

Inspection of Al-Burhan Grammar School

Spring Road Centre, 258 Spring Road, Tyseley, Birmingham, West Midlands B11 3DW

Inspection dates: 5 to 7 July 2022

Overall effectiveness

Good

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Good

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Outstanding

Does the school meet the independent school standards?

Yes

What is it like to attend this school?

This school is 'dedicated to learning as the foundation for life'. This mission statement is evident in the decisions leaders take and in the way that the curriculum has been further enhanced and extended since the last inspection. Leaders are passionate about learning and seek to ensure that their pupils become lifelong learners.

Pupils follow an ambitious and rich curriculum. In class, pupils delight in taking part in lively debates. For example, pupils respectfully challenged one another while considering whether animals should be used to test cosmetic products. Pupils gain deep knowledge and understanding in a wide range of subjects. They achieve exceptionally well and are very well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning and have high aspirations. They push themselves through additional homework tasks such as reading more widely from texts suggested by their teachers. Many aspire to go to university to study medicine, science or teaching.

Behaviour is exemplary, both in lessons and around the school site. Pupils are considerate and respectful. Older pupils look out for younger pupils. Bullying is very rare but is dealt with appropriately if it does happen.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders, including governors, are deeply committed to providing an exceptional quality of education for girls. They are passionate and extremely ambitious for their pupils, wanting them to have successful careers and personal lives. They view the curriculum as an ongoing journey where pupils are always learning.

Leaders have constructed a high-quality, well-sequenced curriculum. The scope and challenge within the curriculum far exceed that of the national curriculum. Pupils study a broad range of subjects for the longest time possible. The curriculum is sequenced to enable pupils to build successfully on prior learning. Foundations of subject-specific knowledge are carefully laid in key stage 3 so that pupils can be highly successful in Years 10 and 11.

A comprehensive reading curriculum has been established that ensures pupils develop the skills necessary to be successful in their academic studies. Teachers build reading opportunities into every subject area. Books, poems and texts are carefully chosen to expand pupils' vocabulary, develop an understanding of different cultures and challenge stereotypes. The vast majority of pupils display a deep love of reading.

Leaders have very high expectations of what pupils will learn and know in each subject area. They have set out the subject-specific vocabulary in each subject in incredible detail. Cross-curricular links are built which enthuse and ignite pupils'

interests. Leaders are determined that no subject is seen in isolation. They focus on encouraging pupils to be ambitious for their future. They help pupils see how, for example, what they study in mathematics now links with a potential future career.

Teachers have excellent subject knowledge and teach with great passion. They are well qualified in their area of expertise. They use ongoing assessment to check learning exceptionally well. Skilful questioning helps pupils clarify and deepen their understanding. Teachers use this information to identify key elements of learning that are missing. They expertly interweave new learning while reinforcing what has been missed. This means that all pupils continue to achieve highly.

Pupils are very attentive and extremely well motivated. They are rarely distracted from their learning. They take pride in their work which is of very high quality. As pupils move through the school, they actively seek ways to extend their own learning and challenge themselves. Attitudes to learning are of the highest quality.

The personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum includes a highly appropriate scheme of work for relationships and sex education. Pupils say they enjoy the freedom to debate ideas and viewpoints in their PSHE lessons. For example, they confidently compare and contrast practices in different religions. Pupils build their confidence and self-esteem through these activities. They challenge respectfully and give thoughtful answers.

Pupils are supported to think about their careers and future prospects from Year 7 onwards through a well-developed careers programme. This includes visiting speakers. Pupils are supported to make appropriate choices based on a wide range of information.

Trips are a valued element of the curriculum. Although the pandemic limited opportunities for a period of time, pupils have recently enjoyed visits to 'The Big Bang UK Young Scientists and Engineers Fair' and a local arts centre. Weekly news sessions are used to ensure that pupils are aware of topical issues such as refugee week, the Commonwealth Games and the war in Ukraine.

Pupils are very knowledgeable about the protected characteristics. They understand how to respect and treat everyone equally. Female leadership is held in high esteem, and pupils are actively encouraged to develop their own leadership skills in lessons and other activities. Older pupils run enrichment days which expand pupils' horizons. Pupils willingly take on responsibilities such as head and deputy head girl and house captains. They are proud to represent the school in events such as the quiz at Birmingham University which they won.

