

Al-Mahad-Al-Islami

1 Industry Road, Sheffield, South Yorkshire S9 5FP

Inspection dates

29–31 January 2019

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- The proprietor, governors and leaders have not ensured that the independent school standards are met.
- Governors and the proprietor do not effectively check the work of the school. They have not ensured that the areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection have been addressed.
- The quality of teaching, and the progress made by pupils, is variable across the curriculum. Leaders do not effectively check the quality of teaching.
- Teachers' questioning does not routinely enable pupils to think more deeply about their learning. Some teachers do not have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve, particularly the most able.
- Pupils' attendance is below the national average. Leaders do not check the effect of their actions to improve attendance.
- There is not a strong culture of reading. The books read by pupils are not well matched to their reading ability.
- There are limited opportunities for pupils to develop their written and mathematical skills across the curriculum.
- Leaders do not ensure that safer recruitment procedures are followed consistently. Concerns staff may have about pupils' welfare are not typically recorded. Therefore, leaders cannot identify trends and whether actions they take to support pupils are effective.

The school has the following strengths

- Leaders foster British values well. Pupils show respect and tolerance of difference.
- The headteacher is committed to improving the school. She acknowledges the areas in need of improvement.
- Pupils receive helpful careers information, advice and guidance.
- Pupils demonstrate positive attitudes towards their learning.

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:
 - taking immediate action to make sure that pupils are safe by ensuring that safer recruitment procedures are followed rigorously, and all necessary checks on staff are made before they are appointed
 - ensuring that the admissions register is compliant and all pupils who leave and join the school during the academic year are notified to the local authority
 - making sure that concerns staff may have about pupils' welfare are recorded, including any follow-up actions
 - providing high-quality professional development for staff, and evaluating the effect this training has on improving the quality of teaching and learning and pupils' progress
 - implementing training for governors so that they can develop their skills to provide effective challenge and support to school leaders
 - developing the role of new middle leaders.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment so that all pupils make good progress from their different starting points by:
 - ensuring that all teachers have the highest expectations of what pupils can achieve
 - developing teachers' questioning skills so that pupils think more deeply about their learning
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to develop their written skills and their mathematical problem-solving and reasoning skills across the curriculum
 - ensuring challenge for the most able pupils and support for the least able
 - developing the culture of reading and enhancing the resources available in the school library, so that pupils have access to a wider variety of books.
- Improve pupils' attendance so that it is at least in line with the national average and reduce the number of pupils who are regularly absent from school.
- 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 do not ensure that the independent school standards are consistently met.
- The proprietor and governors do not have a good enough understanding of the independent school standards. They are not clear about the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- Governors and leaders have not ensured that the areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection have been addressed. They have been too slow to act. Actions taken to address the weaknesses identified at the previous inspection have only recently been implemented.
- The school has a suitable safeguarding policy in line with government guidance. This is available to parents and carers on request. However, there is not a strong culture of safeguarding. Leaders and governors do not ensure that their own safer recruitment procedures, and those in the government guidance, 'Keeping Children Safe in Education', are followed rigorously. For example, leaders do not scrutinise thoroughly gaps in the employment history of staff applying for positions in the school. This means that leaders cannot be sure of the suitability of staff to work with children.
- There are limited opportunities for staff training to enable teachers to develop and enhance their skills. However, some staff are currently working towards a teacher qualification.
- Leaders do not check the effect staff training has on improving the quality of teaching and learning. Staff were not able to identify how professional development helps them to improve their practice.
- Leaders are beginning to monitor the quality of teaching. New policies have recently been introduced to improve the accuracy of teachers' assessment and raise teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve. However, leaders do not evaluate the effect of teaching on pupils' learning and progress. As a result, leaders and governors are not clear if the quality of education is improving.
- Middle leaders' roles have been created in some subjects, such as English and mathematics. However, it is too early to evaluate if middle leaders are having a positive effect as they have just started their new roles.
- The school buildings meet the independent school standards. However, during the inspection, the building was cold. Some pupils were wearing their outdoor coats during lessons to keep warm.
- The headteacher and staff ensure that pupils understand the importance of British values. Pupils enjoy learning about different faiths and cultures. As a result, pupils show respectful and tolerant attitudes, preparing them for life in modern Britain.
- The school's curriculum is based on the national curriculum. At the request of pupils, leaders have recently incorporated art into the curriculum. Leaders are currently revising schemes of learning to ensure more challenge for pupils, particularly in key stage 3. Pupils talk positively about the range of extra-curricular activities, trips and visits. These

activities enhance the taught curriculum. Pupils told inspectors that that they would welcome the opportunity to study design and technology.

