

London East Academy

46 Whitechapel Road, London, E1 1JX

Inspection dates 8–10 October 2014

Overall effectiveness	Inadequate	4
Leadership and management	Inadequate	4
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Inadequate	4
Quality of teaching	Inadequate	4
Achievement of pupils	Inadequate	4

Summary of key findings

This is an inadequate school

- Students do not make enough progress across a range of subjects in Years 7, 8 and 9.
- Results in GCSE examinations are not as high as they should be, given the students' starting points.
- Teachers do not expect enough of students. They do not mark students' work regularly enough or do enough to help them improve their work.
- The school's work to keep students safe is inadequate. Policies and procedures are not followed, including for the recruitment of staff. Not enough has been done to make sure that the building is safe for students.
- Too many students are persistently absent or frequently late to school.
- Students' behaviour is not good enough. They waste time in some lessons, and disrupt the learning of others.
- The curriculum is not broad and balanced. Students do not have enough opportunities for creative and aesthetic learning. They have insufficient understanding of how other people live, both in Britain and abroad.
- The school has declined in recent years. There is no coherent improvement plan against which the school can measure the improvements it is making. Governors do not provide challenge and support to school leaders.

The school has the following strengths

- Students are articulate; they express high expectations for their own academic achievement and future development.
- Students achieve well in computing, Islamic studies and in their knowledge of the Qur'an.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school must take action to meet schedule 1 of The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, as amended by The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements. The details are listed in the full report.

Information about this inspection

- This was an unannounced inspection, at the request of the Department for Education. As part of the inspection, inspectors were asked to look into concerns raised by a student survey completed last year.
- The inspection was conducted at the same time as the inspection of the Al-Mizan School, which shares a site with the London East Academy. The primary school inspection report has been published separately.
- The inspectors observed 15 lessons, four jointly with the executive headteacher. They met with the executive headteacher and the deputy headteacher, to discuss safeguarding procedures and action planning. They met with other staff to discuss standards and the curriculum.
- Inspectors toured the school's premises with senior leaders and the site manager. They observed lunch and playtimes and joined a special event to celebrate Eid.
- There were insufficient responses to Ofsted's survey, Parent View, to enable inspectors to draw conclusions. Inspectors considered the views gathered from the school's 2014 survey of parents. They considered 15 responses to the Ofsted staff survey.
- Inspectors held discussions with groups of students from Years 8, 9 and 10, and with all those in Year 11. They examined students' work and scrutinised school policies and records.

Inspection team

Jonathan Palk, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Gaynor Roberts

Her Majesty's Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- London East Academy is a selective Islamic secondary day school for boys between the ages of 11 and 16. The school's sixth form closed in August 2013. It is housed inside the London Muslim Centre, as is Al-Mizan School, an independent primary school for boys. The two schools are under the leadership of the same executive headteacher, who took up post in September 2014. Both schools are managed by the East London Mosque Educational Trust Limited.
- There are 150 students on roll. None are disabled or have a statement of special educational needs.
- Most students are of Bangladeshi heritage; others are of Somali, Pakistani, Indian and North African heritage. None are at an early stage of English language acquisition.
- London East Academy was opened in September 2004. Its stated aim is 'To encourage as many British born and bred young boys to aspire to become hafizes (memorisers of the Qur'an), alims (scholars) and da'yees (educators). Providing a balanced curriculum with Islamic Sciences and National Curriculum being taught at equal time weighting.'
- Inspectors were aware during this inspection that serious allegations of a child protection nature were being investigated by the appropriate authorities. While Ofsted does not have the power to investigate allegations of this kind, actions taken by the setting in response to the allegations were considered (where appropriate) alongside the other evidence available at the time of the inspection to inform inspectors' judgements.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the achievement of students in in Years 7, 8 and 9, by eradicating inadequate teaching, significantly improving the proportion of good or better teaching and providing a high-quality curriculum across a broad range of subjects.
- Make sure that all teaching is good or better by:
 - helping students develop their answers to questions so they think more deeply and teachers can assess how well they are learning
 - providing tasks that are well matched to students' individual needs so that they are more engaged with their learning
 - providing students with regular feedback on their work, making sure that it helps them understand what they need to do to improve.
- Improve students' punctuality, both at the start of the day and at the beginning of lessons.
- Improve the quality and breadth of the curriculum by:
 - providing high-quality creative and aesthetic learning opportunities
 - providing a range of rich experiences to help students acquire understanding of other faiths and cultures.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - making sure that all safeguarding policies and procedures are applied rigorously, including for staff recruitment
 - implementing a management system to ensure that all regulatory standards are met
 - setting realistic goals for the school's improvement; identifying precisely when these are to be met; recording who is responsible for implementing the action; and describing when and how the action is raising students' achievement.

■ The school must meet the following independent school standards.