Leaders ensure that the curriculum provides pupils with opportunities to learn to express their views. Speaking and listening opportunities are a strong feature in many lessons. Pupils value opportunities to have their voices heard. However, a few pupils do not feel confident to raise their opinions and feelings about the school. Some others find it hard to ask for more help if they do not understand in a lesson.

A small number of pupils and parents raised concern about the effectiveness of leaders in engaging fully with the views of some pupils.

The school's accessibility plan is up to date and relevant. Leaders ensure that the independent school standards are met consistently. Governors ensure that the school fulfils all its statutory duties. They have high expectations of everyone and hold leaders to account, providing excellent support and challenge. Leaders work very closely with governors to ensure they constantly reflect on the provision and seek to learn from best practice and research.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The school's safeguarding policy, which is available to parents, reflects the most recent government guidance.

Leaders ensure that all staff are well trained and understand the part they play in keeping pupils safe. Record-keeping is well organised and managed. The designated safeguarding lead is quick to follow up on any concern. Senior staff work together to ensure pupils and their families get the support they need. There is a real acceptance of 'it could happen here'.

Through the PSHE curriculum, pupils learn about healthy relationships, consent and forced marriage, as well as cyberbullying and the dangers of social media.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and proprietor)

- A very small number of pupils say that their concerns are not considered seriously by staff and leaders. This means that some pupils do not feel that they have a trusted adult to talk to in school. Leaders should continue to find ways to enable pupils to talk to staff confidently and openly.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the provider and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

School details

Unique reference number	134034
DfE registration number	330/6104
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10220399
Type of school	Other independent school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Girls
Number of pupils on the school roll	152
Proprietor	Al-Burhan Foundation
Chair	Dr Mohammad Nasrullah
Headteacher	Dr Mohammad Nasrullah
Annual fees (day pupils)	£4,200 to £4,800
Telephone number	0121 4405454
Website	www.alburhan.org.uk
Email address	admin@alburhan.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	6 to 13 March 2018

Information about this school

- Al-Burhan is a selective, Islamic independent day school for girls aged 11 to 16.
- Situated in Tyseley, Birmingham, the school opened in 2002, providing for a small number of pupils. In 2013, the school moved to its current premises which were once an NHS day-care centre. The premises have been successfully modified to function as a school. There are approved plans to build a purpose-built school on the current site.
- A material change inspection took place on 12 January 2022 to determine if the number of pupils the school could accommodate could be increased. This was agreed and the school is now registered for 160 pupils.
- All pupils are from ethnic minority backgrounds. No pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities. No pupils have an education, health and care plan.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors carried out this inspection under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008. The purpose of the inspection is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

The school meets the independent school standards. These are the requirements set out in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

This was the second routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.

- The inspectors met with the chair of the proprietor body, who is also the headteacher, and the designated safeguarding lead. Meetings were held with senior leaders, subject teachers and other members of staff.
- The lead inspector spoke to the chair of the governing board remotely.
- The inspectors conducted deep dives into mathematics, science, art, religious education and PSHE. The deep dives consisted of visits to lessons, discussions with leaders and teachers, discussions with pupils and scrutiny of pupils' work. They also looked at pupils' work in English.
- The inspectors also talked to pupils more generally about their experiences in school. The lead inspector heard pupils read and talked to them about their reading.
- The inspectors observed pupils at breaktimes and spoke to them during the lunch break.

- The inspectors talked with teachers to discuss how they are supported to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding.
- A range of documentation was scrutinised, including school policies, curriculum documents and safeguarding information, including the checks that leaders make on staff prior to employment. The school's website was also scrutinised and leaders shared the new website which is currently under construction.
- The inspectors made additional checks relating to the independent school standards, including checks on the school's premises.
- One inspector met with parents on the second morning of the inspection. The inspectors considered the free-text responses to the online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View.
- The inspectors considered the responses to the staff questionnaire and the pupil questionnaire.

Inspection team

Nicola Harwood, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Ann Pritchard	Her Majesty's Inspector
Emma Gater	Her Majesty's Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2022