

Leicester Community Islamic School

Independent School

Inspection report

DCSF Registration Number	856/6014
Unique Reference Number	132781
Inspection number	319994
Inspection dates	28 - 29 February 2008
Reporting inspector	Mohammad Ismail

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 162A of the Education Act 2002 (as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005).

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Purpose and scope of the inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005, in order to advise the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Information about the school

Leicester Community Islamic School is an independent Muslim day school for boys and girls aged 5 to 16 years. The school was first registered in 2004. This is its first reporting inspection. The school is located in **the** Humberstone area of Leicester. The school is owned by Darul-Arqam which is a charity registered trust and run by a governing body. The school aims to offer education in 'a relaxed and friendly environment.' It 'Provides a broad and balanced study of all areas of the National Curriculum.' And staff 'Constantly strives to achieve high standards in all avenues of learning.' The school has 146 pupils on roll.

Evaluation of the school

Leicester Community Islamic School is a caring community. The overall quality of education is good. Pupils are safe and well cared for at school. Relationships between staff and pupils throughout the school are good. Pupils make good progress and achieve high standards. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good which is reflected in their good behaviour and respect for others. The school's provision for welfare, health and safety of its pupils is good. Pupils and parents are extremely supportive of the school. The school has plans to acquire new buildings as the present accommodation doesn't fully meet its needs and therefore not all of the requirements for registration are fully met.

Quality of education

The curriculum is satisfactory. It is based on a policy which sets out clear objectives for learning. Throughout the school it is based on National Curriculum guidelines and offers a broad range of learning experiences for pupils at all key stages. Boys and girls are taught together at Key Stages 1 and 2 and separately at Key Stages 3 and 4. Girls follow the same curriculum as boys and have settled well into the learning environment. Islamic Studies and Arabic Studies are offered from the start of Key Stage 1, both as discrete subjects and across subjects. They permeate the daily life of the school, effectively reflecting its objectives. Islamic studies include beliefs, practice, moral teachings and Islamic history. Urdu and Arabic are also included as modern foreign languages. Weekly citizenship lessons in all year groups and assemblies reinforce moral responsibilities and ensure that pupils are informed well about lifestyle choices, the environment and the cultural diversity of the world in which we live. All lessons are based on literacy and numeracy, with the new literacy framework in place. Discrete lessons of information and communication technology (ICT) enable pupils to develop skills and competences although the accommodation

is cramped. This applies also to the teaching rooms for Years 8 and 9. Although the accommodation offers facilities for indoor physical education (PE), outdoor PE takes place on a nearby children's sports facility and the time allocation meets the minimum requirement. The provision of arts and craft lessons ensures that younger pupils are able to discover and develop their creative talents effectively.

Provision is sound at Key Stage 4 where all students study the same eight subjects in these early stages of the school's development. As yet, there is no work related learning, including work experience. The school has planned some work placements for Years 10 and 11. There is also no provision for art for these pupils although the opportunities provided in Islamic Studies ensure development in creative learning. History is a recent addition to the GCSE courses.

Curriculum planning has some good aspects. For example, long and mid-term planning is in place in all subjects. Schemes of work generally offer good detail about the objectives of learning and the methods and resources that are available.

There are no extra curricular activities in place. This deprives pupils of all ages of the opportunity to discover new interests and talents and to develop and expand their inter-personal skills. They enjoy a small but carefully thought out number of educational visits, such as to the space centre. This enhances their classroom learning well and broadens their view of the world. Careers advice is given formally in Years 10 and 11, which students feel is very helpful. However, it is not yet in place in Key Stage 3. Resources are satisfactory although there is some overuse of work sheets in a minority of lessons.

The quality of teaching and assessment is good. As a result children make good progress and attain high standards throughout the school and by the time they leave. The majority of lessons are good and, on occasion, outstanding. In the majority of lessons, pupils display excellent attitudes to learning because teaching engages and challenges them. Tasks are time related so that there is a brisk pace to learning. In both an English and mathematics lessons, pupils made excellent progress because very clear teaching was followed by opportunities for pupils to work independently, on tasks which matched very closely their levels of learning. In the rare cases of teaching being inadequate this is because teaching and tasks do not motivate students and restlessness and low level disruption are not tackled effectively. The 100% A*-C grade in mathematics in 2007 is explained by the consistently high standards of teaching and learning in this subject. English results were well below average in 2007, this was mainly as a result of high staff turnover which resulted in pupils having gaps in their learning. In lessons in which progress is satisfactory, teaching does not take sufficient account of the different levels at which pupils are working. This is compounded when two year groups are taught together and the tasks do not meet closely enough the needs of all pupils, particularly the more able. In all lessons, the purpose of learning is made clear so that pupils know what they have to achieve. Teachers know their subjects well and pupils respect them for this so that their attitudes are usually very good and they enjoy learning.

