



**Al-Ashraf**  
PRIMARY SCHOOL

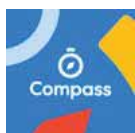


**Al-Ashraf**  
NURSERY

# Al-Ashraf Primary School and Nursery

*"Firm roots, Branches in the sky"*

SCHOOL PROSPECTUS 2023-24





بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

## HEADTEACHER'S WELCOME

Assalamu alaykum wrwb

On behalf of myself, the Staff and the Governors, I would like to welcome you to Al-Ashraf Primary School. By the will of Allah (SWT), Al-Ashraf Primary School started as a community project in 2006 with 25 children and Alhamdulillah through the community's support, has now grown into a fully-fledged Primary school. Located in the centre of Gloucester, our vibrant and inclusive Islamic School and Nursery is at the heart of the local community.

Our dedicated and talented team of staff are passionate about providing a broad and deep curriculum, to ensure every child can reach their highest potential, both Islamically and academically.

At Al-Ashraf, we pride ourselves on maintaining a happy and welcoming atmosphere for all of our pupils, parents and visitors. Visitors often comment on the ethos of the school and on how industrious and hardworking the pupils are!

Al-Ashraf has established a name for itself for providing high quality education in a safe, secure, inspiring and harmonious Islamic atmosphere. Our aim is to build firm foundations, nurture your child's delicate personality, make every pupil feel valued and cared for, and ensure each child reaches their potential.

We look to instil in our pupils, Islamic values, good manners, confidence and a sense of duty and purpose towards the world. We believe this will help them excel spiritually and academically and make positive contributions to society.

This booklet can only reflect some of the ethos of the school and we encourage you to take the opportunity of visiting the school to experience for yourself life at Al-Ashraf - it would be our pleasure to show you around our fabulous school.

Mrs Zainab Patel



## OUR CONTEXT

Al-Ashraf is an independent Islamic Primary school with a flourishing attached nursery. The school has enjoyed success over many years, by consistently delivering excellent results at KS2 level (Yr 6) that compare favourably to local and national schools. We are registered with the Department for Education (DfE). Our school registration number is 916/6081. The proprietor of the school, Al-Madani Educational Trust, is registered with the Charity Commission - registration number 1134963

## OUR MOTTO: "*FIRM ROOTS, BRANCHES IN THE SKY*"

Our motto has been adapted from a Quranic verse (14:24), which describes the results of strong Imaan (faith) and piety being likened to a tree with strong roots, healthy branches and flourishing fruits. Like the tree will grow tall and benefit others through its shade and fruits, a believer with strong faith foundations will most definitely provide benefit others.

## OUR MISSION STATEMENT

*"To create and promote firm foundations in a warm caring Islamic environment, in which each child can achieve their full potential in Faith and Education, and blossom into proud Muslims who are an asset to our society"*



# OUR SCHOOL VALUES

As part of our Islamic ethos, we keep the tarbiyah (Islamic nurturing) of our pupils at the heart of our mission. Ofsted (2020) praised our school values as being the '*golden thread*' which runs through our school. Our school values are summarized in the word **AKHLAQ**, an Arabic word meaning 'good character':

**Appreciation** - I *appreciate* all my blessings, big and small

**Kindness** - Allah is kind and loves kindness, so I am *kind*

**Honesty** - I am always *honest*. Honesty leads me to good.

**Love** - I *love* everybody Allah tells me to

**Ambition** - I have high *ambitions*. I aim high and try my best

**Quality** - Everything I do has to be of the best *quality*.

Each value will be the focus in each half-term. For every display of any of these qualities, our pupils are awarded House Points.







## OUR ISLAMIC ETHOS: OUR RAISON D'ÊTRE

It is vital for us that our children develop into well rounded individuals with strong Islamic roots and foundations. Underpinning all our work is the Islamic ethos which runs through the entire school, from early years through to Yr 6.

Observance of Islamic manners, etiquette and culture are all part of the daily life and add to the holistic development of our children. Likewise, noteworthy Islamic dates, terms, manners of greeting, attitudes and behaviour will be an integral part of each school day.

