



Tayyibah Girls' School

Inspection report

This inspection was carried out under section 162 (A) of the Education Act 2002 as amended. Bridge Schools Inspectorate (BSI) has been approved by the Secretary of State in the Department for Education (DfE) to undertake inspections in designated independent schools within membership of the Christian Schools Trust (CST) or the Association of Muslim Schools UK (AMSUK).

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| DfE number: | 204/6388 |
| Association: | AMSUK |
| Date of inspection: | 17 th -20 th March 2014 |
| Lead Inspector: | Mrs E McAndrew |
| Team inspectors: | Mrs M Kazmi Miss F Norcross |
| Age range of pupils: | 5-18 years |
| Number on roll: | 220 |
| Full-time: | 220 girls |
| Number of pupils with a statement of special educational need: | None |
| Proprietor: | Tayyibah Educational Trust |
| Head teacher: | Mrs N B Qureshi |
| Address of school: | 88 Filey Avenue London N16 6JJ |
| Telephone number: | 0208 8800085 |
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The purpose and scope of the inspection

The main purpose of the inspection is twofold. It is to advise the DfE whether the school continues to meet the requirements for registration, and to determine whether the school's religious ethos continues to meet the expectations of its association. Ofsted monitors the work of independent inspectorates, including a sample of inspections, and you can find the latest evaluation of the work of The Bridge Schools Inspectorate on the Ofsted website.

Information about the school

Tayyibah School is an independent Muslim day school for girls aged five to eighteen. The school is affiliated to the Association of Muslim Schools whose aims it supports. It is situated in the London Borough of Hackney and was established in 1992. All the pupils are girls from practising Muslim families and many travel considerable distances to attend the school. All the pupils speak English as their first language and no pupil has a statement of special educational needs. The school aims 'to provide a broad and balanced education and educate pupils according to the Qur'an and the *sunnah*' (the example of the Prophet Muhammad).

The school was last inspected by Ofsted in December 2010.

Evaluation of the school

Tayyibah Girls' School succeeds in creating a learning community where pupils develop the attitudes and values inspired by their Islamic beliefs and heritage. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social development is outstanding and cultural development is good. The curriculum is good with significant strengths and has improved since the last inspection. Teaching is good overall and some is outstanding. As a result, pupils of all abilities make good and sometimes very good progress. Assessment is good and used effectively to plan pupils' learning. Marking, however, is inconsistent across the school. Pupils' behaviour is outstanding: they are friendly, open, lively and considerate of one another. The school's policies and practice to support the safeguarding of pupils is good. All aspects of provision for welfare, health and safety are good. Pupils say they love coming to school. They feel safe, valued as individuals and believe their teachers care about them and work hard for them to succeed. Parents are clearly appreciative of the school and of the education it provides for their children. The school meets all but one of the regulations.

The school has made significant improvement in several aspects of its provision since the last inspection.

Quality of education provided

The quality of the curriculum from Key Stage 1 through to Key Stage 4 is good, providing an effective framework for pupils of all abilities to learn effectively and make good and sometimes very good progress. At Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils study all subjects of the National Curriculum except music and design and technology, as well as the Qur'an, Arabic and personal, social, and health education (PSHE). From Years 2 to 6, Islamic studies, Turkish and Urdu extend the pupils' learning

experience. In Key Stage 3 provision broadens with the inclusion of three separate sciences and a well-developed course in Islam and Citizenship. This programme of study contributes significantly to pupils' growing knowledge and understanding of their religious heritage and observance, while developing their increasing awareness of their responsibilities as citizens. Since the last inspection the school has extended the provision adding art from Key Stage 1 to the end of Key Stage 3 and physical education (PE) to the end of Key stage 4. Pupils in the sixth form benefit from lessons in Pilates (a physical fitness system). The lack of provision for art limits the scope to develop pupils' artistic experience beyond Key Stage 3.

A significant element of curricular breadth is added through the strong provision of modern foreign languages. From Year 1 pupils begin to learn Arabic and from Year 2 they study Urdu or Turkish. This creates a learning environment where pupils expect to become competent speakers, readers and writers of one and for many two, additional languages and their examination results testify to their success.

The curriculum is assiduously and methodically planned across all the key stages. The good quality planning takes close account of the programmes of study of the National Curriculum and of the levels of attainment pupils are expected to attain nationally. The schemes of work benefit from having been devised by the specialist heads of department from Key Stage 1 through to Key Stage 3, helping to ensure a progressive learning experience for pupils. In the primary classes, the curriculum map clearly sets out what will be taught in each subject across the year. This usefully helps to identify links between learning in different subjects and clarifies the amount of time allocated to each area of learning across the year. At Key Stage 3 the medium term planning is similarly informative and systematic, setting out which units of work or topics in a subject will be taught in each term or half-termly period. The format for the schemes of work varies a little between subjects in the level of detail and the information specified, but all are suitable for their purpose and of a good quality. At Key Stage 4 the curriculum planning is effectively guided by the requirements of the GCSE syllabuses.

