



Al-Ashraf Primary School
Al-Ashraf Centre
Stratton Road
Gloucester
Gloucestershire
(01452) 503533
www.al-ashraf.org.uk
9th Dhul-Qadah 1428
19th November 2007

Dear Parents,

Assalamu Alaykum w.w.

Re: Ofsted Inspection Report

As you may be aware, Ofsted inspected our school on 30th/31st October and we have now received a copy of the final report. The report has also been published on our Al-Ashraf web site.

The report outlines that the overall quality of education is satisfactory with several areas that are good.

- (1) Personal/Social/Spiritual/moral development is good.
- (2) Strong Islamic Ethos, warm and friendly atmosphere.
- (3) Local Muslim community very supportive of school.
- (4) Good balance between faith and secular teaching.
- (5) Good provision for pupils to develop basic skills of literacy and numeracy. Speaking skills also develop well.
- (6) Teaching Assistants have positive impact on learning and personal development.
- (7) Teachers have very good relationships with pupils which encourages good behaviour and hard work
- (8) Pupils enjoy attending school.
- (9) Class routines are well established.
- (10) Pupils encouraged to ask questions.
- (11) Pupil's work assessed carefully and recorded efficiently.
- (12) Differentiated teaching.
- (13) Classrooms are in good condition.
- (14) Informative school prospectus.

The two main areas which require development are: -

1. Activities need to move on quicker for higher attaining pupils.
2. Use of assessment to set long term attainment targets and the need to track pupil's progress to ensure they meet set targets.

The governing committee felt that for a school which has been operating for just over a year, the report had a lot of positive comments whilst maintaining a good balance on aspects of future development. I feel this is mainly down to the hard work put in by pupils, parents, teachers & staff who continue to support us.

The governing committee met on Sunday 11th November to discuss the report and an Action Plan is being developed to address each point whilst continuing to build on our achievements so far.

If you would like to comment on the report please forward them at the school address or e-mail them to myself – iacademy@yahoo.co.uk or to the Chair of Governors, Mr Shahid Vaid. shahidmv@hotmail.com

Jazakumullahu Khairan.
Wassalamu'alaikum w.w.

Mufti Abdullah
School Principal
Al-Ashraf Primary School

Al-Ashraf Primary School

Independent School

Inspection report

DCSF Registration Number	916/6081
Unique Reference Number	135097
Inspection number	318130
Inspection dates	31 October 2007
Reporting inspector	Daniel Towl HMI

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 162A of the Education Act 2002 (as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005).

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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, in order to advise the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Information about the school

Al-Ashraf Primary School is a small Islamic primary school situated in the Al-Ashraf Cultural Centre close to the centre of Gloucester. It is in its very early stages of development with only two classes, Reception and Year 1, but there are plans for it to grow into an all-through primary school. It is closely associated with the Al-Ashraf Nursery, which is on the same site and shares the same administration and management. Most of the pupils previously attended the Nursery. The school is strongly supported by the Gloucester Muslim Welfare Association and has some further links with the Secondary Islamic Girls' School. Most pupils come from the local area. There are 45 pupils, most of whom have English as an additional language. The school was first registered in September 2006. This is the school's first inspection

Evaluation of the school

Al-Ashraf Primary School provides a satisfactory quality of education and there are strengths in its provision for pupils' personal and social development. A strong Islamic ethos pervades the school and its work, and the school has a warm and friendly atmosphere. The curriculum, teaching and learning are satisfactory. Most pupils make a confident start in Reception with reading and writing and reach average levels. The school's policies and procedures are satisfactory but there are a few aspects that need some improvement in order to comply fully with the requirements in its provision to ensure the welfare, health and safety of pupils. There are also some omissions in the provision of information for parents. Parents and the local Muslim community are very supportive of the school and its work.

Quality of education

The curriculum is satisfactory. It is strongly rooted in both Islamic teaching and the National Curriculum and Foundation Stage curriculum which account for most of the school day. At present there are only curriculum plans for Reception and Year 1, the two year groups currently in the main school. A good balance has been established between the faith and secular aspects of pupils' learning.

