

# Iqra High School

319 Waterloo Street, Glodwick, Oldham, Lancashire OL4 1ER

## Inspection dates

6–8 June 2017

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an inadequate school

- School leaders have not ensured that the school meets the independent school standards.
- Safeguarding is ineffective. Leaders are too lax in their approach to keeping pupils safe. Leaders do not identify risks and apply appropriate control measures to make certain that pupils are safe.
- Leaders do not have an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They have not drawn up a strategic plan to drive improvement.
- Pupils are underperforming. The school's assessments do not use a range of reliable evidence to establish pupils' starting points so that appropriate targets are set.
- Teachers do not pay sufficient heed to pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding when planning lessons. This is hampering pupils' progress.
- Leaders do not have a good grasp of the quality of teaching and learning. Their checks are cursory, fail to identify strengths and areas for improvement and consequently have no impact on improving teachers' effectiveness.
- Pupils across the school are underachieving considerably. Although most pupils work at age-related expectations prior to joining the school, almost all achieve well below their peers nationally during their time at the school.
- Leaders are overly reliant on external support to improve the quality of teaching and learning. There is no one within the senior leadership team with the expertise required to lead the curriculum, teaching, learning and assessment.
- Governors have not paid enough attention to pupils' academic performance. Consequently, they have not challenged leaders on pupils' poor outcomes.

### The school has the following strengths

- Teachers endeavour to prepare the pupils for life in modern Britain. Pupils trust their teachers and are confident to speak to them about any worries or concerns.
- The school is calm and orderly. Pupils are polite, take pride in the presentation of their work and get on well with their peers.

### Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school must take action to meet the requirements of the schedule to The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and associated requirements. The details are listed in the full report

## Full report

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Senior leaders and governors should take urgent action to make sure that the school's arrangements for safeguarding are effective by:
  - revising the school's safeguarding policy and procedures so that they comply with current statutory requirements
  - implementing robust monitoring systems to check that the school's policy and procedures are being followed
  - making sure that there is a clear recording and reporting procedure understood and acted on by all staff
  - ensuring that the designated safeguarding lead and any named deputies keep up to date with mandatory training
  - maintaining the school's admission and attendance records in compliance with current statutory requirements
  - implementing rigorous and robust recruitment and selection procedures to ensure the suitability of potential staff and identify any possible training needs.
- Senior leaders should take urgent action to make sure that the school's arrangements for health and safety are effective by:
  - drawing up a risk assessment policy which ensures that risks are routinely identified and suitable control measures put in place, to keep pupils safe.
- Improve leadership and management at all levels, including governance, by:
  - establishing a culture of high ambition for all pupils which is communicated to and shared by all staff, pupils and parents
  - ensuring that they have up-to-date, reliable information about key aspects of the school's performance, including pupils' academic achievement, behaviour and attendance
  - ensuring that self-evaluation is based on an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses
  - ensuring that school leaders have a well-informed strategic plan that provides clear direction for the school and will move it forward
  - reviewing the school's performance regularly and using the outcomes of these reviews to evaluate the effectiveness of the strategic plan and hold senior leaders to account
  - making sure that classroom monitoring focuses on the impact of teaching on pupils' learning
  - providing relevant training and support for governors and senior leaders to enable them to fulfil their duties effectively
  - checking regularly on the progress that all the different groups of pupils make and taking swift action if any group are not achieving as well as they should.
- Improve teaching, learning and assessment to ensure that all groups of pupils, especially

the disadvantaged and the most able, make much better progress than at present, by ensuring that all teachers:

- have the highest expectations of what pupils can achieve
- assess pupils' work and learning accurately and set them work which is well matched to their abilities and takes into account their prior learning
- plan learning which engages and challenges pupils, particularly the most able
- plan work which pupils find interesting and purposeful, so that they develop positive attitudes to learning, particularly in reading, writing and mathematics
- make sure that pupils make better progress in reading comprehension and writing composition as a result of a frequent and specific focus on the development and assessment of these skills
- provide opportunities for pupils to investigate and solve problems, think for themselves and develop fluency in the fundamentals of mathematics
- make sure that pupils know how to improve their work and are given timely opportunities to respond to teachers' advice and correct mistakes.

