

# Rabia Girls' and Boys' School

Portland Road, Luton, Bedfordshire LU4 8AX

**Inspection date**

27 April 2017

**Overall outcome**

The school does not meet all of the independent school standards that were checked during this inspection

## Main inspection findings

### Part 1. Quality of education provided

*Paragraph 2(1), 2(1)(a), 2(1)(b), 2(2)(e), (2)(e)(ii), 2(2)(e)(iii)*

- During the course of this inspection, inspectors found that older boys were given too few opportunities to understand the broad range of career options available to them. This standard was met at the previous monitoring inspection, but is now judged not to be met.

*Paragraph 3, 3(a), 3(c), 3(d), 3(g)*

- At the previous progress monitoring inspection, that took place in January 2017, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment required improvement and the independent school standard was not met because:
  - pupils did not acquire new knowledge and boys in particular did not make good progress according to their ability
  - pupils' skills were not developed well in the subjects taught
  - teaching methods, activities and management of class time required improvement
  - teachers did not plan lessons well enough to build upon pupils' aptitudes, needs and prior attainments
  - the framework to assess pupils' work regularly was not effective and information from assessment was not used well to plan teaching so that pupils could make rapid progress.
- In the action plan, the proprietor undertook to:
  - train staff in the use of resources, assessment, the teaching of phonics and subject specialisms
  - train curriculum coordinators and senior managers to support staff to teach subjects effectively
  - devise, implement and monitor the system to track pupils' progress
  - make sure that leaders scrutinise the quality and presentation of pupils' work
  - check that staff explained to pupils how work could be improved

- reorganise how subjects were taught to primary-aged pupils.
- The quality of teaching across the school is not improving quickly enough. Progress to improve boys' learning has been particularly slow.
- The quality of teaching and learning continues to be better for the girls than for boys as reported in the previous monitoring inspection. This is directly linked to inconsistencies in the quality of leadership of teaching and learning. On the girls' site, senior leaders check the quality of teaching and learning, and then feed back to teachers, helping them to improve. This good practice is not yet used to develop the skills and performance of staff who teach the boys.
- Weaknesses in the teaching of boys include:
  - low expectation of what boys can achieve
  - lack of challenge for the most able pupils
  - insufficient use of assessment information to accelerate boys' progress
  - lack of opportunities to apply learning to real-life contexts.
- Some progress has been made in improving the learning environment and resources. Work is now displayed on the boys' site to model high-quality work, for example in writing and Islamic studies. Staff are keen to develop the use of modern technology, such as computers and whiteboards, to support pupils' learning. These resources bring relevance to the topics studied.
- The work in boys' books continues to be poorly presented. The range of work often lacks breadth and variety, leading to slow progress. In English, teaching is overly focused on grammar. Through a scrutiny of books, inspectors found that boys had insufficient opportunities to write creatively and for different purposes. Spelling was not corrected and, in some cases, the spelling of staff was also inaccurate.
- Boys have insufficient opportunities to apply their numeracy and literacy skills across subjects. In science, worksheets often require single-word answers. This leads to some underachievement, particularly for the most able boys, because they are not encouraged to write up the findings from their scientific enquiries in sufficient detail. In mathematics, real contexts are not used enough to deepen understanding and develop boys' problem-solving skills.
- Progress across subjects of the curriculum is too slow. In one class, in the history books, inspectors could only find two pieces of work completed since September 2016.
- Careers guidance, including work experience placements, is too limited and not used well enough to help boys understand the broad range of career options available to them.
- The good practice reported in January 2017 about the quality of teaching on the girls' site has been maintained and improved further. Subject specialists, particularly in English and mathematics, are making a real positive difference to the progress of girls.
- Staff on the girls' site use their knowledge of subjects well to probe pupils' understanding and move their learning on. For example, in the Year 5 class, the teacher provided challenging feedback to individual pupils to improve their writing of a formal letter to a member of parliament. In geography, the Year 7 books showed that pupils had written accurately and extensively on a range of topics. The work on the physical

features of Kenya offered good opportunities for pupils to improve their literacy skills as well as their knowledge of geographical vocabulary.

