

Suffah Primary School

First Floor, Hounslow Jamia Masjid, 367 Wellington Road South, Hounslow, Middlesex TW4 5HU

Inspection dates

9–11 January 2018

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders have not ensured that pupils make consistently strong progress in subjects other than reading and mathematics.
- Pupils' progress in writing in all subjects is too variable. Teachers do not provide them with enough opportunities to improve their writing skills in longer pieces of work.
- Provision in early years requires improvement because leaders have not ensured that children make consistently strong progress.
- Pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare require improvement overall because pupils do not attend school regularly enough.
- Teachers do not always set work at the correct level, particularly for the most able pupils. Some pupils are over reliant on adults to support their learning.
- The new systems for the robust monitoring of pupils' performance and the quality of teaching are not yet fully established.

The school has the following strengths

- Leaders and governors have ensured that all the independent school standards are met.
- The new headteacher has introduced effective systems to monitor the school's performance.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development has a high priority in the school and is strong.
- The quality of teaching is improving due to effective staff induction and training. Pupils achieve well in reading and mathematics.
- Safeguarding is effective. Staff receive regular training to ensure that they are up to date with the latest guidance. Pupils reported that they feel safe in the school.
- Pupils conduct themselves well and have positive attitudes to learning. They have a good understanding of how people from different backgrounds contribute to life in modern Britain.
- Governors are increasingly confident in holding leaders to account for the school's work.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve leadership and management so that pupils make consistently strong progress by ensuring that:
 - the school’s assessment system contains a broad enough range of information to enable leaders, staff and governors to check accurately pupils’ progress across all subjects and year groups, including in early years
 - there is robust monitoring of the quality of teaching and pupils’ progress
 - parents and carers understand the importance of regular attendance so that pupils’ attendance is in line with national expectations for primary schools.
- Improve the quality of teaching and build on recent improvements in pupils’ outcomes, including children in early years, by ensuring that teachers:
 - take fully into account information on pupils’ attainment when planning lessons
 - set work at the correct level so that pupils achieve as well as they can, particularly the most able
 - provide more opportunities for pupils to practise and improve their writing skills in longer pieces of work, in different subjects
 - help pupils to become less reliant on adults to support their learning.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- In the past year, there have been many changes of staff, including changes of headteacher and early years leaders. While new staff bring with them high expectations, leaders have not ensured that the quality of teaching is consistently good. As a result, pupils do not make strong progress across all subjects.
- The headteacher has recently introduced a system to monitor pupils' progress centrally, in both their academic learning and personal development. Currently, the system provides detailed information and analysis about how well pupils are achieving in English and mathematics and in their personal and social development. Teachers use information effectively to identify weaknesses and improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in those subject areas. However, this is not the case in other curriculum subjects. Consequently, leaders and staff do not have the information they need to check that teaching and the curriculum are having a positive impact on pupils' outcomes in subjects such as science, the humanities and the arts.
- Although improving, the quality of teaching is variable. In part, this is because systems for holding teachers to account are in their infancy. Leaders are taking effective steps to check teachers' performance through the recently introduced performance management system. Alongside this, staff benefit from well-planned guidance to help them develop their teaching skills. Weekly training sessions enable staff to share ideas and develop their practice. For example, they are becoming more confident in assessing pupils' progress in subjects other than English, mathematics and personal development. Staff spoke positively about their induction, the weekly staff training sessions and how the school had supported them in their development and in studying for additional qualifications. Nevertheless, these changes are fairly new and it is therefore too soon to determine whether they will secure greater consistency in the quality of teaching.
- The school is currently operating above its agreed registration with the Department for Education, for the number of pupils on roll.
- The curriculum enables pupils to develop their reading, mathematical and speaking and listening skills across a variety of interesting topics. However, in writing, pupils do not make as much progress as they could. This is because teachers do not expect pupils to routinely apply their writing skills when recording their learning in other subjects.
- Outings to places of interest, after-school clubs and the annual residential visit to Kent provide opportunities for pupils to develop their self-confidence and social skills. These activities prepare pupils well for the next stage of their education.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is effective, and is carefully woven throughout the curriculum. They enjoy celebrating festivals from different world religions. They have many opportunities to reflect and have a good understanding of how people from different cultures and backgrounds contribute to life in modern Britain. For example, during an inspiring assembly on neighbours, pupils demonstrated a good appreciation and understanding of people whose characteristics and lifestyles are different from their own.

- Almost all parents who responded to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, would recommend the school to another parent.
- The headteacher and governors have ensured that all the independent school standards are met, including those relating to safeguarding and child protection.
- The new headteacher has a firm grasp of what needs to be done to ensure that the school provides pupils with a good standard of education. Expectations for what pupils can achieve have been raised. Plans for improvement focus on the areas in need of most attention and include clear success criteria.

