

# Al-Ameen Primary School

Stanfield House, 447 Warwick Road, Birmingham, West Midlands B11 2JR

## Inspection dates

21–23 November 2017

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Good</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Outstanding</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Inadequate

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- The headteacher and his leadership team have worked with commitment and energy to make a very positive impact on the life of the school. As a result, pupils make good progress.
- Senior leaders have made significant improvements to the system for assessment and monitoring pupils' progress. This means that leaders can now identify pupils who are falling behind and help them to improve.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural teaching is strong. As a result, pupils' understanding of the world is well developed. They are able to reflect on relationships with people who have different perceptions and beliefs.
- Personal development, behaviour and welfare are outstanding. Caring for everyone is embedded in the pupils' attitudes to one another. This reflects the school's Islamic ethos.
- Leaders use a good lesson monitoring system. Teachers have individual targets to improve their teaching. As a result, pupils benefit from good teaching in most lessons.
- Teachers and senior leaders know all their pupils well. Because of this, they match tasks well to pupils' abilities. However, teachers do not always challenge most-able pupils with higher-level tasks from the start of lessons.
- Strong leadership in the early years foundation stage ensures that the provision for the children is good. As a result, children at this stage make at least good progress. However, provision in the outdoor environment is not as good as provision indoors.
- Most pupils learn to write well because teachers show them how to write by demonstrating writing themselves. However, some teachers do not give good enough examples that support the pupils to improve quickly.
- Pupils have opportunities to talk about their learning. This helps them to improve both their work and their relationships. However, teachers do not place enough emphasis on them learning to use more adventurous and technical words. In mathematics, teachers do not give all pupils enough opportunities to develop their spoken reasoning.

### 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 leadership by prioritising improvements in teaching that will lead to outstanding outcomes for pupils.
- Improve teaching by ensuring that:
  - teachers challenge more able pupils with higher-level tasks from the start of lessons, particularly in mathematics
  - all pupils in mathematics lessons develop their spoken reasoning, not just the more able
  - pupils develop an increasingly large spoken and written vocabulary of adventurous and technical words that they use correctly, can spell, and understand when reading
  - teachers always demonstrate writing to pupils that is of a high standard.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- All the independent standards are met.
- The leadership team is very dedicated. The deputy headteacher and two senior leaders support the headteacher very effectively in his determination to improve the school. They have clear action plans and specific responsibilities that have a positive impact on all parts of school life. As a result, pupils make good progress in the early years foundation stage, key stage 1 and key stage 2.
- Leaders ensure that pupils are well cared for. A copy of the school's safeguarding policy, which complies with the independent school standards, is published on the school's website. Where necessary, the school leadership team works well with other agencies for the welfare of pupils in its care.
- At the school's previous inspection, there was no reliable system for assessing pupils' progress. Since then, leaders have put in place an effective system for assessing, recording and monitoring pupils' attainment and progress. It is now detailed and enables leaders to identify accurately pupils who fall behind and those pupils who could achieve more. A very clear programme of interventions for pupils ensures that those who need to catch up receive good support. This system is regularly monitored and evaluated. As a result, few pupils fall behind in their learning.
- Leaders ensure that they deliver a strong programme of continuous professional development for the adults in the school. In this way, all teachers, and especially those who are new to the profession, benefit from opportunities to develop their practice significantly. Leaders ensure that teachers have weekly training sessions. Staff are supported by regular targets to improve their teaching, and by support from senior leaders with their planning and within the classroom. This has already had a positive effect on the use of the new mathematics teaching scheme.
- Leaders encourage parents to be able to support their children's progress and development by providing workshops within the school that are linked to coffee mornings. For example, parents took part in a coffee morning on the first day of the inspection and learned about the teaching of phonics. They very much appreciated the opportunity to meet the staff in a relaxed, friendly atmosphere. It was evident that staff have an intimate knowledge of the families that attend the school.
- Parents are most appreciative of the school because of the progress their children make and because the children feel safe and happy. They emphasised the importance to them of the religious ethos of the school. Each morning begins in the playground with morning prayers that parents observe, as the pupils stand in their lines to prepare for the day.
- The vast majority of the staff say that they are proud to work in this school. One member of staff said, 'Leaders encourage and support staff to do their best.'
- A broad and balanced curriculum ensures that pupils enjoy learning about a wide range of subjects. This curriculum is supported by a variety of special events, for example visits from local community police, fire teams and a former local member of parliament. All classes enjoy school visits to a variety of places of interest, for example The Sea Life Centre, Selly Manor, Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, the City of Birmingham

