

Al-Hijrah School

Cherrywood Centre, Burbidge Road, Birmingham, B9 4US

Inspection dates 10 – 11 December 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Inadequate	4
Achievement of pupils		Inadequate	4
Quality of teaching		Inadequate	4
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Inadequate	4
Leadership and management		Inadequate	4

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires special measures.

- Pupils' achievement is inadequate in Key Stages 1 and 2. Pupils' individual needs are not securely identified or supported. As a consequence most pupils make insufficient progress.
- Teaching is inadequate. Recent changes to staffing have resulted in teaching being ineffective in many lessons. Teachers do not use assessment well enough to ensure lessons are pitched to meet the needs of all pupils.
- Poor resources make it difficult for teachers to deliver appropriate activities in some classes.
- The curriculum fails to fully meet the needs of pupils, especially in the primary school. Too much emphasis is given to English and mathematics.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs do not always reach their GCSE targets.
- Some pupils do not have confidence in the staff's ability to deal with bullying. Low-level disruptive behaviour by pupils in classes hinders their own and their peers' progress. Many pupils do not show good attitudes to learning.
- Leaders and managers, including governors, have failed to check on and improve pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching.
- Some key leadership roles are filled temporarily and there is a lack of clarity about how these roles will be filled permanently.
- Governors do not hold a clear vision for the school and are not providing an effective strategic direction to support its improvement.
- Financial resources have been poorly managed over time.

The school has the following strengths

- Results in GCSE qualifications have improved and are above average.
- Attendance is above average.
- The senior leadership team understands the weaknesses and strengths in the school.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 19 lessons taught by 19 teachers; some lessons were jointly observed with senior leaders. Inspectors also made short visits to lessons.
- The inspectors analysed the 111 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) prior to and during the inspection.
- A range of documents was scrutinised, including the school improvement plan, information about pupils' progress, minutes of meetings of the governing body, attendance data and records showing how the school cares for and protects pupils.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, representatives from the governing body, a representative from the local authority, members of staff and senior leaders.

Inspection team

Jane Millward, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Gwendoline Coates

Her Majesty's Inspector

Merryl Ford

Her Majesty's Inspector

Full report

In accordance with the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized all-age school.
- The school is an Islamic school and priority admission arrangements are in place for pupils practising the Islamic faith.
- The school is led and managed by an interim headteacher.
- There has recently been an external audit of governance.
- Most pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium is above average. This is additional funding provided by the government for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those looked after in public care.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is below the national average, as is the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- No pupils are educated off-site.
- The school's performance meets the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching by making sure that:
 - the work pupils are given to do in all year groups and in all subjects is accurately and consistently matched to their needs and abilities
 - teachers use assessment data accurately to plan for pupils' next steps in their learning
 - disabled pupils and those with special educational needs receive appropriate support in lessons
 - teachers have access to and use the resources that they need to teach the whole curriculum, engage pupils' interest and help them make good progress.
- Improve the progress of pupils in the primary school by:
 - ensuring teaching programmes are pitched at the appropriate level for pupils of different needs and abilities and sequentially build on their skills year-on-year
 - identifying where there are gaps in pupils' learning and taking urgent and effective action to close them
 - urgently agreeing an action plan for improving pupils' writing skills
- Improve behaviour and safety by:
 - developing strategies to tackle bullying and poor behaviour and train staff in their implementation

- making sure all staff have high expectations of good behaviour
 - ensuring staff model good behaviour and respect for all pupils at all times
 - making sure that pupils consistently experience teaching that motivates them and leads to better attitudes to learning.
- Improve the effectiveness of leaders and managers, including governors, by:
- ensuring that tracking and monitoring procedures are systematic and enable leaders to check that pupils are making sufficient progress
 - ensuring that procedures to identify and support disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are robust and that action taken to support these pupils is more effective
 - providing middle leaders with the professional development needed to carry out their roles effectively and establishing a framework that will enable them to check the quality of teaching in their subjects
 - improving the curriculum across the school so that it better meets the needs of all pupils, provides more varied and interesting activities, ensures a better balance between the time allocated to English and mathematics and other subjects and offers more option choices for older pupils
 - using the additional funding for primary sport is used more effectively
 - ensuring that the governing body's work is informed by a clear and well directed vision, that it develops a strategic role and holds leaders to account for their actions
 - ensuring finances are managed appropriately, effectively and efficiently
 - implementing the recommendations arising from the recent audit of governance.
-