Curriculum plans are satisfactory and make good use of national guidance and commercial materials. This means that pupils have age appropriate activities although music and some aspects of art are not so well developed, reflecting the

requirements of Islamic traditions, for example pupils are not permitted to use a wide range of musical instruments. There is good provision for pupils to develop their basic skills of literacy and numeracy and they become confident in their knowledge of letter sounds, early writing, numbers and simple addition and subtraction. They count confidently and the higher attaining Year 1 pupils know number pairs that make twenty. In both Reception and Year 1 pupils are encouraged to use play to develop writing through a pretend library/bookshop and post office. Pupils in Year 1 learn to write for different purposes. Pupils in Reception make regular use of the class computers to practise basic reading and number skills. Pupils' speaking skills develop well considering that approximately half start in the Nursery school with little or no English. Most pupils talk confidently to adults and each other. In Reception and Year 1 they listen attentively to stories and can recount the major events.

There is a programme for personal and social education in Year 1 that teaches pupils about keeping safe and, in both Reception and Year 1, weekly assemblies and the daily '*Madrassah*' sessions allow pupils to consider care for oneself, for others and for the environment. There is no programme of curriculum enrichment through clubs and other extra curricular activities

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. There are only two class teachers, one of whom is newly qualified, and there is only a limited amount of experience to draw upon in order to develop and improve strategies and approaches as the school grows and accommodates older pupils. Teaching assistants play an important role and have a positive impact on pupils' learning and personal development

Teachers have very good relationships with their pupils and this encourages them to behave well, work hard and concentrate on their tasks. Pupils enjoy coming to school. Class routines, even for the youngest, are well established. Pupils are encouraged to answer questions and contribute to plenary sessions, which they like to do.

Lesson planning is satisfactory and provides sufficient detail to give teaching assistants all the information they need to support groups and individuals, which they do effectively. The introductory parts of some lessons are not always effective because the discussion and instructions are not focused and clear enough to help pupils understand clearly what they have to do. This leads to some pupils losing concentration.

Teachers and teaching assistants assess pupils' work carefully and ensure that their achievements are recorded efficiently. Lessons allow for pupils of different abilities to learn effectively and make at least satisfactory progress, although some activities in Reception do not move on quickly enough for higher attaining pupils. Some pupils with limited English make good progress. Pupils in Reception are assessed regularly using the national expectations from the Foundation Stage and in Year 1 National Curriculum levels form the basis of assessment. However, because of the school's relatively short existence there is as yet no clear policy for the use of assessment to

set longer term targets and ensure that pupils from Reception onwards make consistently good progress.

Classroom resources are adequate for the current age groups and allow for practical activities such as building with construction kits and the use of small apparatus to support activities such as addition problems in mathematics. Small climbing apparatus is available to enrich indoor physical education (PE) lessons.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is good. They attend regularly and enjoy learning. Most pupils are developing into confident children. Many have the self-discipline to settle to tasks quickly, work hard and persevere. They cooperate well with each other when required. Pupils are aware of the expectations regarding what is right and wrong and this is reinforced through a consistent approach by all adults and the display of class rules. Behaviour is good, for example in lessons and around the school building it is very good, and it is generally good outside during break times.

The Islamic ethos of the school plays a very important role in all aspects of personal development. Approximately one hour per day is spent on '*Madrassah*' studies, which not only introduce pupils to reading Arabic and the Qu'ran but also provide opportunities for them to consider the broader aspects of the Islamic faith, including developing respect and consideration for others and tolerance between different cultural traditions. Within the broader curriculum pupils learn about the main festivals of other cultures, for example Christmas, Divali and the Chinese new year. The curriculum is more limited in teaching pupils about public institutions and services, although pupils visit the library, the post office and local shops and have visitors from the local police. Pupils listen to and learn traditional nursery rhymes and stories but a wider appreciation of music and art is mainly limited to that which is related to the Islamic faith. Pupils contribute to their own school community by taking responsibility for daily jobs in the classroom, which they do willingly, behaving well, following routines and by raising money through sponsored fasts. Pupils also took part in a nationwide shoebox charity appeal for orphans around the world. Pupils' application to their tasks and their achievements in the basic skills of literacy and numeracy help towards their future economic well being.

