

Quwwat-Ul-Islam Girls' School

Independent school standard inspection report

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| Reporting inspector | Michèle Messaoudi |

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PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE INSPECTION

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005, 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.^{1, 2}

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Quwwat-Ul-Islam Girls' School is an independent Muslim school for girls aged from four to 16 years, situated in the London Borough of Newham. It opened primary classes in August 2003 and expanded into a secondary school in September 2005. There are currently 282 pupils on roll. Provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage consists of one Reception class that has 24 children aged between four and five years; none of these children receive public funding under the nursery voucher scheme and all attend full time. The school has not applied for any exemptions from the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage framework. There are no pupils with a statement of educational needs in the school. Most pupils are bilingual or speak English as an additional language. The school serves the local, diverse community, and most pupils are of Bangladeshi, Indian, North African, Pakistani and Somali heritages. It was last inspected by Ofsted in November 2007.

The school's mission is to '*empower the children with the highest academic standards and environment to enable them to make a positive difference in society.*' To this end, it teaches an Islamic curriculum as well as National Curriculum subjects, aiming to '*promote sound Islamic values where children learn respect for others, form positive self images and care for their environment, so that they may actively become responsible in the community.*'

EVALUATION OF THE SCHOOL

Quwwat-Ul-Islam Girls' School provides a good quality of education and meets its aims. Good improvements since the last inspection ensure that teaching, found to be satisfactory in 2007, is now good, enabling most pupils to make good progress over time. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are outstanding; however, the provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, judged as outstanding in 2007, is now good owing to a rise in unauthorised absence and satisfactory multicultural education. Safeguarding arrangements are robust, the school having rectified weaknesses identified in 2007, and the provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety is good. The overall effectiveness of the Early Years

¹ www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2002/ukpga_20020032_en_14#pt10-ch1-pb4-l1g162

² www.opsi.gov.uk/ACTS/acts2005/ukpga_20050018_en_15#sch8

Foundation Stage is satisfactory and the school is in breach of two requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage framework. The school does not meet two of the regulations for independent schools.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The curriculum is good. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, the curriculum is satisfactorily planned and children make satisfactory progress in most areas of learning. Provision for reading skills and personal development is good and children make good progress in these areas. In the main school, the curriculum serves pupils well so that they acquire a wide knowledge base and a wide range of skills, and make good progress in their learning and in their personal development. The planning ensures that pupils build systematically on their prior learning and it is sufficiently detailed to support the teaching. The curriculum is broad and well balanced between Islamic subjects and National Curriculum subjects. Provision for Islamic studies and personal, social and health education (PSHE) makes a strong contribution to pupils' personal development. The programme of PSHE reflects the Islamic ethos of the school. Provision for English, mathematics and science is a strength in the primary curriculum. The breadth of the Key Stage 4 curriculum enables each pupil to take GCSEs in 10 subjects. However, secondary pupils would understandably welcome the introduction of optional subjects including a European language. Provision for science, religious studies and English language is particularly strong. Provision for physical education (PE) is just satisfactory as pupils only have one weekly PE lesson. The development of pupils' literacy skills in all subjects has improved significantly throughout the school since the last inspection and contributes to higher standards of literacy. Links between citizenship and other subjects are not planned consistently. Information and communication technology is used satisfactorily to support pupils' learning. The programme of careers education is planned effectively in partnership with outside agencies. However, a small minority of pupils feel that they are not sufficiently well informed of future careers options. Curriculum enrichment has improved since the last inspection and includes a satisfactory range of educational visits and extra-curricular activities. However, some parents rightly feel that the range of educational visits is not sufficiently wide.

The quality of teaching and assessment is good, which represents a significant improvement since the last inspection. The school has recruited a higher proportion of qualified teachers. A programme of continuous professional development, combined with the institution of peer observations enables staff to share a common understanding of best practice and further develop their skills. Marking, which was inconsistent in 2007, now shows pupils exactly how to improve throughout the school. Pupils are involved very effectively in the assessment of their own learning in some secondary subjects and some primary year groups. Teaching is underpinned by good subject knowledge, high expectations of work and behaviour, and the fostering of good working relationships. Good teaching is characterised by a wide range of methods that matches pupils' varied learning styles and sustains their interest; effective use of resources to support and extend pupils' understanding; and a good

level of challenge for all pupils. In many good lessons, the teaching has outstanding features, including expert subject knowledge, thorough understanding of examination criteria, and dynamic teaching style, but fails to sustain a high level of challenge for all pupils. Where the teaching is satisfactory, the planning does not match pupils' needs sufficiently closely, resulting in pupils making satisfactory progress; in some lessons, the teacher talks for too long, or conducts the lesson at a slow pace, which leads to passive learning. Insufficient PE resources, particularly in Key Stages 3 and 4, limit the range of physical activities. Classroom assistants are deployed at least effectively to support individual pupils. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, the teaching is mainly satisfactory because it does not sufficiently promote children's independent learning. The monitoring of the quality of education and of the rate of progress made by individual pupils is not always as rigorous as it could be because the reduction of the senior management structure limits lesson observation and checking of pupils' work and of teachers' planning.

