

# Noor Ul Islam

Independent school light-touch inspection report

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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, 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.<sup>1, 2</sup>

This was a light touch inspection which focused principally on the quality of education provided by the school, its provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, the arrangements for safeguarding pupils and the improvements the school has made since its last inspection.

## Information about the school

Noor Ul Islam Primary School is an Islamic day school registered for up to 175 pupils from the ages of four to 11 years. It opened in 2001 to serve the diverse community in the London borough of Waltham Forest. There are 159 pupils on roll aged from four and a half to 11 years, all of whom attend full time. There are 24 children in the Early Years Foundation Stage, none of whom are funded under the Nursery Scheme. Pupils have Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Mauritian, Somali, Algerian and Bosnian heritages. Most pupils are bilingual or multilingual and 26 pupils are at various advanced stages of learning English as an additional language. There are 20 pupils identified as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities and one has a statement of special educational needs. The school was last inspected in January 2008.

The school aims to 'motivate all pupils to achieve their academic potential; to inspire towards achieving excellence in Islamic conduct and social skills and to foster and develop, in every student, their service to Islam, particular communities and the wider society'.

## Evaluation of the school

Noor Ul Islam continues to provide a good quality of education and to meet its aims fully. The school's work is much appreciated by most parents. Good teaching and assessment ensure that pupils make at least good progress. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding and so is their behaviour. Robust safeguarding arrangements contribute to good provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety. The school has made good improvements since the last inspection and meets all of the regulations for independent schools. The overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage is good.

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<sup>1</sup> [www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2002/ukpga\\_20020032\\_en\\_14#pt10-ch1-pb4-l1g162](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2002/ukpga_20020032_en_14#pt10-ch1-pb4-l1g162)

<sup>2</sup> [www.opsi.gov.uk/ACTS/acts2005/ukpga\\_20050018\\_en\\_15#sch8](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/ACTS/acts2005/ukpga_20050018_en_15#sch8)

## Quality of education

The curriculum is good, as it was in the last inspection, and it serves the needs of all pupils well. It encompasses all the National Curriculum subjects, except for music, and enables all pupils to acquire a wide base of knowledge and skills. In addition, pupils of all ages learn Arabic as a modern foreign language, which supports their language development and their understanding of the Qur'an. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children learn through play and exploration both indoors and outdoors; their experiences are enhanced through the recent provision of a covered outdoor area. Their progression through all the areas of learning is appropriately balanced between activities that they initiate and those that staff lead, which ensures that they develop independence, curiosity and perseverance.

In the primary department, one of the main strengths is the good provision for English, mathematics and science, enhanced by cross-curricular links that make pupils' learning more coherent and creative and also by practical experiences. For example, pupils attend science shows out of school and cultivate an allotment plot. Reading and writing are taught well from Reception and opportunities for extended writing are planned across the subjects. However, there is not always sufficient focus on the quality of writing to help pupils develop a higher order of writing skills.

The provision of personal, social, citizenship and health education (PSHCE) has expanded since the last inspection. It is very effectively enriched by the Islam and Citizenship Education (ICE) programme aimed at contextualising Islam in Britain, and by educational visits and activities. The use of information and communication technology (ICT) has improved since the last inspection and pupils use computers regularly in several subjects; this develops their research and technological skills. Pupils have numerous opportunities to make and design things during the school day. However, their creative skills are not further extended by after-school clubs.

The curriculum is planned satisfactorily and is modified well to support pupils with learning or linguistic needs. Where pupils have statements of special educational needs, all of the requirements of the statements are met. Provision for physical education (PE) is only satisfactory, as pupils only have one weekly PE lesson. The school has identified the need to improve the balance of the curriculum by providing additional physical activities. There is an adequate range of resources for teaching and learning and the school is developing a library with the help of the parents' and teachers' association. The curriculum is enhanced by off-site visits and visits from a wide range of professionals.

Teaching and assessment are good throughout the school. Teaching is outstanding where it is underpinned by expert subject knowledge and provides a sustained level of challenge. Teachers and teaching assistants share a common understanding of good practice. Consequently, all pupils make at least good progress, including those who have learning or linguistic needs who receive well-timed and effectively targeted support. Teachers generally use assessment outcomes well to plan tasks that match the varying needs of pupils closely. They use questioning very effectively to make

pupils think and deepen their understanding. They use good resources and a wide range of teaching methods effectively to support pupils' learning. A whole-school focus on providing more challenge for pupils has resulted in a higher proportion of pupils making outstanding progress in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6. Most teachers involve pupils in the assessment of their learning, for example through constructive marking and the use of learning targets. However, this is not done consistently. Consequently, pupils do not always gain a clear picture of what to do next to improve. Occasionally, time is not used wisely, so the pace of learning slows down. The occasional over-use of worksheets limits pupils' independence.

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

The school continues to make outstanding provision for all pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Combined with Islamic studies, PSHCE makes a very strong contribution to pupils' personal development. The Islamic studies curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual and moral development extremely well, as reflected in pupils' outstanding behaviour, excellent attitudes to learning, good attendance and good manners. Pupils feel free from bullying and harassment and most enjoy school. They have daily opportunities for reflection in lessons and at prayer time. Their strong sense of community and commitment to diversity is shown in the harmonious relationships which they have with each other. These are fostered through planned classroom activities as well as through the Three Faiths Forum that aims to build lasting bridges between people of different faiths. Through this initiative, pupils have meaningful exchanges with pupils from other religious backgrounds on topics such as friendship and caring for the elderly. This reinforces their Islamic identity and develops their understanding and appreciation of other beliefs in a respectful way.

