



# Tayyibah Girls' School

Independent School

Inspection report

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**Better  
education  
and care**

DfES Registration Number      204/6388  
Unique Reference Number      100300  
Inspection number              296879  
Inspection dates                8-9 March 2007  
Reporting inspector              Mrs Michèle Messaoudi

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 162A of the Education Act 2002 (as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005).

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Age group 4-18	Published 2 April 2007	Reference no. 296879
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## Purpose and scope of the inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005, in order to advise the Secretary of State for Education and Skills about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

## Information about the school

Tayyibah Girls' School is an independent school providing full-time education to Muslim girls aged four to eighteen years that was set up in 1992. It has expanded over the years and now serves the diverse Muslim community of Greater London. There are 272 pupils of Albanian, Bangladeshi, English, Indian, North African, Pakistani, Somali, Turkish heritages. The majority of pupils are at advanced stages of learning English as an additional language. There are no pupils with a statement of special educational need. The school's stated mission is to provide education in a safe and orderly Islamic environment centred on promoting good moral character, self-respect, self-discipline and good manners. It aims to *'provide a broad and balanced education... and educate pupils according to the Qur'an and the Sunnah (the example of Prophet Muhammad).'* The school was last inspected in June 2001.

## Evaluation of the school

Tayyibah Girls' School provides its pupils with a good education in the secondary school and the sixth form, and with a satisfactory education in the primary school. Pupils make good progress over time and achieve highly by the end of Year 11. This owes much to the dedication of the headteacher and staff who strive to help pupils achieve their potential despite limited resources. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral development is good, as reflected in pupils' outstanding behaviour and attitude to learning. The school complies with most of the regulations.

## Quality of education

The curriculum is satisfactory overall. From Year 1, the curriculum is broad and deliberately academic, with a strong emphasis on English to secure a sound basis for other subjects. Reading, speaking and listening skills are well promoted. However, the curriculum is not well balanced as pupils have limited experience in the aesthetic and creative areas of learning. The school provides these mainly through *tajweed* (melodic style of Qur'anic recitation) and English literature. In the primary classes, creative writing is under-developed and pupils have very few opportunities to make things. Both parents and secondary pupils have noted the absence of art and design. The provision for physical education

(PE) has weaknesses owing mainly to lack of expertise and limited time allocation. There are just enough resources to support most subjects, but resources are insufficient for practical science, information and communication technology (ICT) and PE. Lessons in ICT have been disrupted by technical problems, and pupils have had no access to computers for their work for several months. Pupils take the national tests in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 2 and of Year 9. Despite limited resources, pupils have the opportunity to study ten subjects including Arabic, Turkish or Urdu, and religious education/Islamic studies, examined at the level of the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE). In the sixth form, they can choose between biology, chemistry, mathematics, sociology, English, Arabic, Turkish and Urdu. The programme of personal, health and social education is taught mainly through Islamic studies, science and assemblies and reflects the ethos of the school. Careers education is satisfactory and the school has practical plans to develop it further. However, not all pupils feel well prepared for the next stage of their education or starting their working lives. There are no planned opportunities for pupils to fulfil responsibilities commensurate with their age as they move up the school.

Teaching and assessment are good in the secondary school and in the sixth form, and satisfactory in the primary school. There has been a slight improvement since the last inspection. However, there are some weaknesses in Key Stages 1 and 2. Teachers know their pupils well and have established excellent relationships. Consequently, pupils feel at ease to contribute and ask further questions to clarify their understanding. In the best lessons, teachers advance learning through probing questioning that makes pupils think and through providing challenging tasks that stretch them. In less successful lessons, the teaching relies too much on textbooks, which slows pupils' progress as it does not engage them actively in their learning. Throughout the school, pupils are taught by specialist teachers who have good subject knowledge, which enables pupils to achieve highly in their GCSE examinations in all subjects, and in most subjects at Advanced level. However, some teachers are insufficiently aware of the aptitudes, needs and prior attainments of Key Stage 1 and 2 pupils and therefore do not always plan activities that match pupils' needs closely. In some of these lessons, the learning objectives are not clearly identified and the methods used do not suit these young pupils' learning styles. Also, there is no whole school strategy to teach handwriting. There is a good range of assessments to test pupils' learning in most subjects. However, the range of tests used in Key Stage 1 is too limited to inform the planning of future work. The assessment framework is well structured from Year 7 to the sixth form. Marking is generally regular and conscientious, although there is no agreement on correcting spelling. There are examples of best practice, where teachers make constructive comments showing pupils how to improve. The system in place to monitor individual pupils' progress is not sufficiently rigorous to chart their progress since they joined the school, although it enables the

school to identify those who need support. The quality of support provided varies as it is not informed by training for the staff involved.

As there are some weaknesses in the curriculum and teaching in Key Stages 1 and 2, these pupils make satisfactory rather than good progress, as evidenced by their satisfactory achievement in the Key Stage 2 national tests. As they move up the school and they experience a curriculum and a quality and style of teaching better suited to their needs, they progress at a faster rate, which results in good outcomes. The GCSE results of the last five years show that the school has performed consistently highly in all subjects. Pupils who learn English as an additional language achieve as well as their peers. The Advanced level results also indicate good pupil performance.

### Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils

The good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is reflected in the pupils' outstanding behaviour and excellent attitude to learning. They are hard-working, polite, considerate and friendly. The spiritual and moral strands are very well promoted through daily assemblies to which pupils have the opportunity to contribute and through the excellent relationship they enjoy with most teachers. The acquisition of good basic skills and good preparation before examinations and university interviews contribute positively to their future economic well-being. When asked what they like best about their school, they unreservedly answer: '*the teachers and the teaching.*' The majority of pupils enjoy their education and attendance and punctuality are good. However, there is a perception among some of the pupils and parents that not all staff treat pupils fairly and with respect.

Pupils show initiative when given the opportunity, as they demonstrated by organising a successful fund-raising dinner for a national charity. However, the majority of them think that are not encouraged to use their initiative, to do things for themselves and to take on responsibilities. Over half of them feel that the school does not listen to their views and they are not encouraged to suggest ways of improving. There is no citizenship programme in place to prepare them for their roles as responsible citizens. '*The school is not opened to the outside world,*' said an older pupil. The curriculum makes sound contributions to preparing pupils for life in a multicultural society, mainly through history and Islamic studies that includes the comparative study of major world religions with Islam in Key Stages 3 and 4. However, over half of pupils and parents note that pupils' cultural and social development is enriched by few educational visits and no extra-curricular activities.

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## Welfare, health and safety of the pupils

Provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety is satisfactory. Consequently, the vast majority of pupils feel safe. There are suitable procedures in place aiming at minimising the risks incurred by all during the school day in most circumstances. However, no risk assessments were carried out prior to the annual school outings. Although staff are generally aware of health and safety issues, the school has not updated its risk assessment since the completion of the extension works. Furthermore, the school has yet to demonstrate that it has a satisfactory level of fire safety as evidenced by an updated fire risk assessment, a recent report from the fire authorities and a continuous record of appropriate checks.

The school has a zero tolerance of non-compliance with school rules and instances of bullying and misdemeanours are rare. However, in focusing on punishment rather than the positive promotion of good behaviour, the school misses opportunities to develop pupils' self-discipline and self-esteem. Owing to the absence of lockers, over a third of pupils feel that their property is not secure in school. Although pupils are aware of healthy eating and living, many think that it is not sufficiently well promoted in school, and inspectors agree with this view. A high proportion of pupils and parents highlight that opportunities for physical exercise are limited. The school fulfils its obligations under the Disability Discrimination Act 2002 and will draw up a plan to review the possibility of further improving access to the premises.

## Suitability of the proprietor and staff

The school has recently updated its recruitment procedure to comply with the regulations. All the checks that must be carried out prior to confirming the appointment of staff are made, except that the school has not always obtained two suitable written references for staff. The school has already addressed the issue.

## School's premises and accommodation

The school has recently been extended to provide more classrooms and specialist accommodation. However, most classrooms have reached full capacity and some are overcrowded. In one case, health and safety are compromised as it is impossible to move through the room. There is suitable provision for safe, outdoor play.

## Provision of information for parents, carers and others

The school has recently updated its prospectus to provide accurate information. Parents meet teachers twice a year to review their daughters' progress. They

feel well informed through termly interim reports and a comprehensive annual report. However, some teachers' comments are not specific about skills and knowledge relevant to the subject taught. Parents note that it is not always easy to communicate with the school and a significant minority of them do not feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions, suggestions or a problem.

## Procedures for handling complaints

The school has recently updated its complaints procedures to comply with all the regulations. Not all parents are aware of these procedures and the school is addressing this issue.

## Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school meets all of the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 as amended January 2005, with the exception of those listed below.

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of the curriculum (standard 1) and must:

- give pupils adequate preparation for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life (paragraph 1(2)(j))
- ensure that lessons are well planned and that effective teaching methods and suitable activities are used in every key stage, particularly in Key Stages 1 and 2 (paragraph 1(3)(c))
- ensure that teachers show a good understanding of the aptitudes, needs and prior attainments of the pupils in the primary school and that these are taken into account in the planning of lessons (paragraph 1(3)(d))
- ensure that classroom resources of an adequate quality, quantity and range and are they used effectively, particularly for practical science, PE and ICT (paragraph 1(3)(f)).

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (standard 2) and must:

- provide pupils with a broad general knowledge of public institutions and services in England (paragraph 2(d)).

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety (standard 3) and must:

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- implement fully its written policy relating to the health and safety of pupils on activities outside the school, with particular reference to carrying out appropriate risk assessments (paragraph 3(2)(c))
  - carry out a health and safety risk assessment for the whole site and ensure that regular checks are made (paragraph 3(4))
  - demonstrate that it has a satisfactory level of fire safety (paragraph 3(5)).

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of suitability of proprietor and staff (standard 4) and must:

- prior to the confirmation of the appointment of all staff, ensure that two written references are obtained (paragraph 4(c)).

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of the premises and accommodation (standard 5) and must:

- ensure that classrooms are not overcrowded and that health and safety is not compromised by restricted movement in some rooms (paragraph 5(j)).

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## School details

Name of school	Tayyibah Girls' School
DfES number	204/6388
Unique reference number	100300
Type of school	Day Muslim school
Status	Independent
Date school opened	September 1992
Age range of pupils	4-18 years
Gender of pupils	Girls
Number on roll	272
Annual fees	£1,620
Address of school	Tayyibah Girls' School 88 Filey Avenue Stamford Hill London N16 6JJ
Telephone number	0208 8800085
Fax number	0207 2491767
Email address	tayyibahschool@hotmail.com
Headteacher	Mrs Nahida Qureshi
Proprietor	Mr Mohammed Saeed Dana
Reporting inspector	Mrs Michèle Messaoudi
Dates of inspection	8-9 March 2007