

Ayasofia Primary School

130 Cavell Street, London E1 2JA

Inspection dates

20 April 2016

Overall outcome

Independent school standards not met

Context of the inspection

- This inspection was undertaken at the request of the registration authority for independent schools in order to monitor the progress the school has made since the previous inspection.
- This was the first progress monitoring inspection following the full standard inspection in September 2015 which judged the school to be inadequate.
- The Department for Education requested that the school be given one day's notice of this inspection.
- Inspectors scrutinised a wide range of documentation including that relating to safeguarding, curriculum and governance of the school. Inspectors made visits to all classes, talked to pupils about their work and looked at their books. Meetings were held with the headteacher, executive headteacher, two governors, teachers and a group of pupils. A telephone call was made to the vice-chair of governors.

Main findings

Quality of education provided

- In September 2015, inspectors found that the quality of teaching was inadequate. Teachers did not plan lessons that took pupils' varying levels of attainment into account. The curriculum was poorly planned and did not cover aspects of human, social, creative and aesthetic education. Teachers and leaders did not assess pupils' progress. Some, but not all, of the standards in this part remain unmet.
- The quality of education offered at the school continues to be poor. Since his appointment the new executive headteacher has supported leaders and teachers in the introduction of a revised curriculum. Pupils are studying art, history and geography. These changes, however, have been in place for only a few weeks. It is not possible to judge if they have had any positive impact on the quality of education or if pupils have sufficient opportunity to make progress across a broad range of subjects.
- Pupils have been assessed in the key areas of English and mathematics so that their progress from these starting points can be evaluated.
- Leaders have recruited teachers that have appropriate subject knowledge for the courses they are teaching. These new members of staff are enthusiastic and keen to improve. Teachers are now planning some lessons in greater detail. However, it is very early days, and changes are still being introduced.
- Leaders have revised the behaviour policy and teachers are implementing it well. Leaders and teachers have made sure that teaching does not discriminate against any groups of pupils and therefore undermine fundamental British values. Boys and girls are treated equally. Pupils are gaining in confidence and self-esteem as a result.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

- The previous inspection found that the school did not plan for the development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development other than through Islamic studies. There was no structured approach to this element of the school's provision and, as a result, pupils were ill-prepared for life in modern Britain. Most, but not all, of the standards in this part remain unmet.
- The school continues to rely on teachers' incidental planning to cover these aspects of the curriculum. This work lacks structure because it is not embedded within the curriculum.
- Some events and educational visits have started to introduce pupils to other cultures and beliefs. For example, groups have visited a synagogue and a church to learn about what others believe.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- Significant concerns were raised about the welfare, health and safety of pupils at the previous inspection. The school did not meet requirements in relation to safeguarding or the behaviour of pupils. Policies were ineffective because they were inconsistent. The school did not meet the requirements to maintain accurate admissions and attendance records. The school now meets some, but not all, of the standards in this part.
- The safeguarding of pupils continues to be a significant concern. The revised safeguarding policy is inconsistent and systems for reporting concerns are unclear as a result. Leaders now report any pupils who leave the school to the local authority but are unreliable in the information they provide. They do not always report the pupil's new school, for example. Members of staff have received some recent training in aspects of safeguarding, such as female genital mutilation.
- The behaviour of pupils has improved. This is because teachers have introduced a system which is understood by pupils and consistently applied. Any incidents of poor behaviour are appropriately recorded. Pupils know about some of the forms bullying can take and say it happens only occasionally in this school.
- Many of the required policies relating to pupils' welfare, health and safety, such as the anti-bullying policy and educational visits policy, continue to be inconsistent because they have not been sufficiently adapted to the needs of this school. They refer to members of staff, such as the 'head of sixth form', who do not exist in this setting.
- Leaders and governors have worked hard to make sure that the admissions and attendance registers align and now meet requirements.

Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors

- In September 2015 inspectors found that leaders were not implementing safer recruitment practices when appointing staff. References were not taken up in all cases. The single central record of staff recruitment checks did not contain all the required information. The school now meets some, but not all, of the unmet standards identified.
- The single central record now contains all the required information for members of staff. The necessary checks have been completed and recorded. Those working in the school have been appropriately checked for their suitability to work with children.
- Leaders are not sufficiently clear, however, about the requirement to check for teacher prohibition orders when appointments to teaching posts are made.
- The single central record does not record checks made on trustees as required. Leaders were unable to provide evidence that trustees have been checked appropriately. They have started to undertake some checks and some governors told inspectors that they had completed relevant documentation. Nevertheless, no governors or trustees appear on the single central record. This demonstrates a lack of organisation and commitment to ensuring that safeguarding is given the highest priority.
- Leaders have improved the structure of staff files to ensure that references, application forms and other documentation are kept together. Files sampled by inspectors showed inconsistency in recruitment practices with gaps in the files of recently appointed employees.