- Ensure that there is a written policy on the curriculum, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work, which is implemented effectively (paragraph 2(1)).
- Ensure the curriculum gives all pupils experience in aesthetic and creative education (paragraph 2(2)(a)).
- Ensure that all pupils have the opportunity to learn and make progress (paragraph 2(2)(i)).
- Ensure that the teaching involves well-planned lessons and effective teaching methods; 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; utilises effectively classroom resources of an adequate quality, quantity and range (paragraph 3, 3(c), 3(d) and 3(f)).
- Comply with the standard about spiritual, moral, social and cultural development by ensuring that principles are actively promoted, which further tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions by enabling pupils to acquire an appreciation of and respect for other faiths and cultures (paragraph 5, 5(b), 5(b)(v)).
- 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) and 7(b)).
- Ensure that a written policy on compliance with relevant health and safety laws is effectively implemented (paragraph 11).
- Ensure that a written policy on first aid is implemented (paragraph 14).
- Ensure that school staff are deployed to ensure the proper supervision of pupils at playtimes (paragraph 15).
- Carry out appropriate checks to confirm each person's identity before starting work at the school (paragraph 19(2), 19(2)(b) and 19(2)(b)(i)).
- Ensure that suitable outdoor space is provided for pupils to play outside (paragraph 23G(1), 23G(1)(b)).

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are inadequate

- School leaders do not have an accurate view of the school's performance. Crucially, leaders have not evaluated the effectiveness of students' learning and achievement across different subjects. As a consequence, students have made inadequate progress.
- Senior leaders only have a broad idea of what needs to be done to improve the school. The priorities do not focus on improving students' achievement. There is a distinct lack of planning for the school's future development.
- The school is also lacking a well-structured staff development and training programme. Information from lesson monitoring and the tracking of students' progress is not used to identify staff training needs. However, the academy's performance management system does allow good teaching to be rewarded.
- The safeguarding of students is inadequate. Parts of the building are open to members of the public, allowing them to have unauthorised access to students and staff. Supervision at mid-morning break times is inadequate. Only one adult supervises students in parts of the school that are publically accessible.
- Members of staff do not follow risk assessments for areas of the building such as the halls. First aid boxes are too far from where they may be required and are not clearly signed. Testing of the academy's electrical equipment and circuits has not been carried out at the required times.
- The school's safeguarding and child protection policies are incomplete and are not adhered to by staff. The requirements to provide a whistle-blowing policy and clear procedures for raising complaints about the designated safeguarding lead person are not included in the school's policy. Statutory recruitment procedures are not followed thoroughly when appointing new staff. Inspectors found key pieces of information missing from some staff files, yet these members of staff are working in the school. When students have disclosed child protection matters, the correct procedures have not been followed.
- The humanities curriculum has been reviewed and, from Year 8, covers citizenship issues. The Islamic sciences curriculum states that students are taught to live by Muslim law and also respect the law of the land. Students are taught to obey the laws of British society as part of their duty to be a good citizen and associate strongly with this message.
- Nevertheless, students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is weak. Leaders say that they are committed to educating students in the values of contemporary British society. The executive headteacher has implemented a number of initiatives to remind students of their responsibilities as British citizens. He has taken the lead through a weekly programme of assembly themes around British values. However, teaching and the curriculum are not providing adequate opportunities for students to learn more about other faiths, cultures and lifestyles and the way that these contribute to contemporary British society.
- Visitors to the school support both the Islamic and secular curriculum by providing additional expertise. Visitors from local churches and local councillors help students to identify with the community in Tower Hamlets. Inspectors were told that these visitors are checked by the mosque board. No written guidance covering this process was available.
- Students' development is restricted by their lack of experiences in creative and aesthetic subjects, and in design and technology. There are insufficient resources to teach these subjects or humanities adequately. Overall, the school provides a paucity of cultural experiences for students. This also limits students' career opportunities beyond the age of 16. The library is shared with the East London Mosque; most of the books are in Arabic. Students do not use the library on a regular basis because books cannot be taken out on loan.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have failed to keep up to date with what is required in the independent school standards. They have not provided sufficient oversight of the effectiveness of policies and procedures in the academy. Governors have not done enough to ensure that the building is safe or that students are provided with suitable outdoor space for recreation during the school day.
 - Governors lack experience of education matters to adequately challenge school leaders. They have not established an effective process for checking on the school's work. Governors have relied too much on the headteacher's reports rather than establishing ways they can evaluate the school's effectiveness for themselves.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are inadequate

