

Rabia Girls' and Boys' School

12–16 Portland Road, Luton LU4 8AX

Inspection dates	12–14 April 2016
Overall effectiveness	Inadequate
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Inadequate
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Inadequate

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Leaders and governors do not lead by example in modelling the fundamental British values that they teach to pupils.
- Procedures for planning school improvement and reviewing the work of the school are not effective.
- Information on the school's performance focuses too much on what happens on each school site, rather than across the school as a whole. This hinders the sharing of good practice.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement because teachers do not plan well enough to meet the learning needs of pupils to ensure that they make good progress.
- The quality of teaching is too variable across the school because there are weaknesses in teachers' subject knowledge and their expectations of what pupils can achieve are too low.
- Pupils' work in books is often untidy and this is too often unchallenged by teachers.
- While pupils' achievement is now better than at the time of the last full inspection in May 2014, outcomes still require improvement. Outcomes in mathematics in the primary phase are below expectations. The pupils' knowledge and understanding of phonics are weak. Outcomes at the end of key stage 4 are too low.
- The most-able pupils are not stretched, and do not make the progress of which they are capable.
- The school does not meet all of the independent school standards.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils are proud of their school and value their education. Their behaviour is good.
- Pupils are cared for well. They feel safe in the school and attend regularly.
- Islamic studies are taught well across the school. This aspect of the school's work effectively promotes the values of respect and tolerance.
- Pupils develop into confident individuals with high aspirations. Careers education is well developed, and the pupils are prepared effectively for the next stage of their education.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school must take action to meet the requirements of the schedule to The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and associated requirements. The details are listed in the full report.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that senior leaders and governors promote and model fundamental British values through their own actions
 - planning for improvement more effectively and systematically checking the impact of planned actions
 - evaluating performance information across the school, rather than for each school site, to encourage the sharing of good practice
 - ensuring that all the independent school standards are met.

- Improve pupils' outcomes by:
 - raising standards in primary mathematics and phonics
 - increasing the proportion of pupils who make good progress over time
 - ensuring that the most-able pupils are given work in lessons that stretches them
 - improving the quality of pupils' presentation of their work.

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by:
 - developing teachers' subject knowledge where it is weak
 - establishing a clear, useful system to assess pupils' progress
 - making sure that the work planned for pupils suits their needs
 - making sure teachers implement the school's marking policy consistently.

- The school must meet the following independent school standards.
 - Ensure that 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 and effective teaching methods, activities and management of class time; shows a 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 good knowledge and understanding of the subject matter being taught and demonstrates that a framework is in place to assess pupils' work regularly and thoroughly and use information from that assessment to plan teaching so that pupils can progress (paragraph 3, 3(a), 3(c), 3(d), 3e and 3(g)).
 - Ensure that the proprietor actively promotes the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths or beliefs (paragraph 5 and 5(a)).
 - Ensure that particulars of educational and welfare provision for pupils with EHC plans and pupils for whom English is an additional language are provided to parents of pupils and parents of prospective pupils and, on request, to the Chief Inspector, the Secretary of State or an independent inspectorate (paragraph 32(3), 32(3)(b)).
 - Ensure that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently and fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently (paragraph 34(1), 34(1)(a) and 34(1)(b)).