Governance

- Governors are increasingly confident in challenging senior leaders and holding them to account. However, they acknowledge that they need to ask for more information regarding pupils' progress across a range of subjects.
- Governors make regular visits to classrooms to monitor the work of the school. They report their findings informally to leaders and fellow governors. This ensures that they have an increasingly accurate view of the school's performance. However, these visits are not formally documented, and the minutes of governing body meetings do not always capture fully the detail of their discussions. Governors are aware of this issue, and steps are being taken to address it.
- Governors have ensured that well-considered arrangements are in place for the appraisal of the headteacher, and have a good understanding of the process of setting targets for staff.
- The school's finances are carefully monitored through rigorous internal and external checks to ensure that value for money is achieved. Governors have provided additional funding for a computer package to monitor pupils' performance, to purchase classroom resources and for staff training.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- There is a strong culture of safeguarding and vigilance in the school. All staff have completed the required safeguarding training. Leaders have liaised closely with the local authority's 'Prevent' duty team. This is to ensure that staff are up to date with the latest guidance to help them identify children who might be at risk of radicalisation. For example, staff have learned how to identify extremist traits and are now even more alert in spotting unusual behaviour. In discussion, they displayed a good understanding of the issues to consider in trying to prevent pupils from being drawn into extremism.
- The school's safeguarding policy reflects the Secretary of State's latest statutory guidance. It is published on the school's website, alongside all other required policies and information. All staff understand the importance of their role in safeguarding pupils, including the provision of early help and promoting safety online.
- Parents who responded to Parent View feel that the school keeps their children safe. Staff work effectively with external agencies to provide support for pupils and their families.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teaching, learning and assessment are variable and require improvement.
- Teachers do not have all the information about pupils' progress in subjects other than in reading and mathematics, and, therefore, work is not always set at the correct level. This means that pupils, particularly the most able, do not make good progress across all areas of their learning.
- Pupils are not provided with enough opportunities to practise their writing and use interesting vocabulary in longer pieces of work. This is particularly the case in a range of subjects, including history, religious education and science work. As a result, the quality of their writing is not sufficiently well developed for their ages and abilities.
- Teaching is stronger in reading and mathematics because teachers provide suitably challenging activities that ensure pupils achieve well in most year groups. Teachers' questioning is effective in helping pupils to explore their ideas and apply their skills and knowledge.
- Pupils are given a range of opportunities to develop their mathematical ideas and apply them to different situations. They respond well to these practical approaches, which help them to deepen their understanding of mathematical concepts.
- Pupils feel well cared for because staff provide positive role models and strong pastoral support. As a result, pupils work diligently and form respectful relationships with their friends and with adults.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils who spoke to inspectors reported that they are happy and feel safe in school, and that bullying is rare. Overall, pupils have a good understanding of the different types of bullying, including racist bullying. However, some pupils, who spoke to an inspector, were less clear about homophobic bullying. They know how to stay safe while using the internet and outside school.
- Pupils have many opportunities to reflect on their learning every day. These times are very beneficial in improving their self-esteem and helping them to understand how to learn successfully.
- Pupils regularly participate in sports and physical education. These opportunities make a strong contribution to their physical and emotional development and well-being.
- Staff are effective role models who help to ensure that pupils are protected from extreme views and have a mature appreciation of what is right and wrong.
- Occasionally, pupils are over dependent on adults to support their learning, which inhibits their ability to work on their own and thus cultivate good study habits.