This small school manages to preserve a broad curriculum at Key Stage 4 and pupils are usually expected to take up to ten subjects including the core subjects at GCSE. However, there is little individual choice because numbers in each cohort are small. Despite the constraints, pupils achieve very well with results which regularly exceed those achieved nationally. Thus the pupils are well placed to take decisions about the next stage of their education.

In the sixth form, small cohort numbers and the limited space directly affects the possibilities for provision. The school is able to offer up to ten subjects at 'A' level but staffing and timetabling preclude certain combinations and not all the subjects offered are those which a given cohort of pupils would choose. Nevertheless, the school responds flexibly, offering 'A' level courses when enough pupils make that viable. Where it is not possible, pupils are guided in transferring to other schools and colleges in preparation for higher education, the destination of the great majority of pupils.

The good quality of careers education has been maintained and enhanced since the last inspection. Pupils have regular advice and guidance from the careers officer

and some opportunities to explore different aspects of employment with visiting speakers. Worthwhile and relevant work experience is undertaken in Years 10, 11 or 12. In discussions with inspectors, pupils were confident and articulate in discussing the next stage of their education and spoke knowledgeably and interestingly about their perspective on the world of higher education and training. The school has been swift to take the initiative and has recently introduced the 'Young Doctor's Programme' for pupils in Year 12. Pupils have visited Oxford University for an 'Aspiration Day' and taken part in an outreach programme at University College London and other universities, encouraging them to set their expectations high. Interestingly, the outreach programme from Oxford University included a programme designed specifically for all pupils from Key Stage 1 upwards, introducing pupils early to the idea of higher education. Pupils in Year 11 have enrolled in the National Careers Service programme to increase their skills and capabilities in relation to university entrance and are keenly anticipating this new experience.

Visits out of school enhance and extend the curriculum adding the immediacy of first hand-learning experiences. Through these visits pupils have opportunities to explore and investigate, adding significantly to quality and breadth of their learning. The school takes advantage of its situation close to the wide range of museums, galleries, scientific and environmental exhibitions and activities which London provides. A number of good quality visits are planned every year but a significant number of parents expressed the view that they wish this aspect of provision to be increased. Inspectors discussed this issue and took the view that some classes have more opportunities for educational visits than others. It would be reasonable to expect that all classes have regular educational visits to support and enrich their learning.

The quality of teaching is good overall and a significant proportion is outstanding. Assessment is systematic, thorough and of a good quality. As a result all pupils acquire new knowledge, increase their understanding and make good and sometimes very good progress according to their ability. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection.

Teaching in the primary classes is good and benefits from schemes of work which cover all subjects and are effectively planned and supported by subject specialists. Primary teachers rightly place a strong emphasis on the teaching of literacy and numeracy and as a consequence, pupils make good progress in these key areas of learning. This provides an effective foundation for later learning. Teachers in the secondary school are mainly subject specialists with good and often very good subject knowledge, and the skill and enthusiasm to engender effective learning. Lesson planning is generally effective in all key stages though the quality and level of detail varies from excellent to satisfactory. Teachers consistently make productive use of the schemes of work and good assessment information to plan work at a level appropriate for the ages and abilities of pupils in each class. Lessons are well structured. They include appropriate learning objectives and careful thought about activities and tasks to achieve these objectives, including for those pupils with learning difficulties. Support for pupils with learning difficulty in lessons was unobtrusive, flexible and highly effective. Individual education plans (IEPs) are written for pupils with special needs throughout the school, with manageable targets

which are regularly reviewed. Pupils of high ability are also identified. In some lessons work is differentiated such that tasks are sometimes set at a more challenging level, but little evidence was seen of these pupils having opportunities to pursue some area of specific interest to a high level.

Teachers across the school have generally high expectations which they communicate to the pupils so they are clear about what is expected of them. Very good relationships between adults and pupils and pupils themselves contribute to the productive learning atmosphere in lessons. Pupils are highly motivated; enthusiastic, able to concentrate for extended periods and work hard at the tasks they are given. Good teaching encourages and contributes to pupils' outstanding behaviour and in consequence lessons have a brisk pace and progress is rapid.