Governance

- Governors do not have a good understanding of the strengths and weakness of the school. Although governors meet termly, there are very few records of governing body meetings. Governors do not ask challenging questions of leaders.
- Until very recently, governors have not ensured that the headteacher has the time to carry out her role effectively. Although this was raised at the previous inspection, governors have only very recently appointed middle leaders to provide the headteacher with additional capacity to address the school's areas of weakness.
- Governors have not attended any training to enable them to carry out their role well.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.
- Leaders and governors do not ensure that safer recruitment procedures are carried out thoroughly. Leaders and governors have a lax attitude towards the recruitment of new staff. As a result, there is not a consistent approach to checking gaps in the employment history of staff applying for positions. References for staff are not always sought before appointment. Staff qualifications are not always checked. Application forms are not always completed in full. There is not a rigorous interview process. Leaders and governors do not have a secure understanding of safer recruitment procedures.
- Leaders do not always ensure that information is passed on to the local authority when pupils are home educated, missing in education or permanently excluded. There are some gaps in the school's admissions register.
- Concerns that staff have about pupils are passed on verbally to the designated senior leader for child protection (DSL). Records are not kept of these concerns and any follow-up actions. However, the very small number of serious concerns referred to the local authority are logged. The DSL is not trained to carry out her role. Training was organised for the DSL during the inspection. The headteacher has completed the appropriate training.
- Staff and governors have no knowledge or understanding of the dangers of county lines, where gangs in urban areas deliberately target children to sell drugs in county towns.
- Leaders have not ensured that there is a risk assessment policy that is personalised to the school, as specified in the independent school standards. However, risk assessments for the school site and off-site visits are in place.
- Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe in school. All pupils who made their views known to inspectors said that there is an adult in school that they can talk to if they have any worries or concerns.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- High staff turnover has contributed to variability in the quality of teaching.

- Over time, the teaching of mathematics has been weak. Leaders have identified improving pupils' outcomes and the quality of teaching in mathematics as priorities. Parents and pupils told inspectors that teaching is improving in mathematics. From lesson visits and scrutiny of pupils' work, inspectors agree that the quality of teaching in mathematics is improving. However, pupils have limited opportunities to develop their mathematical problem-solving and reasoning skills in mathematics and across the curriculum.
- In English lessons, pupils have opportunities to write for different audiences and purposes. However, in subjects other than English, pupils have limited opportunities to write at length.
- History has recently been added to the curriculum in key stages 3 and 4. Pupils study a range of topics. However, there are few opportunities to develop pupils' source evaluation and inference skills until they are in Year 9.
- Older pupils told an inspector that their work is not challenging enough at times. From the work seen in pupils' books, inspectors agree that pupils' work is often not challenging enough. Some teachers do not have high enough expectations of pupils, particularly the most able pupils. These pupils are not challenged sufficiently.
- Teachers' questioning does not routinely probe pupils' thinking. Pupils do not grapple with their learning and sometimes find the work too easy.
- In some lessons, teachers provide pupils with additional support to help them to complete their work. However, some teachers' instructions are not clear enough. This leads to confusion. As a result, some pupils, particularly the least able, are unable to complete their work successfully.
- The vast majority of pupils take pride in the presentation of their work. Pupils increasingly respond to the feedback they receive from their teachers, particularly in English.
- Positive relationships are evident between pupils and their teachers. There is a culture of mutual respect. As a result, pupils are confident to contribute in class and share their views and opinions. Pupils work well independently and with others.
- Homework is set regularly. Pupils told inspectors they enjoy doing their homework.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Inadequate

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is inadequate.
- Safer recruitment procedures are not thorough. Consequently, leaders and governors cannot be sure of the suitability of staff to work with children.
- Staff do not record any welfare concerns they may have about pupils. This information is passed on verbally to the headteacher or DSL. This means that information can be missed or lost over time.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe online and outside of school. In citizenship lessons, pupils study a range of topics. For instance, pupils learn about the public institutions in Britain, the dangers of smoking, social responsibility and dealing with their feelings, to name a few.

