

Inspection of The School of the Islamic Republic of Iran

100 Carlton Vale, London NW6 5HE

Inspection dates: 11 to 13 October 2022

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Inadequate

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Inadequate

Does the school meet the independent school standards?

No

What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders do not uphold their statutory responsibilities to safeguard pupils. While staff supervision and the secure school site help pupils to feel safe, leaders have not kept up to date with all safeguarding requirements. Leaders and staff are not alert to safeguarding risks to pupils. Leaders and staff have not received the necessary training to ensure that they know how to identify whether a pupil may be at risk from harm and in need of support.

Leaders do not have high enough expectations for all that pupils can achieve. In the secondary phase, they have put in place a curriculum that provides a limited range of subjects in which pupils can gain qualifications. Pupils in the primary phase do not learn new knowledge and skills as successfully as they should.

Pupils behave well here. They are polite, welcoming and articulate. Pupils enjoy learning, get along well with their peers and have positive professional relationships with their teachers. Teachers resolve any rare instances of poor behaviour, including bullying.

Pupils enjoy taking part in physical activities at school. They like socialising and playing various sports at breaktimes, including football, badminton, table tennis and volleyball. Pupils are encouraged to be respectful to each other and towards those of different faiths and cultures.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders have developed the school's curriculum across the primary and secondary phases since the previous inspection. In some subjects, leaders have thought carefully about how the curriculum is sequenced. They have checked that the subject content matches the ambition of the national curriculum. In these subjects, teaching helps pupils to develop knowledge and skills that build over time. Pupils have opportunities to go over and practise what they have learned previously before moving on to more complex ideas.

Leaders' curriculum thinking is more established in the secondary phase and in mathematics, English and science in the primary phase. In Years 1 to 6, teachers are at the very early stages of becoming familiar with the subject content that leaders expect pupils to learn in other subjects. Teachers have received some training to enable them to be familiar with leaders' curriculum thinking. However, leaders have not made sure that staff in the primary phase have received the training they need to improve their subject knowledge and subject-specific teaching across the curriculum. Currently, teachers in the primary phase do not follow leaders' curriculum thinking in some subjects, including geography and history. Consequently, in these subjects, pupils are not helped to learn key subject content and skills, and build their knowledge over time.

Across the school, pupils study a wide range of subjects. However, choices of subjects for pupils to study in Years 10 and 11 are limited. For example, pupils in Years 10 and 11 are currently not able to study and gain qualifications in computing, physical education or geography.

Leaders do not have clear systems to check how well pupils learn and to inform plans for pupils' future learning. Pupils who are falling behind are not identified or supported in a timely way. Teachers do not ensure that pupils are clear how to improve their knowledge and skills. Staff are not as alert as they should be to identifying where pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) might need additional support.

Teachers use a range of approaches to teach pupils to read, including phonics in the primary phase. Staff follow a programme to teach phonics. They select books for pupils to read so that pupils practise the phonics sounds that they know. Teachers check how well pupils develop reading fluency and comprehension. They provide support for those pupils who are falling behind. However, leaders have not put in place a systematic approach to identifying where pupils are having difficulty with specific phonics sounds. Teachers have received some training in the delivery of phonics, but leaders have not ensured that there is an appropriate level of staff expertise in this area. Pupils are not helped to develop their reading fluency swiftly.

Leaders provide a range of initiatives to promote reading across the school. Fiction and non-fiction books are available in the school's library. Pupils in the primary phase enjoy choosing books to read for pleasure. Secondary-age pupils are less enthusiastic about reading. Leaders do not provide these pupils with a suitable range of high-quality reading books.

Pupils' behaviour around the school is orderly. They are settled in class and attentive to their teachers so that learning proceeds uninterrupted. Pupils are proud of their achievements.

Pupils in the primary phase receive relationships education as part of their religious education and citizenship lessons. This includes learning about different types of relationships, ways to keep safe and online safety. Pupils in Years 7 to Year 9 build on these themes in a programme of personal, social and health education (PSHE). They are taught, for example, about the importance of healthy lifestyles and the risks to health of addictive substances. PSHE includes relationships and sex education (RSE), and leaders have adapted the content to include coverage of themes related to mental health and well-being.

Leaders have recently developed the school's provision of careers information, education, advice and guidance (CIEAG) within PSHE and citizenship. However, leaders have not implemented their intended plans to provide pupils in Years 10 and 11 with one-to-one independent careers advice.

Leaders, including the proprietor and the governing body, have not responded effectively to the findings of the previous inspection report. They have not ensured that the independent school standards are met.

Leaders' risk assessments and policies relating to health and safety do not apply directly to the school's specific site. For instance, some of leaders' policies refer to features that do not exist on the school site. Leaders have not made sure that staff complete robust risk assessments, for example for school outings. Staff do not identify appropriate steps to avoid or reduce risks to pupils' safety. Leaders have not made sure that all the books accessible to pupils in the school's library are suitable for the age of pupils.

Staff said that they feel well supported by leaders and do not have concerns about their workload. However, leaders have not provided staff with sufficient training to enable them to carry out their duties to a consistently high standard.

