a website, the school's suitable safeguarding policy continues to be readily available in hard copy.
- These independent school standards are now met.

Paragraphs 3, 3(h), 9, 9(b)

- The previous inspection found that staff managed behaviour inconsistently. This meant that pupils' behaviour varied throughout the school and low-level disruption sometimes affected learning.
- Leaders' action plan identified a range of suitable actions, including the introduction of a new, simpler behaviour policy and training for staff in light of this policy to ensure that it is implemented consistently.
- This inspection found leaders' revised policy and approach to behaviour management has significantly improved pupils' behaviour throughout the school. All staff have been trained to follow a clearer, consistent system of rewards and sanctions. Pupils commented on how much better behaviour is now and were enthusiastic about being rewarded for taking responsibility for their own behaviour.
- These independent school standards are now met.
- The independent school standards checked in this part are now met.

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

All paragraphs

- At the previous inspection, the single central record (SCR) of pre-employment checks on staff was poorly maintained and organised. It was unclear whether all the correct checks had been carried out. Most checks were not dated.

- Leaders' action plan stated that all the required checks had been completed and recorded on a new SCR.
- This inspection found that leaders are now maintaining a fully compliant and up-to-date SCR that accurately records the dates of all the required checks on staff, governors and the proprietor.
- The independent school standards checked in this part are now met.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraphs 23(1), 23(1)(a), 25

- Although the premises continue to be far from ideal for use as a primary school, leaders continue to do all they reasonably can to maintain acceptable standards of health and safety. This inspection also found that leaders' arrangements for providing separate and suitable toilet and washing facilities for pupils continue to be suitable.
- The independent school standards checked in this part continue to be met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraphs 34(1)–34(1)(b)

- At the previous inspection, the proprietor had not put consistent and effective systems in place to check the effectiveness of leaders' work. Some of the independent school standards were not met. The inspection also reported that the school's premises were not fit for purpose. They did not provide a pleasant learning environment. They were cramped and pupils had to sit on the floor all day because there were no desks and chairs. Pupils had to pass through classrooms to move around the building, which disrupted the learning of others.
- Leaders' action plan suggested that the proprietor has taken suitable action to ensure that governors support and check the quality of leaders' work more rigorously than in the past. It stated that there are ongoing premises relocation plans.
- This inspection found that leaders and governors have taken the findings of the previous inspection seriously. They have rightly prioritised securing improvements in safeguarding, staff recruitment processes and pupils' behaviour. The proprietor has recruited new members to bolster the governing body and invested in a range of curriculum resources. Although leaders acknowledge the continued urgency with which new premises need to be found, the current premises have been temporarily upgraded, and more space created, to make them more comfortable for pupils. Leaders' work to strengthen the curriculum and quality of education is proving effective, but more time is needed to see its impact on pupils' learning over time.
- Leaders' effective work since the March 2023 inspection means that many of the previously unmet independent school standards are now met. However, some, including the independent school standard checked in this part, remain unmet at this time.

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	134577
DfE registration number	316/6063
Inspection number	10309118

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 day school
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	105
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Asif Choudhury
Headteacher	Sufyan Rashid
Annual fees (day pupils)	£2,880
Telephone number	020 8555 6258
Website	None
Email address	info@zakariyaschool.org
Date of previous standard inspection	28 to 30 March 2023

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 proprietor and governors continue to seek new, temporary premises. Once found, the plan is to move to them while the current premises are demolished and rebuilt.
- The previous inspection was a graded inspection in March 2023.
- Leaders make no use of 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 inspector was asked to consider some requirements in part 5 in light of concerns received by the Department for Education.
- This was the school's first progress monitoring inspection since its last inspection in March 2023. The inspection was conducted without notice.
- Since the previous inspection, leaders were asked to submit an action plan. This was judged by Ofsted to be not acceptable in July 2023 and was subsequently rejected by the Department for Education.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, who is also the designated safeguarding lead. He also met with a governor and a group of teachers. He toured the premises and reviewed a range of documents, including policies, curriculum plans and the SCR. The inspector met with all pupils in Year 6.

Inspection team

James Waite, lead inspector

Ofsted 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(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; 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(e) demonstrates good knowledge and understanding of the subject matter being taught;
 - 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 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

The school now meets the following 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(f) utilises effectively classroom resources of a good quality, quantity and range;

- 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)(iii) the person's right to work in the United Kingdom; and
 - 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)(c) actively promote the well-being of pupils.

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