Welfare, health and safety of the pupils

Provision to ensure the welfare health and safety of pupils is satisfactory overall. The day to day care of pupils and their supervision around school is good. Procedures for safeguarding pupils are satisfactory but a very small number of staff have still to attend relevant child protection training. This is, however, planned for the very near future. Health and safety and first aid policies and procedures are mostly satisfactory. There are some risk assessments completed for pupils' outside visits but not yet for all other aspects of the school's work. There is no recorded recent health

and safety check for the premises. The school's own fire risk assessment is due for updating but regular fire drills are carried out and recorded and equipment is checked regularly.

Pupils are encouraged to lead healthy lifestyles as part of the general curriculum in science and during Islamic studies. Parents have been given information about providing healthy snacks and lunches and most pupils adhere to this with their lunch boxes. Pupils have regular PE lessons. As part of the community approach to healthy living the school organised a netball and cricket tournament for parents. This event included advice on food, exercise and healthy eating. There are visits from the road safety officer and a community police officer, who give talks to pupils about keeping safe.

Suitability of the proprietor and staff

The school meets the requirements in respect of the appointment of staff. All staff have had the required Criminal Records Bureau checks, although a clear written procedure for the appointment of staff is still in draft form and is due to be finalised and ratified by governors in the near future. The school's single central register of staff is satisfactory.

School's premises and accommodation

The rooms used by pupils are in good condition and are sufficient for the curriculum and the number of pupils currently on roll. There are plans to open further rooms as the school expands from next year. Outside there is an adequate hard surface area used for break times and PE. The hall, used for PE and lunchtimes, is adequate for some light exercise and gymnastic work but is not suitable for more active games. However, the hard outside area is suitable for more energetic small games. The school has plans to develop more information and communication technology facilities and to continue to develop the outside play area.

Provision of information for parents, carers and others

The school has an informative prospectus about the school, which includes its aims, curriculum and organisation. There are some minor omissions in the prospectus relating to information about the number and qualifications of staff employed and although the school has a wide range of policies the availability of these is not made clear to parents and others. Parents receive an informative annual report of their children's progress and achievements.

Procedures for handling complaints

The school's procedures are satisfactory and meet the regulations in full.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school meets all of the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 as amended January 2005, with the exception of those listed below.

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety (standard 3) and must:

- ensure that all staff have received appropriate training identified in the DCSF guidance *Safeguarding children and safer recruitment in education* (paragraph 3(2)(b))
- maintain risk assessments for all aspects of the school's work and complete regular health and safety checks of the premises to meet the recommendations in DCSF guidance *Health and safety responsibilities and powers* (paragraph 3(4)).

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of the provision of information for parents, carers and others (standard 6) and must:

- ensure that parents are aware that they can request information about particulars of policies relating to bullying, child protection, health and safety, the promotion of good behaviour, and sanctions adopted in the event of pupils misbehaving (paragraph 6(2)(h)).

What the school could do to improve further

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

- develop a longer term assessment strategy to aid target setting for pupils
- ensure that the starts to all lessons are clearly focussed and explained
- ensure that Reception activities, especially for higher attaining pupils, move on quickly so that pupils can make more rapid progress.

School details

Name of school	Al-Ashraf Primary School		
DCSF number	916/6081		
Unique reference number	135097		
Type of school	Islamic Primary School		
Status	Independent		
Date school opened	September 2006		
Age range of pupils	4-11		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 24	Girls: 21	Total: 45
Annual fees (day pupils)	£500		
Address of school	Al-Ashraf Culture Centre Statton Road Gloucester Gloucestershire GL1 4HB		
Telephone number	01452 503533		
Email address	iacademy@yahoo.net		
Principal	Mr Abdullah Patel		
Proprietor	Gloucester Muslim Welfare Association		
Reporting inspector	Daniel Towl HMI		
Dates of inspection	31 October 2007		