

Al Huda Girls' School

74–76 Washwood Heath Road, Saltley, Birmingham, B8 1RD

Inspection date

6 November 2015

Overall outcome

Independent school standards met

Context of the inspection

- Following the school's inspection in February 2015, the proprietor was required to draw up an action plan to address the regulatory failings identified. This was evaluated by Ofsted in May 2015 and found to require improvement.
- This unannounced progress monitoring inspection visit was conducted at the request of the Department for Education to check the progress the school is making in implementing the proposals in its action plan.

Main findings

Curriculum, teaching and assessment

- At the time of the previous inspection, many aspects of the quality of teaching required improvement. Teaching was too inconsistent across subjects and year groups. Pupils, including the most able, did not make good progress, particularly at Key Stage 3, because the work set for them was not challenging enough. Teachers' planning did not always take account of the range of learning needs in the group and some teachers did not continuously check pupils' understanding as lessons proceeded. Pupils' progress at Key Stage 3 did not always provide a sufficient basis for increased depth of learning at Key Stage 4. Teachers' marking was inconsistent and pupils were given too little guidance about how to improve their work.
- The school drew up an action plan to address these shortcomings. The proposals to improve the quality of teaching and learning were evaluated and accepted by Ofsted in May 2015. Key elements in the school's proposals included training for staff, the scrutiny of pupils' work by senior staff, the revision of teaching and marking policies, and the appointment of an educational consultant who would participate with senior staff in the observation and improvement of teachers' performance in the classroom.
- This progress monitoring inspection visit found that regular monitoring of teaching and learning is taking place by senior staff working closely with the school's educational consultant. A comprehensive record of lesson observations jointly undertaken by the consultant and senior staff was provided for scrutiny. The judgements in these records correlate closely with those made on teaching and learning during the lessons observed jointly with the deputy headteacher during this inspection visit.
- There is now a good level of consistency in teaching methods across subjects and between year groups. Pupils' progress over time is now consistently good, with some rapid progress resulting from highly effective teaching.
- Pupils, including the most able, are making good progress at both key stages because their work is more challenging. Teachers know their subjects well and have a good grasp of the new examination requirements. This was particularly the case in an English lesson where pupils in Key Stage 4 were confidently getting to grips with 19th century literature.
- Similarly, in chemistry, the teachers' explanations and development of pupils' understanding of ionic bonds provided a secure basis for the next stages in their learning. In personal, social and health education and citizenship, the teacher carefully guided pupils to consider how citizens can speak up for themselves and others when dealing with local and central government. Pupils developed a clear understanding of citizens' roles and responsibilities in a lesson on democracy

and contrasted these with life under a dictatorship. In an information and communication technology lesson, pupils successfully considered the hardware and software elements of a Wi-Fi router. In religious studies, the teacher's expertise helped to develop pupils' appreciation and understanding of demanding passages of Holy Scripture.

- Teachers' marking is timely and the quality of it is more consistent than at the time of the previous inspection. However, the best practice is not sufficiently well shared between subjects. The most effective marking highlights the strengths in pupils' work and guides them as to how to improve. This is particularly evident in English. However, such practice is less developed in mathematics.
- The school has introduced target setting through marking in pupils' workbooks. The school's educational consultant has rightly identified that, while this is adequate and at a reasonable level, it is an area for further development. The evidence from this inspection supports this view. In some instances, the targets do not focus sufficiently on strengthening the subject knowledge and understanding that pupils have recently acquired.
- Teachers' planning is increasingly taking account of the differing learning needs of pupils. Importantly, teachers are now checking pupils' understanding as lessons proceed; in this way, they are securing pupils' confidence in addressing the next steps in learning.
- Evidence from the scrutiny of pupils' workbooks in Key Stage 3 shows that the improvements in teaching and learning evident this term are providing a stronger foundation for the increased depth of learning demanded by the curriculum at Key Stage 4.
- The school has successfully implemented the proposals in its action plan. All the regulatory requirements for this standard are now met.

