

Inspection of Leicester Islamic Academy

320 London Road, Leicester, Leicestershire LE2 2PJ

Inspection dates: 25 to 27 February 2025

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Early years provision	Good
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good
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Does the school meet the independent school standards?	Yes
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What is it like to attend this school?

The school aims for pupils to be 'British Muslim Citizens of the UK who give back to their society'. It does this well. Pupils develop a consistently strong understanding of fundamental British values and the important role that they are expected to play within these.

The school is happy and cohesive. Relationships between staff and pupils are positive. Pupils are well-cared for. In return, they behave well. The school expects pupils to achieve highly. By the time that they leave the school, this expectation is realised. The schools' 'HEART' values are commonly understood. They underpin everything that happens. Pupils understand how these values help them to be honest, aspirational, resilient and thankful.

Pupils value the opportunities that the school provides. They look forward to the Friday 'enrichment' activities where they can try out new things, working alongside new people. Pupils are proud of their roles of school and eco-councillors.

Staff, pupils and the vast majority of parents and carers are positive about the school. One parent summed up many when they said, 'The school provides a nurturing and supportive environment where children feel safe, happy, and encouraged to do their best.'

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

The school has designed and implemented an ambitious curriculum. Across all subjects, it makes clear what pupils are expected to learn and remember. Content is taught in a logical order. It builds cumulatively over time. Important themes are revisited. Teachers check closely on how well pupils are getting on. Anyone who begins to fall behind is quickly identified and helped to keep up. Pupils behave well and pay close attention in lessons. Over time, they build a strong knowledge base. Across the majority of subjects, they have an impressive recall of what they have learned and can apply this learning in new contexts.

The school checks closely on pupils who are at an early stage of learning to read. Staff deliver engaging daily phonics lessons.. Sounds are taught in a well sequenced order. However, the phonics programme is made up of several different resources. In some places, these resources do not work together as well as they should. For example, the books that some pupils read do not align as closely as they should to the sounds that they have learned in lessons. This means that pupils do not master phonics as quickly or as well as they could. Leaders have recognised this and have adopted a new phonics curriculum that provides the necessary fidelity. However, this is at a very early stage of implementation.

Beyond phonics, pupils develop a love of reading. Older pupils talk confidently about the wide range of genres and authors that they have read. They know that reading is a necessary skill that allows them to go on to learn more widely. As one pupil

explained, 'We learn to read so that we can read to learn'. Pupils enjoy listening to their teachers, and each other, read. They know the important role that this plays in helping them to extend their vocabulary.

Children get off to a positive start in the early years. Staff know children well and take good care of them. Across each of the areas of learning, the curriculum sets out the important milestones that children are expected to achieve as they progress through Nursery and the Reception Year. Classrooms and the outdoors area allow children to explore, learn the curriculum and to develop their independence.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported. The school checks closely on how well these pupils learn the curriculum. Pupils who fall behind receive individually tailored support to catch up. However, in a small number of cases, teachers do not adapt lessons well enough to ensure that these pupils' needs are fully catered for. This means that some pupils do not access the curriculum as well as they should.

Provision for pupils' personal development is a strength. A well-designed curriculum for personal, social and health education (PSHE) that teaches pupils about a wide range of people, places and communities supports this offer. Pupils are taught to be reflective and to respect views that may differ from their own. The school provides well for pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural (SMSC) development. In lessons, staff ensure that pupils reflect on how their learning links to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC), fundamental British values and the school's Islamic ethos.

The school is well led and managed. Proprietors, senior and middle leaders know their school well. They know what is working and are quick to act where improvements are needed. They are supported by a cohesive team of staff who are proud to work at the school. Staff workload and wellbeing is a priority. Staff receive regular feedback and support that helps them to improve.

The proprietor board and senior leaders have ensured that the independent school standards (the standards) are met. The school's site promotes pupils' welfare, health and safety. Effective policies and procedures are in place, including around first aid, health and safety, fire safety, behaviour and bullying. The school risk assesses the activities in which pupils engage. The school complies with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010. It meets the statutory requirements of the early years foundation stage framework. The full range of necessary information, including the school's safeguarding policy, is made available to parents on request. A new website is due to go live in March 2025. Leaders know what information needs to be published.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve? (Information for the school and proprietor)

- The school's phonics programme is made up of several constituent parts. Not all parts align as well as they could. The books that pupils read do not consistently match the sounds that they have learned. This means that some pupils who are at the earliest stages of learning to read do not master phonics as quickly as they could. The school should implement and embed its' new approach to phonics and ensure that reading books systematically match the sounds that pupils have learned.
- In a small number of cases, teachers do not adapt teaching well enough to cater for the needs of pupils with SEND. This means that not all pupils with SEND learn the curriculum as well as they should. The school should ensure that teachers consistently adapt lessons so that the needs of pupils with SEND are fully met.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

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

School details

Unique reference number	120335
DfE registration number	856/6007
Local authority	Leicester
Inspection number	10342012
Type of school	Other Independent School
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	366
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Leicester Islamic Academy Trust
Chair	Hussein Suleman
Headteacher	Tabassum Jakhura
Annual fees (day pupils)	£2,300
Telephone number	01162 705343
Website	www.lia.uk.net
Email address	admin@lia.uk.net
Dates of previous inspection	22 to 24 February 2022

Information about this school

- The headteacher took up post in April 2022, shortly after the school's previous inspection.
- The school is an independent Islamic day school for boys and girls aged from three to 11 years.
- The school day starts at 8.15am for Islamic studies teaching.
- The school shares some of its' teaching space with LIA Gems, a nursery provider, for part of the school day.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- At the time of the inspection, the school did not have a website. While access was available to its' previous website, much of the information that it contained was out of date. However, the school has ensured that all necessary information is available upon request.

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.

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

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the second routine inspection that the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, curriculum leaders, the special educational needs coordinator, the early years leader and groups of staff and pupils.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: reading, mathematics, humanities, and PSHE. To do this, they met with curriculum leaders, visited lessons, looked at pupils' work and met with teachers and pupils. Inspectors also discussed the curriculum and talked to pupils in some other subjects.
- The lead inspector met with the chair of the proprietor board.
- Inspectors took account of the responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View. They considered the responses to the online Ofsted staff survey.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and

considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.

- Inspectors reviewed school documents, including those relating to the independent school standards. Inspectors scrutinised leaders' plans for improvement and their assessment of the school's effectiveness.
- Inspectors spoke informally to pupils around school, at breaktimes and on the playground.
- Inspectors toured the premises and reviewed the school facilities.

Inspection team

Vic Wilkinson, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Julie Sheppard

Ofsted Inspector

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