High quality pastoral support is key to this aim, and we work closely with parents to develop relationships with families and help pupils to achieve their full potential.

As part of their school day, boys and girls from the Oak class (Years 5 and 6) are given time to pray their Zuhr salah in school. Habits like these, formed in an Islamic school will create the strong Islamic foundations we long for in our children. Alongside this, we promote a 'Sunnah per week' designed by qualified scholars, which is then promoted throughout the week

At the start of the day, children are welcomed with salam and recite the duas for knowledge, ensuring their day starts with the remembrance of Allah (SWT). Every Friday, children recite salawat (durud) upon our Beloved Nabi (May Peace and Blessings enshroud him), instilling in them the importance of loving the people of Allah.



## OUR SCHOOL SETUP: OUR MIXED-AGE CLASSES

Currently, we operate in a model of mixed-age classes, split into 4 groups:

- Willow - Early Years Foundation Class 2 (Reception)
- Elm - Years 1/2
- Cedar - Years 3/4
- Oak - Years 5/6

We have found great benefits so far in the mixed-age class setting. The teachers and TAs have been supported by senior leaders and the children have benefited from the mixed ages, learning to support and challenge each other.

Multiple pieces of research indicate that mixed-age classes are just as, or in cases, more effective than traditional one-age classes. Our staff have created a learning environment in which pupils can thrive and move ahead with their learning.

To give ourselves the best chance to make our school a success, we also use the services of various educational consultants, who have helped us make enormous progress.

Our teachers have been sent on school exchange visits to identify and introduce good practice from other schools, similar to ours. We also regularly network with numerous other school leaders to ensure we are up-to-date with policies and practices, using every opportunity to share best practices. This has opened up opportunities for outreach work with our children who have benefited from school-exchanges with a local CofE school.



# OUR SCHOOL DAY

8:10 am	School Gates open
8.20 am	Doors open – SLT gather children outside
8.30am	Doors close and Registration
8:35 am	Lesson 1 - English (with Spellings and Reading)
10:15 am	Break/ Snack time
10:30 am	Lesson 2 – Maths
11:30 am	Lesson 3 – Islamic Studies
12:30 pm	Lunch time
1:30 pm	Afternoon Lessons
3:30 pm	School ends

*Timetable is subject to change*





## OUR BROAD AND BALANCED CURRICULUM

Our curriculum embraces the community in which it is situated, recognising local culture, history, heritage, geographical and business links and most importantly, the aspirations of all our children. We place strong emphasis on the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all our pupils. Our school community has identified a clear set of values that underpin expectations for behaviour for all members of our school family, as is evident in the half-termly school valuesm, AKHLAQ.

We follow the National Curriculum objectives for all subjects. Our daily lessons include English, Reading, Spellings, Maths and Islamic Studies. The afternoons are shared between History, Geography, Science, Art, DT, PSHE, Computing, and PE. Our curriculum is well-structured, flows from one topic to the other and allows ample opportunity for retrieval practice.

Our children come to school with different life experiences, which impacts their vocabulary, reasoning and understanding throughout all key stages. We provide a wealth of trips and visits to improve learning outside the classroom and to create links between learning and fun for our children, such as theatre experiences, trips to the farm, museums, zoos, and to Westminster, experiences which they otherwise would usually not have access to. We consider the learning gained from these trips to be invaluable, helping children develop understanding about the world in which we live, bringing to life classroom-based learning. We want to prepare all our children for the next stages in their educational careers as well as allow them to develop their aspirations for adult life.

The ability to learn is underpinned by the teaching of basic skills, knowledge, concepts and values. We constantly provide enrichment opportunities to engage children and believe that childhood should be a happy and investigative. They are at a stage in their lives in which there are no limits to their curiosity and there is a thirst for new experiences and knowledge.





## LETTING PUPILS LEAD

They say today's children are tomorrow's leaders. At Al-Ashraf, we firmly believe that children can be leaders today, and this experience can only benefit them tomorrow. We therefore encourage our children to take the lead in school initiatives.