The school must meet the following independent school standards:

- The proprietor ensures that the teaching at the school: enables pupils to acquire new knowledge and make good progress according to their ability so that they increase their understanding and develop their skills in the subjects taught; involves well planned lessons and effective teaching methods, activities and management of class time; shows a good understanding of the aptitudes, needs and prior attainments of the pupils, and ensures that these are taken into account in the planning of lessons; and demonstrates that a framework is in place to assess pupils' work regularly and thoroughly and use information from that assessment to plan teaching so that pupils can progress (paragraph 3, 3(a), 3(c), 3(d), 3(g)).
- The proprietor must ensure that arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school and such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State (paragraph 7, 7(a), 7(b)).
- The proprietor ensures that an admission and attendance register is maintained in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (paragraph 15).
- The proprietor must ensure that the welfare of pupils at the school is safeguarded and promoted by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written risk assessment policy and appropriate action is taken to reduce risks that are identified (paragraph 16, 16(a), 16(b)).
- The proprietor must ensure that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role and they fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently (paragraph 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b), 34(1)(c)).

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Inadequate

- Senior leaders and the proprietor have not ensured that the school meets the independent school standards. There are a number of unmet standards in relation to safeguarding, progress, assessment, admissions and risk assessments. As a result, senior leaders have jeopardised pupils' welfare, health and safety.
- Senior leaders have failed to ensure that safeguarding is effective.
- Leaders do not identify any potential risks to pupils' health and safety. There is no policy to ensure that risk assessments are drawn up routinely, so that appropriate control measures are in place to make sure that the school's premises are a safe place for pupils. Moreover, leaders do not identify potential risks or establish control measures when taking pupils out of school, to places other than the local community centre. Consequently, leaders do not reassure themselves that pupils are kept safe during the school day.
- Governors and senior leaders do not carry out thorough checks to secure an accurate view of the school's performance. Governors are overly reliant on the information provided to them by the headteacher. Senior leaders' and governors' lack of professional curiosity mean that they have not identified and addressed significant weaknesses in pupil performance.
- Leaders' lack of experience and expertise in relation to the curriculum, assessment and teaching and learning is hampering improvement. Leaders are overly reliant on external training to improve teaching and learning, and have made ill-advised choices of assessment tools. They have not made sure that teachers plan lessons which build on what pupils have studied at key stage 2 and prepare them well for Year 11 examinations.
- Governors and senior leaders have not developed a strategic plan to drive school improvement. There is no consistent, accurate view of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and what actions should be taken to tackle areas needing improvement.
- The lack of a considered recruitment and induction process means that leaders cannot be certain that staff have the skills and knowledge they need for the job they are to do.
- Staff are proud to work at Iqra High School. They enjoy their work. However, financial constraints and the high turnover of staff are putting teachers under pressure. This is having an impact on the morale of some staff. The lack of a performance management system is a missed opportunity to recognise the good work of staff and make sure that everyone contributes to school improvement.
- Leaders have ensured a broad and balanced curriculum which enables pupils to gain a range of qualifications. However, teachers miss opportunities to find out what pupils already know and can do, so that they can adapt their plans accordingly. Moreover, teachers do not give pupils enough opportunities to develop their literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum. This is hampering pupils' progress across the school.
- Teachers try to enhance the curriculum through a range of trips, visits and visitors. However, staff report that financial constraints limit these opportunities. During the inspection a number of girls took part in the first of a series of workshops run by a mental

health charity. However, the school offers no extra-curricular activities to enhance the curriculum. This limits the range of pupils' experiences.

- Teachers try to prepare the pupils for life in modern Britain, despite the limited opportunities to take the pupils out of school. Teachers provide a few opportunities across the curriculum to prepare pupils for life outside their school and local community. Pupils appreciated a visit from pupils from a local Catholic high school. They enjoyed finding out about the other pupils' lives and views of the world. Pupils learn about some of the diverse range of people who make up communities across Britain.
- The school has strong links with the local Anglican church and synagogue. Faith leaders regularly visit the school and pupils have enjoyed visits to these places of worship. Pupils have a good understanding of Christianity and Judaism, recognising the similarities and differences with Islam.
- Pupils keep up to date with national and international news. They are able to talk knowledgeably about current affairs and consider how events may have an impact on their own lives. Pupils are encouraged to help those less fortunate than themselves, for example making up parcels for a local food bank.

