

Al-Ashraf Secondary School for Girls

Address: Sinope Street, Gloucester, Gloucestershire, GL1 4AW

Unique reference number (URN): 115810

Inspection report: 12 May 2026

Exceptional	
Strong standard	● ●
Expected standard	● ● ● ●
Needs attention	
Urgent improvement	

✔ Safeguarding standards met

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, pupils are made safer and feel safe.

How we evaluate safeguarding

When we inspect schools for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- **Met:** The school has an open and positive culture of safeguarding. All legal requirements are met.
- **Not met:** The school has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.
- **Insufficient evidence:** Inspectors were unable to gather sufficient evidence to judge whether safeguarding standards are met.

Strong standard ●

Attendance and behaviour

Strong standard ●

Leaders are committed to continuing to improve pupils' attendance. They carefully track pupils' absence and lateness over time. They use this information to provide early support and intervention for individual pupils and their families. As a result, attendance remains consistently high. There are a low number of pupils who are regularly absent from school. Leaders are proactive in seeking engagement from parents and carers. They look for ways to overcome cultural and language barriers. For example, using translation tools, making regular phone calls and completing home visits. Consequently, there has been a reduction in pupils taking term time holidays or having extended absences from school.

Leaders have established a culture at the school of working hard, being kind and behaving well. Pupils show excellent self-discipline and rarely need to be reminded about positive behaviour. There are no recorded incidents of bullying. However, leaders and staff are astute to the possibility and talk to pupils about managing any conflicts and how to report if any did occur. Lessons are disruption free so pupils can focus on their learning. At social times, pupils interact with each other happily and confidently. This school is an environment free from any discrimination or derogatory language.

Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard ●

Leaders have created an extensive yet coherent personal development programme. It is meticulously planned and provides pupils with a set of deliberately selected wider opportunities and experiences. Leaders ensure that it is thoughtfully tailored to the school's context. For example, the programme includes carefully considered relationships and sex education that meets pupils' needs in a culturally appropriate way.

Leaders see it as crucial to overcome cultural barriers. Their efforts are highly successful. The school has collaborated with external bodies such as the Royal Life Saving Society. The school's work enables pupils to learn to swim and understand water safety. Additionally, leaders do not shy away from teaching pupils about how to maintain positive mental health. Leaders shape the programme specifically to overcome common barriers and those that could be experienced by individual pupils.

The school's pastoral programme and the range of wider opportunities and experiences builds pupils' confidence, resilience and preparation for life beyond the school. The programme is woven into all aspects of school life, including the curriculum, assemblies, competitions, clubs, trips and other experiences. In this way, it benefits each pupil.

The careers programme is ambitious and extensive. It is carefully sequenced to broaden pupils' options and prepare them for their chosen pathways, including overcoming community or cultural barriers. Pupils in Year 10 have to seek out and organise their own work experience placements, developing their independence and giving them essential experience of producing an application for employment.

Pupils develop detailed knowledge and skills, including around fundamental British values and how to keep themselves safe online. They are very well prepared for life beyond school.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard 

Typically, pupils achieve well. Pupils' outcomes at the end of key stage 4 compare positively to national published data. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those who are disadvantaged, make secure progress from their starting points. They are well prepared for their next steps in education, employment or training. Many of the pupils from this school go on to study at a range of local sixth-form provisions.

Pupils largely secure the knowledge they need in word reading, spelling, handwriting and number facts. Leaders ensure there is effective support and intervention for individual pupils which means, for most, their gaps are closing quickly. However, some of this support is at the early stage of being implemented and therefore, for some pupils, these gaps currently persist.

Across the curriculum, pupils generally produce work of a sound quality, including pupils with SEND, those who are disadvantaged and those known to social care.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders closely monitor the quality of the curriculum and teaching across the school. They identify when timely action is needed to bring about improvement. Teachers who are new to the school, or less experienced, receive an enhanced programme of support.

Leaders have designed a curriculum that is ambitious and well planned for each subject and year group. They have carefully considered the knowledge they want pupils to learn. Leaders ensure that pupils receive a balance of national curriculum subjects alongside the school's Islamiat curriculum.

Generally, the curriculum is taught well. Teachers draw on their knowledge of pupils' needs and starting points when planning and delivering their lessons. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported. For example, they may receive additional check ins from teachers or have longer texts broken down into smaller manageable chunks. However, there is some inconsistency in how well teachers check pupils' understanding and use this to inform the next steps in learning.

Leaders and staff are aware of pupils who have not yet secured the necessary foundations in communication and language, reading, spelling, handwriting and mathematics. Overall, they take appropriate action to secure this knowledge through in-class support or specific intervention, although some gaps remain.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Leaders ensure there is a clear process for identifying pupils' needs early. This includes any pupils that may have emerging special educational needs and/or disabilities. For example, leaders work closely with parents and carers to arrange relevant assessments. Teachers then use a range of strategies to support the pupil effectively in class. Careful tracking of pupils' progress means that leaders respond quickly if needs change or others emerge.

Leaders take time to build a broad picture of each individual pupil which is informed by a wide range of information. For example, their proficiency in English and details of their home languages. Leaders use this information to plan a range of support to reduce barriers to achievement and wellbeing for all pupils, including for those who may be disadvantaged.

