

Alamiyah School

113–115 Marlborough Road, Dagenham, Essex RM8 2ES

Inspection dates

8–10 May 2018

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Procedures for monitoring the school’s work, including checking the implementation of agreed policies or set actions, are not sufficiently well developed.
- A small number of pupils have high levels of persistent absence, which has an impact on the school’s overall attendance.
- Provision for pupils’ personal development and welfare lacks depth and requires improvement. Pupils have a limited understanding of the protected characteristics.
- Pupils have few opportunities to deepen their understanding of the role of British institutions in modern Britain.

The school has the following strengths

- Leaders support teaching staff well. Teachers have good subject knowledge and plan and provide a range of interesting activities to motivate pupils.
- The school has a caring and supportive ethos. Adults consistently expect and encourage all pupils to work with positive attitudes, resulting in the good behaviour seen in classes and around the school.
- The quality of teaching and the progress that pupils make are consistently good and outcomes are strong.
- The early years is well led and managed. Leaders have utilised the staff’s strengths and previous experiences effectively. As a result, provision in the early years is good.

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?

- Strengthen the impact of leadership and management by:
 - improving monitoring systems to enable school leaders and those responsible for governance to review and analyse the school's performance, holding all to account
 - ensuring that parents fully understand the need for their children to attend regularly.
- Strengthening the impact of leadership and management on teaching by:
 - enhancing the curriculum further to deepen provision for pupils' social, moral and cultural development to ensure that they are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Since the pre-registration inspection in July 2017, trustees from the Alamiyah Education Foundation charity have overseen the setting up of this new primary school. The vast majority of pupils have joined the school from the now-closed Alamiyah Pre-school. The charity's previous 'outstanding' pre-school provision, for children aged three to five, closed in August 2017, as the foundation sought to extend the provision on offer to accommodate pupils up to nine years of age.
- In two terms, leaders have successfully established a new school, building on their experience of running a pre-school provision. Consequently the quality of teaching, learning and pupil outcomes are good across the school. However, leaders have not paid sufficient attention to ensuring that the procedures for monitoring the school's work, including checking the implementation of agreed policies or set actions, are well developed.
- Some important information, such as that related to pupils' attendance, is not evaluated thoroughly enough to enable leaders to act swiftly to address any issues. For example, though leaders are aware of when to refer pupils who are taken off roll to the local authority, they do not check that these referrals have taken place. This has led to delays in the referrals process, potentially placing pupils at risk.
- Additionally, although leaders monitor monthly and termly attendance, they do not keep cumulative whole-school records of attendance. Consequently, they have been slow in highlighting to trustees the decline in whole-school attendance since the school opened, and in formulating clear plans for improvement.
- Leaders ensure that pupils have access to a range of religions and cultures, and the necessary skills to consider moral issues. However the provision on offer lacks depth. Although pupils accept differences, and are respectful of the peoples they have knowledge of, they demonstrate a superficial understanding of the cultures studied. Consequently, some pupils could not remember learning about religions other than Islam, despite the school's curriculum identifying opportunities to study a range of religions and cultures.
- The school's work to raise pupils' awareness of fundamental British values is at an early stage of development. School leaders have ensured that there is an appropriately planned curriculum, which provides a broad range of learning experiences for each of the age ranges the school serves. Clear messages are given to staff, encouraging respect for others and recognition of the protected characteristics, which must not be discriminated against. Policies refer to teaching in an age-appropriate way, so that diversity and respect for all is promoted, preparing pupils for life in modern Britain.
- However, not enough of a strong focus has been placed by leaders on supporting the delivery, or monitoring the implementation of this important aspect of the school's curriculum. Leaders recognise the importance of developing this aspect further, extending pupils' experiences beyond the visits from health and the emergency services.
- Leaders are ambitious for all pupils. The headteacher is relentless in her drive to promote consistently good teaching, supporting staff through opportunities for one-to-one

supervision meetings, the implementation of appropriate schemes of work and the monitoring of planning. This, alongside effective support from the local authority early years advisory teacher, ensures continuous improvement in the quality of teaching and assessment.