- The curriculum coordinator in charge of developing assessment practice has worked diligently to refine the arrangements introduced in September 2016. The previous monitoring inspection reported that some progress had been made but developments were still at an early stage. Some teachers use assessment well and take into account pupils' prior attainment to plan relevant activities in lessons and to set challenging targets. This good practice is not yet shared consistently across the whole school. The use of assessment to plan the teaching of boys is ineffective.
- This independent school standard remains unmet.

## Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

### *Paragraph 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b)*

- At the previous progress monitoring inspection, the school did not meet all of the independent school standards. In addition to the standards not met, there were weaknesses in the leadership of the school.
  - The curriculum coordinator on the boys' site did not have sufficient time to bring about improvement.
  - Leaders did not demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their roles.
  - The safeguarding policy and the many other policies about pupils' protection and well-being were lengthy and could potentially confuse staff.
- In the action plan, the proprietor undertook to make sure that:
  - senior managers and curriculum coordinators demonstrated the knowledge to train, support and monitor the quality of teaching and learning
  - staff used assessment procedures with rigour to plan for the next steps
  - teachers, coordinators and the senior management team tracked the progress of individuals and groups
  - governors, the senior management team and staff received training to understand how to meet the independent school standards.
- The positive trend of improvement, reported in the January 2017 monitoring inspection, has slowed. Although the quality of girls' education has been consolidated and has improved, too many weaknesses remain in the provision for boys and in their outcomes. Leaders have not shared the good practice and expertise that exist in the school.
- Collaboration and joint training between staff on both sites are becoming more frequent but the positive impact of such training is not yet evident on the boys' site. Consequently, teaching and learning across the school are ineffective.
- Some senior leaders do not have the expertise, time or confidence to monitor and evaluate the school's work, set clear targets for staff and promptly check whether guidance is being applied to improve the quality of teaching. There has been no monitoring of teaching on the boys' site since January 2017.
- The lack of prompt and well-targeted action to ensure good teaching on the boys' site means that boys underachieve. Progress in literacy is particularly slow.

- The acting headteacher is highly committed. She provides guidance to staff and works well with specialist teachers to improve the quality of teaching on the girls' site. As a result, staff work well together and girls' outcomes are improving. However, she has been unable to influence and improve the quality of education for boys.
- Although inspectors reported in January 2017 that the action plan had run its course and that governors needed to establish a new plan to sustain improvements, they have not done so. Therefore key priorities, actions and timescales to improve boys' provision are not identified.
- Arrangements to safeguard pupils continue to be effective. The designated safeguarding leads have welcomed the local authority's advice, including to ensure the good monitoring of children at risk of missing education. The single central register includes all the statutory checks to ensure staff's suitability to work with children. Staff receive relevant training.
- The designated safeguarding lead, who met the lead inspector, explained that, due to lack of time, leaders did not act on the advice given to them in January 2017 about bringing together the numerous policies about safeguarding, child protection and pupils' well-being. Almost all the school's other policies are due for review in July or September 2017.
- In addition to the standards not met in January 2017 inspectors found one additional standard that is not met.
- This independent school standard remains un-met.

## Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school does not meet the requirements of the schedule to The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (‘the independent school standards’) and associated requirements that were checked during this inspection. This included the standards and requirements that the school was judged to not comply with at the previous inspection. Not all of the standards and associated requirements were checked during this inspection.

### **The school does not meet the following independent school standards**

*Standards that were not met at the previous inspection and remain un-met at this inspection*

- The proprietor must ensure that the teaching at the school:
  - enables pupils to acquire new knowledge and make good progress according to their ability, so that they increase their understanding and develop their skills in the subjects taught
  - involves well-planned lessons, effective teaching methods and activities
  - shows 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
  - demonstrates that pupils’ work is regularly assessed and information from that assessment is used to plan teaching so that pupils can make progress (paragraph 3, 3(a), 3(c), 3(d), 3(g)).
- The proprietor must ensure that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school:
  - demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their roles so that the independent school standards are met consistently
  - fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently (paragraph 34(1), (34(1)(a), 34(1)(b)).