University and a West Midlands primary school with a Christian ethos. In this way, pupils learn about a variety of subjects that broaden their knowledge and experience.

- Extra-curricular activities, like the first aid club and mad science club, widen pupils' knowledge and skills. Year 6 pupils were able to visit the Houses of Parliament and Year 5 pupils visited the council house in Birmingham. These visits added to their knowledge of how democracy works in Britain.
- The pupils benefit from a strong programme of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through personal, social, health and economic education, citizenship lessons and lessons in Islamic studies. The curriculum is designed so that it allows pupils to question and have discussions with a wide variety of people of different faiths and those with no faith. Year 6 pupils have benefited from partnering with a primary school in the West Midlands that has a Christian ethos. The pupils have taken part in a number of visits between the two schools, where pupils have worked together and made friends. One pupil said, 'We learn about their religion and they learn about us. We have made lots of friends there.' As a result, pupils are confident to become friendly with those of different faiths
- Study during Black History Month enabled pupils to understand role models from other cultures. For example, they learned about Martin Luther King, Rosa Parks and Nelson Mandela, who were significant leaders from a culture different to their own.
- Pupils have good opportunities to learn about caring for wider society by raising money for a large variety of charities. For example, they have raised funds for those suffering in Syria, for victims of earthquakes in Haiti, Pakistan and Nepal and cyclones in Bangladesh and Burma. They raised funds for sending an ambulance to Gaza with aid convoys. They also taken part annually in the Kidz4Kidz campaign and the Food4All programme. They have collected large amounts of food for the homeless shelter and they take part in the local litter round. In this way, they learn to care about people in the wider community and across the world. The school's ethos is clearly embedded in the minds of the pupils. As one said, 'Everybody should be included, no matter what the differences. You treat everybody how you would like to be treated yourself.'

## **Governance**

- The governance of the school is fully involved in the management of the school.
- Governors attend regular half-termly meetings. The governor with responsibility for teaching and learning visits the school weekly to support the leadership team. All governors make recommendations and ask challenging questions about a variety of school issues. They set targets for the headteacher.

## **Safeguarding**

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is effective. Pupils feel very safe at school because they trust the adults working with them to help them deal with any problems.
- Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe, including when using the internet. They do not feel that bullying or bad behaviour is an issue in their school.
- Safeguarding policies and procedures are effective. Accidents, and the few behavioural

incidents, are carefully recorded and followed up effectively by staff.

- All staff and governors are trained regularly in how to keep children safe.
- A copy of the school's safeguarding policy, which complies with the independent school standards, is published on the school's website.