- Leaders have used the staff's strengths and previous experiences from the pre-school well. Together, staff and leaders have correctly identified the need to provide more opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematical reasoning skills to real-life situations. They have also begun work on ensuring that the good progress that pupils make in writing across the curriculum continues to improve, by providing meaningful opportunities for writing for a range of audiences and purposes.
- Staff are unanimous in their agreement that they are proud to work at the school. Many value the leadership of the headteacher, and the time given to regular supervision meetings and their professional development. Recent links have been made with other Montessori providers, which enable discussions around the assessment of the new 'elementary' curriculum for pupils in Years 1 to 4. However, as yet, no formal moderation systems are in place beyond the school's own setting for the elementary class.
- Leaders are quick to address areas that need improvement when they are brought to their attention. During the inspection, the chair of governors swiftly addressed any concerns the inspector identified.
- Parents and carers are positive and confident about the quality of the school's work. They value the small size and high staff-pupil ratios. They are particularly complimentary about the care and nurture shown by staff towards pupils, and the strong focus on celebrating the uniqueness of each child.

Governance

- Trustees are proactive, and deeply committed to the school's success. They call on their personal skills and expertise to provide support for different aspects of school improvement and delivery. They meet regularly. However, systems are not yet fully developed to ensure that they are provided with all the necessary information to monitor the implementation of the school's proposed actions or policies. This limits their effectiveness in holding leaders to account. For example, although governors receive reports from the headteacher, these reports lack sufficiently detailed information for them to be able challenge school leaders effectively.
- Trustees have ensured that an appropriate accessibility plan is in place and meets the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

Safeguarding

- Safeguarding at the school is effective. The chair of governors has ensured that all appropriate checks are in place for the recruitment of staff. A single central record of checks is in place, and meets requirements. Although trustees made clear decisions regarding the roles and engagement of members of the proprietary body before the school opened, actions to ensure that these decisions were compliant with the independent school standards were implemented less swiftly. Despite this delay, trustees have ensured that all of the independent school standards are met.

- The headteacher, who is the designated safeguarding lead, is proactive in ensuring that staff understand how to raise concerns. All staff have been appropriately trained. Staff are aware of potential signs of concern and their duty to act, including around the risks associated with radicalisation and extremism, and female genital mutilation. Staff are vigilant, and take good care of the pupils. The site is secure, and pupils move calmly and purposefully to play and between activities. A suitable safeguarding policy, published on the school's website, is available to staff and parents.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers plan lessons well by focusing on the individual needs and prior achievement of their pupils. Each pupil has their own individual learning plan, with an appropriate level of challenge. Individual learning plans ensure that timely interventions are put in place for pupils in need of additional support, and that teaching enables pupils to make good progress across a range of subjects.
- Pupils enjoy their learning, and apply themselves well, because teachers are enthusiastic about learning, have high expectations, and tasks are clearly modelled and explained. Pupils particularly enjoyed finding out about gemstones and their properties, and taking their learning further, by researching and ordering elements on the periodic table.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and use this knowledge effectively to encourage pupils to progress well. Teaching which involves practical activities is particularly effective. For example, pupils achieve well in practical life lessons, because they have pride in their achievements. They enjoy planting in the gardening troughs, growing berries and herbs, using their produce to cook or make mint tea.
- The teaching of phonics is a strength at the school and teachers help pupils to develop good reading skills. Pupils read with confidence and demonstrate good levels of comprehension.
- Pupils use non-fiction texts adeptly to research topics of interest to them. This research leads to pupils' progress in writing across the curriculum. However, leaders have correctly identified that providing more meaningful opportunities for writing, for a range of audiences and purposes, will further extend their writing expertise. Grammar, punctuation and spelling are taught systematically, supporting bilingual pupils particularly well.
- In mathematics, pupils confidently use a range of high-quality, practical resources to support them in calculating. Occasionally, pupils are less confident in articulating their reasoning skills. Leaders have correctly identified the need to provide further opportunities for pupils to develop and apply their mathematical reasoning skills.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Although teachers promote equality of opportunity and diversity, and the school's curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to learn about other cultures and to keep

themselves healthy and safe, pupils' understanding is narrow and lacks depth. Pupils showed a limited understanding of the protected characteristics.

