

Inspection of Azhar Academy Girls School

Block F, Tennyson Road, Forest Gate E15 4DR

Inspection dates: 19 to 21 March 2024

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Early years provision

Outstanding

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Outstanding

Does the school meet the independent school standards?

Yes

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a friendly and welcoming school. Pupils are encouraged to support and help each other. Older pupils often encourage younger ones to make healthy choices and keep themselves safe. For example, pupils in Year 10 recently created and led a workshop for pupils in Year 9 about the dangers of vaping. Pupils treat each other with care and consideration. Pupils are happy and safe here.

Personal development and academic success are equally prioritised. Pupils achieve very well by the time they leave the school. The school encourages pupils to take an active role in supporting the community. Recently, pupils in Year 1 led a campaign to collect donations for a local foodbank. Pupils have worked with the police on a project to reduce speeding in the local area.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. For example, pupils playing football at breaktime are highly aware and respectful of others sharing the space, to ensure that everyone is kept safe. In the secondary phase, pupils listen and support each other through school-organised 'Girls supporting girls' sessions.

The school is highly ambitious for all pupils. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are well supported to develop their spoken and written English.

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

The school curriculum matches the breadth and ambition of the national curriculum. The school has thought carefully about the most important information that pupils need to know and remember. Knowledge is sequenced effectively from the early years onwards. The school makes effective decisions about what is taught and when. This is because leaders make use of up-to-date, pertinent research about how pupils learn best in different subjects. Teaching staff receive substantial training to develop their subject expertise. As a result, the intended curriculum is securely implemented. Leaders are considerate of staff workload when making decisions about the curriculum and training.

The school ensures that important content is revisited regularly to help pupils to remember it. For example, in Year 3 pupils are taught how to measure the outside perimeter of shapes. This knowledge is refreshed and built on year on year. As a result, pupils in Year 6 confidently measure and calculate the perimeter of non-standard shapes. Teaching checks that pupils can recall and remember what they learned previously. If pupils struggle with this, teaching is adjusted accordingly to address any gaps in pupils' knowledge. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive effective help and support to learn the curriculum. Teaching staff receive training from therapists and a range of experts to enable them to meet the needs of pupils with SEND. As a result, appropriate adaptations to teaching and resources are made. The school closely consults parents and carers to check that provision for pupils with SEND is having the desired impact.

The school places high importance on reading and developing language. In the early years, children are taught and encouraged to listen carefully and answer questions using full sentences. In school, pupils read every day. The school provides information and resources to parents, so they know how to support their children with reading at home. For example, parents and pupils who speak English as an additional language have extra resources to use at home to support pupils to learn and practise the phonics sounds taught in school. Pupils at the early stages of learning to read receive phonics teaching from well-trained school staff. Teaching and reading books are matched precisely to pupils' knowledge of phonics. Pupils receive additional phonics teaching to help them keep up where needed. Pupils quickly develop reading confidence and fluency here.

Pupils are motivated and enthusiastic to learn. They are highly focused and attentive in lessons. This includes in the early years. Pupils are taught to understand and explain their feelings and be considerate of the feelings of others. Pupils attend school very regularly. The school tracks pupils' absences from school rigorously. If any concerns arise, the school takes appropriate and effective action to tackle this.

Provision for pupils' personal development is exceptionally well thought through. Through the school's curriculum, pupils are taught about Islamic values and fundamental British values and a wide range of traditions and beliefs, including those different to their own. Pupils are taught about relationships in an age-appropriate way. In the early years, children listen to stories and talk about what it means to be a good friend. In the secondary phase, relationships and sex education follows statutory guidance and includes information about significant issues, such as consent.

Pupils have access to an extensive range of wider curricular opportunities. These include extra-curricular clubs, including, archery, science and henna painting. In each year group, educational visits take place regularly, for example to museums in the capital.

