

Al-Mahad-Al-Islam School

Independent school progress report

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Reporting inspector	Saleem Hussain

Age group: 12-16

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Purpose and scope of the visit

This inspection visit was carried out by Ofsted under Section 162A of the Education Act 2002.

The visit was conducted at the request of the Registration Authority for independent schools in order to monitor the progress the school has made in implementing its action plans following the previous inspection.

Information about the school

Al-Mahad-Al-Islam Secondary School is an Islamic faith secondary school for girls founded in 1996. There are 73 pupils aged from 12 to 16, who mostly reside in the immediate catchment area of Darnall, in Sheffield. The school community is made up of girls from various backgrounds, including Pakistani and Somali heritage; staff and girls are all Muslims and speak English as an additional language. A very small number of pupils have special educational needs and/or learning disabilities. No pupil has a statement of special educational need. The school has a governing body, the *Shura Committee*, comprising five members, including a chairperson who is also the proprietor.

The school seeks to help the girls towards achieving an understanding of their own faith, and the role of Islam in their lives, and to teach all subjects of the National Curriculum, as well as Arabic, Islamic and Qu'ranic studies. The school aims to 'ensure that the students receive a broad and balanced education according to the National Curriculum and in an Islamic environment; provide a caring, safe and a well ordered environment for the girls to develop their educational and life skills, and foster in each child the understanding that every individual is a valued citizen of the community'.

Context of the visit

The school had its last inspection in March 2008. The school was required to produce an action plan that was accepted on 29 September 2008. In addition, two further action plans were submitted. This is the report of the second monitoring visit to evaluate progress against the school's action plans.

Summary of the progress made in implementing the action plan

At the last inspection the quality of education was judged to be satisfactory. The school complied with most of the regulations, but did not have appropriate plans and schemes of work in each subject to support its curriculum policy. The monitoring of each subject to assure the quality of the curriculum was not rigorous enough. In addition, there was insufficient opportunity for pupils to gain aesthetic and creative experiences. As a result of these factors the girls were missing out in a few areas of their academic learning. The girls' personal and social development was provided for in Islamic studies and linked to the study of citizenship. However, there was no

written scheme of work for personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) to ensure systematic coverage of all appropriate themes and issues. As a result the curriculum did not include enough opportunity for the girls' personal development. Also, although the girls had a good knowledge of their own culture, their awareness and understanding of other cultures was very limited. The last inspection also identified that the school did not have a suitable first aid room.

Senior managers developed action plans with clear strategies and procedures to remedy the weaknesses identified at the last inspection. Curriculum documentation was to be reviewed and improved. The school planned to develop a system to regularly and frequently check whether or not teachers planned their lessons effectively. The school intended to consider how aesthetic and creative experiences could be offered without causing conflicts with Islamic traditions. The school was also to review its curriculum for PSHCE and produce written plans and schemes of work to improve provision. This was to include the development of opportunities for the girls to learn about the multi-cultural nature of society. Regarding first aid, the school intended to review its accommodation and identify a suitable area where pupils who became ill could be treated.

As a result of implementing the agreed action plans, the school has remedied all the shortcomings well.

The school has made significant improvements to the quality of its curricular documentation. This supports the delivery of the curriculum well and ensures that there are plenty of planned opportunities for the girls to gain experiences in all the required areas of learning. There are now good plans and schemes of work for all subjects. The quality of the curriculum is assured through the school's new monitoring regime. Senior managers carry out rigorous checks of planning and this has led to clear improvements. The proprietor and senior managers gave careful thought to how aesthetic and creative experiences could be provided so that conflicts with the school's Islamic ethos do not arise. This sensitive approach has resulted in the creation of a good range of aesthetic and creative learning experiences. The girls say that they love the chances in textiles lessons to use their artistic skills. Regarding personal development, there are now good quality written plans and schemes of work for PSHCE. The systematic coverage of appropriate themes and issues has resulted in clear improvements in personal development outcomes. Inspectors are impressed by the girls' maturity, thoughtfulness and consideration for others. The school has taken very effective steps to develop the girls' awareness of other cultures by markedly increasing learning opportunities in this area. The girls' views about the need for harmony in our multi-cultural society are admirable. The school acted very quickly following the last inspection to provide a suitable first aid room and this is in place.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school has made good progress and now meets all regulatory requirements.

School details

Name of school	Al-Mahad-Al Islam School		
DCSF number	373/6028		
Unique reference number	131122		
Type of school	Islamic Faith School		
Status	Independent		
Date school opened	1996		
Age range of pupils	12-16		
Gender of pupils	Girls		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 0	Girls: 73	Total: 73
Annual fees (day pupils)	£1150		
Address of school	1 Industry Road Sheffield South Yorkshire S9 5FP		
Telephone number	0114 243 1224		
Email address	almahad_school@yahoo.co.uk		
Headteacher	Mrs Rizvana Koser		
Proprietor	Mr M Hayat Khan		
Reporting inspector	Mr Saleem Hussain		
Dates of inspection	02 November 2009		