The good curriculum and good teaching enable most pupils to make good progress over time. Results in public tests and examinations over the last three years indicate that most pupils achieve highly in relation to national norms. However, the more able do not always achieve as well as they could because they are not always sufficiently challenged.

SPIRITUAL, MORAL, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT OF PUPILS

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good throughout the school. The school provides a secure learning environment and pupils are happy and like to come to school. Pupils' enjoyment is reflected in their outstanding behaviour, excellent attitudes to learning and good levels of participation. They are polite, friendly and considerate to others. They show a good understanding of what is right and wrong; bullying is minimal and the need for serious sanctions is rare. They form positive relationships that contribute effectively to their personal development and well-being. However, a small minority of secondary pupils do not display the expected level of self-discipline and do not provide good role models for primary pupils. Although the school tries hard to encourage regular attendance, some parents take their children on holiday during term time, resulting in higher than expected levels of unauthorised absence.

The school provides a good range of opportunities for pupils' spiritual development through the curriculum, congregational prayers and assemblies. Pupils practise putting their faith into action by contributing to the community in its local, national and global dimensions, for example by making food to raise funds for charity and producing a school newspaper. However, primary and secondary pupils rightly feel that they could shoulder responsibilities of a higher order and contribute effectively to improving their school. The citizenship programme prepares pupils well for their roles as British citizens. Pupils' cultural development and knowledge of public institutions and services in England are enhanced effectively by educational visits.

Year 10 pupils took part in three-faith forum activities and reflected on how faith can be expressed through dress in Christianity, Judaism and Islam, in a way that respects diverse views and promotes tolerance. However, multicultural education is only satisfactory as it is not sufficiently developed at whole-school level. The wide range of skills which they develop through the curriculum, careers education and enrichment activities, prepares pupils well for their future economic well-being.

WELFARE, HEALTH AND SAFETY OF PUPILS

Provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety is good throughout the school. All essential policies and procedures aimed at minimising risks in all circumstances and promoting pupils' well-being are in place and are implemented consistently. Arrangements for the safeguarding of pupils, which had weaknesses in 2007, are now robust. Staff receive the appropriate level of training in child protection and their knowledge of what to do should a concern arise is supported effectively by a detailed and clear child protection policy. Any pupils at risk are identified and supported well, in partnerships with parents, carers and outside agencies. The required checks are made on all staff and volunteers to confirm their employment history and their suitability to work with children. Several staff have received first aid training that is appropriate for the age range taught, including the Early Years Foundation Stage. Whilst attendance registers are maintained satisfactorily, there are shortcomings in the maintenance of the admission register, as listed at the end of the report.

Pupils show a good understanding of the importance of safety and of healthy eating and exercise and their impact on health and well-being. They rightly report that whilst healthy eating is promoted successfully by the school, they have insufficient opportunities for vigorous exercise.

The school fulfils its obligations under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, as amended.

SUITABILITY OF STAFF, SUPPLY STAFF AND PROPRIETORS

All the required checks are carried out on staff and the proprietors prior to confirmation of their employment and are recorded in a single central register in the correct manner.

PREMISES OF AND ACCOMMODATION AT THE SCHOOL

The premises provide teaching accommodation that is fit for purpose, enabling safe and effective learning, and there are plans to provide additional specialist areas. Security arrangements are good. Staggered play times enable pupils to play safely outdoors.

PROVISION OF INFORMATION

The school provides a good range of up-to-date information to parents, carers and others. Parents and carers have three formal opportunities to meet their children's teachers and most feel well informed of their children's progress. They receive detailed annual reports that do not always indicate their children's next steps of learning in every subject area.

MANNER IN WHICH COMPLAINTS ARE TO BE HANDLED

Suitable procedures for dealing with complaints fairly and promptly are in place. However, not all parents and carers feel that complaints are handled effectively.

