

Al-Ashraf Primary School

Al-Ashraf Cultural Centre, Stratton Road, Gloucester GL1 4HB

Inspection dates

10 November 2015

Overall outcome

Independent school standards met

Context of the inspection

- This inspection was undertaken at the request of the Department for Education, the registration authority for independent schools. The inspection was unannounced. At the school's last full inspection in June 2014, its overall effectiveness was judged to be good. Subsequently, at an emergency inspection in January 2015, a number of the independent school standards were judged to be not met. In May 2015, the school's action plan was judged to require improvement. This was the first progress monitoring inspection to the school.
- The main purpose of this inspection was to monitor the school's progress in implementing its action plan in response to the weaknesses identified at the inspection in January 2015.

Main findings

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

- The inspection in January 2015 found that the proprietor was not actively promoting the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. This failing resulted from a questionnaire sent to parents to gain their views on mothers and fathers attending assemblies separately. A decision had been made to hold segregated assemblies without sufficient consultation with parents or the Board of Trustees. As a result of implementing its amended action plan, a further questionnaire was sent to parents in September 2015. A decision has now been made that fully takes account of parents' views and those of the Board of Trustees.
- The school has taken action to amend statements on its website and in its prospectus to ensure they promote mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. The proprietor has actively sought the involvement of all parents to ensure that the school is inclusive. Mothers have been invited to join the governing body and the school's management committee. Following the implementation of the action plan, mothers have come forward to play a greater role in the management of the school. The school is successfully promoting tolerance, respect and inclusivity.
- Since January 2015, as a result of implementing the action plan, pupils are learning to stay safe through the teaching of personal, social, health and economic education. In addition, leaders ensure pupils learn about other faiths and cultures. This makes a positive contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils have a good understanding of other religions and demonstrate tolerance and respect for the beliefs of others. The planned programme of assemblies is linked to the religions taught, to deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding of other faiths. For example, they learn about the Christian festivals of Christmas and Easter, and also the Hindu festival of Diwali. This promotes respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. The promotion of fundamental British values is threaded through all learning. As a result, pupils have an in-depth understanding of what it means to be British. The requirements are now met.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- The inspection in January 2015 found arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils failed to meet the standards. The safeguarding policy was not up to date and did not

have regard to the most recent guidance issued by the Secretary of State. In its action plan, the school undertook to review and update the safeguarding policy and to implement fully the guidelines set out in the most recent 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' guidance published in July 2015. School leaders have been proactive in ensuring the standard is now met and remains met. Following the inspection in January 2015, all staff have completed safeguarding training. Staff are now well placed to recognise symptoms of abuse or when students are at risk of harm. In implementing its action plan, the school has included specific reference to safeguarding issues in the safeguarding policy. These include child sexual exploitation, cyber-bullying, domestic violence, forced marriage and radicalisation. This has given staff a good understanding of how to protect pupils from the risk of exposure to extreme views and opinions.

- The current safeguarding policy is on the website and includes information about how children will learn about staying safe. A detailed policy regarding safe use of the internet supports the information given in the safeguarding policy and in the prospectus. In discussions with pupils, they were able to clearly state how to keep safe when using the internet. The school also provides information for parents to support their children in staying safe when online at home.
- As part of the implementation of the action plan, the school appointed a governor with specific responsibility for safeguarding. As a result, the school's policy and practices are monitored carefully. The policy now includes information detailing how governors will handle any allegations against members of staff and volunteers. Plans to monitor and review the ongoing work of the school in these areas are now in place. The independent school standards in relation to safeguarding are now met.

Quality of leadership and management

- The school leaders have been proactive in ensuring the regulations are now met. They recognise that their safeguarding policy and practice were not rigorous enough. In implementing the action plan, they have reviewed and updated the website and prospectus for parents. Parents can now view the updated safeguarding policy and understand how the school teaches children to be safe. A British values statement explicitly sets out the school's intention to promote fundamental British values.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school meets The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and associated requirements

Inspection team

Catherine Leahy, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about this school

- Al-Ashraf Primary School is an independent Muslim day school. It opened in September 2006. The school is registered for 180 pupils. Currently there are 175 boys and girls on roll, aged from four to 11 years.
- The school is located in the Al-Ashraf Cultural Centre, a three-storey building close to the centre of Gloucester. It shares its premises and management with the Al-Ashraf Nursery, which is registered separately and was not inspected during this visit.
- The large majority of pupils are of Indian or Pakistani heritage, with smaller numbers from a range of different backgrounds. Very few pupils are in the early stages of learning English.
- The school follows the Early Years Foundation Stage requirements for Reception children and the English National Curriculum in Key Stages 1 and 2, supplemented by daily Islamic education sessions.
- There are no pupils who have a statement of special educational needs. The school has identified a small number of pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs.
- The school aims to deliver education in stimulating and challenging ways, and to create tolerant individuals who respect and appreciate others, their cultural background, feelings and views from an Islamic perspective.
- There is one headteacher who leads the primary and secondary schools. There is a deputy headteacher who has day-to-day responsibility for the primary school.
- The school is owned by the Al-Madani Educational Trust.

School details

Unique reference number	135097
Inspection number	10006774
DfE registration number	916/6081

This inspection was conducted at the request of the registration authority for independent schools. It was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008.

Type of school	Muslim day school
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	175
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Al-Madani Educational Trust
Chair	Mr Shahid M Vaid
Headteacher	Mr Abdullah Patel
Date of previous school inspection	17–19 June 201
Annual fees (day pupils)	£750-£1150
Telephone number	01452 503533
Email address	admin@al-ashraf.gloucs.sch.uk

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