Many lessons ensure opportunities for pupils to work collaboratively and individually, exploring ideas and developing oral and thinking skills, as well as the capacity to work independently. Nonetheless, in some lessons the lack of practical investigation and consolidation limits the learning opportunities for pupils.

Teachers provide clear explanations and instructions and some questioning is of a high quality, encouraging pupils to think carefully and deepen their knowledge and understanding. Many teachers are also skilled in using time when pupils are working on tasks profitably, to support individuals and to explore the thinking of pupils working independently or in small groups. In all key stages, lessons are well organised to make good use of time. The excellent attitudes and behaviour of all pupils help to ensure that no time is lost managing distracting conduct.

Assessment procedures and practice are well established and of good quality. The school has a secure framework to assess pupils' performance and this is undertaken regularly and methodically. The clear marking policy sets out the purposes, types and expectation for the marking of pupils' work but it is not consistently applied. In the best examples, teachers draw pupils' attention to what they have done well and identify for them what they need to do to improve further. This pattern is evident in some cases in the primary classes and continues into the secondary school but with inconsistencies in marking within and between different subjects. Where marking is of a high quality, it is up-to-date, detailed and clearly subject related. In the best practice throughout the school, marking and correction are accompanied by helpful comments and relevant observations, alongside the setting of perceptive targets for pupils to pursue in improving their learning.

At all key stages pupils' attainment and progress are assessed through half-termly tests in all subjects in relation to the levels of attainment in the National Curriculum. In addition, tests are set in some subjects at the end of units and topics in order to assess progress and attainment and to identify areas for improvement. This information is used to set targets to develop pupils' awareness of their abilities and needs, and how they can focus their attention to make progress. In discussion with inspectors, pupils said they understood the purpose of setting targets and found they were very effective in helping them to improve their work. In all key stages there are good examples of assessment in lessons with constructive and purposeful feedback to pupils. Peer assessment is increasingly part of pupils' learning experience and good examples of informed and mature assessment were seen with older pupils.

The school usefully carries out the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's Optional Tests in literacy and numeracy, contributing to teachers' knowledge of how pupils' attainment and progress compare with that of pupils nationally.

The pattern of regular formal assessment helps to ensure that pupils' progress is monitored effectively in relation to the National Curriculum levels of attainment in all subjects up to Key Stage 3 and in relation to the GCSE grades at Key Stage 4. In the sixth form pupils' work is effectively assessed in relation to examination grades. All data from assessment is entered on the school's tracking system. This most useful system enables teachers to track precisely the attainment and progress of an individual or group in each subject over time, and to compare their performance with that of pupils of the same age nationally.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

The pupils' spiritual, social, moral level is outstanding, and cultural development is good. The beliefs and values of Islam are central to all that the school undertakes and influences all its provision. Pupils acquire self-respect and self-esteem through reflection on their individual spiritual development and on their Islamic characters. They are encouraged to explore their own beliefs and those of others through the school's Islamic ethos, values and teaching. Pupils have good opportunities to strengthen their faith through the daily recitation of the Qur'an and increasing understanding of *hadith* (sayings or actions of the Prophet Muhammad) and *sunnah* (the example of the Prophet Muhammad). The pupils have a growing sense of spiritual belonging, reinforced through worship at prayer times, the regular recitation of *duas* (supplications) and the *adhaan* (call to worship) being played throughout the school at prayer time. Productive links are made with Catholic and Jewish schools, to widen pupils' perceptions and deepen their understanding of others' beliefs. Recently, in the interfaith forum, ideas about holy journeys were discussed by the schools, with Tayyibah pupils talking about the Islamic journey of a lifetime, Hajj.

The moral development of pupils is underpinned by Islamic beliefs and values and standards of moral conduct. Pupils grow in mutual respect for each other; the adults around them and visitors to the school. Speaking to inspectors, pupils identified the school as being a place where 'We are all sisters who care for each other'. They have an increasingly clear understanding of right and wrong and a growing awareness of the importance of the law for the citizens of the country. Pupils have a clear idea about British institutions, reinforced by invited guest speakers from institutions such as the Metropolitan Police Force and the Fire Brigade.

Pupils' excellent social development means they are able to work easily in groups whether this is collaborating in classroom learning or working together on larger projects in school or for the community. Pupils are able to take a lead in their own learning in Islamic and Citizenship lessons considering the social issues affecting not only their own communities but worldwide communities. Pupils have an increasing sense of modern day British society, extended by their experience within the school council. The work of the council gives them first-hand opportunities to see democracy in action as they seek, and then discuss the ideas of their peers and come to conclusions about future action. This allows all views to be heard in a coherent and systematic way. The pupils are involved in an Eco group where all

classes have recycling as an activity, helping to maintain a litter free school and playground. Strong links have been forged with other schools to create a social network link, discussing social issues and broadening the pupils' understanding of matters affecting their particular faith schools.