Leaders work effectively with the local authority's virtual school to ensure that looked-after pupils have positive experiences and outcomes. For example, through weekly contact and home visits where a pupils' attendance becomes a cause for concern. The school draws appropriately on external support to provide the help needed.

The school does not use any alternative provision.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders have an assured understanding of the strengths and areas for development at the school. They have acted quickly to address the previously unmet independent school standards and other areas for improvement, identified at the previous inspection. Leaders now ensure that the school consistently meets the requirements of the independent school standards. They have increased the capacity of the senior leadership and premises teams, to ensure that this can be maintained over time.

Leaders are highly reflective. They are committed to embedding the improvements they have made as well as moving forwards with new priorities. Leaders and staff care deeply about all pupils. They make decisions in pupils' best interests with the goal for pupils to realise their full potential, both academically and pastorally.

The proprietor delegates most statutory duties to an effectively run governing body. It ensures that the school runs efficiently and provides challenge to leaders. At times, however, the oversight of leaders, including the proprietor and governors, is not consistent, which means that the school's performance is not always as highly effective as it could be.

Staff are positive about working at the school. They feel valued by leaders and have a voice in school improvements. Staff benefit from a well-considered professional learning programme. However, this is not as extensive or targeted as it could be.

Leaders and staff have developed trusting relationships with parents and carers. Most parents are positive about the school's work. Leaders have established helpful links with businesses, charities and other schools for the benefit of pupils.

What it's like to be a pupil at this school

Pupils enjoy their time at Al-Ashraf and they attend regularly. Pupils from different backgrounds are welcomed. Pupils describe the school as a family. The school's alumni are listed proudly on the walls. Many previous pupils visit to share their experiences with the girls currently attending. Pupils say this inspires them to be ambitious for their futures. Some pupils choose to return and work at the school in order to be part of its continued legacy.

Teaching of the ambitious curriculum is typically effective, so pupils achieve well, as shown in national published outcomes. Staff get to know them as individuals which enables pupils to thrive. The school provides effective support to pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. These pupils, like their peers, make secure progress from their starting points.

The school environment is calm and purposeful. Pupils are welcoming to visitors. They are always well mannered and respectful. Pupils form positive relationships with their peers and staff. They have trusted adults they can talk to with any worries or concerns. This supports them to feel safe in school. Bullying is extremely rare. Pupils know that the school will not tolerate any discriminatory behaviour.

The school's house system creates a strong sense of belonging. Pupils enjoy competing against their peers in sport, baking and poetry for example. Pupils benefit from an extensive range of wider experiences and opportunities. These include the annual enrichment week, visits from renowned artists, reward trips and working with local primary schools. Many pupils develop the confidence to lead assemblies where they debate topics of their choice. Pupils learn about faiths and beliefs different to their own. They reflect maturely on world events. They are very well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that teaching precisely and consistently checks pupils' understanding of what they have been taught and that this information is used to carefully plan the next steps for pupils' learning so that any remaining gaps in their knowledge close quickly.
- Leaders should ensure that the professional learning programme is more extensive to carefully match the needs of individual staff while also supporting whole school priorities.
- Leaders, including governors and the proprietor, should further strengthen their strategic oversight of the school's performance in order to achieve consistently strong standards across all areas of the school's work.

About this inspection

Inspectors carried out this standard inspection under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, and checked the school's compliance with the independent school

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

Following our renewed inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

Inspectors spoke with the headteacher, designated safeguarding lead, special educational needs and disabilities coordinator, the chair of the governing body and the proprietor. Inspectors also spoke with groups of staff and pupils.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

This school is a non-selective, independent all girls school.

This school is registered as having a Muslim religious ethos.

This school does not use any alternative provision.

The proprietor is Al-Madani Educational Trust. Mr. Yakub Patel is the Chair of Trustees.

The fees currently charged are a minimum of £2,150 per annum up to a maximum of £2,650 per annum.

The email address for the school is office@al-ashraf.gloucs.sch.uk

Headteacher: Abdullah Patel

Independent school standards

Independent school standards are either met or not met for each category.

1. Quality of education provided

Standards met

All standards have been met.

2. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

Standards met

All standards have been met.

3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Standards met

All standards have been met.

4. Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

Standards met

All standards have been met.

5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Standards met

All standards have been met.

6. Provision of information

Standards met

All standards have been met.

7. Manner in which complaints are handled

Standards met

All standards have been met.

8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Standards met

All standards have been met.

Lead inspector:

Kelly Olive, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspector:

Sandy Hayes, Ofsted Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

This data was available to the inspector at the time of the inspection.

Total pupils

76

School capacity

87

Pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan

0

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

5

Our grades explained

Exceptional

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other schools can learn from it.

Strong standard

The school reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

Expected standard

The school is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

Needs attention

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

Urgent improvement

The school needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

Insufficient evidence

Inspectors were unable to gather reliable enough evidence to grade an evaluation area. This is rare and normally only happens if there are no pupils on roll at the school.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) inspects services providing education and skills for children and learners of all ages, and inspects and regulates services that care for children and young people.

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 <https://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 2026



© Crown copyright