Provision of information

- When the school was previously inspected in February 2015, the school's website was in the process of revision. The safeguarding policy had been withdrawn from the school's website while this took place. The relevant regulation was not failed at that time but it was made clear to the school that a revised copy of the policy must be uploaded urgently.
- The school's website was checked when the school's action plan was evaluated by Ofsted in May 2015. At this point, the safeguarding policy was still not available on the school's website. No reference was made in the action plan to address what was now regarded by Ofsted as a regulatory failing.
- In preparation for this progress monitoring inspection visit, the school's website was checked. At this point, the safeguarding policy reflected the requirements of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education (April 2015)'. This was not up to date because the requirements were revised and the new requirements made statutory by the Secretary of State for Education in July 2015.
- On arrival at the school, the latest safeguarding policy was requested. This was dated September 2015 and reflected the requirements of the latest statutory requirements as outlined in 'Keeping Children Safe in Education (July 2015)'. Senior leaders also presented the inspector with the draft of an amended policy, dated October 2015, in which reference is made to the mandatory duty, effective from 31 October 2015, to report cases or suspected cases of female genital mutilation and other abuse.
- By the end of this progress monitoring inspection visit, the proprietor had ensured that the school's very latest safeguarding policy was available to download from the school's website. The website was checked again after the visit and found to be compliant with requirements.
- All the regulatory requirements for this standard are now met.

Quality of leadership in and management of schools

- At the time of the previous inspection in February 2015, senior leaders did not have a sufficiently rigorous understanding of how well the school was performing against the independent school standards. Senior leaders did not recognise that the quality of teaching was not consistently good or that the arrangements for the observation of teaching and scrutiny of pupils' work had insufficient impact on improving the quality of teaching. They did not model good teaching or work alongside teachers where further development was required, including

providing sufficient support for newly appointed teachers to establish effective classroom routines.

- This progress monitoring inspection visit found that the school has worked closely with its educational consultant to develop leaders' understanding of how the school is performing against the independent school standards. In particular, the educational consultant has provided senior leaders with training in monitoring and evaluating the school's provision and in supporting the development of good quality teaching and learning.
- Senior leaders have a much more accurate understanding of the features of good teaching and learning. The records of joint lesson observations and other activities undertaken by the educational consultant and senior leaders rigorously identify and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses in teaching, and highlight the next steps in supporting improvement. Their joint discussions with pupils, scrutiny of pupils' work and scrutiny of teachers' planning triangulate the judgements made.
- Senior leaders are using their day-to-day observations and scrutiny of teachers' work and pupils' progress to effectively support teachers' development. Both recently appointed and established staff are being supported well to become consistently good or better practitioners or to maintain and further improve their already good and outstanding practice.
- Recruitment procedures have been revised and now include provision for senior staff to observe candidates teaching pupils as part of the appointment process.
- All the regulatory requirements for this standard are now met.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

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

Inspection team

Michael Best, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Information about this school

- Al Huda Girls' School is situated in Saltley in East Birmingham. The school has an Islamic ethos and all current pupils are members of the local Muslim community.
- The school provides education for up to 117 girls in the age range 11 to 17 years. There are currently 74 pupils on the roll of the school. No pupil has a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan.
- The ethos of the school is 'one of equality of opportunity for young British Muslims girls, enabling them to understand and become integrated members of British society'. The school aims to 'instil in them a sense of Islamic identity, allowing them to live in today's society as practising Muslims'.
- The school does not use the services of any alternative providers.
- There are currently no post-16 pupils on the roll of the school.
- The school experiences above-average turnover in staff. There have been a number of changes since the last inspection. A number of members of staff have joined the school this term.
- In the summer term 2015, an experienced educational consultant was appointed to work with senior leaders and staff in the school.
- The school was last inspected in February 2015.

School details

Unique reference number	103595
Inspection number	455486
DfE registration number	330/6088

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 for girls
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	11–17 years
Gender of pupils	Girls
Number of pupils on the school roll	74
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Asif Jawaid
Chair	Asif Jawaid
Headteacher	Samina Jawaid
Date of previous school inspection	5 February 2015
Annual fees (day pupils)	£1,800
Telephone number	0121 328 8999
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