

The School of the Islamic Republic of Iran

100 Carlton Vale, London NW6 5HE

Inspection dates

25–27 September 2018

Overall effectiveness	Inadequate
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Inadequate
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Inadequate
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Inadequate
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Inadequate

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Safeguarding is not effective. Leaders do not check the suitability of staff rigorously. Staff have a limited understanding of safeguarding procedures.
- Leaders have not ensured that all the requirements of the independent school standards are met.
- Teaching does not stretch or motivate all pupils sufficiently. This limits pupils' achievements, including in English and mathematics.
- There is not enough training for teachers to help them improve their teaching.
- The curriculum does not build on pupils' knowledge and skills well enough. There is a difference between the school's teaching plans and what is taught in classrooms.
- Pupils are not given work that will prepare them for the next stage of their education.
- The school's policies and procedures are not turned into effective actions. There is a gap between the school's intentions and pupils' outcomes.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils behave well and are keen to learn. They enjoy school, and feel safe and well looked after.
- Pupils have a say in how the school is run. Leaders use the suggestions made by the pupil council to improve the school's resources.
- Leaders ensure that pupils use the school's computers safely. Pupils know about the dangers of social media and how to use the internet safely.
- Senior leaders, staff and governors are ambitious for the school and its pupils. They have made some important improvements to the building.
- Pupils' achievements improve as they move through the school. They have a good knowledge of facts.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school must take action to meet the requirements of the schedule to The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and associated requirements. The details are listed in the full report.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - leaders, including governors, understand and meet all the independent school standards
 - policies and procedures are implemented effectively
 - tests in relation to the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 are carried out regularly by a qualified assessor
 - governors hold leaders to account for keeping pupils safe, for the quality of teaching and learning, and the curriculum
 - leaders follow the Department for Education guidance, 'Keeping children safe in education', September 2018, when carrying out checks on all staff and governors before they are appointed
 - staff and governors are up to date with all safeguarding and child protection training
 - systems monitor pupils' progress and identify how well they are all achieving
 - the curriculum includes teaching plans, resources and assessment materials for all subjects that identify progression over time
 - the quality of teaching and learning is monitored and teachers are given the opportunity to develop their practice.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that:
 - work is suitably demanding for all pupils, including the most able, and enables them to deepen their knowledge and skills
 - improve teachers' subject knowledge, especially in the teaching of phonics
 - teachers are given opportunities to improve their skills and subject expertise in the range of subjects taught, through relevant training
 - there are appropriate resources available for teachers and pupils.
- The school must meet the independent school standards, as set out in the annex of this report.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Inadequate

- Leaders and governors have ensured that some parts of the independent school standards that were not met at the last inspection have now been met. However, standards relating to the vetting of staff, fire safety and the curriculum remain unmet. This means that pupils' education and well-being are compromised.
- The school meets more of the independent school standards than at the last inspection. For example, showers and changing facilities are provided for older pupils, the lighting in classrooms is much better and the building has been painted. Access to the school is secure, and there is a new security system. The building is safe and well maintained, although there are some minor hazards. These are identified in risk-assessment documents.
- The checks the school carries out to vet the suitability of staff are inadequate. Although there is a record of these checks, leaders were not able to assure inspectors that all staff have a valid enhanced certificate from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). Investigations revealed that, in one case, the application was for a basic certificate, which is insufficient for the role. In addition, six new staff have yet to receive their certificates.
- Leadership of the curriculum is weak. Leaders have not been able to appoint teachers with enough expertise to act as subject leaders, especially for key stage 3. Professional development is limited by a lack of resources.
- Although leaders are developing the curriculum, there is a mismatch between the school's plans and what happens in classrooms. Planning is not tailored to meet the needs of pupils. As a result, pupils learn facts in isolated pockets. Work is rarely adapted to take account of pupils' previous learning or to correct any misunderstandings. For example, in mathematics, pupils calculate percentages but do not understand how to show the result in the appropriate units.
- Leaders and governors have taken firm action to deal with some of the school's weaknesses. For example, they have upgraded the facilities. There are new procedures for leaders to check the quality of teaching. However, this is at an early stage of development. Leaders do not evaluate the school's performance thoroughly enough.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is improving. Pupils have a basic understanding of other religious traditions, such as those associated with Christianity. However, the depth of their knowledge is limited. Visits to the Houses of Parliament and Buckingham Palace help to develop pupils' understanding of modern Britain. For example, they know about the roles of the Queen and Members of Parliament and can describe fundamental British values.
- The teaching of literacy and numeracy is poor in key stage 1 but improves by the time pupils reach key stage 3. However, in subjects other than English and mathematics, pupils have few opportunities to apply their literacy and mathematics skills.