## **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

**Good**

- The curriculum presented to the pupils is interesting and varied. Because of this, pupils have very good attitudes to learning. They are enthusiastic and keen to learn.
- Pupils are encouraged to work collaboratively, to share their thinking with each other and to help each other. For example, they are frequently involved in looking at each other's work and deciding whether or not that work is correct, or could be improved. They become more aware of the importance of teamwork and support from others.
- Teachers ensure that pupils know how their work can be improved. They use assessment well to provide targets for pupils to aim for. Pupils know what they have learned before and what they now need to work on. In this way, they know the progress they need to make.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are good. Teachers know their pupils well. Consequently, the work set ensures that pupils make good progress. Teachers often adapt their lessons, responding to pupils' needs. They give praise and rewards for hard work. Because of this, pupils are highly motivated.
- Teachers use resources well to support pupils' understanding and to assess how well pupils are doing in the lesson. For example, they use the electronic board at the front of the classroom to show images of the subject of the lesson and they use 'show me' whiteboards so that they can assess the pupils' work as soon as they have done it. They use real objects and visual images to help pupils understand their mathematics.
- Good planning for learning ensures that teachers make interesting links between different subjects. For example, in a Year 6 science lesson, the teacher linked aspects of science to religious education. Pupils learning how to create an electrical circuit also discussed festivals of different faiths where lights are used. Collaborative group work and the enthusiasm of the teacher ensured that pupils were excited about their learning.
- The new mathematics scheme of work supports teachers to structure pupils' maths work well. Teachers often show pupils good models of how to do their calculations when they need support. However, teachers do not often expect pupils to talk to each other about their mathematics using the correct mathematical terminology. They sometimes give individual pupils opportunities to show their spoken reasoning about mathematics, but they do not expect all pupils to use the language of mathematical reasoning. As a result, pupils make less progress in this aspect of mathematics.
- In mathematics, teachers often do not give most-able pupils higher-level work soon enough. Pupils have to do a number of calculations that are easy for them before they are challenged with a more difficult task. Because of this, they do not have enough time to complete the work that would extend their skills. This sometimes also happens in other lessons, for example in science.
- Pupils are given frequent opportunities to read and daily guided-reading lessons. The

system for monitoring reading works well. Both teachers and parents regularly support their children to learn to read. As a result, most pupils enjoy reading. However, not enough emphasis is placed on learning more adventurous and technical words. Consequently, pupils often come across words that they do not understand and they do not know how to work out their meanings from other words in the sentences. This means that they do not understand everything that they read.

- Pupils' cursive handwriting improves as they get older, particularly in lessons where teachers take care to show a good handwriting style. This does not happen in every classroom. As a result, some pupils learn good handwriting skills more quickly than others.
- The school's writing procedures set out how to teach pupils to improve the content of their writing and grammar. They place emphasis on 'modelling' writing – showing pupils how to write. Some teachers do this well, but in some classrooms teachers' writing is not of a good enough quality to ensure that the most able pupils make faster progress.
- Teachers place insufficient emphasis on the use of more adventurous and technical words in spoken language and in writing. Consequently, the content of pupils' writing does not improve in this area as much as it should. Pupils do not know how to use or spell these words in their writing.

## **Personal development, behaviour and welfare**

## **Outstanding**

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils have excellent opportunities to influence the work of the school. The school council members' suggestions for improvements to the tuck shop and to play equipment have been adopted. Pupils have a variety of responsibilities within their classrooms that develop their sense of teamwork.
- Pupils work together in mixed groups of boys and girls. Because of the good relationships between staff and pupils and between the pupils themselves, they are confident to share their views.
- Pupils respond very well to the excellent opportunities they have to study a wide variety of different subjects, engage in art and crafts and take part in special visits to places of interest. They have an enthusiasm for learning.
- Pupils' ability to consider others in the wider community is strong. For example, they support the homeless. They have supported a very large number of charities and have developed relationships with pupils from other cultural backgrounds. In this way, leaders have ensured that they develop a strong sense of how to make relationships with the wider community in Britain and across the world. Because of these experiences, they have a deep understanding of British values. They are very thoughtful about their own responsibilities and caring for other children.
- Staff make sure that pupils are taught how to stay safe. Pupils confirmed that they feel safe in school. They talked about road safety, fire safety, safety near water and staying safe from online bullying. Year 5 and Year 6 pupils have the opportunity to learn about first aid because they attend a first aid after-school club. Leaders have set this up because some of the pupils have shown an interest in becoming doctors in the future. Older pupils have a good understanding about the dangers of radicalisation and racial