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is inadequate

- Leaders and governors, through their actions, undermine the school's work to promote fundamental British values. For example, inspectors expressed concern when a screen was placed between male and female staff during joint discussions. Additionally, male and female staff do not come together for whole-school training. Instead, when training takes place on one school site, it is broadcast to the other site via the internet. These practices, which leaders and governors informed inspectors were their usual arrangement, do not demonstrate equality and respect.
- The school does not meet the independent school standards linked to the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, and pupils' progress.
- Improvement planning is weak because leaders have not identified the most important priorities to make the school more effective or eradicated the inconsistencies in the school's performance. The current school improvement plan has not been monitored closely enough and does not enable governors to hold senior leaders to account.
- School leaders acknowledge that some guest speakers to the school have not been vetted with sufficient rigour. Procedures for more rigorous checking of the background and views of guest speakers are now in place through a revised visitors' policy. The school now checks the credentials and backgrounds of all speakers so that the safety of pupils is not put at risk.
- Leaders have not ensured that the information provided to parents or potential parents includes details of the school's provision for pupils with education, health and care plans, or for whom English is an additional language.
- Leaders have dealt well with the previous weaknesses in the school's curriculum. The curriculum is now suitably broad. The school day has been extended both for boys and girls to ensure a thorough coverage of subjects. The curriculum is supplemented well through the addition of a range of extra activities.
- School leaders have monitored the quality of teaching effectively and teachers' practice has improved, although it still requires improvement.
- Pupils have a good understanding of wider spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues. Although they study in a Muslim faith school, they have developed a good understanding of the values that characterise life in multi-cultural, modern, democratic Britain.
- Girls and boys receive good-quality careers guidance, ensuring that girls have the same high professional aspirations as boys. For example, most girls spoken to hope to study at university and expressed an interest in becoming doctors, architects or scientists. Pupils in Year 10 spoke enthusiastically to inspectors about their upcoming work experience placements, many of which are in London.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governors have not ensured that all of the independent school standards are met.
 - The way in which governors permit the school's leaders to carry out meetings demonstrates poor modelling of respect and equality.
 - Governance has strengthened since the last inspection. The chair of the governing body meets regularly with the school's leaders in order to gain an up-to-date account of the school's successes and the challenges it faces. Governors are becoming better at supporting and challenging the headteacher when they meet, but they do not check systematically for progress against the school's improvement plan.
 - Governors have visited lessons to gain a better understanding of the learning pupils experience in the classroom. They are now in a stronger position to hold leaders to account.
 - Governors review and update the school's policies regularly. They consider carefully the performance of individual members of staff before awarding any increase in pay.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The school has a suitable safeguarding policy published on its website. Staff are fully aware of their role and responsibilities with regard to keeping children safe. Inspectors identified some minor administrative flaws relating to the management of safeguarding, but these were rectified before the end of the inspection.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement

- The teaching does not secure good progress and achievement across the school. Some teachers have a secure knowledge of the subjects they teach, but some do not have the specialist expertise to extend or deepen pupils' learning, particularly the most-able pupils.

- The teaching of mathematics is not enabling pupils to make good progress across the school because of weaknesses in some teachers' subject knowledge and too much variability in teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve.
- Weaknesses in the teaching of phonics mean that some pupils lack the strategies to sound out unfamiliar words, and so struggle to read fluently.
- The school has put in place revised systems for assessing pupils' work involving the use of levels for some pupils and grades for others. Although school leaders have rightly recognised the need to revise methods to assess pupils' attainment and progress, and link these to a modified curriculum, the new systems are not understood by all teachers and pupils. This is a weakness which has a direct impact on the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes because teachers do not always pitch the work at the right level.
- Teachers have access to a wide range of resources and make effective use of these to provide a variety of activities for the pupils. Some teachers make effective use of questioning to test pupils' understanding of what they have learned and to identify which topics need to be re-visited.
- Teachers' planning for lessons does not consistently provide sufficient challenge to the most-able pupils, so these pupils do not achieve what they should.
- The quality of teachers' marking is inconsistent because the guidelines outlined in the school's policy are not followed by all teachers. Pupils said that they find it helpful when teachers share the assessment criteria so that they know what to do to improve and achieve their targets.
- Islamic studies are taught well across the school. Girls and boys are encouraged to learn and recite from the Quran. Pupils' skills in memorising extracts from the Quran are developed well and pupils told inspectors that they are motivated to learn when they compete against each other in class.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

are good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils told inspectors that they felt safe when in school. The school provides a safe and secure environment for pupils in which to work. Inspectors observed younger pupils being dismissed at the end of the day and handed over to a responsible adult using a procedure which aims to ensure their safety and well-being.
- Staff demonstrate a good awareness of their role and responsibility in ensuring the safety of pupils in their care. Staff have a good understanding of when to refer child protection matters to an external agency. Systems for reporting children who go missing are clear. The headteacher and deputy headteachers demonstrate very good knowledge and full understanding of the 'Prevent' duty (government advice to schools to have due regard to the need to identify signs of extremism and radicalisation). Links established with the local police service have proven to be a useful source of support and advice.
- Pupils develop a good understanding of what it means to be a responsible citizen in modern, democratic Britain. Inspectors observed Year 10 pupils engaging in a healthy debate about the rule of law. Pupils have supported the local community by tidying up the local park. They have also engaged with representatives of other faiths. In discussions with inspectors, pupils demonstrated tolerance of other people's ways of life, even when their own religion views these differently.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are attentive and well behaved in all lessons. This is testament to pupils' positive attitudes and their good self-discipline.
- Pupils move around the school site sensibly and with consideration for others. Inspectors observed pupils socialising well with each other during their breaks and at lunchtime, and saw them exchanging their opinions in a balanced way.
- The school implements its behaviour policy well. Parents rightly believe that school leaders manage pupils' behaviour effectively. This is reflected in the low number of behavioural incidents and the small number of fixed-term exclusions.

