

Inspection of Al-Islamia Institute for Education

5-7 Evington Street, Leicester, Leicestershire LE2 0SA

Inspection dates: 1 to 3 March 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Inadequate
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Does the school meet the independent school standards?	Yes
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What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils and staff live out the school's 'IKHLAS' (sincerity) values of inspiration, kindness, healthy living, leadership, aspiration and spirituality. The school has a strong family feel. Pupils have a deep sense of belonging to the school. They are very proud of their school.

Pupils say that they feel safe and are happy at school. They know that adults support them if they have any concerns or worries. They say that there is no bullying. They know that teachers would deal with it quickly and fairly if it happened.

Pupils are well mannered and behave well. They were enthusiastic about dressing up for the World Book Day parade and passionately showed off their creative headwear. They like their regular visits to the local community library. They learn to read well and are eager to read.

Many parents and carers are pleased that their children attend the school. One parent wrote, 'The school promotes positive Islamic values, as well as teaching pupils to become proud British citizens.' Overwhelmingly, parents comment positively about the school. They recognise that significant improvements have been made in recent years.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Senior leaders lead with a clear moral purpose. They have improved the school since the previous inspection. Leaders have high expectations of pupils and teachers.

Leaders have developed an ambitious curriculum. Pupils know more and remember more in a range of subjects. Leaders have sequenced subject curriculums so that pupils build on previous learning. For example, in geography, pupils develop their fieldwork and map skills from one year to the next. Teachers have high expectations of pupils. They provide work that is suitably demanding. They check pupils' learning and quickly address any errors or misconceptions. Pupils take pride in their work and enjoy learning in a range of subjects, including science, art and English.

Leaders have developed an orderly way to identify pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They work with parents and external agencies to make sure that pupils get additional support. Teachers value the training and guidance that they have to support pupils' needs. Pupils with SEND learn the same curriculum as their friends.

Younger pupils get off to a good start with reading. Leaders have improved the teaching of reading since the last inspection. They have introduced new phonics resources. All staff are trained to teach phonics faithfully to the new scheme. Teachers make sure that books are matched to pupils' reading skills. Pupils enjoy reading the new books. They use their knowledge and skills to improve their

reading. They become confident and fluent readers. Older pupils have many opportunities to develop their reading. Pupils have a love for reading. Many are passionate about books. They speak knowledgeably about their favourite authors. They look forward to swapping books at the library.

Teachers have high expectations of pupils' conduct. Pupils mostly have positive attitudes to their learning. They behave well and are respectful of each other. Most pupils attend school regularly. They value their education.

Leaders prioritise pupils' personal development. Leaders have developed their provision for pupils' personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education. They focus on character development and raising pupils' aspirations. Pupils have opportunities to understand the importance of well-being. For example, in PSHE, they learn about healthy relationships. They learn the importance of physical and mental health. Pupils have opportunities to understand their responsibilities in modern Britain.

Leaders support pupils' cultural development. For example, pupils value learning about different cultures and countries. They learn about different artists and read a range of literature. Pupils fondly recall visits to a museum, a farm, the local park and the botanical gardens. They learn to respect people who are different to themselves, such as those with different faiths and beliefs. However, they do not learn enough about different religions and faiths. Therefore, they do not fully understand what it is they are respecting.

Trustees, board members and senior leaders ensure that the independent school standards are met. Leaders make sure that policies are up to date and available on the school's website. These include the curriculum, behaviour and complaints policies. The school complies with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010. Leaders make sure that the premises are well maintained. They ensure that pupils' welfare, health and safety are central to their work. They meet statutory guidance related to relationships and health education.

The proprietor board has been strengthened since the previous inspection. Trustees and leaders work well together. They are ambitious for the school and its pupils. They know the school's strengths and areas for further development. They have taken effective action since the previous inspection to improve the school, despite the pandemic.

All staff feel valued and are proud to be part of the school. Leaders are mindful of staff's well-being and workload. Staff gain from a range of training opportunities to further improve their practices for the benefit of pupils.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have developed a strong culture of safeguarding. The school's safeguarding policy reflects the latest statutory guidance and is published on the school's website. All required pre-employment checks are undertaken before an adult starts working with pupils.

Staff receive regular training and know their responsibilities well. They know what to do if they are concerned about a pupil's welfare. They know pupils well. Safeguarding leaders work well with external agencies to make sure that pupils get extra help when needed.