prejudice.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils are polite and courteous. They are friendly to each other, staff and visitors. Classrooms are calm and pupils settle quickly to work when moving from one lesson to another and when required to change their seating arrangements.
- Pupils listen carefully and respond enthusiastically during group work and class discussions. Pupils listen to adults and to each other. They collaborate well, both in lessons and during outdoor play.
- Pupils dress smartly and ensure that they keep their classrooms tidy. Pupils who attend the breakfast club automatically tidy up at the end of the session, including washing up the crockery and cutlery.
- Pupils say that there is no bullying in the school, pupils do not use derogatory language or racial discrimination.
- All parents who spoke with inspectors stated that pupils behave well. Pupils who spoke with inspectors confirmed that they behave well most of the time. They respect school rules and are aware of the system for rewards and sanctions.
- Attendance is good. Pupils are rarely late for school. The school works very hard to ensure that the few pupils who attend less regularly are encouraged to improve. This has resulted in consistent improvements in attendance over the past year. Parents fully support the school by bringing or sending their children to school regularly and on time.

## Outcomes for pupils

**Good**

- Outcomes for pupils are based on small numbers of pupils. This means that progress and attainment from one year to the next is not easily compared.
- Most children arrive in the early years foundation stage with levels of attainment that are broadly average for their age. The children who remained in the school through Nursery and Reception and are now in Year 1 made at least good progress. The same applies to children who arrived in Reception and are now in Year 1. They all attained their early learning goals and many of them exceeded these goals. This is because the teachers in the early years foundation stage assess and plan the learning for these pupils very well.
- Information from the previous Year 6 cohort shows good attainment in reading and in spelling, punctuation and grammar. Attainment in mathematics was lower. For this reason, leaders have a strong focus on the improvement of mathematics teaching this year.
- Evidence from the books of current pupils and information from the school's assessment system show that pupils have made good progress from Year 1 to Year 2 and from Year 3 to the end of Year 5. Standards across other subjects in the curriculum match those in the English books. Some turbulence in staffing prevented Year 6 pupils making the progress that they should this term. Leaders have now overcome these difficulties and are confident that they have put in measures to help Year 6 pupils to catch up quickly.

- The school's system for monitoring and tracking progress is ensuring that few pupils fall behind. However, more needs to be done to ensure that the most able pupils in key stage 1 and key stage 2 make faster progress.
- The very few pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities are making strong progress from their starting points. They are well supported by teaching assistants, teachers and outside agencies. The few pupils who arrive in school unable to speak English are well supported and also make strong progress.
- Pupils experience a wide range of subjects and activities during their time at the school that prepare them well for the next stage of their education. In this school, the pupils also benefit from learning about Islam as well as other world religions.

### Early years provision

**Good**

- Provision in the early years foundation stage is good because of strong leadership and an ethos of caring and support for families. Relationships between staff, parents and children are strong.
- Personal development, behaviour and welfare are outstanding. Staff ensure that children take part in the organisation of the day by giving out equipment and helping each other. The children behave exceptionally well and cooperate very well in pairs and in groups.
- Most children join the Nursery or the Reception class with skills and abilities that are broadly average for their age. Some children, however, start with a very limited ability to speak English. By the time they enter Year 1, most children have skills and abilities that are at least appropriate for their age. Those with little English when they arrived have made good progress.
- Records of the children's work are kept well in 'online journals'. These are extremely well documented and provide a clear account of the children's learning and progress.
- Regular assessment helps the staff to monitor how well each individual child is doing, as well as providing parents with evidence of the child's progress and development.
- Staff develop a very strong relationship with parents from the very start of the early years foundation stage. Children are supported to settle in with close cooperation from their parents. Parents have many opportunities to come to school to meet the staff and discuss their child's progress in a friendly and relaxing atmosphere. Parents and teachers share frequent 'wow' moments with each other when a child has achieved a new target. Recently, parents came to a 'mini-beast party' where everyone dressed up as mini-beasts, including some of the parents.
- The children in the Nursery and Reception classes make strong progress in early phonics, reading, writing and mathematics. This prepares them well for Year 1. Those children whose English is less well developed learn quickly because the teachers work hard to encourage them to speak about their learning. Staff also ensure that they encourage other children who speak English well to play and learn with them.
- In both the Nursery and Reception classes, the children were developing good communication and mathematical skills in the many activities on offer. They were enjoying learning from role play as they pretended to be weather reporters and made notes about the weather. They were counting objects and experimenting with tactile

