

# Inspection of Afifah School

86 Clifton Street, Old Trafford, Manchester M16 9GN

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Inspection dates: 5 to 7 March 2024

**Overall effectiveness** **Good**

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The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection Good

Does the school meet the independent school standards? **Yes**

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils enjoy coming to this school. They get on well with each other and with staff. Children in the early years like to play in their exciting, well-resourced classrooms and outdoor areas. Older pupils enjoy chatting with each other at breaktimes. Many pupils join the school at the start of key stage 3. Once here, they settle in quickly and make new friends. Staff are warm and caring. This enables pupils of all ages to feel secure.

The school has high expectations for what pupils can achieve. Pupils usually listen carefully to their teachers. They work hard and complete their tasks. Pupils know that staff will help them if they find work difficult. In all key stages, pupils typically achieve well in most of the subjects that they study, including in national tests and GCSEs.

Pupils behave well. In the early years, children quickly learn to follow the simple rules. For example, they know when it is time to play and when it is time to put the toys away. Older pupils demonstrate sensible behaviour as they move around the school between lessons. This helps to ensure that the school is calm and orderly.

Pupils learn about faiths and cultures that are different from their own. They take part in activities that help them to understand the fundamental British values, such as democracy and the rule of law. Pupils relish opportunities to take on responsibilities in school, such as becoming members of the school council. These experiences contribute well to pupils' wider development

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

The school provides pupils with a broad and ambitious curriculum that spans the early years to Year 6. All pupils learn this strong curriculum, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

In most subjects, the school has a clear overview of the impact of the curriculum on pupils' learning over time. This enables the school to make further improvements that might be necessary in these subjects. In a small number of subjects, the school's work to develop an understanding of the impact of its curriculum is at an earlier stage, especially in key stage 3. This limits the extent to which the school can identify and make any improvements that might be needed.

Due consideration has been given to the knowledge that pupils need to learn by the end of each year group, and by the time that they leave the school. In almost all subjects, the school has broken down this key knowledge into smaller, carefully ordered steps. This helps pupils to build new learning on what they already know. Pupils typically achieve well in these subjects. In a very small number of subjects, especially in key stage 3, some of the smaller steps of knowledge are less clear. This makes it more difficult for teachers to make sure that pupils learn everything that they need to know. This hinders how well some pupils achieve in these subjects.

The school has provided training for staff to enable them to deliver the curriculum effectively. In lessons, staff check that pupils understand the learning provided. They take appropriate steps to correct any misconceptions that pupils may have. The school uses information from assessments to make any adjustments to teaching that might be necessary. This helps to ensure that pupils' learning is secure.

In the early years, the curriculum places a strong focus on the development of children's communication and language skills. Children can join the school from the age of two. Many children begin school having experienced languages other than or in addition to English. Staff are highly skilled at supporting children to develop their vocabulary and their understanding of English. This prepares children well for the curriculum beyond the Nursery Year.

Reading has a high priority in the curriculum. Children in the Reception class start their phonics learning straight away. They enjoy learning each day about new letters and sounds. This continues in Year 1 with more complex groups of letters. The school ensures that the words in reading books contain only the letters and sounds that pupils have learned. This enables pupils to read confidently and successfully. By the time that they reach the end of Year 1, most pupils achieve well in the phonics screening check. This includes pupils with SEND and those for whom English is an additional language.

The school has ensured that pupils encounter a wide range of literature to help bring their learning to life. There is a well-stocked library where pupils can select books for themselves. Pupils of all ages typically achieve well in reading.

Pupils who may have SEND are quickly identified. Where necessary, careful adaptations are made to enable these pupils to learn the curriculum successfully. The school communicates promptly and effectively with parents and carers, and with a range of professionals, to secure extra help for any pupils who need it. Pupils with SEND achieve well from their starting points, including in their GCSEs.

Staff set clear and consistent expectations for pupils' behaviour. Pupils listen carefully to their teachers and try not to disturb others by chatting. This helps everyone to get on with their work. The majority of pupils attend school regularly. The school gathers and analyses a range of information in order to understand patterns and trends in pupils' attendance. This has enabled the school to take swift and effective action to reduce absences over time, so that more pupils can benefit from the school's strong curriculum.