Pupils learn about risks and how to keep themselves safe in different situations. They learn about online safety and how to be safe in the community.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and proprietor)

- Leaders promote fundamental British values across the school's curriculum. Pupils know the importance of respect and tolerance, including respecting different people's religions, faiths and beliefs. However, leaders do not make sure that they develop pupils' knowledge of different faiths and religions. As a result, pupils do not fully understand what it is they are respecting. Leaders need to make sure that pupils' spiritual development is further enhanced by enabling pupils to learn about different people's religions, faiths and values.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the provider and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

School details

Unique reference number	135390
DfE registration number	856/6020
Local authority	Leicester
Inspection number	10213174
Type of school	Other independent school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	91
Number of part-time pupils	None
Proprietor	Al-Islamia Institute for Education Trust
Chair	Haroon Makda
Headteacher	Zubair Kola
Annual fees (day pupils)	£1,800
Telephone number	0116 2515101
Website	www.school.alislamia.org.uk
Email address	info@alislamia.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	12 to 14 November 2019

Information about this school

- The school is an Islamic independent day school.
- The school is registered to provide full-time education for pupils aged two to 11 years. At the time of the inspection, there were no pupils aged two to four years old registered at the school.
- There is another provider on the same site for children aged two to four years. This school, which is owned by the same proprietor board, is registered separately. It was not inspected as part of this inspection.
- The proprietor board has appointed two associate members to the trust since the previous inspection.
- The school does not make use of alternative providers.
- There are no pupils with SEND who have an education, health and care plan.
- The school's previous standard inspection was in November 2019, when it was judged to be inadequate.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors carried out this inspection under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008. The purpose of the inspection is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

The school meets the independent school standards. These are the requirements set out in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and pastoral leader. They met with safeguarding leaders. They met with other members of staff.
- Inspectors met with an associate member of the proprietor board.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics, science and art. For each deep dive, inspectors spoke with teachers, teaching assistants and subject leaders, looked at curriculum planning, visited lessons and looked at samples of pupils' work. They listened to pupils read.
- Inspectors looked at a range of other subjects including geography, English, history, computing, PSHE and design technology.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils about different aspects of school life.
- Inspectors toured the premises to review the suitability of the accommodation.

- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documents. These included policies related to health and safety, the curriculum, teaching and assessment. They reviewed safeguarding documents. Inspectors checked the single central record.
- Inspector met with many parents at the start of the school day. They considered 13 views of parents who completed the Ofsted Parent View questionnaire, as well as five free-text responses received. They reviewed 17 responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire. They analysed 31 responses to the pupil questionnaire.

The school's progress in meeting previously failed standards

During the inspection we checked whether the school now meets the independent school standards that it was judged to have failed at its previous standard inspection on 12 to 14 November 2019.

- The outcome of this part of the inspection is: **the school now meets the previously failed standards.**
- At the previous inspection, inspectors found curriculum planning to be less effective in some subjects, including history and geography. These subjects lacked ambition. The planning did not include specific subject knowledge and did not help pupils gain a detailed understanding of the topics. The curriculum planning did not take into account the aptitudes and needs of all pupils, including those with SEND.
- Leaders have revised the school's curriculum. They have appropriate curriculum progression maps and schemes of work for each subject. These plans set out curriculum intent, implementation and intended impact for each subject. Curriculum plans identify the key knowledge and skills pupils will learn and by when. Teachers' lesson planning takes into account the aptitudes and needs of pupils.
- Leaders have revised the school's SEND policy. They have improved the way that they identify and provide for pupils' needs. They have supported staff with training. They work with external professionals when additional support is needed. Attempts to appoint a special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) have been unsuccessful. Leaders are currently advertising for a new SENCo.
- At the previous inspection, inspectors found that teachers were not clear about what they expected pupils to learn. They also found that teachers were not confident in using phonics to help pupils learn to read. Teachers' expectations of pupils' work were too low. They did not insist that pupils use spelling and grammar accurately.
- Leaders have implemented a new teaching and learning policy. They have provided teachers and support staff with training that has improved teaching and learning. Staff have high expectations of what pupils can do and achieve in literacy, numeracy and other subjects.
- Leaders have invested in a new phonics scheme. They have trained all staff to deliver phonics faithfully to the scheme. Classroom staff are confident in teaching phonics. Pupils quickly learn to read and write well, using their phonics knowledge and skills. Pupils that need help are given additional support.

- At the previous inspection, inspectors found that the proprietor board did not fulfil its legal duties under the Equality Act 2010. Leaders had not ensured that pupils were taught to understand the protected characteristics, including respecting people who are of a different sexual orientation or people who change their gender.
- Leaders have developed the school's relationships and health education as part of the school's PSHE education. They have revised the PSHE policy that sets out the responsibility of trustees not to discriminate on any ground, including gender reassignment or sexual orientation. They have addressed weaknesses in the previous PSHE curriculum. They have developed a relationships and health education policy in consultation with parents. Pupils learn about protected characteristics and relationships education in age-appropriate ways.
- At the previous inspection, inspectors found that pupils did not have enough opportunities to be involved in the local community.
- Leaders have strengthened these aspects of the school's provision. Pupils regularly visit the local library, support local charities and exchange messages and cards with pupils at another school. However, some planned activities have not been possible due to the pandemic. Leaders have plans to further develop these community links as pandemic restrictions change.
- At the previous inspection, inspectors found that the arrangements for safeguarding were not effective. Leaders had not taken the right actions or made the best decisions to keep pupils safe. Records of concerns they had about a pupil's welfare were brief and not kept securely. Leaders did not get help from experts to stop a concern from becoming more serious.
- Leaders updated the safeguarding policy in line with the latest national guidance. They ensure that trustees, leaders and staff have regular safeguarding training and updates. They have appointed a designated safeguarding lead, as well as a deputy. Safeguarding leaders work with external professionals and agencies to make sure that pupils get the support they may need. Safeguarding records are now well organised and contain relevant information.
- At the previous inspection, inspectors found that the school's admissions register was not up to date. Leaders had not ensured that they had the correct information recorded for every pupil.
- Leaders have addressed this weakness. The electronic admissions register is up to date and contains all of the expected information.
- At the previous inspection, inspectors found that leaders did not provide a suitable medical room for pupils to use if feeling unwell.
- Leaders have now equipped this room with suitable furniture.
- At the previous inspection, inspectors found that the school's complaints policy did not give parents enough information about how to make a complaint. For example, it did not include specific time limits for each stage of the complaint process. The policy did not tell parents how to take their complaint further if they were not happy with how the school leaders had responded to their complaint.