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is inadequate

- Pupils' achievements are inadequate across Key Stages 1 and 2. Pupils do not make sufficient progress and in some cases, the standard of their work declines. Too much focus is given to the teaching of English and mathematics at the cost of the broader curriculum. As a result, pupils' progress in other subjects is limited. In some 'topic' books there is minimal work and very little evidence of progress over time.
- Standards in writing in Key Stages 1 and 2 are not high enough, especially for the more-able pupils. Although leaders acknowledge that writing needs to be improved there is no clear plan for how better standards in writing will be achieved.
- The school has received funding to improve pupils' participation in sport and physical activities in the primary school. Although a strategy of how to spend this money has been well thought out, the school acknowledges that pupils do not spend enough time engaging in physical activities. As a consequence the impact of this funding on pupils' well-being is unclear.
- At GCSE, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs frequently fail to achieve the target grades set for them. Documents provided by the school state that the support provided for these pupils did not tackle their needs; that guidance from teaching assistants was inappropriate; and that tracking of pupils' progress was inadequate. Systems for the identification of these pupils' needs lack clarity. Information held by the school indicates that the progress made by this group of pupils is in decline.
- Two out of every five parents and carers who responded to the on-line questionnaire did not feel their child makes good progress at school.
- Weaker readers and those who are eligible for the Year 7 'catch-up' funding programme receive support to help them improve their reading skills. While early indications are that there has been a positive impact on raising standards in reading, formal assessments have not been completed.
- GCSE results have improved this year and some pupils achieved good grades in a range of subjects. The number of pupils who achieved five good GCSE qualifications including English and mathematics is above the national average. Pupils who are supported by the pupil premium make similar progress to their peers. At the end of Key Stage 4, pupils supported by the pupil premium attained similar results to their peers in English but achieved approximately half a grade below their peers in mathematics.
- The school uses a policy of early entry to GCSE for religious education and mathematics. Results in these subjects are high and pupils have not been disadvantaged by the use of early entry.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are given access to all areas of learning and receive a suitable education when they start school.

The quality of teaching

is inadequate

- More than half of the parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire felt that their child was not taught well. Inspectors support this view.

- The quality of teaching overall is inadequate, although it is variable across the school. Recent changes to staffing have increased this variability and during the inspection too much inadequate teaching was observed. The significant amount of weak teaching means leaders are unable to guarantee pupils will maintain the standards achieved in 2013.
- Where teaching is poor, pupils make insufficient progress because teachers do not match activities in lessons to the pupils' different needs and abilities. Assessment data are not used carefully enough to ensure lessons focus on what pupils need to do next. Systems to track pupils' progress are poor. As a result, teachers do not identify gaps in pupils' learning or pitch their teaching at the right level.
- Teachers do not make sure that pupils move on quickly enough in their learning. Pupils' attention wanders when teachers' introductions do not capture their interest, and some teachers fail to correct pupils' poor attitudes to learning. There is a focus on improving pupils' skills in literacy and numeracy. As a result, in some classes too little emphasis is given to other subjects and the curriculum is too narrow.
- Poor resources limit the quality of teaching and learning. In science lessons observed in Key Stage 4, pupils' progress was impeded because the lack of equipment meant they could not conduct the necessary practical investigations.
- When teaching is good or outstanding, teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and teachers use questioning well to deepen pupils' understanding. Activities motivate and engage pupils and have a positive impact on their attitudes to learning. In some lessons pupils make very good progress.
- Generally, marking helps pupils to improve their work. Some marking celebrated pupils' work but provided limited guidance on what to do next. Better examples included effective advice which was acted upon by pupils.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are inadequate