- Two of our Year 6 children are selected as Head boy and Head girl.
- Another 10 are elected onto the School Council by their classmates, with one child elected to be Chairperson through a whole-school vote.
- Our teachers select 6 anti-bullying buddies across the school who are given training by our Behaviour Lead. Their role is to monitor and identify behavioural issues in the classroom and report them to a trusted adult.
- Another 6 children across the school are selected to act as Well-Being Ambassadors, responsible to support their classmates struggling with their emotions.

Our children are at the centre of everything we do and we value their feedback on matters which concern them. Every child matters here.

## OUR STATE-OF-THE-ART RESOURCES

To facilitate the highest standards of teaching and learning in the classrooms, we have invested heavily in technology over the past couple of years. We have recently installed interactive screens in every class, including our nursery. The interactive panels have reinvigorated our classrooms and brought to life abstract concepts, all at our fingertips.

We have equipped our computing room with new computers and software, committing to the long-term improvements of our IT systems.

We have also purchased a number of new iPads to facilitate hands-on technological learning during class times, which teachers use every day. Alhamdulillah, with an ever-advancing technological world, we do not intend to remain stagnant, and ensure we move forward with modern technology.

# OUR ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENTS

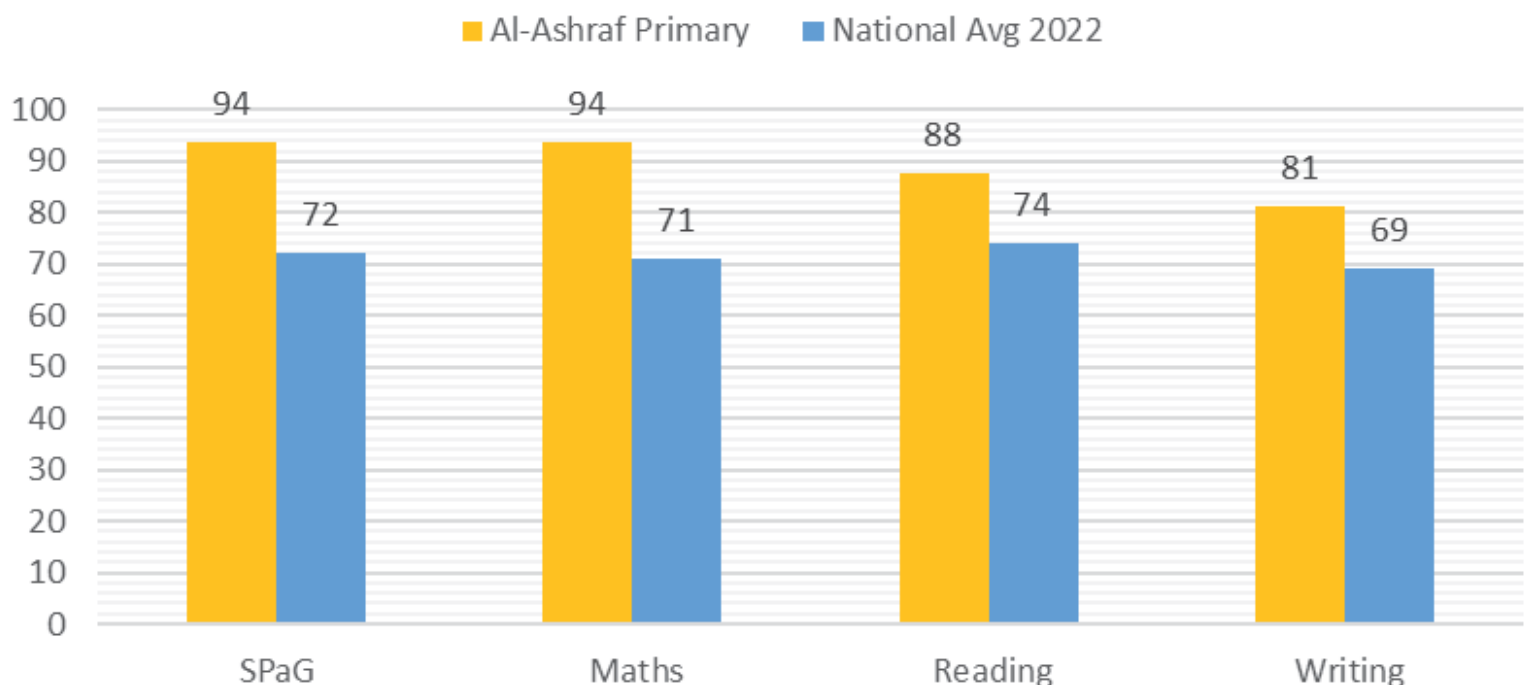
We are fully committed to providing our pupils with the best possible education and Islamic tarbiyah. Despite our restricted finances due to our low tuition fees model, we have consistently outperformed our local and national counterparts in the national SATs exams, sat by the children at the end of Year 6.

