

Al Huda Academy (Jamia Al-Hudaa)

Ouseburn Croft, Darnall, Sheffield, South Yorkshire S9 3FY

Inspection dates

12–14 December 2017

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Inadequate

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders have sought appropriate reviews and advice externally, which have developed their leadership skills, capacity to improve teaching and learning, and knowledge of the independent school standards.
- Teaching and learning are much improved from the previous standard inspection. Teachers take part in training, for example about questioning, and then apply this to their teaching, asking questions that make pupils think hard.
- Overall, pupils make good progress from their starting points. The improved assessment tracker identifies pupils to receive extra support if they fall behind in the core curriculum; however, this does not yet extend to the wider curriculum.
- Teachers use pupils' progress information to plan learning; however, some pupils, particularly the most able, sometimes complete work quickly because it is too easy for them.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced and pupils study a range of GCSE subjects and vocational subjects alongside Islamic studies. Leaders are continuing to develop opportunities in creative, aesthetic and physical areas of the curriculum.
- Pupils have many opportunities within the school curriculum to develop their personal, social, health and economic knowledge. Leaders agree, however, that more extra-curricular opportunities would develop pupils' knowledge and skills further.
- Pupils' attendance is above the national average for secondary schools. Pupils are polite and courteous and behave well in school.
- At the time of this inspection, there were no students in post-16 education at the school. Students from the previous academic year studied vocational qualifications alongside Islamic studies and progressed into a variety of education, employment and training.
- Leaders ensure that all staff receive appropriate training in child protection, and pupils are aware of whom to go to if there is an issue.
- Pupils say that the school has improved considerably over the last two years.
- Following the previous inspection, leaders now ensure that they meet the independent school standards consistently.

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 outcomes for pupils by:
 - building on improvements made to the creative, aesthetic and physical aspects of the curriculum
 - providing further extra-curricular opportunities for pupils to develop their skills and knowledge outside the taught curriculum
 - ensuring that teachers challenge all pupils, particularly those who are the most able, with a variety of activities to make maximum progress from their starting points.
- Further improve assessment by extending the new assessment tracker to the wider curriculum so that the progress of this curriculum is tracked as rigorously as the core curriculum.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders effectively develop their knowledge and skills by working with external consultants and other good and outstanding schools. Through this, they ensure that they meet the independent school standards consistently.
- Following the previous inspection, there have been changes to leadership. The previous deputy headteacher is now the headteacher and there is a new chair of the governing body in place. Staff are in full support of the new direction of the school and the opportunities there are for them to develop their teaching.
- Leaders have developed appropriate systems and strategies for the school. For example, there is now an appropriate performance management system in place, which enables leaders to hold teachers to account for the progress pupils make. There is also an assessment tracker, which carefully tracks pupils' progress in the core curriculum, meaning that teachers and leaders are aware of pupils who fall behind so that they can receive support quickly. Leaders have plans to extend this tracker to the wider curriculum.
- Leaders are ambitious and want all pupils to fulfil their potential. Leaders have improved the curriculum so that pupils now study a broader range of subjects, prepare to live healthy lives and learn extensively about life in modern Britain. Leaders agree that while there are opportunities for aesthetic, creative and physical aspects of the curriculum, there is some work to do to ensure that teachers incorporate these aspects across the curriculum.
- The school has not made a change to the age range registration status, but there are currently no post-16 students at the school. Students in the post-16 provision last year left to continue their studies elsewhere or to enter employment or further education.
- Leaders agree that pupils would benefit from a wider range of extra-curricular opportunities to support their skill development. Pupils are particularly keen to have a broader range of experiences within the community.