- Low-level disruptive behaviour hinders pupils' learning. In some lessons pupils do not show good attitudes to learning and they do not persevere with the activities set for them. This is most common where teaching is less engaging.
- Pupils reported instances of bullying. The most common forms are physical bullying and name-calling. Pupils told inspectors that bullying is not handled consistently well across the school and that some members of staff were better than others at tackling these sensitive issues. Although some teachers endeavour to eradicate bullying, pupils report that incidents are quickly repeated. As a result, pupils do not have the confidence in the school's ability to successfully address bullying.
- Inspectors' judgements about behaviour and bullying are supported by parents and carers. Of those who responded to the Ofsted questionnaire, more than a third were not confident that the school made sure pupils were well-behaved and almost half did not feel the school dealt effectively with bullying.
- Social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is promoted through some positive behaviours modelled by staff. This was observed in lessons and in interactions between staff and pupils around the school. However, there were incidents where teachers' behaviour in lessons was overly assertive or where their approach to dealing with unacceptable behaviour was to shout.

Some pupils reported incidents where staff had used inappropriate and demeaning words when addressing them.

- Attendance is above average. Pupils attend school regularly and are generally punctual to lessons.

The leadership and management are inadequate

- The interim headteacher is very new to the school and there has been little time for his actions to have an impact on pupils' performance. He has quickly and accurately assessed the school's strengths and weaknesses. However, some other members of the leadership team are either temporary or inexperienced or both. In addition, the governors lack the ability to offer the school effective strategic direction or challenge and have not sufficiently monitored the school's progress over time.
- The deputy headteacher in particular, and members of the senior leadership team, have worked very hard, and shown real commitment to providing an adequate education for pupils. However, they do not have the experience, or have had the support, to be able to develop robust systems which will ensure the school's improvement.
- The interim headteacher and senior leaders hold an accurate view of the quality of teaching, although not enough has been done to eradicate inadequate teaching. There is a system in school to monitor the performance of staff. However, it is not robust enough because too much inadequate teaching remains and governors have not checked sufficiently on the quality of teaching or how the procedures help to tackle weak teaching across the school.
- Tracking and monitoring procedures lack precision and clarity and quality assurance procedures are weak. Leaders at all levels have not had opportunities to observe good practice in other schools and as a result, they are unable to evaluate accurately how weak their own systems are. The frequent changes of headship have had a serious impact on leaders' ability to carry out their roles.
- Subject leaders, although keen to make a difference, have not received appropriate professional development to enable them to carry out their role in assuring the quality of teaching and monitoring pupils' performance effectively in their areas of responsibility.
- The curriculum is not broad and balanced. Pupils in the secondary school mostly follow a purely academic route. This is because the school does not currently have the capacity to offer enough vocational options for pupils where this would be more appropriate for their needs and aspirations. In the primary school there is too strong an emphasis on English and mathematics skills and pupils do not have the opportunity study other subjects in sufficient depth. Furthermore, in the primary school there is a lack of clarity about which skills are taught in each year group. This confusion results in pupils covering the same work in different year groups.
- The local authority has provided support to the school. However, this has not had the desired impact and weaknesses in the school prevail.
- Procedures for safeguarding meet requirements.
- While leaders monitor and tackle discrimination, inadequate achievement means that leaders are not able to ensure equality of opportunity for all groups of pupils.

■ The school should not appoint newly qualified teachers.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governance is ineffective. Governors are too heavily involved in the day-to-day running of the school. As a result, they spend too much time on routine aspects of the school and insufficient time on developing the school's strategic direction. They do not hold a shared vision for the school and have not formulated an agreed plan of how they will adopt a supportive, strategic, challenge and monitoring role. Governors have not been diligent in ensuring the school's resources have been managed efficiently or effectively. Although most governors are new to their role and have received training in aspects of governance, this has not had sufficient impact and they are not performing well enough to ensure the school's future success.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	133306
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	433741

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	All-through
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	774
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mohammed Arif
Interim Headteacher	Alan Chambers
Date of previous school inspection	11 November 2013
Telephone number	0121 7737979
Fax number	N/A
Email address	m.nawaz@al-hijrah.bham.sch.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2013