Below is a comparison of recent data from the May 2022 SATs exams. As you can clearly see, Al-Ashraf Primary's Year 6 pupils produced exceptional results, once again, thanks to the commitment of the children, our parents and of course the classroom staff, who work tirelessly to ensure every child is given the support and challenge required to help them reach their potential.

Many of our alumni have been, or currently are, on our staffing team, whilst others have graduated from university, many of them studying the sciences, finance and other prestigious degrees.

***'Leaders have also made sure that learning is well planned in subjects such as mathematics and science. In these subjects, important ideas and areas of learning are taught in the right order. This helps pupils to know and remember more.'*** Ofsted 2020

## 2022 Y6 SATs Results Pupils who meet the Expected standard





# OUR INCLUSIVE SCHOOL

Alhamdulillah, we are proud to have a growing school family from diverse backgrounds and cultures. We value the contribution of every child to our school family and welcome you all. Our diversity is our strength.

We understand that not every learner learns at the same speed. We provide additional classroom scaffolds, small group focused support and a pastoral support team which includes a learning mentor to help those at risk of not achieving their potential. If your child needs extra support we will endeavour to meet their needs through our careful provision mapping and in partnership with you, parents and carers.

We keep our school family's broad backgrounds, their strengths and their challenges in mind when we decide what to teach and how to teach it. In addition to detailed training, we have employed the services of Educational Psychologists, Play therapists and are currently working closely alongside our Occupational Therapist to support our neuro-diverse children

Al-Ashraf Primary has British Values at the heart of its ethos and curriculum. Our dedication to ensuring that our students leave the school as independent and responsible citizens means that we reinforce British values regularly.

*'Senior leaders have designed and put in place an ambitious curriculum, including for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).'* Ofsted 2020



# OUR NURSERY AND EARLY YEARS

Our fantastic Nursery caters for children aged 3+. We follow the DfE's Early Years' Foundation Stage curriculum, with a focus on developing the Islamic tarbiyah of every child. Time is structured with an emphasis on fun, relevant and motivating activities, focusing on the 7 primary learning areas:

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, Social and Emotional development
- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

The Nursery also offers weekly Mother and toddler groups. Please visit our Nursery website for more details at <http://nursery.al-ashraf.org.uk>.

*Children in Nursery thrive. They are eager to explore and find out new things, and they stick at tasks without giving up. They listen attentively. Children are friendly. They work well together. They are confident to approach adults if they need help. Staff make close checks on children's development and are adept at shaping the curriculum to help children to excel.*

Ofsted 2020





# ISLAMIC STUDIES AT AL-ASHRAF

From Nursery through to Y6, we have allocated a specific portion of the day to teach Islamic Studies and Arabic reading

In EYFS, we focus on the basics, for example:

- Islamic nursery rhymes;
- Arabic numbers, months, 5 pillars, colours
- Pronunciation of letters;
- Aqa'id (beliefs) and reflecting on God's creation,
- Themes based around the months of Islam, e.g. Hajj week
- Reading book (Inc. stories from the Qur'an) and looking at pictures: story mapping using visuals.
- Fun opportunities of learning:
  - Islamic show and tell
  - Taster week
  - Senses week

Throughout the school, we use the An Nasihah curriculum as a guide, to ensure comprehensive coverage over the 7 years children are at Al-Ashraf. We cover the core topics of

- Aqeedah (Islamic Beliefs)
- Fiqh (Islamic rulings)
- Tarikh (Islamic History)
- Sirah (The Prophet's life)
- Hadith (Prophetic statements)
- Adab (Islamic etiquette)

Additionally, we start teaching Arabic reading with the Qa'idah, moving up to Qur'anic recitation. Our focus is quality of recitation (Tajwid), rather than quantity recited.