- Pupils have a range of opportunities to develop their leadership skills, for example by joining the school council and becoming prefects.
- Pupils understand what can constitute all of the different forms of bullying. Pupils told inspectors that bullying is rare. The school's own records confirm this. If bullying does occur, pupils are confident that staff will deal with any issues quickly.
- Older pupils demonstrate a secure understanding of the protected characteristics. Pupils show respectful and tolerant attitudes. Pupils are respectful towards other cultures and faiths.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Pupils' attendance is below the national average and has declined since the previous inspection. Leaders do not check the effect of actions taken to improve attendance. The proportion of pupils regularly absent from school is above the national average. Improving pupils' attendance remains a priority for the school.
- Pupils demonstrate positive attitudes towards their learning. Pupils are aspirational for their futures. As a result, they work hard in lessons and are keen to do well.
- Pupils are polite and well-mannered. They are respectful to staff and to each other. Pupils behave well at breaktimes and lunchtimes.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- The progress made by pupils is variable across the curriculum and requires improvement.
- Over time, pupils' outcomes in their GCSE examinations are variable. Pupils' attainment in most subjects was below the national average in 2018. However, pupils' attainment in science was above the national average.
- In 2018, no pupils achieved the English Baccalaureate (EBacc). This is because pupils did not study history or geography in key stage 4. The headteacher's aim is for more pupils to achieve the EBacc. As a result, the headteacher has introduced GCSE history, which some pupils now study.
- The headteacher has recently established an assessment system to demonstrate pupils' progress over time. The school's own information shows that pupils make less progress in key stage 3 mathematics compared to other subjects. In 2018, outcomes in GCSE mathematics remained below the national average. However, pupils' progress in mathematics is beginning to improve because of improved teaching.
- In 2018, Year 11 pupils' attainment in English was slightly below the national average. However, pupils make better progress from their different starting points in English compared to that in other subjects.
- The most able pupils are not challenged well enough to achieve the top grades in their GCSE examinations.
- There is not a strong culture of reading. Pupils do not read regularly in school. There is a limited selection of books in the school library. Inspectors found that the books pupils read are not always well matched to their reading ability.

- Leaders ensure that pupils receive helpful information, advice and guidance to prepare them for their next steps in education, employment or training. All Year 11 pupils receive a one-to-one impartial interview with a careers adviser. Pupils in Year 10 participate in a work experience placement. Leaders have recently developed the curriculum in key stage 3 to include more information about careers.

School details

Unique reference number	131122
DfE registration number	373/6028
Inspection number	10061252

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	11 to 17
Gender of pupils	Girls
Number of pupils on the school roll	37
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Mohammed Hayat khan
Chair	Mohammed Hayat khan
Headteacher	Juwairiah Khan
Annual fees (day pupils)	£1,410
Telephone number	01142 431224
Website	No website
Email address	jkhan@almahadalislami.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	27–29 June 2017

Information about this school

- Al-Mahad-Al-Islami is an independent day school, with an Islamic ethos, for girls aged from 11 to 17 years.
- At the time of the inspection, there were no sixth-form students on the school's roll.
- The previous standard inspection took place in June 2017.
- There are no pupils who access alternative education provision.
- There are no pupils with an education, health and care plan.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection was carried out with one day's notice. The inspection was conducted over two and a half days.
- Inspectors visited lessons and looked at a wide range of pupils' work in all year groups and subjects.
- Inspectors met with all pupils during the inspection.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, the DSL, the proprietor, a governor and nine members of staff.
- An inspector listened to some pupils read.
- Inspectors contacted some parents by telephone to get their views about the school.
- An inspector toured the school site to check compliance with the independent school premises standards.
- A wide range of documentation relating to the school's work was scrutinised during the inspection, including the school's improvement plan and self-evaluation, information relating to the progress and attainment of pupils, school policies, behaviour records, minutes of governing body meetings, and documents relating to the independent school standards.
- Inspectors took account of the views of nine members of staff who returned Ofsted's staff survey. There were no responses to Ofsted's pupil survey or parent survey, Parent View.

Inspection team

Michele Costello, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Fiona Dixon

Ofsted Inspector

Annex. Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school must meet the following independent school standards

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.
- 16 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that:
 - 16(a) the welfare of pupils at the school is safeguarded and promoted by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written risk assessment policy.

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

- 18(2) The standard in this paragraph is met if:
 - 18(2)(c) the proprietor carries out appropriate checks to confirm in respect of each such person:
 - 18(2)(c)(ii) the person's medical fitness;
 - 18(2)(c)(iv) where appropriate, the person's qualifications;
 - 18(2)(e) in the case of any person for whom, by reason of that person living or having lived outside the United Kingdom, obtaining such a certificate is not sufficient to establish the person's suitability to work in a school, such further checks are made as the proprietor considers appropriate, having regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.
- 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.
- 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)(iv) checks were made to ensure, where appropriate, that S had the relevant qualifications;
 - 21(3)(a)(viii) checks were made pursuant to paragraph 18(2)(e).

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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