- Leaders have reviewed the school's complaints policy. It is comprehensive and clear. It is also published on the school's website.
- At the previous inspection, inspectors found that the school did not have an accessibility plan.
- Leaders have reviewed the school's provision and have written an accessibility plan that meets the requirements of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010. The plan includes information about adapting the premises, curriculum and published documentation for any pupil with SEND. The plan is published on the school's website.
- At the previous inspection, inspectors found that the proprietor board had not ensured that the school met all of the independent school standards. Relationships between leaders and governors had broken down and procedures for keeping pupils safe were not effective.
- Leaders and trustees quickly resolved their differences after the previous inspection. Trustees appointed two associate members to increase the proprietor board's capacity to fulfil its responsibilities. Those with responsibility for governance now fulfil their responsibilities well. They have established a strong and effective culture of safeguarding.
- The school now meets the independent school standards.

The school now meets the following standards:

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.
- 2(2) For the purposes of paragraph (2)(1)(a), the matters are-
 - 2(2)(d) personal, social, health and economic education which-
 - 2(2)(d)(i) reflects the school's aim and ethos; and
 - 2(2)(d)(ii) encourages respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Act.
- 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(f) utilises effectively classroom resources of a good quality, quantity and range.

Part 2. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

- 5 The standard about the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils at the school is met if the proprietor-
 - 5(b) ensures that principles are actively promoted which-
 - 5(b)(iii) encourage pupils to accept responsibility for their behaviour, show initiative and understand how they can contribute positively to the lives of those living and working in the locality in which the school is situated and to society more widely;
 - 5(b)(vi) encourage respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Act.

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.
- 15 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that an admission and attendance register is maintained in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

- 24(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that suitable accommodation is provided in order to cater for the medical and therapy needs of pupils, including-
 - 24(1)(a) accommodation for the medical examination and treatment of pupils;
 - 24(1)(b) accommodation for the short-term care of sick and injured pupils, which includes a washing facility and is near to a toilet facility.

Part 6. Provision of information

- 32(1) The standard about the provision of information by the school is met if the proprietor ensures that-
 - 32(1)(b) the information specified in sub-paragraph (3) is made available to parents of pupils and parents of prospective pupils and, on request, to the Chief Inspector, the Secretary of State or an independent inspectorate.
- 32(3) The information specified in this sub-paragraph is-
 - 32(3)(f) details of the complaints procedure referred to in paragraph 33, and the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year.

Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

- 33 The standard about the manner in which complaints are handled is met if the proprietor ensures that a complaints procedure is drawn up and effectively implemented which deals with the handling of complaints from parents of pupils and which-
 - 33(c) sets out clear time scales for the management of a complaint;
 - 33(f) where the parent is not satisfied with the response to the complaint made in accordance with sub-paragraph (e), makes provision for a hearing before a panel appointed by or on behalf of the proprietor and consisting of at least three people who were not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint;
 - 33(g) ensures that, where there is a panel hearing of a complaint, one panel member is independent of the management and running of the school;
 - 33(h) allows for a parent to attend and be accompanied at a panel hearing if they wish;
 - 33(i) provides for the panel to make findings and recommendations and stipulates that a copy of those findings and recommendations is-

- 33(i)(i) provided to the complainant and, where relevant, the person complained about; and
- 33(i)(ii) available for inspection on the school premises by the proprietor and the head teacher;
- 33(j) provides for a written record to be kept of all complaints that are made in accordance with sub-paragraph (e) and-
- 33(j)(i) whether they are resolved following a formal procedure, or proceed to a panel hearing; and
- 33(j)(ii) action taken by the school as a result of those complaints (regardless of whether they are upheld); and
- 33(k) provides that correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints are to be kept confidential except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 109 of the 2008 Act requests access to them.

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
 - 34(1)(c) actively promote the well-being of pupils.

Inspection team

Chris Davies, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Aileen King

Ofsted Inspector

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