- Pupils demonstrate a basic awareness of British institutions. They are encouraged to express their views, and teachers expect pupils to respect the opinions of others. However, pupils have few opportunities to deepen their understanding of the role of British institutions in modern Britain, or to articulate their learning confidently.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils' behaviour in lessons and during social times reflects their positive attitudes to learning and their school community.
- Staff model positive relationships, and have high expectations of pupils. Consequently, pupils are respectful of each other and of members of staff. Staff manage the few instances of unsettled behaviour in class well, and foster positive attitudes through daily class circle times. During these times, staff encourage pupils to compliment and express their appreciation for the positive acts of their peers.
- Pupils say that there is no bullying, because rare disagreements are quickly resolved, and adults always help to resolve any other problems that occur. School records confirm that instances of bullying are rare and effectively managed.
- Attendance records scrutinised during the inspection indicate that most pupils at the school attend well. However, a few pupils have high levels of persistent absence, which has an impact on whole-school attendance figures. In the first two terms of the school's opening, leaders have initiated processes to check pupils' termly attendance. They are aware of the importance, particularly in the first year of opening, to ensure that all parents understand the requirement for their children to attend regularly once they reach five years of age.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- As pupils have not yet completed their first year at the school, there are no available end-of-year outcomes.
- Pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their school life. From accurate assessments of pupils' starting points on entry to the school, learning is planned which supports pupils to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding in a wide range of curriculum subjects. Consequently, pupils' progress is good across a range of subjects.
- Regular opportunities to read and discuss their work contribute to pupils' strong progress across the curriculum. Pupils use their knowledge, understanding and enjoyment of non-fiction texts particularly well to undertake individual research into a range of topics that interest them. Consequently, pupils demonstrate high levels of engagement in their learning, while working independently.
- In mathematics, pupils make sound progress from their starting points. They use their knowledge and understanding well. Work scrutiny of pupils' learning confirms good progress.
- While there are no pupils with a statement of educational need or who are supported by an education, health and care (EHC) plan, teachers make sure that they plan support and

tailor work for boys and girls from different starting points. This leads pupils, including the less able, to learn effectively and progress well in line with their peers.

Early years provision

Good

- There are no figures available for the proportion of children achieving a good level of development, as children have not yet completed their first year at the school.
- The early years is well led and managed. Leaders have used their recent experience of running a previously registered outstanding early years setting to shape the provision at this new school.
- Consistency of expectation among staff through regular, clear guidance from the headteacher on planning and evaluation ensures that adults know their children well. As a result, planned learning enables children to make good progress from their starting points. Children are well prepared for Year 1.
- In school, assessments show the vast majority of children join the early years with skills broadly in line with age-related expectations. Children were seen working well independently, and demonstrating good levels of concentration.
- A system for tracking children's progress against all seven areas of the early years foundation stage is in place. Online electronic journals accurately track children's achievements through the early years. These electronic records collect important evidence about each child's learning and personal development, using photographs of children's learning and work, and records of staff's, parents' and children's comments.
- Leaders ensure that, from the first point of contact with the school, parents are engaged with staff to share key information about their child's learning. Partnerships with parents are sustained through the frequent open sessions where parents are invited into school to learn alongside their children.
- As one parent commented, 'As a working parent, the staff...go above and beyond to ensure that they communicate with me consistently and make extra provision for me to observe and meet with staff.' Parents spoken to at the start of the day, and those who shared their views using the free-text option of Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, were positive about the support offered by the school.
- Adults plan activities that enable children to make sense of the world around them. For example, when pretending to camp outside, adults carefully questioned children while they were selecting materials to build their campfire. They were encouraging them to talk about why they had chosen the materials for the fire, helping them to explore their choices and communicate their thoughts.
- Activities for children are well organised. The colourful and inviting learning areas, indoor and outdoor, are well resourced and provide a breadth of activities that capture children's interests. Consequently, children behave very well because they are engaged in their learning. They enjoy repeating phrases, such as when as they sang songs and explored rhythmic patterns as they used drums to accompany their singing around the campfire.
- Strong caring relationships exist between adults and the children in their care. Adults model language well, and children swiftly learn the rules and routines. Even the newest, youngest arrivals were confidently changing into their indoor shoes when coming in from

the outside.