resources such as water, sand and construction equipment. Teaching frequently follows the children's own interests. When one of the boys became very interested in dogs, the staff planned a programme of learning around how to look after a pet dog.

- The furniture in the indoor area is set out so that children can enjoy working with each other in small groups. As a result, they develop their spoken language skills. Resources are easy for the children to take out and put away so that they develop their independence.
- Staff in both the Nursery and in Reception ensure that they encourage children to develop their thinking. They prompt and question them skilfully so that the children extend their ideas. For example, when the children were involved in role play they were asked, 'What do you think the weather will be like tomorrow?'
- Although playground space is limited, the children have some opportunities to use music apparatus, bicycles and other equipment, including a mud kitchen. However, provision in the outdoor area is not as good as indoors. This is because the staff need to set up the resources every time they go outside and put them away when they have finished.
- The school meets the requirements of the schedule to The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent standards') and associated requirements in relation to the early years foundation stage.

## School details

Unique reference number	130244
DfE registration number	330/6113
Inspection number	10038829

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	Muslim faith school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	123
Number of part-time pupils	6
Proprietor	Al Ameen Foundation
Chair	Moin Uddin
Headteacher	Mohammed Rahman
Annual fees (day pupils)	£2,000
Telephone number	0121 706 3322
Website	<a href="http://www.alameen.bham.sch.uk">www.alameen.bham.sch.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:contact@alameen.bham.sch.uk">contact@alameen.bham.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	29 September – 1 October 2015

## Information about this school

- Al-Ameen Primary School is an independent Muslim day school that provides full-time education for boys and girls aged 3 to 11 years.
- The school is affiliated to the Association of Muslim Schools UK.
- The school is registered for 180 pupils and currently has 123 boys and girls aged from three to 11 years on roll. Six children in the nursery attend part time.
- Currently all the families that send their children to the school are practising Muslims. These families are mainly of British Pakistani and Bangladeshi heritage, although there

are an increasing number of pupils from other backgrounds.

- No pupil has an education, health and care plan.
- The school's most recent standard inspection was on 29 September 2015. The school was required to produce an action plan for the Department for Education and this was followed by two unannounced monitoring inspections. The first monitoring inspection was on 20 September 2016 and the second on 25 January 2017.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors carried out lesson observations in all classrooms and spoke to pupils about their work. Inspectors also checked samples of pupils' recorded work and met with a group of pupils to discuss their work, behaviour, safety and responsibilities. They also listened to pupils read. Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour and safety in the playground and at other times.
- The lead inspector undertook a tour of the school premises with the headteacher.
- Inspectors considered a range of school documentation. This included leaders' evaluation of their own effectiveness; information about pupils' achievement, progress and performance; and documents and information related to governance, teaching, behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.
- Inspectors held discussions with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, two senior leaders and members of the teaching staff. The lead inspector spoke to one governor and the local authority safeguarding officer on the telephone.
- Inspectors spoke to parents and carers to seek their views about the school. There were insufficient responses to be counted on Parent View.
- Inspectors spoke to nearly all teaching staff to provide feedback on lessons observed. Inspectors also considered the views expressed by some staff about how well they are supported in carrying out their duties and responsibilities.
- Inspectors analysed staff questionnaires completed by 14 members of staff.

## Inspection team

Mary Maybank, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Michael Onyon	Ofsted Inspector

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