Governance

- The Madni Trust provides support and guidance for school leaders. There are regular meetings to hold the headteacher to account and to check that the school is improving.
- The Madni Trust ensures that leaders are developing appropriate skills to continue to improve the school and to ensure that safe recruitment practices are in place.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders responsible for safeguarding at the school are knowledgeable about all aspects of safeguarding and child protection. They work to ensure a culture of vigilance across the school and ensure that they make appropriate checks on all adults working at the school and that they record these appropriately.
- Staff receive regular training that meets both statutory requirements and local concerns

and needs. Recruitment procedures and the induction processes of new staff ensure that all staff know how to identify concerns and how to report them. They also ensure that staff read and understand the regularly updated and suitable child protection policy that is available on the school's website.

- Regular health and safety checks and appropriate risk assessments ensure that pupils are safe in school, on the local playing fields adjacent to the school and on visits out of school.
- Leaders are constantly seeking ways of improving safeguarding practice and now work proactively with Sheffield Local Safeguarding Children Board. This helps them to keep abreast of local concerns and to access local authority advice and support.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The headteacher's relentless focus on improving the quality of teaching has made its mark. Training opportunities and regular monitoring of learning have improved the quality of teaching significantly since the previous standard inspection. This is contributing to the generally good progress pupils are making across the increasingly wider range of subjects they study.
- Teachers have strong subject knowledge and know their pupils well. They usually direct questions that take into account pupils' current abilities. Teachers then probe pupils' answers to deepen their learning and understanding. For example, in a key stage 4 English class, the teacher's skilful questioning enabled pupils to explain the different behaviours and characteristics of the animals in the book 'Animal Farm'. Probing questions then enabled pupils to describe the social and historical context of the story, which helped to add meaning to the text.
- Pupils have more opportunities across the curriculum to write at length in different subjects. This is helping to strengthen and develop literacy skills. Coupled with opportunities to read aloud and opportunities to have discussions, pupils develop confidence in these aspects of their learning.
- In some lessons, teachers explain the main concepts well by modelling and providing examples from everyday life. For example, in mathematics, working through examples on the board with pupils helped them to fully understand decimal places.
- Pupils and teachers have good relationships. Pupils ask questions because teachers create an environment that enables them to do so.
- Teachers generally use their regular assessments of pupils' learning to plan activities that move pupils on quickly from their current levels of knowledge and understanding. For example, in Arabic, teachers challenge pupils well. Occasionally, however, in other subjects, the pace of learning slows when work does not stretch the most able pupils sufficiently.
- Teachers ensure that pupils gain knowledge and skills to enable them to be successful in their GCSE examinations. However, leaders agree that pupils would benefit from a wider variety of tasks to further engage and enthuse them in their learning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils develop into thoughtful and confident members of this harmonious school community. Their confidence and self-esteem grow as they move through the school because of the care and support teachers provide.
- The curriculum, assemblies and citizenship lessons ensure that pupils learn how to keep themselves safe. Pupils report that teachers teach them about risks to their personal safety and how to manage them. This includes risks from using mobile devices, and the internet, which they can access during the school day as part of their studies.
- Professionals from the police and Sheffield fire and rescue services visit the school regularly to complement the school's work. They talk to pupils about risks from issues such as drugs and alcohol, anti-social behaviour and fire safety. Older pupils take level 2 qualifications in child protection and health and safety. They are also involved in identifying hazards and risk assessments for activities in school and beyond.
- Work to develop pupils' understanding of British values and to foster their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development takes place across all aspects of the school's curriculum. Pupils speak convincingly about how they value differences in others and in their views. This includes protected groups as enshrined within the Equality Act 2010. Pupils report that this is because the values of tolerance and respect for all are fundamental tenets of both the Islamic faith and the secular work within the school.
- Pupils report that bullying is rare. This is because everyone gets along well together in this small friendly school and teachers and pupils do not tolerate bullying because it is against their values of respect that they embrace.
- Pupils have some opportunities to mix with people from the local community, for example in working with the Friends of Ouseburn Croft open space to plant trees, visits to the local church and library, and their work with a homeless charity. However, they would like more extra-curricular opportunities to go out of school and mix with others in the wider community.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are polite and friendly and are strong ambassadors for the school. Their behaviour is good as they move through the school and their attitudes to learning are positive. Pupils are motivated and keen to do their best and generally remain focused on their work.
- Pupils' enjoyment of school can be seen in their above-average attendance rates. Staff know pupils well and have strong relationships with parents. Parents are quickly contacted and have meetings with leaders should the attendance of their children start to slip. Leaders follow up assiduously the destination of any pupil when they leave. Such work minimises risks to pupils going missing from education.
- Pupils and staff all report that behaviour is usually good. When there is disruption to learning, teachers are quick to deal with it. Behaviour logs confirm that incidents of misbehaviour are very rare. Exclusions are also very rare and this is an improvement from