*Standards that were met at the previous inspection, but are now judged not to be met at this inspection*

- The proprietor must ensure that a written policy on the curriculum, supported by appropriate schemes of work, is drawn up and implemented effectively, and that the written policy, plans and schemes of work for pupils receiving secondary education provide:
  - access to accurate, up-to-date guidance that enables them to make informed choices about a broad range of career options; and
  - helps to encourage them to fulfil their potential (paragraph 2(1), 2(1)(a), 2(1)(b), 2(2)(e), (2)(e)(ii), 2(2)(e)(iii)).

## School details

Unique reference number	130331
DfE registration number	821/6001
Inspection number	10033775

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	Independent day school with a Muslim ethos
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	5 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	128
Proprietor	Rabia Educational Trust
Chair	Mr Zafar Khan
Headteacher	Mr Mirza Akbar
Annual fees (day pupils)	£1,950 (primary), £2,300 (secondary)
Telephone number	01582 493239
Website	<a href="http://www.rabiaschool.uk">www.rabiaschool.uk</a>
Email address	rabia_gs@yahoo.co.uk
Date of previous standard inspection	12–14 April 2016

## Information about this school

- The school was established in 1996 and is registered with the Department for Education (DfE) to admit up to 330 boys and girls aged five to 16 years. Very occasionally, the school admits children from their fifth birthday into the Reception Year but does not plan to do so in the future.
- Of the 128 pupils currently on roll, there are 44 boys and 84 girls.
- The school has a Muslim ethos. Most pupils are of Pakistani or Bangladeshi heritage. All pupils speak English as an additional language.
- There are no pupils with an education, health and care plan or statement of special

educational needs.

- The school operates from two sites within a few minutes' walk of each other. The boys' provision is at 326–340 Dunstable Road, Luton, Bedfordshire LU4 8JS. The girls' provision is at 12–16 Portland Road, Luton, Bedfordshire LU4 8AX.
- Boys and girls in the Reception Year, Year 1 and Year 2 are educated together at the Portland Road site.
- The school does not use alternative provision.
- The headteacher has been absent from the school due to illness since the inspection in April 2016. An acting headteacher leads the school across both sites, supported by a curriculum coordinator on each site.
- The school was issued with a warning notice on 12 May 2016 and was required to provide the DfE with an action plan to address the standards not met at the standard inspection in April 2016.

## Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out at the request of the registration authority for independent schools. The purpose of the inspection was to monitor the progress the school has made in meeting the independent school standards and other requirements that it was judged to not comply with at its previous inspection.
- This is the second progress monitoring inspection since the school's standard inspection in April 2016, when the overall effectiveness was judged as inadequate and four of the independent school standards were judged by Ofsted as not met.
- This progress monitoring inspection was commissioned by the DfE to evaluate the school's progress in meeting the two independent school standards that remained unmet at the first monitoring inspection, namely those relating to the quality of teaching and leadership and management.
- The school's action plan was evaluated by Ofsted in June 2016 and judged as acceptable.
- This progress monitoring inspection was unannounced.
- Inspectors met formally with the acting headteacher, senior leaders and one curriculum coordinator. Inspectors met the designated safeguarding lead on the girls' site and three members of the governing body. On both sites, lessons were observed and pupils' work was scrutinised. Inspectors spoke to pupils and staff.
- It was not possible to meet the curriculum coordinator on the girls' site during this inspection because she was temporarily out of the country.
- Inspectors checked the school's documents relating to safeguarding pupils, the monitoring of teaching and learning, assessment information and examination results. The school's website was scrutinised.
- There are no new entries on Parent View since the standard inspection in April 2016.

## Inspection team

Marianick Ellender-Gelé, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Paul Copping

Ofsted Inspector

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