Leaders, including the proprietor and chair of the governing body, have regular communications with parents and carers. They have consulted parents' views on the RSE policy, and enabled parents to remove their children from sex education if requested. Neither the RSE policy, nor a statement of the policy, is published on the school's website. Leaders do not publish all the information on the school's website as required in the independent school standards.

Leaders have made some improvements to the school site so that some previously unmet standards relating to the welfare, health and safety of pupils are now met.

The school is compliant with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

Leaders, including the proprietor and the governing body, have not ensured that they and staff have received up-to-date safeguarding training. Staff are not familiar with the latest statutory safeguarding guidance. They lack awareness of risks to pupils' safety and well-being. They also lack vigilance in identifying and reporting when pupils may need support with a safeguarding concern. Leaders have not established a systematic approach to the reporting of any concerns.

Pupils are taught about ways to keep themselves safe. This is done through PSHE classes, assemblies and guest speakers, including the police.

During the inspection, inspectors reviewed the books in the school library. Inspectors found a non-fiction book with adult content that was inappropriate for the age of pupils using the library. The book was located on a shelf alongside books aimed for primary-age pupils.

The school's safeguarding policy is published on the school's website. The policy does not reflect current guidance nor reflect the school's practice.

Leaders do not ensure that they know and understand all the required safeguarding checks that need to be made of staff, leaders and the governing body. Leaders have not taken suitably swift action to make all the checks that were not in place at the time of the previous inspection. During this inspection, leaders took steps to make these checks, but the section 128 checks of leaders, including the proprietor, remained incomplete at the end of the inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and the proprietor)

- Leaders and the proprietor body have not made sure that leaders with responsibility for safeguarding have received necessary and appropriate safeguarding training. Leaders and staff are not familiar with their statutory responsibilities to safeguard pupils. They are not vigilant to identifying when a pupil may be at risk from harm. Leaders should, as a matter of urgency, ensure that their own and the safeguarding training of staff is up to date so that all have a confident working knowledge of, and carry out, their statutory safeguarding responsibilities.
- Leaders do not know and understand the necessary safeguarding checks to be made of staff and leaders, including the proprietor and governing body. They have not completed section 128 checks of staff and the governing body, where there is a requirement to do so. Leaders should ensure that they improve their knowledge and understanding of the statutory safeguarding checks to be made, and complete these without delay.
- Leaders' revised curriculum plans for the foundation subjects are in the very early stages of being implemented in the primary phases. Teachers in the primary phase have received little training on what is expected of them, so they generally are not delivering the curriculum content that leaders intend. Teachers in the primary phase do not have strong subject knowledge or confidence in teaching some foundation subjects. Leaders should provide training and guidance to enable teachers to teach the required knowledge and skills set out in leaders' plans effectively.
- Leaders and staff lack expertise in the teaching of early reading and phonics. Pupils do not build strong phonics skills to help them to read with fluency and confidence. Leaders should ensure that staff receive the right training so that they deliver the school's chosen early reading scheme consistently and competently, enabling pupils to develop their reading skills swiftly.
- Leaders do not have an effective approach to assessment across all subjects. Staff do not routinely check how well pupils are learning or identify soon enough when a pupil is falling behind. They are not alert to any pupils with SEND who might need support. Leaders should ensure that teachers check that pupils have

learned the intended knowledge and skills, and provide the right support for any pupils who are falling behind.

- Leaders do not provide the opportunities for pupils to continue to study some subjects after Year 9. Pupils are not able to build on their learning and pursue interests in these subjects. In Years 10 and 11, leaders should extend the range of subjects that pupils are able to study and gain qualifications in.
- Leaders have not acted upon their plans to provide CIEAG to pupils. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 have not received one-to-one, independent careers advice. Leaders should implement their intended provision of CIEAG so that pupils receive the support they need to make well-informed choices about their future careers.
- Leaders' policies relating to health and safety and risk assessments do not reflect procedures and practice in the school. Leaders do not ensure that staff identify health and safety risks and mitigate against these risks. Leaders should review their policies to ensure that they apply to the school's specific site, to the activities which take place within the school, and on excursions. This includes the use of the school's library by the school's wider community and the risks concerning accessibility of books intended for adult readers only. They should provide clear guidance and training so that staff complete risk assessments thoroughly and competently. Leaders should check that health and safety risks to pupils are accurately identified and addressed appropriately.
- Leaders do not provide parents with all the required information as set out in the independent school standards. Information such as term- and holiday-time contact details for the proprietor, copies of previous inspection reports, and details of pupils' academic performance, are not available to parents on the school's website. Leaders should publish this information on the school website.
- Leaders have not responded with necessary urgency to the findings of the previous inspection report. Most of the independent school standards that were unmet then continue to be unmet. Leaders, including the proprietor and the chair of governors, should prioritise the actions needed to ensure that the independent school standards are met.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

School details

Unique reference number	133385
DfE registration number	304/6079
Local authority	Brent
Inspection number	10242753
Type of school	Other Independent School
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	6 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	110
Number of part-time pupils	None
Proprietor	Seyed Abbas Hosseini
Chair	Mojtaba Moghadas
Headteacher	Seyed Abbas Hosseini
Annual fees (day pupils)	£850
Telephone number	020 7372 8051
Website	www.iris.school.co.uk
Email address	irischool@gmail.com
Date of previous inspection	1 March 2022

