

Al-Mizan School

46 Whitechapel Road, London E1 1JX

Inspection dates

9–11 May 2018

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The school's positive ethos and welcoming environment enables pupils to be happy, safe and enjoy their learning.
- The headteacher, governors and staff have improved the quality of education for pupils. They are ambitious for the school, have high expectations and want the very best for all pupils. Parents and carers can see the improvements and are very pleased with the school's work.
- Governors and leaders have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths. Together, they ensure that all the independent school standards are met. Plans for further improvements to the school's work are robust.
- Pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Last year, the proportion of Year 6 pupils that attained the expected standard in all three subjects was above the national average. However, not enough pupils attained the higher scores.
- Teachers know their pupils well. They use professional development opportunities effectively to improve their teaching.
- Pupils' conduct and behaviour are exemplary. They show respect to others and are proud of their school and their achievements. Pupils are highly motivated to do well. Staff promote pupils' personal well-being very effectively.
- Leaders ensure that pupils study a wide range of subjects, including Islamic studies. However, in some subjects, such as science, the curriculum does not effectively enable pupils to deepen their knowledge and understanding of the concepts taught. Occasionally, activities do not demand enough of pupils.
- Leaders' checks on pupils' learning in the wider curriculum subjects are not as robust as in English and mathematics.
- Opportunities for pupils to develop good reasoning skills in mathematics are inconsistent.
- Sometimes, the most able pupils are held back in their learning by having to complete work that is too easy. Across different subjects, teachers sometimes miss opportunities to challenge these pupils.
- The quality of outdoor provision for pupils could be even better.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets the requirements of the schedule to The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - leaders' checks on pupils' progress in subjects other than English and mathematics are consistently effective
 - leaders review the curriculum further so that opportunities for pupils to acquire a deeper understanding of the concepts taught are consistently effective
 - the quality of outdoor provision for pupils improves.
- Improve pupils' outcomes and the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that:
 - teachers provide the most able pupils with work that is sufficiently challenging across all subjects taught so that these pupils make the progress of which they are capable
 - teachers provide pupils with opportunities to develop their reasoning skills in mathematics so that a higher proportion attains the higher scores in this subject.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Since his appointment in 2016, the headteacher has worked effectively to improve the quality of education provided. Together with a good team of leaders and staff, he has ensured that the quality of teaching is good and that pupils achieve well.
- Leaders, staff and governors are united in their vision for the school. They have high expectations of their work, pupils' outcomes and their well-being. The headteacher has ensured that improvement plans to raise standards are well informed and focused. All school development priorities are shared with staff and parents. The headteacher reports regularly to the governing body so that the impact of leaders' actions is checked effectively.
- The headteacher is well supported by the head of primary. Together they provide good support to the teaching staff. They monitor pupils' progress well and provide staff with good professional development opportunities to improve the quality of teaching. Work with other schools, including local maintained schools, is having a positive impact on raising staff expectations of what constitutes good or better learning.
- Pupils enjoy a varied and well-balanced curriculum. Visiting art specialists provide good opportunities to develop pupils' creative and drama skills. Physical education takes place regularly and leaders incorporate practical and investigative learning in a range of subjects well. However, there is scope to improve the curriculum further so that pupils acquire a deeper understanding of the key aspects taught. Sometimes, pupils move from concept to concept quite quickly, without having the chance to deepen their knowledge and understanding.
- Islamic studies sessions are very well organised. Parents are involved in helping their children to learn and recite the Koran. Pupils' daily planners are used effectively to monitor their progress in this subject and to keep parents up to date with their learning.
- The religious education curriculum provides strong opportunities for pupils to learn about their own and other faiths. This is underpinned by the school's very effective promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Leaders have worked well to ensure that the curriculum, assembly programme and the school's values actively promote equality and diversity.
- In September 2017, the school started to admit girls. The proprietor, governors and leaders ensured that this change to the school was well managed. Although there are only a few girls on roll currently, they have settled well and enjoy their learning. Parents agree that staff and other pupils have supported their daughters well. During the inspection, all pupils worked harmoniously with others.
- Pupils enjoy a variety of enrichment activities, including educational visits that enhance the curriculum. They speak positively about their visits to St Paul's Cathedral and Stonehenge, for example, and could explain how visits to Kew Gardens and museums in London extend their knowledge and skills.
- Parents are extremely positive about the school. They report that the school has improved in recent years and that their children receive a good education and achieve well. They particularly appreciate the school's workshops designed to keep them informed

on safeguarding matters.