EFFECTIVENESS OF THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE

The overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactory. Satisfactory provision secures satisfactory outcomes for all children. The staff create a warm and welcoming environment in which children build good relationships and enjoy learning. Children care for each other, and play and work amicably together. They eat and drink healthily. They enjoy daily physical exercise. Information from parents and carers is used effectively to promote children's welfare and well-being. Robust safeguarding arrangements are in place. Consequently, children feel safe. The curriculum provides an adequate range of activities and experiences which satisfactorily promote the six areas of learning. Provision for reading and personal, social and emotional development is good and as a result children's level of achievement is better in these areas. Children learn Arabic, which enhances their language development.

The leadership and management of this stage are satisfactory and promote adequate self-review. The balance between teacher-led and child-initiated learning is satisfactory. Opportunities are missed to extend children's independent learning skills as most adult-led sessions are taught as a whole class and the indoor and outdoor spaces are not always used effectively. Systems are in place to assess children in all six areas of learning and inform parents of their children's progress. However, observations of children's learning do not relate sufficiently closely to the early learning goals and do not consistently identify the children's next learning steps. The school is in breach of two requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage, as listed below. However, these breaches do not have a detrimental impact on children's safety and well-being.

COMPLIANCE WITH REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS

The proprietor has ensured that the school meets The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, schedule 1 ('the Regulations'), with the exception of those listed below.³

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of the quality of education provided (standards in part 1) and must:

- provide PE resources that are sufficient in quality, quantity and range (paragraph 3(f)).

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of provision for welfare, health and safety of pupils (standards in part 3) and must:

- ensure that the dates when pupils are admitted to the school or leave the school are recorded in the admission register (paragraph 17).

In order to comply with the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage, the school must:

- ensure that at the end of the academic year, children are assessed against the 13 scales in the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile and that this information is communicated to the local authority.

In order to comply with the welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage, the school must:

- ensure that staff have suitable qualifications, and improve the child adult ratio accordingly.

WHAT THE SCHOOL COULD DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER

While not required by regulations, the school might wish to consider the following points for development:

- review the structure of the senior management team to ensure rigorous monitoring of the quality of education and of the tracking of individual pupils' progress
- provide more challenge for pupils, especially the more able, by ensuring that work that meets their individual needs pupils closely is consistently planned and that the planning is informed more sharply by information from assessments; in the Early Years Foundation Stage, ensure that daily observations relate closely to the early learning goals and that this information is used to plan the children's next learning steps
- provide pupils throughout the school with more opportunities for physical development
- reduce unauthorised absence.

³ www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2010/1997/contents/made

INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

| | | | |
|-------------|------|--------------|------------|
| outstanding | good | satisfactory | inadequate |
|-------------|------|--------------|------------|

The quality of education

| | | | | |
|--|--|---|--|--|
| Overall quality of education | | ✓ | | |
| How well the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of pupils | | ✓ | | |
| How effective teaching and assessment are in meeting the full range of pupils' needs | | ✓ | | |
| How well pupils make progress in their learning | | ✓ | | |

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

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|--|---|---|--|--|
| Quality of provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | | ✓ | | |
| The behaviour of pupils | ✓ | | | |

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

| | | | | |
|--|--|---|--|--|
| The overall welfare, health and safety of pupils | | ✓ | | |
|--|--|---|--|--|

The quality of the Early Years Foundation Stage provision

| | | | | |
|--|--|--|---|--|
| Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage | | | ✓ | |
| The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage | | | ✓ | |
| The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage | | | ✓ | |
| Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage | | | ✓ | |

SCHOOL DETAILS

| | |
|---|--|
| School status | Independent |
| Type of school | Primary and Secondary Muslim Day School |
| Date school opened | August 2003 |
| Age range of pupils | 5-16 years |
| Gender of pupils | Girls |
| Number on roll (full-time pupils) | Boys: 0 Girls: 282 Total: 282 |
| Number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs | Boys: 0 Girls: 0 Total: 0 |
| Number of children aged 0-3 in registered childcare provision | Boys: 0 Girls: 0 Total: 0 |
| Annual fees boarders | £2,150 (secondary); £1,900 (primary) Total: 0 |
| Number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs | 16 Chaucer Road, Forest Gate Boys: 0 Girls: 0 Total: 0 London E7 9NB |
| Telephone number who are looked after | 0208548 4736 Girls: 0 Total: 0 |
| Annual fees (day pupils) | £2,150 (secondary); £1,900 (primary) |
| Acting Headteacher (childcare) | Ms Bushra Malik |
| Proprietor (boarders) | Quwwat-UI-Islam Society |
| Address of school | 16 Chaucer Road, Forest Gate, London E7 9NB |
| Telephone number | 02085484736 |
| Email address | info@quwwatulislam.com |
| Headteacher | Bushra Malik |
| Proprietor | Quwwat- UI -Islam Society |