

Normanton House Primary school

Independent School

Inspection report

DCSF Registration Number	831/6006
Unique Reference Number	134294
Inspection number	320000
Inspection dates	12–13 February 2008
Reporting inspector	Mark Mumby HMI

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

Normanton House is an independent Muslim day school for boys and girls aged 4 to 11 years. It is located on the outskirts of Derby and is owned by Al Akram Trust. The school aims *'to offer children a firm foundation in Islamic primary education'*, and *'...maintain a strong distinctive Islamic character in keeping with the guidance of the Qur'an and Sunnah as well as offering a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum'*. The school is registered for 150 pupils and there are currently 85 full time pupils on roll. The school opened in June 2003 and this is the first published Ofsted inspection report.

Evaluation of the school

Normanton House School is a happy and harmonious community where pupils' behaviour is outstanding. The quality of education is good and the school takes satisfactory care of its pupils. However, because some of them have not been reviewed since the school opened, the schools' policies do not take full account of the latest guidance. Although procedures to care for pupils are generally robust, these are not always reflected in the school's documentation. The school meets most of the requirements for registration.

Quality of education

The curriculum is satisfactory. Provision for Islamic studies, Arabic and Urdu is good. The schemes of work for these subjects are detailed and provide clear progression for all pupils enabling them to make good progress. Islamic studies include Quar'anic studies, *Fiqh* (theology), Islamic history, *Hadith* (oral tradition of the Prophet) and *Aklaaq* (moral teaching). The school also offers Arabic and Urdu as modern foreign languages. Provision for personal, social and health education, which is taught mainly through Islamic studies, is good.

The school has a satisfactory curriculum policy which covers the required aspects of the secular curriculum. Good use is made of National Curriculum and National Strategy materials to plan effective lessons. As a result, pupils make good progress in their learning. Although the school encourages pupils to participate in community sporting activities, there are limited opportunities for physical activities organised by the school beyond the core curriculum. Pupils benefit from a small number of visits out of school. However, some parents have rightly expressed a need to extend this provision. Opportunities for children in the Reception class to learn outdoors are restricted as they do not have direct access to a suitable outside area and they have few resources.

The quality of teaching and assessment are good. As a result, pupils make good progress throughout the school and attain high standards by the time they leave. The school makes good use of assessment, including national assessments in Year 2 and Year 6, to monitor the progress of its pupils. This information confirms the good progress seen in lessons and in pupils' work.

Pupils make good progress in lessons because the teachers know them well. Teachers use questioning effectively to challenge pupils and to make them think. Pupils respond well to this and have very positive attitudes to their work. They relate very well to their teachers, whose supportive approach ensures that pupils of all abilities are able to achieve well. Specialist teachers for many subjects have very good subject knowledge and these teachers are particularly effective in moving pupils on in their learning. Their good use of appropriate technical language, for example in science and mathematics, is a particular strength. Lessons are well planned and teachers have a clear understanding of what they expect pupils to learn. Teachers involve individual pupils effectively when they are teaching the whole class. As a result, pupils enjoy their work and lessons move on at a brisk pace. However, on a few occasions, pupils do not listen well to each other and call out. Consequently, the progress pupils' make slows. The teaching styles used mean that most lessons are heavily directed with many involving the use of prescriptive worksheets or textbooks. As a result, there is little opportunity for pupils to develop their skills as independent learners in lessons.

Marking provides pupils with a good understanding of how well they have done. At its best, it provides clear guidance to help pupils improve their work. On these occasions, pupils progress more quickly. However, this type of developmental marking is not used consistently throughout the school.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is good overall. Their spiritual, moral and social understanding is particularly strong and their behaviour is outstanding. Pupils have great respect for their teachers and express their affiliation to their school and culture. Regular prayer sessions and morning assemblies are organised to meet pupils' spiritual needs. Although pupils have a very good understanding of their own culture, they have limited opportunities to learn about a wider range of cultural traditions. All pupils are valued and staff are successful in raising pupils' self-esteem. They have good attitudes and develop the social skills necessary to make a positive contribution to school life. For example, older pupils help younger pupils to read and support them on the playground. Monitors throughout the school have responsibilities such as for tidying up or for leading prayers. Pupils clearly enjoy school and their attendance is satisfactory. They understand the difference between right and wrong and respect the school rules, which they feel are fair. They approach their work with enthusiasm, developing good basic skills and being well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Welfare, health and safety of the pupils

Pupils' welfare, health and safety are satisfactory. Pupils are very well known as individuals by the staff, and they say that they appreciate the care and concern shown for them. Relationships between pupils and staff are good, and the quality of supervision is high. Although the school implements sound health and safety procedures on a day to day basis, this is based on established practice rather than properly documented procedures. Several policies have not been reviewed since the school was opened and do not take full account of the latest guidance.