*'The curriculum is rooted in the school's faith-based ethos. Pupils learn about Islamic and British values through meaningful experiences and reflection on AKHLAQ (Appreciation, Kindness, Honesty, Love, Ambition and Quality)' Ofsted 2020*



## RELATIONSHIPS AND HEALTH EDUCATION (RHE)

We have introduced Relationships Education to put in place the building blocks needed for positive and safe relationships of all kinds, using age-appropriate language, concepts and resources. This will start with family and friends, how to treat each other with kindness, and recognising the difference between online and offline friendships. We can build on the core content by reflecting their beliefs in their teaching.

RHE at our school is centred on the example set by the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him) and will be positive and prudent, showing the potential for development, whilst enabling the dangers and risks involved to be understood and appreciated.

Our programme enshrines Islamic values relating to the importance of stable relationships, marriage and family life. It also promotes those virtues which are essential in fulfilling the rights of others.

We have a responsibility to ensure our resources consider the 'age and religious backgrounds of its pupils'. After consulting with parents and staff, we have partnered with AMS to use their DfE-approved resources. We would not want insensitive teaching of the 'sex education' curriculum to cause undue distress and confusion to our parents and pupils.

As a Muslim school, we will only be teaching age-appropriate sex education to our Primary school children due to its sensitive nature. During Year 5 and 6, our children will receive lessons on 'growing up' which will be delivered by trained staff members, sensitive to the needs of the school, the pupil and their parents.

We will ensure staff receive the required training to enable them to deliver the curriculum effectively. They will also be trained on meeting the emotional needs of the children through empathy and understanding.

Our RHE policy can be viewed here: [al-ashraf.org.uk/primary/files/rhe-policy.pdf](http://al-ashraf.org.uk/primary/files/rhe-policy.pdf)



## ENRICHMENT OPPORTUNITIES

A weekly programme of activities is incorporated into the school's curriculum and extra-curricular clubs to enhance and enrich the children's learning experience. These include: art, design and technology, cooking, sport, foreign languages, singing (nasheeds), newspaper club, netball club, reading club, Lego club, student council and many more!

We have developed and maintained positive relationships and partnerships with many local sports clubs and charities, for example, Gloucestershire CCC, The Friendship Café and City Farm, Rising Stars FC and are a proud official affiliate of Gloucester RFC, whose coaches offer us free Rugby coaching during PE lessons!

*"...promote pupils' personal development. Pupils learn about the wider world, including other faiths. Visits to many places of worship and visitors to school provide exciting experiences. As a result, pupils learn about culture and science. They understand what it is to be a good citizen" Ofsted 2020*



## ADMISSIONS

Our school is welcoming to children and parents of all religions, backgrounds and cultures. To check if places are available in the school for your child, please call the School Office on 01452-503533. If there are spaces available, please complete the Admissions Form found at <https://al-ashraf.org.uk/primary/admissions.php> and hand it in to the school office or email our admissions team on [admissions@al-ashraf.gloucs.sch.uk](mailto:admissions@al-ashraf.gloucs.sch.uk). Alternatively collect the form from the school office during school hours, between 8:15 am - 3:45 pm.

Please ensure you are fully aware of the contents of the Applications/Admissions Policy before completing the form.

## SCHOOL FEES

Like every independent school, we are reliant on school fees to operate. The fees are used on staff wages, utilities, classroom resources and providing enrichment opportunities to all children.

After much consideration and parental consultation, the yearly fees for **2023-24** have been set at **£2225** for every child, from Reception class, through to Year 6.

If there are three siblings attending Al-Ashraf, we have set the third child's discount at **50%**, meaning the total for three children would be **£5500** for the school year.