## **Governance**

- Governors admit that they have not fulfilled their statutory duties. They have failed to ensure that the school meets the independent school standards.
- Governors do not have an accurate view of all key aspects of the school's performance.
- Governors do not routinely ask senior leaders for information about pupils' performance, the curriculum and the quality of teaching and learning. Moreover, they have not made sure that safeguarding is given the high priority required.
- Although governors meet regularly, their lack of curiosity has meant that they have neglected to check on the key aspects of the school's performance, drawing on a range of evidence to reassure themselves that senior leaders are fulfilling their responsibilities.
- These failures by governors to provide effective oversight and fulfil their responsibilities have contributed significantly to the school's inadequacies.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.
- Leaders have failed to carry out rigorous checks on staff to make sure that they are suitable to work with children. Leaders do not follow a robust recruitment and selection process, so that they can reassure themselves of the suitability of potential candidates.
- Leaders have not ensured that the designated safeguarding lead has completed mandatory training within the statutory timescales. Furthermore, leaders have not put in place robust systems for the reporting and recording of concerns.
- Leaders have published a safeguarding policy on the school's website. However, it does not comply with current statutory requirements. Moreover, the policy does not reflect the safeguarding practice in the school.
- The school's laxity around recording and reporting of concerns could put pupils at risk of

harm.

- Leaders do not fulfil their statutory duties when a pupil leaves the school. Leaders do not make sure that they check the information provided by parents and record the name of the new school and the date the pupil started there. In addition, leaders do not pass the required information on to the local authority.
- Teachers are aware of potential safeguarding risks to their pupils. They make sure that pupils are given the key information that they need to keep themselves safe.
- Pupils feel safe and well cared for. They are confident that teachers would deal effectively with any very rare incident of bullying. Parents who spoke to the inspector agree.

### Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

### Inadequate

- Teachers' expectations of what the pupils are capable of achieving are too low. Teachers do not spend enough time finding out what pupils already know and can do. The impact of this is particularly evident when pupils join the school in Year 7, when too much time is wasted repeating work pupils that have already done. Furthermore, there are too many missed opportunities to challenge the most able pupils and help those pupils falling behind to catch up quickly.
- The school has introduced a new marking policy. However, teachers are not applying it consistently. Although leaders carry out reviews of marking, they do not check on teachers' adherence to the policy. Pupils rarely act on any written comments and errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling go unchecked. Work in pupils' books shows the limited impact of teachers' marking in helping pupils to improve their work.
- Teachers do not plan lessons which challenge pupils and help them make rapid gains in their knowledge, skills and understanding. Teachers do not demand enough of pupils during lessons. Pupils are not routinely expected to grapple with tricky problems, find out answers for themselves and justify their thinking. There are too few chances for pupils to take responsibility for their own learning.
- Teachers are not using questioning to good effect. Too much questioning demands little in the way of making pupils think hard and provides teachers with very little information about pupils' learning.
- There are too few opportunities for pupils to develop literacy skills across the curriculum. In many lessons, pupils are required to copy information directly from the board or worksheets. Teachers do not encourage pupils to make their own notes or put information into their own words. Moreover, there is little evidence that pupils are given support to edit and redraft their writing. As a result, pupils' writing shows little noticeable improvement over time.
- Too many opportunities are missed to find out what the pupils already know prior to teaching a new topic. This is compounded by teachers' adherence to highly prescriptive curriculum plans. Teachers do not make sufficient use of their professional judgement to adapt the plans, so that pupils make stronger progress in lessons and over time.
- In mathematics, there are too few opportunities for pupils to reason and solve problems. Pupils are not secure in some of the most basic mathematical concepts. Pupils do not apply their mathematical knowledge enough in other subjects. Consequently, pupils do

not enjoy this subject as much as they could, are not willing to take risks and lack fluency when using and applying their mathematical knowledge.