Premises of and accommodation at schools

- At the time of the September 2015 inspection, the premises were judged to be poorly maintained. Toilet facilities did not meet requirements, the medical room was unsuitable and clean drinking water was not available for pupils. Levels of lighting and sound insulation did not meet the required standards. The school now meets some, but not all, of the unmet standards identified.
- Leaders have relocated the medical room and it now meets requirements. It is now a partitioned area within the staff office. A sink is available and a toilet is located nearby.
- There are separate toilets for staff and pupils. The boys and girls toilets for pupils in key stage 2 are not sufficiently separated from each other. The premises remain in a poor state of repair.
- Leaders have improved the lighting in all areas by removing a wall and allowing more natural light into classrooms. However, poor sound insulation remains a concern, with noise from classrooms travelling easily through both walls and floor.
- Clean drinking water is now provided in communal areas on both floors of the building. However, the drinking water is not labelled as such, as required.

Provision of information

- When the school was inspected in September 2015 they did not provide information about the school's performance on the school website or to parents. In addition, they did not provide annual written reports to parents on their child's progress, as required. The school now meets some, but not all, of the unmet standards identified.
- The school website has been under maintenance for some time. School leaders provided inspectors with an information pack given to prospective parents. At the end of the autumn term 2015 teachers compiled reports about each pupil's achievement which were sent to parents. These reports inform parents about their child's learning in English, mathematics, science, computing, history, geography, art and physical education.
- School leaders have not addressed the requirement to make information about the school's performance available to parents.

Manner in which complaints are handled

- The complaints policy in place at the time of the last inspection did not meet requirements. This was because it did not set out arrangements for complaints that had not been resolved to be heard by an independent panel.
- The policy has been revised and now meets requirements. The new policy sets out the arrangements for a panel hearing with three panel members who are not directly involved in matters relating to the complaint.
- There have been no formal complaints received, but leaders are aware of the requirement to retain written records of any complaint that does arise.

Quality of leadership in and management of schools

- The inspection in September 2015 judged leadership and management to be inadequate. These standards remain unmet because leaders have not ensured that all of the independent school standards are met.
- Since the inspection there have been significant changes to the leadership structure in the school. Some trustees have resigned and replacements found from the local community. One of these now takes the role of executive headteacher. In addition, leaders have set up a governing body and recruited governors from a diverse range of backgrounds. Members of the governing body have experience in financial and management sectors and bring relevant skills to support the school. These arrangements have been in place for only a few weeks, however, so the impact of their work is limited.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- At the time of the previous inspection, teaching at the school did not treat boys and girls equally. The school was not fulfilling its duties under the Equalities Act 2010 because there was no provision made for pupils who had special educational needs or disability.
- Teaching at the school now ensures that all pupils are treated equally and fairly. Teaching no longer undermines fundamental British values and teachers have started to introduce these to the curriculum. As a result, the requirements of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 are now met.

Statutory requirements of the early years foundation stage

- At the time of the previous inspection, the school was found to be providing early years education without permission. A number of children under the age of five were being taught alongside key stage 1 pupils.
- The school no longer has pupils below the age of five on roll. The admissions register records the destinations of these pupils. The school is no longer operating early years provision.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school must take action to meet The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and associated requirements

- The proprietor should ensure that a written policy on the curriculum, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work, is drawn up and implemented effectively (paragraphs 2(1), 2(1)(a)).
- The proprietor should ensure that the written policy, plans and schemes of work take into account the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils, including those with an education, health and care plan (paragraph 2(1)(b)(i)).
- The proprietor should ensure that the written policies, plans and schemes of work give pupils experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic and creative education (paragraph 2(2)(a)).
- The proprietor should ensure that the written policies, plans and schemes of work provide personal, social, health and economic education which reflects the school's aim and ethos and encourages respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equalities Act 2010 (paragraph 2(2)(d)).
- The proprietor should ensure that all pupils have the opportunity to learn and make progress and are prepared effectively for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British society (paragraphs 2(2)(h), 2(2)(i)).
- The proprietor should ensure that teaching 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 (paragraph 3(a)).
- The proprietor should ensure that teaching fosters in pupils self-motivation, the application of intellectual, physical and creative effort, interest in their work and the ability to think and learn for themselves (paragraph 3(b)).
- The proprietor should ensure that teaching involves well-planned lessons and effective teaching methods, activities and management of class time (paragraph 3(c)).
- The proprietor should ensure that teaching 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 (paragraph 3(d)).
- The proprietor should ensure that teaching utilises effectively classroom resources of a good quality, quantity and range (paragraph 3(f)).
- The proprietor should ensure that a framework is in place to assess pupils' work regularly and thoroughly, and that information from that assessment is used to plan teaching so that pupils

can progress (paragraph 3(g)).