- Although pupils have access to a local playground and large gymnasium and sports hall facilities, leaders agreed with the inspector that opportunities for outdoor play are not of the best quality and should be further improved.

Governance

- Governors are ambitious for the school and proactive in making sure that the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes are good. They have ensured good improvements to the school since the previous inspection but are not complacent. They know what needs to be done to improve the school still further.
- Governors bring a range of skills and expertise to the school, including from an education background. They use these skills well to challenge leaders and ask questions about pupils' outcomes. Governors visit the school regularly and join leaders in evaluating the quality of teaching.
- The governing body is keen to ensure that the school is 'outward facing' and that the work with other schools continues. They have recruited a positive staff team that shares their vision for the school's future.
- The proprietors, governors and leaders have ensured that the school meets all the independent school standards.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Keeping children safe is the top priority for governors, leaders and staff. The headteacher ensures that all staff are well trained in identifying the possible signs that a pupil may be at risk from harm. Safeguarding training is up to date and the staff spoken to during the inspection have a very clear understanding of the latest legislation.
- Leaders work closely and effectively with the local authority to keep pupils safe. For example, they make sure that the school's policies and procedures to protect pupils from the dangers associated with radicalisation and extremism are effective.
- The proprietor and governing body ensure that all arrangements to check the suitability of staff are in place. Leaders make sure that the site is safe for pupils and that, despite being part of a multi-use building, pupils are not exposed to members of the public.
- The school's safeguarding policy is published on the website. It meets requirements and reflects the most up-to-date guidance from the Department for Education.
- Leaders have designed a curriculum that incorporates safeguarding. In personal, social, health and economics (PSHE) education lessons, for example, pupils are taught about the dangers associated with gangs and when using social media. The headteacher makes sure that parents have the information they need to keep children safe at home.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers know their pupils well. They work together as a team to discuss pupils' learning and share good practice. In all classes, teachers convey high expectations for pupils' learning and conduct. Pupils are highly motivated, listen carefully and want to do well.
- Classrooms are positive learning environments. Displays are used effectively to capture pupils' achievements and provide prompts for their independent learning. Resources are used well, including good-quality reading texts, to engage pupils in their learning.
- Pupils say that teachers make learning fun. They particularly enjoy the practical activities in mathematics, science and the creative subjects. Teachers follow the planned curriculum consistently and understand the school's end-of-year expectations in each subject.
- Leaders have worked effectively to improve the teaching of writing. Pupils write for a range of purposes and in different styles. For example, Year 3 pupils enjoyed writing letters to the headteacher, using persuasive language. Teachers expect pupils to write well in all subjects and are working effectively to improve pupils' handwriting throughout the school.
- Islamic studies lessons are well organised. Teachers have strong subject knowledge and support pupils of all abilities to memorise extracts from the Koran effectively. Pupils' progress is monitored closely and their achievements are shared with parents daily. Pupils enjoy this subject and aspire to having their name on the prestigious display of all those who can recite the Koran from start to finish.
- Reading is taught well. Pupils read regularly with teachers and enjoy the good-quality texts that are used in English lessons. Group reading is effective and ensures that pupils make strong progress in developing fluency and comprehension skills.
- Teachers use questioning well to find out how much pupils understand. In Year 6, for example, pupils are regularly asked to explain their answers and justify their reasons. However, opportunities for pupils to develop effective reasoning skills in mathematics are inconsistent through the school. Leaders acknowledge that this aspect of teaching needs to be better.
- Although pupils enjoy a broad curriculum, some aspects of it are not sufficiently effective at deepening pupils' knowledge and understanding. In some lessons, pupils are not encouraged to think deeply about the subject. Teachers miss opportunities to extend pupils' learning and develop a deeper understanding. This is particularly the case for the most able pupils, where work is not always demanding enough.
- Across the different subjects taught, sometimes teachers do not provide work that is challenging enough for the most able pupils. Although challenges are planned, sometimes these pupils are asked to complete work that is too easy and do not have time to reach the harder work. This restricts them from making the progress of which they are capable.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils understand different types of bullying but say that it is extremely rare. Pupils say that they are very confident to speak to any of the adults in school about any concerns or

worries. They say that adults deal with any issues quickly and effectively.