Assessment of learning is good overall and is a major contributory factor for the good results at Key Stage 4. The senior leadership team have accurate and rigorous records of monitoring of pupils' progress through the school. Formal assessments, twice yearly, following school examinations trigger actions to ensure that pupils falling behind in their learning are swiftly provided with extra support. Subject staff keep regular interim records. Marking is more variable. In some subjects it is very effective because teachers tell pupils what they have achieved and how to move forward in their learning. The school has developed a whole school system so that all pupils understand the meaning of the grading on their work.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils

The school's provision for its pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. It effectively meets the school's stated ethos. Pupils behaviour is good and they help each other. They have great respect for their teachers and express their affiliation to their school and faith. Their attitudes to their learning are good. They learn about other cultures and about British institutions in their Islamic studies, citizenship and history lessons. Pupils are taught the importance of tolerance in society and respecting others and they are also informed about political institutions. All pupils enjoy school life. As a result, attendance is above the national average. Pupils are assertive, expressive and respectful. There is a daily assembly programme in which they are given the opportunity to extend their spiritual and moral development. Regular daily prayer sessions in which pupils have the opportunity to conduct and lead the sessions in turns, also benefit their spiritual development. The school has few links with the wider community and local institutions. The school organises some trips for its pupils, but these are limited. Pupils would like more educational visits and after school activities and to be more formally involved in the decision making processes of the school.

Welfare, health and safety of the pupils

The school's provision for the welfare, health and safety of its pupils is good. The vast majority of its pupils feel safe and well cared for at the school. They are regularly reminded about healthy life styles. The school operates a zero tolerance policy towards bad behaviour. The anti-bullying, behaviour, child protection, health & safety, school outing, first aid and visitors' policies are effectively implemented. The designated child protection officers are known to the school community and pupils know who to talk to in case of bullying. The child protection officer's training is not up to date; the school is aware of this and arrangements have been made for update training. There are appropriately trained first aiders in the school. All members of staff are kept abreast of updates about child protection, fire and other risks. The school meets the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act (2002).

Suitability of the proprietor and staff

The school has adopted a suitable recruitment policy and all required checks are carried out on staff and its proprietors before their appointment is confirmed. Records of checks are kept as required, on the single central staff register.

School's premises and accommodation

The school operates in a building which was previously used for commercial purposes. The building is adequately maintained, kept tidy and it has been made safe as an effective learning environment. School teaching areas for primary section and girls' secondary are on the ground floor while boys' secondary is facilitated on the first floor. There is a large indoor hall, a library and a medical room for primary and secondary girls. However, the medical room for secondary aged boys has no sink. The teaching rooms for Year 9 and Year 10 boys are too small, as are the ICT room and the science laboratory. The provision of washing facilities for pupils are insufficient. Therefore, the school's accommodation does not meet a number of the requirements.

Provision of information for parents, carers and others

The school provides parents, carers, prospective parents and others with up-to-date, comprehensive and useful information through its prospectus. The school also runs a website to meet this purpose. It sends reports to parents twice a year and holds two annual meetings for parents to come and discuss their children's progress.

Procedures for handling complaints

The school has a clearly written complaints policy which fully meets the requirements.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school meets all of the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 as amended January 2005, with the exception of those listed below.

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of the premises and accommodation (standard 5) and must:

- ensure that all its teaching and work rooms are of an appropriate size and none are overcrowded (paragraph 5(j))
- ensure that there are sufficient, separate toilets for boys and girls (paragraph 5(k))
- provide appropriate facilities for boys' in the secondary section who become ill (paragraph 5(l)).

What the school could do to improve further

While not required by the regulations, the school might wish to consider the following points for development:

- ensure that the child protection officer attends the planned refresher training day in safeguarding children on the specified date
- ensure the enhancement of the school's relationship with the wider community
- ensure the success of planned work experience placements for pupils
- extend the provision of physical education by offering a variety of extra curricular activities.

School details

Name of school	Leicester Community Islamic School		
DCSF number	856/6014		
Unique reference number	132781		
Type of school	Primary and secondary Islamic		
Status	Independent		
Date school opened	September 2000		
Age range of pupils	5-16		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 91	Girls: 55	Total: 146
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
Number of pupils who are looked after	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
Annual fees (day pupils)	£1320		
Address of school	2 Overton Road Leicester Leicestershire LE5 0JA		
Telephone number	0116 274 1626		
Fax number	0871 243 1758		
Email address	Darul_arqam@yahoo.co.uk www.lcis-darularqam.org.uk		
Headteacher	Mr Ahmed Abdul Hai Dadipatel		
Proprietor	Darul Arqam Trust		
Reporting inspector	Mohammad Ismail AI		
Dates of inspection	28 - 29 February 2008		