- Leaders have invested in new textbooks and resources for science and mathematics, which are making a positive difference. Pupils told the inspector how much they enjoy their science lessons, particularly the opportunities to undertake practical tasks and undertake independent research. Pupils enjoy the chance to extend their scientific learning at home through online access to science materials.
- Although teachers have attended external training, the lack of leadership of teaching and learning means that this training is not followed up back at school. Teachers do not have the expert support and guidance to help them improve their skills. Leaders' checks on teaching are cursory and do not pay heed to the impact of teaching on pupils' learning. Leaders do not provide teachers with useful feedback which could help them improve their effectiveness.
- Parents appreciate the wealth of information they receive about their children's progress. They find the regular consultation meetings with teachers helpful and the annual reports comprehensive. Parents are confident that, if they had any concerns about their child's progress, the teachers would willingly make time to see them.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

## Inadequate

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is inadequate.
- Leaders' laxity with regard to safeguarding, health and safety and record-keeping potentially puts pupils, staff and visitors at risk. Leaders have not ensured that safeguarding measures are effective. Moreover, leaders have not identified any potential risks to pupils, staff and visitors, whether on the school's site or while out on trips and visits. Consequently, adequate measures to control those risks are not in place.
- Lessons do not give pupils enough opportunities to develop the skills which will be essential to their success at key stage 5. Although pupils are diligent students, they have too few opportunities to grapple with complex problems and work things out for themselves.
- Pupils enjoy their physical education lessons. They enjoy the range of different sports they take part in. However, they do not participate in any competitions or other sporting events with other schools. Pupils said that they do not take part in sports clubs and activities outside school. During the inspection, pupils took part in a workshop run by a mental health charity. This gave pupils an opportunity to explore the importance of friendship.
- Staff build excellent relationships with pupils. Pupils are confident to share any worries or concerns with their teachers. Staff have a deep understanding of the local community and the potential safeguarding risks to pupils. Teachers make sure that pupils are given the information they need to keep themselves safe. Pupils are knowledgeable about how they would seek help if they needed it.
- Teachers provide pupils with a range of information about their options when they leave school. Next year is the first year that there will be a cohort of Year 11 pupils. Teachers

have plans in place to provide pupils with independent specialist advice and guidance, as well as arranging meetings with the local college. Almost all pupils would like to continue their studies to degree level. Many have well-considered ideas for their career pathways, including speech therapy and medicine.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils' conduct is generally good throughout the day. Pupils greet their teachers, each other and visitors politely and respectfully. Pupils generally respond to their teachers instructions quickly.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school. Many of them arrive at school well before the start of the school day. They make sure that they bring the books and equipment they need for their lessons.
- Pupils are adamant that there is no bullying in the school. They report that pupils get on well with each other and any rare fallings-out are quickly and effectively dealt with by teachers.
- Most pupils have excellent attendance. The headteacher keeps a close eye on attendance. He makes sure that parents and pupils are clear about the importance of attending every lesson, every day. The headteacher makes sure that parents make a formal request if they wish to take their children on holidays in term time. He actively encourages parents to minimise the disruption to their children's learning by making trips to visit family abroad in school holidays.
- There have been no serious behaviour incidents or exclusions at the school. Teachers have worked hard to successfully eliminate 'shouting out' by pupils during lessons. Pupils are able to get on with their work without interruptions and disruptions.
- Occasionally, usually in lessons where expectations are not high enough, there is a small minority of pupils who can find it hard to comply with the school's high standards for behaviour.

## Outcomes for pupils

### Inadequate

- For too long, leaders and teachers have held the erroneous view that most pupils are working below age-related expectations when they join the school. Leaders failed to realise the serious flaws in the baseline assessment they relied on as a starting point when measuring pupil progress. As a result, although most pupils are working at or above age-related expectations at the end of key stage 2 just prior to starting at the school, most fail to reach these standards again by the end of Years 7 and 8. A few pupils are still lagging behind at Year 9.
- Targets for almost all the pupils are below the standards they reached at the end of Year 6. As a result of these low expectations, most pupils are going backwards rather than forwards in their learning.
- Leaders have not identified and addressed the variation in performance between the different year groups and subjects. This is because leaders do not compare the performance of the different groups and across the subjects. As with the other groups of



pupils, leaders have failed to identify and meet the needs of the most able pupils. Despite a number of pupils joining the school who are working well above age-related expectations, teachers do not capitalise on this strong start. Consequently, pupils, including the most able, are underperforming.