- Leaders have recognised that although learning across the early years is good, the provision would benefit from more opportunities which engage children in developing a deeper understanding of the process of learning. Adults have successfully trialled introducing ideas boards, which are supporting children's independent learning opportunities and their early writing across the curriculum.
- Safeguarding in the early years is effective. Children are well cared for, and safeguarding systems are secure. Leaders have ensured that all the independent school standards and specific statutory and welfare requirements for the early years are met.

School details

Unique reference number	144805
DfE registration number	301/6006
Inspection number	10044422

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	Montessori independent school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	3 to 9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	46
Number of part-time pupils	33
Proprietor	Alamiyah Educational Foundation
Chair	Mrs Saahera Motara
Headteacher	Miss Hanan Musa
Annual fees (day pupils)	£5,850 to £7,410
Telephone number	020 8595 5999
Website	http://www.alamiyahschool.org
Email address	admin@alamiyahschool.org

Information about this school

- Alamiyah School is run by the registered charity, Alamiyah Education Foundation. The Alamiyah School stems from a project which began in 2005 with a group of home-schooling parents who were eager to create a positive learning environment for their children. The project was subsequently joined by a group of educational professionals and evolved into the Alamiyah Pre-school.
- Alamiyah School is an independent, coeducational Montessori day school with an Islamic ethos. It opened in September 2017, following the closure of Alamiyah Pre-school, to cater for pupils from three to nine years of age.
- There are 46 pupils on roll. Pupils are taught in two separate classes; Elementary for Years 1 to 4, and Children's House, for children aged from three to six years. Ten pupils

attend the Elementary class. Thirty-six children are on roll in Children's House. Thirty-three of these children attend part-time. A maximum of 23 children attend either the morning or afternoon sessions in Children's House at any one time.

- Thirty-two children in the early years are in receipt of the 15 hours government funding.
- Many pupils speak English as an additional language, but very few are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils who are from minority ethnic backgrounds is above average, with the largest groups being from Asian or other mixed Asian backgrounds.
- There are no pupils who have a statement of special educational needs or who are supported by an EHC plan. A very small number of pupils have been identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The school runs a breakfast club and an after-school Arabic club for those on the school roll.
- The school is located on the ground floor of a former doctor's surgery. It is situated in a residential street in the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham. The building includes two large classrooms, three separate play areas and a separate administration block.
- The school's previous inspection was a pre-registration inspection, which took place on 3 July 2017, when the provision was judged: 'likely to meet all the independent school standards'.
- The school was first registered on 27 July 2017. This is the school's first standard inspection.
- During the course of the inspection the school notified the Department for Education of a change in membership, following the resignation of two members of the proprietorial body.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed learning by visiting lessons in both classes, talking to pupils about their work, and scrutinising work in their books, in their electronic learning journals, and on display around the school. Observations in lessons were completed jointly with senior leaders. A brief visit was made to the breakfast club run by the school.
- The inspector met formally with a group of pupils, and spoke with pupils informally throughout the inspection. The inspector observed pupils outside at play, while having their lunch, and as they moved around the school. The inspector also listened to pupils read and discussed their reading with them.
- The inspector held meetings with school staff and leaders, including those responsible for safeguarding, assessment and the leadership of the early years. Meetings were also held with the chair of governors and a member of staff responsible for attendance and admissions. The inspector met with two trustees, including the chair and a representative from the local authority's early years team.
- The chair of governors and the headteacher accompanied the inspector during a tour of the school site to check compliance with the independent school standards. The inspector also scrutinised records of checks on the premises, including risk assessments and fire safety records.
- Inspectors scrutinised documents provided by the school, including the school's self-evaluation and action plan. School improvement documents, policies, information on pupils' outcomes, information on pupils' behaviour and attendance, information on the school's website, and minutes of management meetings were also reviewed.
- The inspector met informally with parents at the start of the school day, and took into account the 16 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and the 11 free-text comments. The inspector also met with a group of staff and took account of the five responses to Ofsted's questionnaire for staff.

Inspection team

Jean Thwaites, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

Parent View

You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2018