Pupils feel safe from bullying and are confident that it will be dealt with effectively should it occur. However, the bullying policy has not been reviewed recently and lacks sufficient detail. For example, it does not include guidance about how to record incidents, what the sanctions are for bullying and when they would be applied. The school has a first aid policy and a suitable number of staff are appropriately trained. Procedures for recording incidents are robust. However, the policy does not provide sufficiently clear guidance for staff. For example, details about the hygiene procedures for dealing with contaminated waste. A child protection policy is in place but it does not take account of the latest guidance. The person responsible for child protection has not been appropriately trained, although the school has already put in place plans to rectify this.

Suitable risk assessments are completed for activities, including educational visits and for the school premises. The school's attention to health and safety is supported by an appropriate policy and accurate records are kept of the regular fire drills and testing of fire and electrical equipment.

Whilst pupils have a good understanding about healthy eating and taking exercise, too many of them choose to eat unhealthy snacks at break time. Opportunities for physical activity are limited, both within the curriculum and outside of it.

The school has not prepared a suitable accessibility plan for disabled pupils and, therefore, does not fully comply with its duties under the Disability Discrimination Act (2002).

Suitability of the proprietor and staff

The school fully complies with the regulations relating to the checks it makes on prospective employees regarding their identity and suitability to work with children. However, requests for references and medical fitness reports are not consistently followed up. Consequently, the single central record of staff checks shows that information about some employees is incomplete.

School's premises and accommodation

The school building has been suitably adapted to meet the needs of the school. The classrooms are clean, bright and appropriately sized. Currently there is limited outdoor space for recreation, physical education and activities for the Reception children. However, improvements are already underway to rectify this.

Provision of information for parents, carers and others

The school has a good relationship with parents and provides suitable opportunities for them to meet with the trustees, as well as their children's teachers. Written reports, which are prepared twice each year, are of good quality. As a result, parents are well informed, both about their children's work and the life of the school. The prospectus has recently been updated and fulfils all of the requirements.

Procedures for handling complaints

The school has a clearly written and fair complaints procedure which 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 provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety (standard 3) and must:

- prepare and implement a written policy to prevent bullying which has regard to the DCSF guidance *Bullying: don't suffer in silence* (DCSF 0064/2000) (paragraph 3(2)(a))
- prepare and implement written policies to safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are pupils at the school in compliance with DCSF guidance *Safeguarding children and safer recruitment in education* (2007) (paragraph 3(2)(b))
- prepare and implement a satisfactory written policy on first aid (paragraph 3(6)).

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of suitability of proprietor and staff (standard 4) and must:

- prior to the confirmation of the appointment of all staff (including volunteers), carry out appropriate checks to confirm their medical fitness, character references and, where appropriate, qualifications and professional references and take such information into account in determining whether their appointment will be confirmed (paragraph 4(2)(a)).

In order to comply with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 2002 the school should devise a three-year accessibility plan.

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:

- Make more consistent use of marking to provide clear guidance to help pupils improve their work.
- Provide more opportunities within the curriculum to enrich pupils' physical and cultural development.
- Make more effective use of the outdoor environment, particularly for pupils in Reception, and for physical education.

School details

Name of school	Normanton House Primary
DCSF number	831/6006
Unique reference number	134294
Type of school	Primary
Status	Independent
Date school opened	4 June 2003
Age range of pupils	4-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 51 Girls: 34 Total: 85
Annual fees (day pupils)	£1650
Address of school	Normanton House Primary School Normanton House Village Street Derby Derbyshire
Telephone number	01322 769333
Email address	enquiries@alakramtrust.org.uk
Headteacher	Mrs Nighat Khan
Proprietor	Dr A Piracha
Reporting inspector	Mark Mumby HMI
Dates of inspection	12–13 February 2008