- There has not yet been a cohort who have progressed through the school and moved on to their next stage of education, employment and training. Teachers are aware of the requirements of the required syllabus for their subjects and are following it with their Year 10 classes.
- The school does not promote a love of reading in its pupils. Books are stored in cupboards rather than made readily available to pupils. Pupils are not encouraged to read for pleasure during the school day or at home. Although some pupils have visited the local library, this is not routine. These missed opportunities are hampering the development of pupils' reading fluency and comprehension as well as limiting their ideas for writing.
- Some teachers have raised the targets using their own professional judgements of the pupils. As a consequence of these raised expectations, pupils in mathematics are making better progress than in some other subjects.
- In science, pupils' performance is improving. This is because the investment in new resources is supporting pupils to work at an appropriate level and they are challenged to improve further. The subject leader is also clearly inspiring the pupils through her knowledge, skills and enthusiasm.
- Leaders are quite rightly concerned about pupils' progress in English. Although they offer additional bespoke lessons to help pupils catch up, they have failed to recognise the weaknesses in the teaching of English. Moreover, leaders have not recognised the negative impact of the lack of opportunities for pupils to refine and improve their reading and writing skills across the curriculum.

## School details

Unique reference number	141087
DfE registration number	353/6002
Inspection number	10034034

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 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	52
Number of part-time pupils	None
Proprietor	Iqra Educational and Welfare Trust
Chair	Manzoor Ahmed Shakir
Headteacher	Mohammad Farooq
Annual fees (day pupils)	£2,000
Telephone number	0161 652 8563
Website	<a href="http://www.iqrahs.org.uk">www.iqrahs.org.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:headteacher@iqrahs.org.uk">headteacher@iqrahs.org.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	29 April–1 May 2015

## Information about this school

- Iqra High School is an independent Muslim day school for pupils between 11 and 16 years. The school is owned by the Iqra Education and Welfare Trust, which is a charity. The school is non-selective. It is located in the Glodwick area of Oldham on the same site as a madrassah which is managed by the Khadija Education and Youth Centre and attended by both boys and girls. A good proportion of girls who attend the school also attend the madrassah in the evening to undertake Koranic and Islamic studies.
- The school was opened in September 2014. It is registered for 100 pupils. There are 52 girls on roll in Years 7, 8, 9 and 10. Although the school is registered for girls and boys,

no boys have attended the school yet. No pupil has an education, health and care plan or a statement of special educational needs.

- The school uses no alternative provision.
- All pupils are British and of Asian heritage.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals has not been established.
- The school offers secular and Islamic education.
- The school's vision, values and aims include: 'Iqra High School will become a centre of achievement for all pupils irrespective of their background and ethnicity. We sincerely intend to produce learners whom are confident individuals, responsible citizens and positive contributors to our own community and society at large. We will become a beacon of high quality in lifelong learning at all levels. All of our pupils will develop better understanding of Islamic faith, positive self-esteem, confidence, high aspirations and ambition to achieve their full potential.'
- This is the school's second standard inspection since its registration.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector met with the headteacher as well as other members of staff.
- The inspector also met with the proprietor and members of the governing body.
- The inspector also spoke to the local authority officer responsible for safeguarding in schools.
- There were no responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View. The inspector met with a group of three parents.
- The inspector met formally with a group of staff.
- The inspector met formally with a group of eight pupils.
- The inspector visited classrooms to observe pupils' learning and check pupils' work in books.
- The inspector looked at information about pupils' progress and attainment as well as a range of other documentation.
- The inspector conducted a review of safeguarding, including an evaluation of the school's policies and procedures to keep pupils safe, training records, recruitment checks and record-keeping.

## Inspection team

Pippa Jackson Maitland, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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