Governance

- Governors are ambitious for the school and its pupils. They have made a strong contribution to improving the building. However, governors' knowledge of the school's

strengths and weaknesses is based on the views of their own children. They do not have an in-depth grasp of the school's academic performance. Governors have not checked the curriculum to make sure that it meets the requirements of the independent school standards.

- Governors ensure that most health and safety regulations are met, except those related to fire safety. They support staff to promote British values, including showing respect and tolerance. This has contributed well to pupils' personal development.
- Governors have not ensured that safeguarding procedures meet requirements. They have failed to ensure that the necessary checks on all adults are carried out properly. As a result, the arrangements for vetting staff are not effective, and do not meet requirements.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.
- The safeguarding policy covers most aspects of safeguarding, although information about radicalisation and extremism, female genital mutilation and forced marriage is limited. Staff confirm that they have read part one of 'Keeping children safe in education'. However, this has not been routinely recorded.
- Staff have received safeguarding training, and this is refreshed regularly. Two members of staff, who act as the designated safeguarding leads, have been trained to level 2 in safeguarding. Despite this, staff are not as knowledgeable as they should be about what to do if they are concerned about a child.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Inadequate

- Despite some small pockets of effective practice, teaching is weak. While some teachers have a secure knowledge of their subject, others do not. This results in work that is undemanding and lacks challenge. Too often, work fills the time available but does little to deepen pupils' knowledge and skills. Consequently, pupils make too little progress.
- Where progress is better, teachers check pupils' learning and extend their knowledge well. Pupils respond well to work they are given and enjoy the challenge. However, in too many cases, teaching does not explore pupils' understanding or correct their misconceptions. As a result, pupils' learning is poor.
- Assessment practice is variable. Where pupils receive clear feedback about their work and how to make it better, they make good progress. However, this is not a common approach. As a result, pupils' progress is weak. Pupils' books show that they increase their factual knowledge of a range of topics but do not join these together to deepen their understanding. As a result, they cannot apply new knowledge in different contexts. For example, in English in key stage 3, pupils know the techniques for writing a detective story, but they cannot write creatively. They have few opportunities to use their imagination.
- Much of the teaching, especially in key stages 2 and 3, results in work that is poorly matched to pupils' needs. While pupils learn many facts, they make little progress in using these to develop their understanding or skills.
- Some teaching is limited by the resources available. For example, in physical education (PE) pupils were unable to practise their basketball skills properly because the hoop was

in a narrow space. In other subjects, a lack of suitable resources hampers learning. Teachers have done their best to ease these problems, especially in providing reading books. However, staff report that the lack of resources makes their job more difficult.

- Although teachers work hard to improve planning for lessons, this remains inadequate. The link between the written policy for the curriculum and individual lesson plans is weak. In some cases, the school's published timetable does not match what is being taught. This means that pupils' progress is haphazard.
- Teachers' knowledge of phonics is poor. Teachers follow a set of online materials. While this helps them to cover the main sounds, their knowledge of concepts, such as decoding, is limited.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement. The playground is properly supervised and first-aid procedures are secure. However, the weaknesses in carrying out checks on staff mean that pupils' welfare is compromised.
- Procedures to identify pupils who may need support are not well established. While staff know their pupils well, and are always willing to help them overcome problems, this tends to be informal. As a result, some pupils get missed. For example, pupils new to the school and unable to speak English are not always given work they can access. On the other hand, pupils said that teachers explain things if they do not understand.
- Overall, pupils have positive attitudes and respond to teachers' instructions. This contributes to their learning and keeps them focused, even when teaching is not strong.
- Pupils are clear that they feel safe in school. They also know how to keep themselves safe online. Personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) lessons deal with topics such as democracy, tolerance, respect and British institutions.
- The school council provides good opportunities for pupils to develop their sense of responsibility. Pupils said that the council meets frequently and that its suggestions, such as more healthy food, are taken up by the school.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are well mannered and polite. Their behaviour in classrooms and around the school is calm and well ordered. Occasionally, pupils can be a little silly, especially in the youngest years. However, teachers manage behaviour well. As a result, behaviour improves as pupils get older.
- Pupils said that bullying is rare. They were clear that on the odd occasions that it does happen, teachers deal it with quickly. The school's records support pupils' view that bullying is rare.
- Pupils' attendance at school is typically above the national average. Pupils said that they enjoy coming to school. They are punctual to lessons, although some parents and carers