Information about this school

- The school is an Islamic independent school. It is registered for 81 pupils aged 6 to 16 years. Currently, 110 pupils are on roll. The school is operating beyond its registration agreement with the Department for Education (DfE) as it is recorded on the Get Information about Schools website, and it has not notified the DfE. It has exceeded the maximum number of pupils on roll that it is registered to admit.
- The previous standard inspection was in December 2019 when the school was judged to be inadequate and did not meet the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and associated requirements. A progress monitoring inspection took place in March 2022, when it was judged that standards continued to be unmet.
- Leaders do not make use of alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors carried out this inspection under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008. The purpose of the inspection is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the COVID-19 pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with school leaders, including the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and the chair of the governing body.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, history, mathematics and PSHE. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also looked at curriculum plans and spoke to leaders about some other subjects.
- The inspection of safeguarding included meeting with the leaders with responsibility for safeguarding, reviewing the school's policies, procedures, training and curriculum relevant to safeguarding, and talking to staff and pupils.
- Inspectors toured the school site accompanied by school leaders, to check compliance with independent school standards.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online surveys completed by pupils and staff. There were no responses to the online parent survey.

Inspection team

Amanda Carter-Fraser, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Sophie Cavanagh

Ofsted Inspector

Annex. Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school does not meet the following independent school standards

Part 1. Quality of education provided

- 2(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if-
 - 2(1)(a) the proprietor ensures that a written policy on the curriculum, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work, which provides for the matters specified in sub-paragraph (2) is drawn up and implemented effectively
- 2(2) For the purposes of paragraph (2)(1)(a), the matters are -
 - 2(2)(e) for pupils receiving secondary education, access to accurate, up-to-date careers guidance that –
 - 2(2)(e)(i) is presented in an impartial manner
 - 2(2)(e)(ii) enables them to make informed choices about a range of career options; and
 - 2(2)(e)(iii) helps to encourage them to fulfil their potential.
- 2A(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor -
 - 2A(1)(g) publishes a copy of the statement on a website and provides a copy of the statement free of charge to anyone who asks for one.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 7 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that-
 - 7(a) arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school; and
 - 7(b) such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.
- 16 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that-
 - 16(a) the welfare of pupils at the school is safeguarded and promoted by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written risk assessment policy.
 - 16(b) appropriate action is taken to reduce risks that are identified.

Part 4. Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

- 18(2) The standard in this paragraph is met if -
 - 18(2)(b) no such person carries out work, or intends to carry out work, at the school in contravention of a prohibition order, an interim prohibition order, or any direction made under section 128 of the 2008 Act or section 142 of the 2002 Act, or any disqualification, prohibition or restriction which takes effect as if contained in either such direction.

- 20(6) The standard in this paragraph is met in relation to an individual ("MB"), not being the Chair of the school, who is a member of a body of persons corporate or unincorporate named as the proprietor of the school in the register or in an application to enter the school in the register, if -
- 20(6)(a) MB –
- 20(6)(a)(ii) does not carry out work, at the school in contravention of a prohibition order, an interim prohibition order, or any direction made under section 128 of the 2008 Act or section 142 of the 2002 Act or any disqualification, prohibition or restriction which takes effect as if contained in either such direction.
- 21(3) The information referred to in this sub-paragraph is–
- 21(3)(a) in relation to each member of staff ("S") appointed on or after 1st May 2007, whether–
- 21(3)(a)(iii) a check was made to establish whether S is subject to any direction made under section 128 of the 2008 Act or section 142 of the 2002 Act or any disqualification, prohibition or restriction which takes effect as if contained in such a direction – including the date on which each such check was completed or the certificate obtained;

Part 6. Provision of information

- 32(1) The standard about the provision of information by the school is met if the proprietor ensures that-
 - 32(1)(d) following an inspection under section 108 or 109 of the 2008 Act, a copy of the report of the inspection (if it has been sent to the proprietor) is published and maintained on the school's internet website, and provided to the parents of each registered pupil, by any date specified by the body who conducted the inspection
- 32(2) The information specified in this sub-paragraph is –
 - 32(2)(b) either –
 - 32(2)(b)(i) where the proprietor is an individual, the proprietor's full name, address for correspondence during both term-time and holidays and a telephone number or numbers on which the proprietor may be contacted, or
 - 32(2)(c) where there is a governing body, the name and address for correspondence of its Chair.
- 32(3) The information specified in this sub-paragraph is –
 - 32(3)(e) particulars of the school's academic performance during the preceding school year, including the results of any public examinations
 - 32(3)(g) a copy of the report of any inspection carried out under sections 108 or 109 of the 2008 Act or section 87(1) of the 1989 Act.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

- 34(1) The standard about the quality of leadership and management is met if the proprietor ensures that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school –
 - 34(1)(a) demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently
 - 34(1)(b) fulfil their responsibilities effectively so the that independent school standards are met consistently.
 - 34(1)(c) actively promote the well-being of pupils.

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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