

Al-Ameen Primary School

Independent school inspection report

DCSF registration number 330/6113
Unique reference number 130244
Inspection number 342526
Inspection dates 6–7 October 2009
Reporting inspector Jacqueline Wordsworth HMI

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended.

Age group: 3–11

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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, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.¹

Information about the school

Al-Ameen Primary School is an independent Muslim day school that provides full-time education for boys and girls aged 3 to 11 years. The school is affiliated to the Association of Muslim Schools UK. The school is registered for 100 pupils and currently has 87 boys and girls aged from 3 to 11 years on roll. Currently all the families that send their children to the school are practising Muslims. These families are mainly of British Pakistani and Bangladeshi heritage, although there is an increasing number of pupils from other backgrounds. No pupil has a statement of special educational needs and all pupils speak English and more than one other language. The school aims 'to develop the whole personality of pupils with Tawheed (Oneness of God) at the core and Islam as the main focus of their lives; to encourage the pursuit and acquisition of general knowledge and skills; to promote the dignity of each young person through self-respect, respect for parents, elders and others, through the development of personal responsibility; and to ensure that young people enjoy their life at school and develop a love of learning and a strong desire to continue their education as a lifelong experience.'

Evaluation of the school

Al-Ameen Primary School provides a good standard of education for its pupils, who flourish because they are happy and kept safe. As a result, pupils are well motivated and are eager to learn. They make good progress in their learning and achieve well in the main school and satisfactorily in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Within this well-disciplined and caring environment, the school fosters pupils who are pleasant, well-behaved, courteous, well-mannered and respectful of the staff and of each other. The school has successfully created a strong spiritual environment firmly based on Islamic principles where teachers nurture pupils' faith securing a family atmosphere that is evident in the daily life of the school. Consequently, parents and pupils are overwhelmingly positive about the school and Early Years Foundation Stage. There has been improvement in the school's work in several areas since the last inspection and the school now meets almost all of the requirements for registration. Nonetheless, further work needs to be done to improve some aspects of welfare, health and safety and the quality of teaching and assessment in the Early

¹ www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2002/ukpga_20020032_en_14#pt10-ch1-pb4-l1g162

Years Foundation Stage. The school has acknowledged this and begun to address it by providing further training for staff.

Quality of education

The quality of education is good and the school fulfils its aims well. The curriculum, including the Islamic curriculum, is good and meets the needs of all pupils effectively, including those in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The Islamic Studies programme gives pupils the opportunity to deepen their knowledge and understanding of the Qur'an and to be familiar with the language of the Qur'an – Arabic. There is an appropriate balance between the secular subjects and Qur'anic and Islamic studies. Arabic is taught separately as a modern foreign language and during Qur'anic studies. The daily routines such as Duaa (supplication) and Zohar Salah (lunchtime prayer) enable pupils to practise their faith and develop a sense of community. Pupils learn to distinguish right from wrong through Qur'anic studies and this strengthens their personal, social and health education. A particular strength is the way in which the teachers provide effective opportunities for pupils to understand the meaning of Surahs so that they can implement the learning behind them in their daily life.

This effective broad and balanced curriculum is underpinned by detailed policies and schemes of work with good emphasis placed on teaching of literacy and numeracy. Nevertheless, the school is aware that there is occasionally an over reliance on worksheets that are not always appropriately matched to the pupils' needs. This has a particular impact on writing, where the teachers miss opportunities to consolidate skills taught in English lessons and to increase the range and extent of pupils' writing. Consequently, standards in writing across some year groups are lower than in reading. As a result, pupils make slower progress in this area because writing skills are not taught systematically. Also there are too few opportunities for pupils to write at length or to use a range of more complex writing styles. Similarly, in mathematics opportunities are missed to involve pupils in more open-ended investigations and problem solving activities.

The quality of teaching and assessment has improved since the time of the school's previous inspection and is now good in the main school and satisfactory in The Early Years Foundation Stage. It has improved because the senior leaders keep a close eye on what goes on in the classrooms. They make regular visits to check that school policies are implemented and regularly give teachers clear written advice on how to improve their teaching.

Pupils benefit from small teaching groups and the high level of individual support. Consequently, they make good progress in learning by the time they leave at the end of Year 6 from their individual starting points. Teachers' management of pupils is effective with good relationships between staff and pupils, making classrooms harmonious and purposeful places.

The good teaching observed during lessons has some common features: Staff have high expectations for pupils' behaviour and standards of work and lessons are well planned. Of particular note are the very positive relationships teachers have with their pupils and the effective use of praise and encouragement to motivate them. These features were exemplified in a Year 3 English lesson on non-fiction and fiction texts. The pupils buzzed with excitement and worked in a mature and independent way to find examples of differences between the two text types because they clearly understood the task and what it was they were learning. Pupils forge ahead in such lessons, because the work is challenging and the pace is brisk.

In the less effective lessons, although the objectives for learning are made clear to pupils, these are not always shared with them in child friendly language and so pupils do not fully understand how their success will be measured.

There are some good examples of target setting and analytical marking but these are inconsistent across the school. The best examples now make it clear what pupils need to do to improve with pupils given the opportunity to ask questions if they have not grasped something.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development across the whole school is good. Teachers provide good role models for Islamic life and this has a positive impact on pupils' moral development. Through their active participation in Islamic studies pupils develop a good knowledge of what is right and wrong and have a clear understanding of their Islamic identity. As a result, pupils of all ages build very strong and trusting relationships with their peers and with their teachers. Pupils' enjoyment is reflected in their good attendance and behaviour and in the enthusiasm they show when they arrive each morning and during lessons. The pupils leave the school literate and numerate, therefore they are well prepared for the next stage of their education and future economic well-being.