bring them to school late.

Outcomes for pupils

Inadequate

- Pupils' attainment is low and they make insufficient progress from their starting points. This is because undemanding teaching does not help pupils to broaden and deepen their knowledge and skills. As a result, pupils' outcomes are inadequate.
- The school has recently introduced a new system for checking pupils' progress so that teachers can identify those that make too little progress. However, the first of these checks has yet to happen, so it is too early to judge its effectiveness.
- Achievement in all subjects is weak, but there are pockets where it is stronger. In mathematics in upper key stage 2, and in some aspects of English in key stage 3, standards are improving. For example, pupils can use the four main operations in mathematics. In English, they have a secure grasp of the techniques to write a story. Pupils cover a range of topics in English, mathematics and science, and can recall facts. However, the curriculum does not develop pupils' understanding of the links between these facts. This limits their learning, and pupils do not deepen their knowledge well enough.
- Achievement in other subjects is weak. This is because teachers' subject knowledge is not secure. Standards in art are especially low. Achievement in information technology is improving, but the curriculum is poorly planned and does not prepare pupils to move securely to the GCSE course. Leaders recognise that to raise standards, teachers' expertise must improve.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language make adequate progress in their reading and writing. By the end of key stage, most can read fluently. However, younger pupils have a limited knowledge of phonics, and this limits the development of their literacy skills.

School details

Unique reference number	133385
DfE registration number	304/6079
Inspection number	10054290

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

Type of school	Other Independent School
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	6 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	120
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Seyed Abbas Hosseini
Chair	Mr Mesbah
Headteacher	Seyed Hosseini
Annual fees (day pupils)	£850
Telephone number	0207 372 8051
Email address	irischool@gmail.com
Date of previous inspection	18–20 October 2016

Information about this school

- This is an Islamic school for boys and girls. The school is registered for 81 pupils aged 6 to 16; there are currently 120 on roll aged 5 to 14. The school plans to provide education for Year 10 pupils next year, and Year 11 in September 2020.
- The school was last inspected in October 2016 when it was judged to be inadequate. The inspection judged that the school did not meet The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and associated requirements.
- Pupils come from a range of cultural backgrounds and speak English as an additional language. The school does not have any pupils who have special needs or an education, health and care plan.
- The school does not use alternative providers.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in lessons across all year groups and subjects. Some of these were jointly observed with school leaders.
- Inspectors looked at arrangements at break and lunchtimes.
- Samples of pupils' work were scrutinised.
- Discussions were held with senior leaders, including governors, teachers and pupils.
- A range of documentation and policies were scrutinised, including records of pupils' behaviour and attendance, assessment information, complaints procedures and the vetting checks the school makes to ensure that staff are suitable.
- Inspectors reviewed records, policies and procedures relating to safeguarding.
- No parents responded to Ofsted's online survey.

Inspection team

Brian Oppenheim, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

David Davies

Ofsted Inspector

Annex. Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school must meet the following independent school 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 subparagraph (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; and
 - 2(1)(b)(ii) do not undermine the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.
- 2(2) For the purposes of paragraph (2)(1)(a), the matters are-
 - 2(2)(e) for pupils receiving secondary education, access to accurate, up-to-date careers guidance that-
 - 2(2)(e)(i) is presented in an impartial manner;
 - 2(2)(e)(ii) enables them to make informed choices about a broad range of career options; and
 - 2(2)(e)(iii) helps to encourage them to fulfil their potential;
- 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(b) 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;
 - 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;
- 3(g) demonstrates that a framework is in place to assess pupils' work regularly and thoroughly and use information from that assessment to plan teaching so that pupils can progress;

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.
- 12 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005[12].
- 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[13].

