

Inspection of London East Academy

46 Whitechapel Road, Whitechapel, London E1 1JX

Inspection dates: 2 to 4 November 2021

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Outstanding**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection Good

Does the school meet the independent school standards? **Yes**

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy school and the sense of achievement they get from their learning in subjects and from taking part in other activities. Pupils talked about the school's values, such as respect, courage and service, and what the values mean to them. There is a strong sense of community.

Leaders and teachers prepare pupils well for the next stage of their education. Pupils go on to study at local colleges and secondary schools and to take up apprenticeships. Leaders set high expectations for the character of people their pupils grow up to become, as well as how well they do in their academic work. They have created a school community where pupils are supported to achieve highly academically and in their personal lives.

Pupils get on very well with each other and their behaviour is calm and orderly. Pupils are kind and have a strong sense of loyalty to each other. Older pupils act as role models to younger pupils. Bullying is rare because leaders' work to promote respect for difference is effective. If it does happen, leaders take swift action and pupils have confidence in the school's systems. Adults keep pupils safe and help them learn to keep themselves safe as they grow up.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders have created a curriculum which balances religious and secular subjects effectively. The secular curriculum is ambitious and follows the national curriculum. A high proportion of pupils study for the English Baccalaureate, which prepares them for further study. Through studying Arabic and the school's specialist religious curriculum, pupils are prepared to go on to become religious leaders and experts in their faith, if they choose to do so.

There is a particularly strong focus on science, mathematics and computing subjects. The creative and artistic aspects of the curriculum are less well developed. In art in Years 7 to 9, pupils use a limited range of media. In Years 10 and 11, the opportunities for creative and artistic experiences are limited.

Pupils learn the intended curriculum in almost all subjects. Leaders sequence knowledge and introduce new vocabulary effectively. Pupils are not overloaded with new facts and they remember and can apply their knowledge. Typically, pupils use vocabulary confidently because teachers set high expectations. For example, in a history unit on crime and punishment, the teacher insisted that pupils used specific vocabulary and showed them how to do so.

Sometimes, teachers move on to teach new content before pupils have a secure grasp of what was previously taught. In science in Years 7 to 9, pupils' learning is less secure. For example, pupils do not understand some scientific terms and struggle to remember content and integrate new ideas into what they have learned previously.

Teachers typically use assessment effectively. They check pupils' understanding and adapt their plans where necessary. Leaders assess pupils' reading and ensure sure that they get help if they need it. Leaders support pupils' wider reading and a mobile library is planned. Leaders have an extensive catch-up programme for pupils so that they are not disadvantaged because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Leaders review how well pupils learn and staff make changes to the curriculum where needed.

Pupils are exceptionally keen to learn and do well. They behave well and lessons are not disrupted. Pupils listen to and respect each other's views. They discuss differences of opinion and interpretation with maturity in the religious and the secular curriculum. Their positive attitudes contribute to a studious yet lively atmosphere in lessons.

Pupils are reflective about their own faith and have respect for other people's religions and values. They are taught about democracy and the rule of law and about the institutions of national and local government. Pupils are encouraged to make a valuable contribution to local community events. They are taught about all the protected characteristics and put 'respect' into practice through their attitudes towards each other.

Since the previous inspection, leaders have successfully improved the careers information, education, advice and guidance for pupils. It is now a strength of the school. Pupils of all ages experience an exciting and wide-ranging programme of activities. The school meets the Gatsby benchmarks of quality careers guidance.

The school does not routinely have pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) on roll. When pupils with SEND are on roll, a governor who is a qualified special educational needs coordinator oversees provision for these pupils' needs. Leaders work in partnership with external agencies to support pupils effectively.

Trustees have ensured that all the independent school standards and schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 are met. Leaders' record-keeping is detailed. They work effectively with the trust employees to maintain the school's building and make sure risk assessments and health and safety checks meet requirements.

Governors, the proprietor and school leaders articulate a clear common vision for pupils to be British Muslims who go on to further study, contribute to society and know and understand their faith.

Governors know the school well. They challenge and support leaders and pay attention to detail. Governors monitored the school's work carefully during lockdowns. They set high expectations for leaders and ensured pupils' entitlement to learning.

Leaders have implemented the statutory guidance on relationships, sex, and health education effectively. Leaders, the proprietor and governors set high expectations

for staff but always consider the well-being and workload of staff in decision-making.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have clear systems for recording concerns. Staff are trained and understand their responsibilities. Leaders take advice where they need to and secure the help that their pupils need.

Leaders take safer recruitment seriously. Their training is up to date and they are knowledgeable about changes in safer recruitment guidance. They make sure that pre-employment checks are completed and recorded.

Leaders want pupils to be resilient and well informed about how to stay safe. They ensure that the curriculum helps pupils to learn how to keep themselves safe, including online. As a result, pupils are confident and knowledgeable.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and proprietor)

- There is some variation in how well pupils remember and understand key ideas in subjects. Leaders should ensure that pupils know and understand new vocabulary and content well before introducing them to new knowledge.
- Pupils' experience in creative and artistic activities is not as strong as other aspects of the curriculum. This means that pupils do not develop knowledge and skills as securely. Leaders should ensure that:
 - the art curriculum in Years 7 to 9 is as ambitious as the national curriculum and pupils practise art through a wide range of different media
 - pupils in Years 10 to 11 are offered more opportunities for creative and artistic learning.

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The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

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School details

Unique reference number	134810
DfE registration number	211/6394
Local authority	Tower Hamlets
Inspection number	10204303
Type of school	Other Independent School
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Boys
Number of pupils on the school roll	138
Number of part-time pupils	None
Proprietor	East London Mosque Trust
Chair	Hussain Shefaar
Headteacher	Mohammed Badrudduza also known as Mohammed Badr
Annual fees (day pupils)	£4200
Telephone number	020 7650 3070
Website	www.elmschools.co.uk
Email address	admin@elmschools.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	11 to 13 July 2017

Information about this school

- London East Academy is an independent school for boys. The school has a Muslim ethos.
- The proprietor is the East London Mosque Trust. The trust's other school is a primary school, Al-Mizan school. The two schools share the same governing body. The headteacher of Al-Mizan school is also the deputy headteacher of London East Academy.
- The current headteacher was appointed as the interim headteacher from June 2021. The chair of governors was appointed to the role in January 2020. He is also a trustee.
- The school uses the facilities of Whitechapel Sports Centre, 55 Durward Street, E1 5BA for physical education (PE). The school uses the community play space in Spelman Street, E1 5LJ for outdoor play.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

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

This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.

The school meets the independent school standards. These are the requirements set out in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and other senior leaders.
- The lead inspector met with the chair of governors.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, science, history, and personal social health and economic (PSHE) education. Inspectors visited classes and looked at subject plans and pupils' work. They met with pupils and held discussions with teachers and subject leaders.
- Inspectors also visited classes in other subjects and looked at curriculum plans. Inspectors scrutinised pupils' work in art.
- Inspectors met with the leader with responsibility for safeguarding and reviewed the single central record of pre-employment checks and records of safeguarding and behaviour. Inspectors talked with staff about the impact of their safeguarding training and to pupils about how safe they feel in school.

- Inspectors visited the outdoor play space with pupils and a PE lesson at Whitechapel Sports Centre. Inspectors also visited an assembly.

Inspection team

Janet Hallett, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Kanwaljit Singh

Ofsted Inspector

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