Behaviour

- Overall, pupils' behaviour requires improvement because pupils' outcomes are disadvantaged by inconsistent levels of attendance.
- A significant number of pupils do not attend school regularly enough. Leaders reported that this is often due to parents taking their children out of school during term time. This means that attendance figures are well below those of maintained primary schools, nationally. Leaders acknowledge that more work is needed to convince parents that these absences are detrimental to their children's education and progress. This year, attendance has shown a small improvement, which has been as a result of closer monitoring, using the school's new tracking system to follow up unexplained absence.
- Pupils conduct themselves well in classrooms and around the school. They are polite and respectful to each other, and form positive relationships with adults. Those pupils who were interviewed appreciated the opportunity to tell the inspector how much they like their school.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Pupils' outcomes require improvement because pupils are not making consistently strong progress in subjects other than mathematics, reading and speaking and listening.
- Pupils' achievement in writing is variable. This is because pupils do not have enough opportunities to practise their writing, to write at length or to write longer pieces for different purposes and audiences. In addition, not all pupils, including the most able, are set challenging enough tasks to ensure that they make strong or better progress.
- Scrutiny of pupils' workbooks, visits to classrooms and leaders' judgements on the quality of pupils' learning show that some are not making consistent progress across the curriculum. Not all pupils make the progress of which they are capable in a range of subjects, including Arabic, history, religious education and science. This links directly with the variable quality of teaching that they receive in these subjects.
- Overall, the lower attaining pupils and those from different minority ethnic backgrounds make steady progress. This is because staff know their pupils well, and are increasingly effective in planning interesting activities that meet their needs and abilities.
- Pupils enter the school with skills and aptitudes that are typical for their age. As a result of effective teaching, and despite the weaknesses in writing, overall, pupils achieve well in reading and speaking and listening. The school's information indicates that pupils make stronger progress in mathematics than they do in English. Interesting problem-solving activities deepen pupils' understanding of mathematical concepts and engage their interest because these are often related to real-life situations.
- In 2017, all Year 6 pupils successfully gained entry to independent, selective and non-selective secondary schools. Pupils are polite and considerate, with good social and communication skills and, as a result, they are adequately prepared for the next stage of their education.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- The two early years leaders are newly appointed and have not had sufficient time to establish themselves fully. As a result, children make steady progress across most areas of learning. Teaching does not routinely meet children's needs because staff do not always set work at the correct level to enable children to achieve well. In addition, some parents do not ensure that their children attend as regularly as they should. When this occurs, these absences have a detrimental effect on children's education and impede their progress.
- As in the main school, the system for assessing and tracking children's progress is quite new. Nevertheless, staff use the information they have so far gathered, to identify weaknesses and improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.
- Children start early years with a range of skills that are broadly typical for their age. Staff provide interesting activities that enable children to make steady, rather than good, progress. Effective transition arrangements ensure that children settle quickly into Year 1.
- Children are encouraged to explore new ideas in practical ways to enhance their understanding. For example, they were creative in designing a greetings card for their neighbours. They also practised their phonics skills by sounding out the letters in 'dear' and 'thank you'. Children thoroughly enjoyed this activity and produced some very attractive cards, with the text correctly spelt.
- Children enjoy working together and are respectful towards staff and each other. They behave well and want to learn.
- Parents are involved in their children's education and welfare, which is having an increasingly positive effect on children's learning.
- Safeguarding practices meet all the relevant independent school standards and the statutory requirements of the early years are met.

School details

Unique reference number	134243
DfE registration number	313/6072
Inspection number	10007697

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	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	163
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Hounslow Jamia Masjid Trust
Chair	Afzal Kiani
Headteacher	Asif Ali
Annual fees (day pupils)	£3,000
Telephone number	020 8572 9817
Website	www.suffahschool.hounslow.sch.uk
Email address	office@suffahschool.hounslow.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	28–29 November 2007

Information about this school

- Suffah Primary School is an independent Muslim school for boys and girls aged three to 11. The school is located in the mosque complex in the residential area of Hounslow, in west London.
- There are currently 53 children in the Nursery and Reception classes, and 110 pupils in Years 1 to 6.
- The school serves the local community of mainly Arab, Bangladeshi, Pakistani and Somali heritages. All pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds. Pupils speak a variety of

languages and most are bilingual. Few pupils enter speaking English as an additional language, with very few being at an early stage of learning English.

- The school is registered to accept pupils aged three to 11 and, currently, there are 163 pupils on roll, which is above the number registered with the DfE. No pupils have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan.
- The school was last inspected by Ofsted in November 2007, when it was judged to be satisfactory.
- The headteacher took up his post in January 2017. Since this time, there has been 50% turnover in staffing. The leadership of early years is new from January 2018.
- The school sets out its aims as follows: 'Suffah Primary School is a place where we strive to achieve excellence. Children and adults are able to realise their potential for growth in an enjoyable, exciting, creative, caring and safe Islamic environment.'
- When they leave, most pupils transfer to local independent or maintained secondary schools.

Information about this inspection

- This full standard inspection took place with one day's notice.
- The inspectors visited all classes to observe teaching and learning jointly with senior staff. They spoke to pupils informally throughout the inspection.
- There were 21 responses to Parent View and 12 written comments. One inspector spoke with parents and considered the school's analysis of its own survey of the views of pupils and parents. Inspectors also considered the 21 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors held discussions with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders, staff and three governors, including the chair of the governing body, and the 'Prevent' duty coordinator from the local authority.
- Inspectors reviewed key documents and policies, including those relating to safeguarding, to check the school's compliance with the independent school standards. They scrutinised pupils' books and the school's information about pupils' attainment and progress.

Inspection team

David Scott, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Rosemarie McCarthy	Ofsted Inspector

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