If parents are committed to sending their children to the school but require reasonable financial assistance, please visit the school management who may be able to provide guidance.





# PUPIL-PARENT-STAFF COMMUNICATION

## In the Early Years

We exchange information and discuss things that will benefit your child's development with the nursery. These conversations are best with your child's 'Key Person' who:

- helps your child to settle, feel happy and safe,
- is responsible for your child's care, development and learning,
- takes a careful note of your child's progress,
- shares ideas as to how to help your child via ClassDojo or My Learning Book (digital learning journal),
- will discuss your child's progress & adjustment to preschool and reception year on parent's consultation day.

## In Key Stage 1 and 2

We have fixed two dates for pupil-parent-teacher consultations, keeping the child at the centre of their learning, ensuring they take ownership of their progress.

Parents can also connect with teachers on **Class Dojo**, and with the office on the **Compass Education** app

## PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

The privilege of a low-cost independent Muslim community school is that it can only be maintained by your active involvement, as has been the case since the inception of the school, alhamdulillah. You are invited to volunteer where possible, be it with your time, your help, or your expertise.

## PARENT GOVERNORS

We are fortunate to have a highly effective Governing Body who work closely with all stakeholders and the wider community. The Inspectors met them and described them as having 'been relentless in their pursuit to turn things around'. Parents are encouraged to become active members of the Governing Body and are encouraged to join the school PTA, where you can help organise and support fundraising events, and also suggest improvements to the school.

*"At Al-Ashraf, I created many unforgettable memories. The entire school was like a family coming together to learn new things and venture together on new adventures." (Nusayba, ex-pupil)*

*"Al-Ashraf taught my child what it meant to be a good Muslim, and that being a good Muslim and being a good British Citizen go hand-in-hand. I am indebted to the staff there who helped him to understand the value of education and helped create an Islamic identity within my child." (Khadija, ex-parent)*

*"Alhumdulillah, I feel Maryam is doing very well and her confidence has increased. I also feel that teacher communication is very good." (Imran, Father)*

*"My time at AAPS really helped mould me into the person I am today. The teachers and teaching assistants there encouraged me to try my hardest and fulfil my potential, whilst also safeguarding my Deen from a young age. I am indebted to all the staff at AAPS for all the support they were able to give me. Truly some of the best, carefree years of my life." (Abdullah, ex-pupil)*

*"I had a great experience at Al Ashraf primary school and as one of the first students, I saw it grow closer in terms of being a school community. It enabled foundations in my Deen to be built as well as allowing academic success." (Aliyah, ex-pupil)*

*"I found al-Ashraf to be full of love, leadership and elevated expectations. I was taught never to judge a book by its cover, and that, although we are all different, we are all one family, and should celebrate our uniqueness. It was the best school for me and has prepared me for life as a law-abiding, high-aspiring British Muslim." (Aaminah, ex-pupil)*





## WHY AL-ASHRAF?

- We aim to safeguard the Iman of our children through our Islamic environment and ethos.
- We are an Ofsted GOOD school
- Our Islamic tarbiyah focus starts from EYFS
- Established and resourced classrooms.
- Fully qualified teachers and TAs in every class.
- We have a family of committed staff from our own community who care deeply for every child.
- Daily Qa'idah/ Qur'an classes across the school.
- Effective and successful Islamic Studies curriculum, taught by qualified Ulama/ Alimas, with TAs
- Chance for children in KS2 to pray salah every day, under supervision of our Muslim staff.
- Tarbiyah programme with reminders/ duas/ surats/ durud/ self-reflection/ assemblies/ salah/ sunnah of the week.
- Minimal behavioural issues.
- We follow the National Curriculum objectives for academic subjects
- Broad and balanced curriculum
- Countless enrichment opportunities.
- We can teach RSE in line with our faith beliefs,
- We consistently outperform schools locally and nationally in statutory assessments
- Cheaper fees compared to other private schools.
- Promotion of important Islamic calendar events which encourages child involvement.
- Support during Ramadhan – shorter school days.
- Promotion of Halal activities/ events/ meals.