- Teachers use all opportunities to praise pupils' achievements and boost their self-esteem. They are positive role models to the pupils and put their pupils' personal development and well-being at the heart of their work.
- The school's PSHE programme ensures that pupils develop a strong understanding of British values and the importance of respecting others. Pupils discuss equality and diversity with maturity and say that the school helps them to become good citizens.
- Pupils articulate their understanding of other faiths very well. For example, during the inspection, pupils retold stories from Sikhism with enthusiasm and discussed what they had learned from visits to cathedrals and churches. Pupils say that they like coming to a school where they can learn about their own faith as well as others.
- Pupils say that derogatory language is not tolerated. Leaders ensure that pupils know why it is important to respect others. For example, the well-thought-out programme of assemblies is used very effectively to celebrate equality. When discussing the topic, pupils used phrases such as, 'It is important to be yourself' and 'Be who you want to be'. Teachers provide regular opportunities for pupils to learn about the world beyond the school's gates and the different people that make up their city. Governors and leaders are clear that one of the core aims of the school is to prepare pupils for life in modern Britain.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- In lessons, pupils show high levels of motivation for learning. They are keen to do well and share their ideas, thoughts and opinions. Pupils work together very effectively and offer help to others without being asked. They are extremely polite and well-mannered.
- Pupils are very proud of their school. They report that behaviour is always very good and that their peers are friendly and kind. During the inspection, pupils' behaviour around the school and during breaktimes and lunchtimes was excellent.
- Pupils' attendance has improved significantly since the previous inspection. The headteacher's work to ensure that parents understand the importance of good attendance has had a positive effect. Leaders follow up absences swiftly and thoroughly. Consequently, pupils' attendance is above average.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. The work in their books supports the school's assessment information and the vast majority of pupils are working at the standards expected for their age.
- In 2017, the proportion of pupils that attained the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics was above average. This was an improvement from the previous year where it had been lower than average.
- The Islamic studies curriculum is well planned to ensure that pupils develop the skills of reading and reciting extracts from the Koran. Progress in this subject is very good. Islamic studies and religious education ensure that pupils learn to ask questions about the world around them. By the time they leave Year 6, pupils have a good understanding of

different faiths and have the moral and cultural awareness to prepare them well for the next stages of their education.

- Lower-attaining pupils achieve well. Teachers ensure that these pupils are given the support to make strong progress in their learning. The small number of girls are making equally good progress as the boys.
- Pupils make good progress in mathematics. Lessons are planned systematically to enable pupils to use and apply their learning in different ways. Pupils develop a good understanding of calculation strategies and the skills needed to solve problems. However, pupils' reasoning skills are not consistently strong.
- Pupils acquire a variety of skills across the wider curriculum. They learn a range of subjects and have good opportunities to apply their literacy and numeracy skills in different contexts, such as in science and the humanities. However, there is scope to improve the curriculum further so that pupils acquire a deeper knowledge and understanding in some subjects and make even better gains in their learning.
- Although most-able pupils make good progress overall, they are capable of more. Last year, too few of the most able pupils attained the higher scores in the end of Year 6 tests. Furthermore, work set for current pupils is not always sufficiently challenging and this restricts the most able pupils from making better progress and attaining the higher standards.

School details

Unique reference number	133646
DfE registration number	211/6392
Inspection number	10038167

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	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	70
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	East London Mosque Trust
Chair	Abdul Hayee Murshard
Headteacher	Askor Ali
Annual fees (day pupils)	£3,200
Telephone number	020 7650 3070
Website	www.eastlondonmosqueschools.co.uk
Email address	admin@leacademy.com
Date of previous inspection	8–10 October 2014

Information about this school

- Al-Mizan is a selective Islamic junior school located in the London Muslim Centre. The centre also houses London East Academy, an independent Islamic secondary school for boys. Both schools are led by the same headteacher who was appointed in January 2016. In September 2017, Al-Mizan started to admit girls in all year groups.
- The previous standard inspection took place in October 2014, where the school was judged to provide an inadequate quality of education to pupils. Progress monitoring inspections took place in March 2015, October 2015 and October 2016.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection was carried out with one day's notice.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, leaders and teaching staff. He met with the designated safeguarding leader, chair of governors and a group of administrative and teaching staff. He spoke with the proprietor on the telephone.
- The inspector observed learning in all classrooms and in a variety of subjects. Leaders accompanied the inspector on some of these visits to lessons.
- The inspector held formal meetings with two different groups of pupils and spoke with pupils informally during lessons and in social times.
- A wide range of documentation was considered, including information related to safeguarding, the school's single central record of staff suitability checks, school development plans and pupils' assessment records.
- The inspector looked at the work in pupils' books in all year groups and across a range of subjects.
- The inspector spoke to seven parents at the start of the inspection and considered the 12 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire.
- The inspector toured the school, looked at all areas used by pupils and scrutinised a range of documents to check the school's compliance with the independent school standards.

Inspection team

Gary Rawlings, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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