Part 4. Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

- 18(2) The standard in this paragraph is met if-
 - 18(2)(a) no such person is barred from regulated activity relating to children in accordance with section 3(2) of the 2006 Act where that person is or will be engaging in activity which is regulated activity within the meaning of Part 1 of Schedule 4 to that Act;
 - 18(2)(b) no such person carries out work, or intends to carry out work, at the school in contravention of a prohibition order, an interim prohibition order, or any direction made under section 128 of the 2008 Act or section 142 of the 2002 Act, or any disqualification, prohibition or restriction which takes effect as if contained in either such direction;
 - 18(2)(d) the proprietor ensures that, where relevant to any such person, an enhanced criminal record check is made in respect of that person and an enhanced criminal record certificate is obtained before or as soon as practicable after that person's appointment;
- 18(3) The checks referred to in sub-paragraphs (2)(c) and (except where sub-paragraph (4) applies) (2)(e) must be completed before a person's appointment.
- 20(6) The standard in this paragraph is met in relation to an individual ("MB"), not being the Chair of the school, who is a member of a body of persons corporate or unincorporate

named as the proprietor of the school in the register or in an application to enter the school in the register, if-

- 20(6)(a) MB-
- 20(6)(a)(i) is not barred from regulated activity relating to children in accordance with section 3(2) of the 2006 Act where that individual is or will be engaging in activity which is regulated activity within the meaning of Part 1 of Schedule 4 of that Act; and
- 20(6)(a)(ii) does not carry out work, or intend to carry out work, at the school in contravention of a prohibition order, an interim prohibition order, or any direction made under section 128 of the 2008 Act or section 142 of the 2002 Act or any disqualification, prohibition or restriction which takes effect as if contained in either such direction;
- 20(6)(b) subject to sub-paragraphs (7) to (8), the Chair of the school makes the following checks relating to MB-
- 20(6)(b)(i) where relevant to the individual, an enhanced criminal record check;
- 20(6)(b)(ii) checks confirming MB's identity and MB's right to work in the United Kingdom; and
- 20(6)(b)(iii) where, by reason of MB's living or having lived outside the United Kingdom, obtaining an enhanced criminal record certificate is not sufficient to establish MB's suitability to work in a school, such further checks as the Chair of the school considers appropriate, having regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State;
- 21(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor keeps a register which shows such of the information referred to in sub-paragraphs (3) to (7) as is applicable to the school in question.
- 21(3) The information referred to in this sub-paragraph is-
 - 21(3)(a) in relation to each member of staff ("S") appointed on or after 1st May 2007, whether-
 - 21(3)(a)(i) S's identity was checked;
 - 21(3)(a)(ii) a check was made to establish whether S is barred from regulated activity relating to children in accordance with section 3(2) of the 2006 Act;
 - 21(3)(a)(iii) a check was made to establish whether S is subject to any direction made under section 128 of the 2008 Act or section 142 of the 2002 Act or any disqualification, prohibition or restriction which takes effect as if contained in such a direction;
 - 21(3)(a)(v) an enhanced criminal record certificate was obtained in respect of S;
 - 21(3)(a)(vi) checks were made pursuant to paragraph 18(2)(d);

- 21(3)(b) in relation to each member of staff ("S"), whether a check was made to establish whether S is subject to a prohibition order or an interim prohibition order, including the date on which such check was completed.
- 21(6) The information referred to in this sub-paragraph is, in relation each member ("MB") of a body of persons named as the proprietor appointed on or after 1st May 2007, whether the checks referred to in paragraph 20(6)(b) were made, the date they were made and the date on which the resulting certificate was obtained.
- 21(7) The information referred to in this sub-paragraph is, in relation to each member of a body of persons named as the proprietor in post on 1st August 2007 who was appointed at any time before 1st May 2007-
 - 21(7)(a) whether each check referred to in sub-paragraph (6) was made; and
 - 21(7)(b) whether an enhanced criminal record certificate was obtained, together with the date on which any check was completed or certificate obtained.

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.

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