The pupils have a clear sense of their Muslim identity and of the community of which they are members. They have taken a keen interest in the welfare of elderly Muslim people living in a nearby home and are considering ways to raise funds in their support. They have Cake Bake days to raise funds for the school and have successfully raised funds for both local and foreign charities. Parents attend the end of term school play to allow pupils to share their achievement with family and the community. Pupils and staff come from a diverse range of backgrounds and this is celebrated as pupils appreciate the different cultures within their school and beyond. The recent Food Week encouraged them to share their national food and enjoy culinary diversity and difference. Within lessons pupils are taught about the different elements of a culture and how it complies with the teachings of the *sunnah* 'Love thy neighbour'. Opportunities in the curriculum are planned to help ensure pupils develop a growing knowledge of other communities within the neighbourhood of their school and in the wider world. Well-planned visits contribute effectively to pupils' everyday experience of the diverse culture of contemporary Britain.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The provision for the welfare, health and safety of pupils is good. The school ensures that the policies and procedures related to all aspects of safeguarding are thorough and reviewed regularly. The child protection officers have recently undertaken 'Training for Safeguarding Leads' with the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Board. The pupils said in conversation with inspectors that they feel safe in school; there is no bullying and if concerns were to arise, they feel sure that their teachers would address them promptly.

The school has appropriate measures in place to help them deal with fire and accidents and all fire-fighting equipment is regularly and appropriately serviced. Regular fire drills are conducted. Fire marshals have received training and several members of staff have completed training in first aid. Risk assessments are carried out as necessary and are thorough. Annual and weekly checks of equipment are carried out and recorded. The school has effective routines in place for safety in lessons and on visits out of school, all of which contribute to the pupils' safety and well-being. The school monitors attendance well. The pupils' attendance is good.

Pupils develop a good awareness of healthy lifestyles through lessons in PSHE, science and Islamic studies. They learn about the importance of healthy eating and the dangers to health from smoking and the misuse of drugs. Pupils are actively encouraged to eat healthily at both break and lunch times. Much work has been done to develop the pupils' fitness through their PE lessons, and walking to school continues to be popular for the pupils who live locally.

Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

The school has clear and robust procedures for staff recruitment and for checking on all governors, staff and volunteers. The single central register complies with all regulations.

Premises of and accommodation at schools

The school's premises and accommodation are suitable for their purpose. In recent years the school has expanded its premises with the addition of a hall, new classrooms and a purpose-built science laboratory. This has significantly improved the learning environment. A part of this extension includes individual changing rooms for the pupils, but there are no showers for secondary aged pupils. Detailed plans are in place to extend the building further and active consideration is being given to the inclusion of showers. The school has developed its outside area, with good quality surfacing to provide recreational space and opportunity for outdoor PE and games. The premises are maintained efficiently, although the decoration in the washrooms in the older part of the building needs some attention.

Provision of information

The range and quality of information given to parents is good. The school has a KSM (Koshi School Management) site, which is an information technology platform for parents to access information provided by the school. Each parent is issued with a unique user name and password and may then access general information and data concerning their child's progress. All the policies that support the school's provision are available to parents through this site. The KSM site was reviewed very recently to ensure that all the information required by regulations to be made available to parents was included in its most up-to-date form. The school has a detailed prospectus for the sixth form and intends to re-design its general prospectus which is out-of-date. The information to parents includes a pupil and parent contract with the school, helping to ensure parents understand, appreciate and support the high expectations of the school.

Parents are regularly informed about all aspects of their daughters' progress and attainment and they receive a written termly report. Reports are of a good quality giving parents a clear indication of the pupils' strengths and areas for improvement in each subject.

Manner in which complaints are to be handled

The school's policy for complaints meets the requirements. In the last year there have been three complaints, none of which were referred to a panel and all of which were dealt with in accordance with the school's policy.

Compliance with the regulations

In order to meet fully the regulations in **part 5**, premises of and accommodation at schools, the school must:

- provide shower facilities for pupils aged eleven years or over at the start of the school year who receive physical education (Regulation 23A (1)).

The school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010.

Meeting the expectations of AMSUK

The school's religious ethos continues to meet the expectations of AMSUK.

What the school could do to improve further

As part of future development the school might wish to consider:

- ensuring that the marking policy is effectively implemented in all key stages
- extending opportunities for practical work, and
- providing regular visits for pupils in all classes to extend and enhance their learning.