Secondary-age pupils receive clear and comprehensive careers information and guidance. The school provides many ways for pupils to find out about future career options. These include educational visits to national careers events, visiting speakers from a range of career backgrounds and work experience opportunities. Leaders ensure that parents are made aware of the range of post-16 options available to pupils after Year 11.

The school receives effective support and challenge from the proprietor and governing body, who fulfil their responsibilities and have strong knowledge of the independent school standards. Leaders and the proprietor ensure that the independent school standards are met consistently. They make sure schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 is upheld.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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	134417
DfE registration number	316/6064
Local authority	Newham
Inspection number	10319225
Type of school	A school registered with a religious ethos
School category	Independent day school
Age range of pupils	3 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	519
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Ismail Gangat
Chair	Ismail Gangat
Headteacher	Rookshana Adam (executive headteacher)
Annual fees (day pupils)	£3,300 (primary) and £3,600 (secondary)
Telephone number	020 8555 5959
Website	www.aags.azharacademy.org
Email address	girls.school@azharacademy.org
Dates of previous inspection	1 to 3 March 2022

Information about this school

- The school has a Muslim ethos. The primary school caters for boys and girls. The secondary school caters for girls from Year 7 to Year 11. The school has a high number of pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- The primary phase is located at 470 High Road, Leytonstone E11 3HN. The secondary phase is located at Block F, Tennyson Road, Forest Gate, London E15 4DR.
- Since the previous standard inspection, a material change inspection of the school was carried out in November 2022. The proposed material change at that time was to move into new premises at Block F, Tennyson Road, Forest Gate, London E15 4DR and to increase the number of pupils on roll. The material change was agreed by the DfE.
- The school proposes to open another secondary site at 235a Romford Road, Forest Gate E7 9HL, which is the site previously used by the secondary phase of the school before moving to Block F, Tennyson Road.
- The school does not use 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.

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 judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with the executive headteacher, senior leaders, the proprietor and representatives of the governing body.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, PSHE and art. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also looked at curriculum plans and spoke to leaders about some other subjects.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the 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.

- To check compliance with the independent school standards, inspectors scrutinised health and safety documentation and checked the suitability of the premises.
- The Department for Education commissioned Ofsted to carry out the standard inspection earlier in the cycle than previously planned because of the high number of concerns raised with the Department for Education about the school.

The school's proposed change to its premises and the maximum number of pupils

The school has applied to the Department for Education (DfE) to make a 'material change' to its registration. At the DfE's request, we checked whether the school is likely to meet the relevant independent school standards if the DfE decides to approve the change. This part of the inspection was carried out under section 162(4) of the Education Act 2002.

The outcome of this part of the inspection is: **the school is likely to meet the relevant independent school standards if the material change relating to the school provision is implemented.**

The school proposes to use the previous secondary-phase site to accommodate an additional 300 secondary-age girls. The premises is well-maintained and has bright and spacious classrooms. There are suitable toilets and facilities for the care of pupils who may need medical treatment. Leaders have identified local facilities that will be used to accommodate physical education and space to play outside.

All the required policies are already in place and published on the school's website. The school has arrangements already in place to use suitable external organisations to conduct health and safety risk assessments and checks of the premises. Leaders have ensured that there are robust systems already in place for assessing risks on a daily, weekly and monthly basis. Leaders currently fulfil their statutory responsibilities to ensure safe recruitment of staff. Appropriate pre-employment checks have been completed in a timely manner. Leaders have made sure that teaching staff are suitably qualified and trained to teach the curriculum.

There is an effective, well-thought-out curriculum currently in place. Leaders intend to use it with the pupils educated at the proposed new site. Leaders at the current secondary site intend to work closely with any newly appointed staff to ensure that the curriculum is implemented securely.

Information about the material change inspection

- An inspector visited the proposed premises to check their suitability. The inspector reviewed a range of health and safety documentation for the premises.

- Inspectors spoke with the executive headteacher about proposals for staffing and the curriculum.

Inspection team

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