Pupils show good understanding of their cultures and those around them. The international evening of Iftar in school is a strong example of promoting tolerance and harmony between all members of the community. Consequently, pupils are confident young people who enjoy being involved in all school activities, such as charity events, and make a good contribution to the wider community.

Welfare, health and safety of the pupils

The provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety is good. The school's procedures for child protection and first aid are robust and members of staff have been trained to the required standards. The school is fully inclusive and complies with the requirements of the Disability and Discrimination Act 2002.

Although the school has effective procedures for many aspects of health and safety including testing of fire safety equipment, there are still some important procedures

that are not as robust. For example, although the risk assessments are consistently carried out, some of these assessments are not detailed enough to ensure that all risks have been adequately considered. The school attendance registers, although maintained accurately, do not comply with the regulations because they are completed in pencil. The school has a clear system to prevent bullying and pupils are taught to respect others. As a result, incidents of unkind behaviour between pupils are rare. Pupils of all ages report that they are confident that there is always someone they can talk to, if they are worried or anxious. Consequently, all pupils report that they feel safe in school. Pupils are helped effectively to understand how they can keep themselves safe and healthy through the science curriculum and in Islamic studies.

Suitability of the proprietor and staff

The school fully complies with the regulations relating to the checks it makes on prospective employees and volunteers regarding their identity, qualifications, medical fitness and suitability to work with children.

School's premises and accommodation

The school premises and accommodation are satisfactory. The school occupies rooms on the ground and first floors of a building that requires constant maintenance. However, the Early Years Foundation Stage is housed in brand new purpose-built, spacious accommodation. It is well maintained, clean and attractively decorated providing a calm and pleasant environment in which to learn. The outside play area is safe and provides a reasonably sized hard surface for outdoor play and physical education.

Provision of information for parents, carers and others

The school provides parents with accurate and up to date information about the school, its ethos and organisation. Parents report that they are pleased with the school; they receive regular written reports that vary in format and content. All give the results of end of year tests and the class teacher's comments on each pupil's behaviour, attendance and general attitude. The more informative reports indicate pupils' progress in each subject and suggest areas for improvement.

Procedures for handling complaints

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

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

The sound leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage results in satisfactory quality provision, with all of the learning and development and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage met. Staff work closely as a team, and provide safe and suitable, well designed learning opportunities that interest and engage children. Consequently, children enjoy their learning in the bright and well cared for environment. Outdoor play provides children with opportunities to support their physical health as well as developing their gross motor skills. However, there is no climbing apparatus and this limits their physical development.

Children display positive attitudes towards learning and respond appropriately to instructions. They behave well in their classes and during play; therefore no time is wasted and learning flows without interruption. As a result, children make at least satisfactory progress in all areas of their development relative to their starting points and capabilities and feel safe and well cared for.

While there are satisfactory systems to assess the children's progress, staff do not assess the children's starting points early enough and therefore sometimes find it difficult to compile a detailed picture of the children's progress over time. Staff are developing more effective use of direct observation as part of the assessment process. This is proving to be most useful where staff have identified what children have gained from an experience, rather than simply noted their participation in it. The manageability of these systems in different areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage is a little inconsistent, because records completed in the Nursery are not passed on to staff in the Reception class. Parents are kept well informed through clear ongoing records of their child's experiences and achievements in the home school booklet.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school meets all of the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 as amended ('the Regulations'), with the exception of those listed below.²

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety (standard 3) and must:

- Maintain an admission register and an attendance register in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006?³ (paragraph 3(9)).

² www.opsi.gov.uk/si/si2003/20031910.htm

³ www.opsi.gov.uk/si/si2006/20061751.htm

What the school could do to improve further

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

- Teach writing skills systematically across the school and provide more opportunities for pupils to write at length
- Introduce more investigative and problem solving activities in the mathematics curriculum.

Early Years Foundation Stage:

- Increase the frequency of direct observation of children to tailor activities to children's identified needs and capabilities.

Inspection judgement recording form

outstanding	good	satisfactory	inadequate
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The quality of education

Overall quality of education		√		
How well the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of pupils		√		
How effective teaching and assessment are in meeting the full range of pupils' needs		√		
How well pupils make progress in their learning		√		

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Quality of provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development		√		
The behaviour of pupils		√		

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The overall welfare, health and safety of pupils		√		
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The quality of the Early Years Foundation Stage provision

How good are the outcomes for children in the EYFS?			√	
What is the quality of provision in the EYFS?			√	
How effectively is the EYFS led and managed?			√	
Overall effectiveness: how well does the school meet the needs of children in the EYFS?			√	

The quality of boarding provision *(leave blank if not applicable)*

Evaluation of boarding provision				
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School details

Name of school	AL–Ammeen Primary School		
DCSF number	330/6113		
Unique reference number	130244		
Type of school	Primary		
Status	Independent		
Date school opened	September 2005		
Age range of pupils	3 - 11		
Gender of pupils	mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 51	Girls: 36	Total: 87
Number on roll (part-time pupils)	Boys: 15	Girls: 13	Total: 28
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational need	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
Number of pupils who are looked after	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
Annual fees (day pupils)	£ 1600		
Address of school	Stanfield House 447 Warwick Road Tyseley Birmingham B11 2JR		
Telephone number	0121 706 3322		
Fax number	0121 706 3322		
Email address	info@alammenfoundation.org.uk		
Headteacher	Mohammed Aminur Rahman		
Proprietor	Abdul Quadir		
Reporting inspector	Jacqueline Wordsworth HMI		
Dates of inspection	6–7 October 2009		