the time of the previous inspection.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Overall, current pupils make good progress in their learning across the curriculum. Leaders set clear targets for pupils, which they base upon their key stage 2 outcomes. Books demonstrate that current pupils are gaining appropriate knowledge, progressing towards their targets and preparing well for GCSE examinations.
- In 2016, pupils did not make as much progress in mathematics as they did in other subjects such as English. Leaders took action to address this and results improved in 2017. Progress information provided by the school and work in pupils' books indicate that mathematics continues to improve.
- Pupils read confidently with expression and understanding. They are able to apply their knowledge of how to read to unpick unfamiliar words. Pupils access a range of reading material from the school library and school leaders continue to extend the range of books to include fiction and non-fiction appropriate to pupils' interests.
- From the time they enter school, pupils have careers lessons and access independent careers advice and guidance from Sheffield Futures, the local careers service. Pupils have individual plans to help them to attain their goals for the future. Opportunities for work experience in key stage 4 enhance pupils' understanding of life beyond school.
- The school's work to ensure pupils move on successfully to their chosen destinations after school is strong. All pupils who left school in the past two years have moved on successfully to their chosen, varied destinations.

School details

Unique reference number	134574
DfE registration number	373/6030
Inspection number	10033918

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	Other independent school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Boys
Number of pupils on the school roll	23 in Years 8 to 11
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Madni Trust
Chair	Rizwan Ahmed
Headteacher	Mohammed Amaar
Annual fees (day pupils)	£1,500
Telephone number	0114 2217907
Website	www.alhudaacademy.co.uk
Email address	amaar@alhudaacademy.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	29 April to 1 May 2015

Information about this school

- Al Huda Academy (Jamia Al-Hudaa) is an independent Muslim day school for pupils between the ages of 11 and 18 years. The school selects pupils of average and above-average levels of ability through the setting of an entrance examination and interview.
- The previous standard inspection took place on 29 April to 1 May 2015. The school has also received three progress monitoring inspections on 21 April 2016, 10 to 11 January 2017 and 3 to 4 May 2017.
- The school holds registration status as an 11 to 18 school for both girls and boys. There are currently no pupils in the post-16 provision and no girls on roll.

- At the time of this inspection, the current proprietors had written to the Department for Education to request a material change of proprietor.
- There is no longer any boarding provision at the school.
- The school does not use any alternative education provision.
- The school does not have any pupils who have an education, health and care plan.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection was carried out over two and a half days with half a day's notice.
- The inspectors toured all buildings currently being used by the school, both inside and out.
- Inspectors observed teaching and learning with school leaders, and met with leaders, the chair of the governing body, staff and a representative from the Madni Trust. Inspectors met with pupils both formally and informally.
- Inspectors reviewed the work in a number of pupils' workbooks.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around school was observed.
- Inspectors evaluated a wide range of documentation, including leaders' evaluations of the school and compliance with the independent school standards. They evaluated admissions and attendance registers, policies, minutes from governing body meetings, monitoring information, child protection policies and safeguarding information. Inspectors also looked closely at progress information provided by the school and all other documents as required as part of the independent school standards.
- Inspectors took into account five free-text responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. There were no responses to Ofsted's questionnaire for staff.

Inspection team

Debbie Redshaw, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Margaret Farrow

Her Majesty's Inspector

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