- The school clearly teaches pupils about all forms of bullying. Pupils struggled to think of incidences where they or a friend had been bullied. They also demonstrate a good awareness of the dangers associated with the use of the internet.
- Pupils attend school regularly. Appropriate systems are in place to establish the reason when any pupil should fail to attend school.

Outcomes for pupils

require improvement

- Pupils enter Year 1 with skills and abilities that are broadly typical of their age. The proportion of pupils who reach the expected attainment levels in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of the primary phase is below the national average. Too few pupils make good progress during the primary phase, particularly in mathematics.
- The work in pupils' books is often poorly presented and lacks care.
- The progress that pupils make during their primary years is not monitored closely enough. Leaders' records of the progress pupils make lack precision.
- Pupils enjoy reading and show an interest in books. Pupils read at an age-appropriate level and are able to discuss the texts they read with interest. Younger pupils frequently struggle to read unfamiliar words because their knowledge of phonics is weak.
- Progress in English and mathematics improves as pupils approach the end of key stage 4, but this has not ensured that enough pupils meet the standards achieved nationally. However, the work in pupils' books in key stage 4, including in English, mathematics and other GCSE subjects, supports the school's view that pupils' progress continues to improve at a faster rate in the secondary phase than in the primary provision.
- The school's data indicates that girls generally achieve better than boys. Current progress data for pupils in Year 11 indicates that achievement is likely to be better this year, and that the school will get closer to the national figure for the proportion of pupils achieving five or more grades A* to C at GCSE.

School details

Unique reference number	130331
Inspection number	10018158
DfE registration number	821/6001

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	Muslim day school
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	5–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	160
Proprietor	Rabia Trust
Chair	Zafar Khan
Headteacher	Mirza Akbar
Annual fees (day pupils)	£1,950 (Primary) £2,300 (Secondary)
Telephone number	01582 493239
Website	www.rabiaschool.uk
Email address	mz@rabiaschool.com
Date of previous inspection	15 May 2014

Information about this school

- Rabia Girls' and Boys' School is a Muslim day school that is registered to provide full-time education for up to 330 boys and girls aged five to 16 years. The school operates on two sites within close proximity, one for boys and one for girls. Due to a decrease in the number of pupils on roll, boys in Years 1 to 4 are currently taught on the girls' site.
- The school was set up in 1996 to serve the local community in Luton and to provide Islamic education for young Muslims. It aims to give pupils an opportunity to study and develop their academic and spiritual potential in an Islamic environment. Boys are mostly taught by male staff and girls by female staff.
- Pupils have diverse cultural backgrounds and most are of Pakistani or Bangladeshi heritage. All pupils speak English as an additional language.
- There are no pupils with special educational needs or disability. No pupils have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan.
- The school does not make use of any alternative off-site provision.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was conducted with no notice. The school was last inspected in May 2014 when it was judged to be inadequate. Two progress monitoring visits were conducted in January 2015 and October 2015.
- Inspectors observed pupils' learning across Years 1 to 10. Year 11 pupils were on study leave. Most of these observations were carried out with the school's senior leaders.
- Meetings were held with the school's senior leaders, the chair and two other members of the governing body, and groups of pupils from key stages 2 to 4.
- Inspectors scrutinised school improvement documents, policies, information on pupils' outcomes, and their work, records of the quality of teaching and minutes of meetings of the governing body. They checked the arrangements in place for recording the names of visitors to the school and the single central record of recruitment checks of staff. Inspectors also met with parents informally at the end of the school day.
- Inspectors considered 13 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. No members of staff or pupils responded to the online surveys.
- The Department of Education asked inspectors to pay particular attention to the school's promotion of fundamental British values and to what extent these are supported through teaching and the school's curriculum.

Inspection team

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Her Majesty's Inspector

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Her Majesty's Inspector

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