The school provides older pupils with an appropriate programme of independent careers advice, guidance and support. This ensures that they are well informed about the education, employment and training choices and options open to them.

Through the curriculum for personal, social, health and economic education, pupils develop a range of knowledge and skills in readiness for adult life. For example, they learn about difference and diversity and gain an understanding of the protected

characteristics. The school provides pupils with a range of trips and visits that support their learning and that contribute to their personal development.

The proprietor has put in place a suitable policy for relationships, sex and health education (RSHE). This policy has been developed in consultation with parents. It is published on the school's website. The programme for RSHE follows current statutory guidance. Pupils of primary age receive age-appropriate relationships and health education.

The proprietor has taken effective steps to ensure that all of the independent school standards ('the standards') are met securely and consistently. The premises are clean and tidy. There is a programme of maintenance and any necessary repairs are carried out promptly. Pupils benefit from a wide range of suitable resources to support their learning. This includes in the early years. Classrooms are well-lit and have appropriate acoustics. The proprietor has put in place a relevant health and safety policy. The school complies with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 and with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

Staff appreciate the concern that leaders show for their well-being. Leaders take account of the impact on staff workload when they make decisions about teaching and learning. The school engages positively with parents and professionals in ways that support pupils' experiences at school.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

### **[If the school is not outstanding] What does the school need to do to improve? (Information for the school and proprietor)**

- In a small number of subjects, the curriculum does not contain enough information about all of the smaller components of knowledge that pupils need to learn, especially in key stage 3. This hampers the ability of teachers to make sure that pupils are taught all of the knowledge that they need in these subjects. The school should ensure that in all subjects, the curriculum sets out clearly the smaller steps of learning so that pupils build their subject knowledge securely over time.
- The school's work to understand the impact of the curriculum in a small number of subjects is at an early stage, especially for key stage 3. This makes it difficult for the school to make further improvements to the curriculum in these subjects, should they be necessary. The school needs to ensure that in all subjects, there is a clear understanding of the impact of the curriculum at each key stage over time.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	134469
<b>DfE registration number</b>	358/6018
<b>Local authority</b>	Trafford
<b>Inspection number</b>	10299195
<b>Type of school</b>	Other independent school
<b>School category</b>	Independent day school
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2 to 16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	295
<b>Number of part-time pupils</b>	None
<b>Proprietor</b>	Afifah Academy
<b>Chair</b>	Asif Khamisa
<b>Headteacher</b>	Abdul Huy Malek
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	£3,700 to £4,100
<b>Telephone number</b>	0161 872 1516
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.afifahschool.com">www.afifahschool.com</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:admin@afifahschool.co.uk">admin@afifahschool.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	5 to 7 November 2019

## Information about this school

- The school is located in premises at 86 Clifton Street, Old Trafford, Manchester M16 9GN.
- The school has an Islamic faith ethos.
- The school is registered to admit up to 296 pupils.
- Since the last inspection, a new deputy headteacher has been appointed to the primary department, and a new deputy headteacher to the secondary department.
- The school does not make use of any 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.
- This was the first routine inspection 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 met with the headteacher and other school leaders.
- The lead inspector met with the chair of the proprietor body.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspectors met with subject leaders, discussed the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to staff, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The lead inspector also observed some pupils reading to a familiar adult.
- The inspectors discussed the curriculum in some other subjects with leaders.
- 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.
- The lead inspector made a tour of the school. Inspectors also reviewed documentation to check the school's compliance with the standards.
- The inspectors considered the views expressed by parents in their responses to Ofsted Parent View. This included the free-text comments.

- The inspectors spoke with some pupils about school life. They took account of the responses to the pupil survey.
- The inspectors spoke with staff to discuss leaders' support for their workload and well-being. Inspectors took account of the responses to Ofsted's staff survey.

### **Inspection team**

Mavis Smith, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Phill Walmsley

Ofsted Inspector



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