- The proprietor should ensure that a framework for pupil performance to be evaluated, by reference to the school's own aims as provided to parents or national norms, or to both, is in place (paragraph 4).
- The proprietor should ensure that the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs are actively promoted (paragraph 5(a)).
- The proprietor should ensure that principles are actively promoted which enable pupils to distinguish right from wrong, to respect the civil and criminal law of England, and 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 (paragraphs 5(b), 5(b)(ii), 5(b)(iii)).
- The proprietor should ensure that principles are actively promoted which enable pupils to acquire a broad general knowledge of, and respect for, public institutions and services in England (paragraph 5(b)(iv)).
- The proprietor should ensure that principles are actively promoted which further tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions by enabling pupils to acquire an appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures (paragraph 5(b)(v)).
- The proprietor should ensure that principles are actively promoted which encourage respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equalities Act 2010 (paragraph 5(b)(vi)).
- The proprietor should ensure that principles are actively promoted which encourage respect for democracy and support for participation in the democratic process, including respect for the basis on which the law is made and applied in England (paragraph 5(b)(vii)).
- The proprietor should ensure that arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school, and that such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State (paragraphs 7, 7(a), 7(b)).
- The proprietor should ensure that bullying at the school is prevented in so far as is reasonably practicable, by the drawing up and implementation of an effective anti-bullying strategy (paragraph 10).
- The proprietor should ensure that relevant health and safety laws are complied with by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written health and safety policy (paragraph 11).
- The proprietor should ensure that the welfare of pupils at the school is safeguarded and promoted by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written risk assessment policy, and that appropriate action is taken to reduce risks that are identified (paragraphs 16, 16(a), 16(b)).
- The proprietor should ensure that all required checks are made to confirm the suitability of proprietors, and that the proprietor keeps a register which shows such of the information as is required (paragraphs 20(6), 21(6), 21(7)).
- The proprietor should ensure that separate toilet facilities for boys and girls aged 8 years or over are provided except where the toilet facility is provided in a room that can be secured from the inside and that is intended for use by one pupil at a time (paragraph 23(1)(b)).
- The proprietor should ensure that the school premises and the accommodation and facilities are maintained to a standard such that, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of pupils are ensured (paragraph 25).
- The proprietor should ensure that the acoustic conditions and sound insulation of each room or other space are suitable, having regard to the nature of the activities which normally take place therein (paragraph 26).
- The proprietor should ensure that cold water supplies that are suitable for drinking are clearly marked as such (paragraphs 28(1), 28(1)(c)).
- The proprietor should ensure that particulars of the school's academic performance during the preceding school year are made available to parents of pupils and parents of prospective pupils (paragraphs 32(1), 32(1)(b)).

- The proprietor should ensure that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently, fulfil their responsibilities effectively and actively promote the well-being of pupils (paragraphs 34, 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b), 34(1)(c)).

Inspection team

Gaynor Roberts, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Carmen Rodney

Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about this school

- Ayasofia Primary School is located in Whitechapel, east London. The school was established in April 2009 by Cityside Primary Trust. Since the previous inspection some of the trustees of Cityside Primary Trust have been replaced. One of the new trustees has taken on the role of executive headteacher. A governing body has been established.
- The last standard inspection took place in September 2015 when the school was judged to be inadequate.
- Ayasofia is an independent school for boys and girls with a Muslim faith characteristic. Pupils come from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds, although the majority are of Bangladeshi heritage. A small number of pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability is below average.
- Pupils in years 1 and 2 are taught together, as are those in years 3 and 4. Years 5 and 6 have separate classes.
- The aim of the school is to 'provide a broad, balanced and exciting curriculum in a safe and secure environment'.

School details

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| Unique reference number | 136084 |
| Inspection number | 10017707 |
| DfE registration number | 211/6090 |

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.

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| Type of school | Primary school |
| School status | Independent school |
| Age range of pupils | 5–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 80 |
| Number of part-time pupils | 0 |
| Proprietor | Cityside Primary Trust |
| Chair | Jahid Ahmed |
| Headteacher | Mohammed Umair |
| Date of previous school inspection | 29–30 September 2015 |
| Annual fees (day pupils) | £2,500 |
| Telephone number | 020 7247 4928 |
| Email address | info@ayasofiaprimary.com |

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