- Students' behaviour is inadequate. They do not respect all of their teachers equally, and signal their disaffection in a few lessons by deliberately talking when they know they should not. At times they resort to throwing things. In some other lessons they are slow to respond, often choosing to remain silent rather than participate.
- Even when they are motivated by the lesson content they are slow to settle, continuing to quietly talk to each other rather than listen to the teacher. This is also the case when they should be reciting aloud from the Qur'an. Teachers do not condone this low-level disruption and apply the school's sanctions appropriately and fairly. Nevertheless, poor behaviour continues.
- The behaviour in the confined spaces of the halls at playtime and lunchtime is poor. The boys are noisy and, when playing football, show little regard for the safety of others.
- Despite this, students say that they are keen to make good progress academically and are ambitious for their futures. They recognise that their behaviour can be unacceptable. They speak eloquently about the need to respect different lifestyles.
- Students show a mature and well-rounded approach to debating how they are living and growing up in modern democratic Britain. They channel their views through a suggestion box and by discussing matters that concern them with their form tutors. Year 11 students contribute to school improvement through an elected head prefect.
- Teachers are keen for students to widen their horizons and become active members of British society. Students are encouraged to socialise more widely through, for example, trips and visits. There are regular community sports events that bring the students into contact with those from other schools. They have a well-established alumni programme and all the students are provided with informed and independent advice on entry into further education at local colleges or sixth forms.
- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is inadequate. A significant number of regulations relating to students' welfare, health and safety are unmet. Students told inspectors they feel less safe in public areas despite supervision by teachers. Students are well aware of the dangers posed by the internet and social media. They are confident to discuss these matters with their form tutors. However, the school has not helped current students build greater resilience through engaging with other agencies working to secure students' safety, such as Prevent.
- Too many students are persistently absent or frequently late. This means that they miss some of the important personal, social and health education teaching in assemblies and tutor times. Systems for reducing lateness and absence are not having the required impact.

The quality of teaching is inadequate

- Teaching has not improved since the previous inspection. The same issues that arose then are still evident. Marking of students' work is sporadic and cursory. Teachers rarely explain to students how they can improve their work. Insufficient guidance is given about how to improve punctuation and grammar, or to explain ideas. Teachers do not correct untidy and poorly presented work.
- Learning is often inadequate in lessons because teachers do not check that students understand the work or give them opportunities to apply their learning. Teachers do not always encourage students to think deeply or for themselves. Students who are falling behind are not helped to catch up. Evidence in books shows that where students have not understood the task, they have not completed the work. This restricts students' progress.
- Some teachers are much better than others at setting work at the right level and sustaining this through a lesson. The best teaching was typified by high levels of challenge to students every step of the way.
- Teachers have little access to good-quality resources to help them plan interesting and creative lessons. They rarely use students' excellent computing skills to enrich or enhance their lessons.
- Teachers' personal subject knowledge is particularly good in the teaching of Islamic studies. Assessment and tracking of students' progress in these lessons is thorough.
- Teaching in other subjects is not nearly as strong. An over-reliance on worksheets, with the same work for all, regardless of ability or need, means that some students struggle to complete the work while others find the work too easy.

The achievement of pupils is inadequate

- Students' progress in their first three years at the academy is inadequate. The majority do not make the

progress in English, mathematics and science that they should. Very few make more-than-expected progress. By the time they start their GCSE courses in Year 10, they are significantly behind where they should be in their studies. Some ground is made up through additional classes and homework classes, which require the support of parents. However, by the time they take their GCSE examinations, standards are not as high as they should be given students' above-average starting points in Year 7.

- There has been a steady improvement in the number of GCSE passes achieved by students since the last inspection. In 2014 the proportion of students gaining five GCSEs at grade C or above, including English and mathematics, was higher than the national average. However, the proportion reaching the top grades of A and A* has not improved significantly. Standards continue to differ widely between subjects. In mathematics, science and computing, students' performance is much stronger than it is in English, humanities and Arabic.
- Students make good progress in their Islamic science lessons and religious studies. In these subjects, teachers' expectations of students are high and teaching is focused strongly on the coursework criteria.
- Students have a good range of ideas and their spoken language skills are good. Their writing is often expressive but is let down by weak grammar, spelling and punctuation. Written work in subjects other than English is not well developed and this contributes to weaker performance in humanities.
- Lack of opportunities and experiences in aesthetic and creative subjects means that students underachieve in this curriculum area.

What inspection judgements mean

School	
Grade	Judgement
Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Requires improvement
Grade 4	Inadequate

Detailed grade characteristics can be viewed in the *Non-association independent school inspection handbook* which is published on the Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/140053.

School details

Unique reference number	134810
Inspection number	442970
DfE registration number	211/6394

This inspection was carried out under section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as inserted by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005, 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	Islamic faith school
School status	Independent day school
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Boys
Number of pupils on the school roll	150
Proprietor	East London Mosque Educational Trust Limited
Chair	Muhammad Habibur Rahman
Headteacher	Ziaur Rahman
Date of previous school inspection	March 2011
Annual fees (day pupils)	£3,300
Telephone number	020 7650 3070
Email address	admin@leacademy.com

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