# AL-ASHRAF

## PRIMARY SCHOOL & NURSERY

*" Firm roots, branches in the sky "*

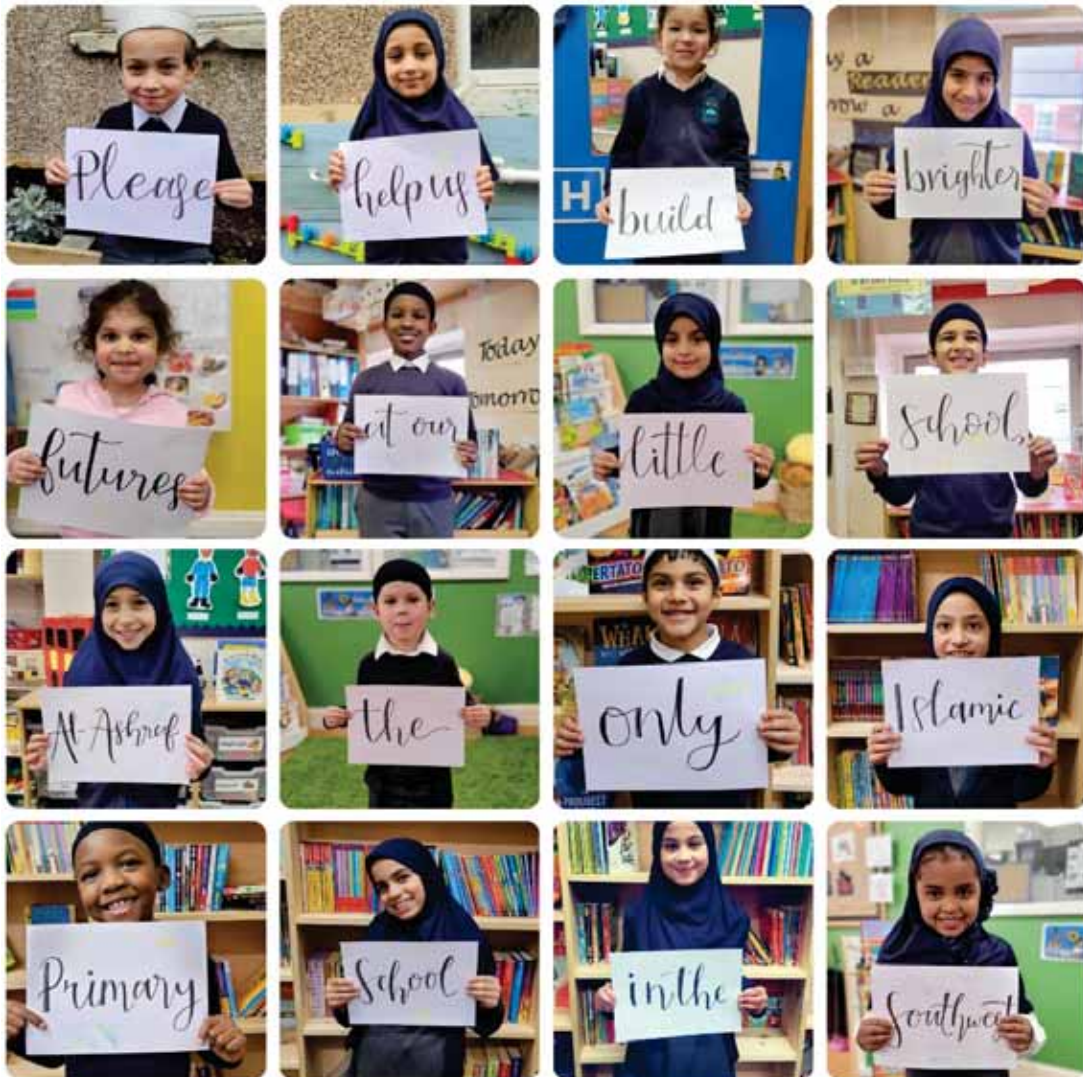


### C O N T A C T U S

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**Al-Ashraf Primary School**

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