Through the ICE programme, pupils learn that to be a good citizen is to be a good Muslim and they have many opportunities for active citizenship. For example, the school council consulted pupils in order to review the anti-bullying policy and all pupils are involved in recycling. Pupils have recently received an award from Transport for London for their work on the school's travel plan. They bake biscuits and sell food to raise funds for national and international charities. By working on the Rainbow Family Project for three consecutive years, the current Year 6 pupils have been linked with schools and orphanages in Africa and Asia and have learned how different and often difficult the lives of others can be. They have shared their experiences with others by making videos and artwork highlighting what they have gained from this project spiritually, socially, culturally and academically. Pupils are well prepared for their future through the acquisition of good basic skills, high levels of self-confidence and good teamwork skills.

### **Safeguarding pupils' welfare, health and safety**

Provision for safeguarding pupils' welfare, health and safety remains good throughout the school. All policies and procedures, including the safeguarding policies, are reviewed annually and reflect current government guidance. All the

required checks are carried out on staff, volunteers and the proprietors to ensure their suitability to work with children, and these are recorded appropriately in a single central register. All staff receive the appropriate level of child protection training. The senior leaders and designated persons demonstrate a thorough understanding of what to do should concerns arise. Sufficient staff are trained as fire marshals and fire evacuation drills are recorded in thoughtful detail to help improve systems. A high proportion of staff have received training in first aid, three with paediatric qualifications. Accidents and the dispensation of medication are adequately recorded. The last inspection highlighted the absence of appropriate facilities for pupils who are ill and the school has since equipped a designated room with a bed and a sink for this purpose. The staff promote very high standards of behaviour at all times, creating a well-ordered environment in which pupils learn to respect others' needs and space. Instances of bullying are extremely rare. Most parents who returned the pre-inspection questionnaire feel that their children are safe and are happy with the provision. However, there is a perception among some pupils and parents that pupils are not always treated fairly and that some teachers discriminate between boys and girls. Although inspectors found no evidence to suggest that this is the case, they agree that these views should be given due attention by the school.

Pupils develop a good understanding of how to be safe and healthy through the curriculum and through specific training, for example in road and internet safety. They are encouraged to eat healthily and to drink plenty of water. Pupils enjoy a satisfactory range of daily physical activities, although the lack of outdoor space and sports facilities imposes limits on what can be offered in school time. However, the school encourages pupils to walk to school and they have access to sports activities run by the school trust at weekends. The school fulfils its obligations under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, as amended.

## **Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

Good leadership and management ensure that the provision and outcomes for all children are good, and so the overall effectiveness of this stage is good. Children enjoy moving freely between a wide range of activities planned indoors and outdoors, using the recently built all-weather facility. They are encouraged to behave very well, to share and have very positive relationships with others. Consequently, they feel safe and well cared for. They wash their hands with few reminders and are encouraged to eat healthily. Children are helpful and enthusiastic about tidying up. Curriculum planning is detailed and ensures that all six areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage are promoted equally through a good balance of activities which children can initiate or which staff lead. Staff ensure that all children access the whole range of proposed activities. Staff are supported very effectively by the local authority to develop good practice in teaching and assessment. Reading skills are taught well in conjunction with writing skills, and children's language development is further enhanced by learning to sound letters and sing songs in Arabic.

Good quality assessments of children's learning and development inform future planning for their learning and ensure that this meets the needs of individual children well. However, the children's starting points are not recorded shortly after they join the school in a way that distinguishes them readily from their achievements at the end of the first term. This hinders the monitoring of their earliest progress. Nevertheless, children make good progress towards the expected goals. Close partnerships with parents and appropriate staff training ensure that the children's welfare needs are met well and parents feel well informed of their children's progress. Safeguarding procedures are robust. The staff form a cohesive team, extremely well led by the new Reception teacher. Accurate self-review confirms the department's good capacity for further improvement.

## **Compliance with regulatory requirements**

The proprietor has ensured that the school meets The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, schedule 1 ('the Regulations').<sup>3</sup>

## **What the school could do to improve further**

While not required by regulations, the school might wish to consider the following points for development:

- improve the provision for PE
- involve pupils more consistently in the assessment of their own learning
- further improve pastoral care in consultation with pupils and parents to ensure that all pupils feel that they are treated fairly by all staff
- in the Early Years Foundation Stage, further improve the monitoring of children's progress by carefully recording their starting points as soon as possible after they join the school.

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<sup>3</sup> [www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2010/1997/contents/made](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2010/1997/contents/made)

## Inspection judgements

Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
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### The quality of education

Overall quality of education		✓		
How well the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of pupils		✓		
How effective teaching and assessment are in meeting the full range of pupils' needs		✓		
How well pupils make progress in their learning		✓		

### Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Quality of provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	✓			
The behaviour of pupils	✓			

### Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The overall welfare, health and safety of pupils		✓		
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### The quality of the Early Years Foundation Stage provision

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage		✓		
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage		✓		
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage		✓		
Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage		✓		

## School details

<b>School status</b>	Independent		
<b>Type of school</b>	Islamic day school		
<b>Date school opened</b>	September 2001		
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11 years		
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed		
<b>Number on roll (full-time pupils)</b>	Boys: 86	Girls: 73	Total: 159
<b>Number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs</b>	Boys: 1	Girls: 0	Total: 1
<b>Number of pupils who are looked after</b>	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	£2,600		
<b>Address of school</b>	135 Dawlish Road Leyton London E10 6QW		
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8558 8765		
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:primary@noorulislam.co.uk">primary@noorulislam.co.uk</a>		
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Rookshana Adam		
<b>Proprietor</b>	Mr Yusuf Hansa		