

Inspection of Al-Khair Preparatory School

36 Pitlake, Croydon CR0 3RA

Inspection dates: 1 to 3 October 2024

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Early years provision	Good
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good
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Does the school meet the independent school standards?	Yes
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What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils take pride in their learning and want to do well. They know that every member of staff cares for them and wants them to excel. As a result, pupils work hard, rise to these high expectations and achieve well.

Pupils enjoy school, feel safe and get on well with each other. They describe Al-Khair as a place where everyone is welcome and valued. Pupils' good behaviour contributes to the school's positive atmosphere. Pupils show kindness and respect to others. They particularly enjoy assemblies. These are special occasions, where pupils come together to reflect on their own lives as well as the world around them.

The school's broad and exciting curriculum is enriched in a variety of ways. For example, all pupils get the chance to visit places, such as theatres and museums. The school promotes pupils' self-esteem and confidence, particularly in public speaking. For example, pupils regularly take to the stage to recite poetry or to teach their peers about a famous person in history that they have researched. Pupils enjoy jobs such as 'line leaders' and prefects. Pupils in Year 6 happily give up some of their lunch breaks to help younger children learn to read.

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

The proprietor has ensured that the school complies with the independent school standards and the statutory requirements of the early years foundation stage. The school complies with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010. The proprietor, together with governors, works effectively with leaders to ensure that pupils receive a good education and achieve well. Parents and carers are overwhelmingly pleased with the school's work. Staff are determined to do their very best for all pupils. They enjoy working at Al-Khair and feel that leaders take seriously their workload and well-being.

The curriculum is ambitious. The school has put in place schemes of work which are well sequenced and intend for pupils to build up their knowledge over time. In most subjects, including English and mathematics, everyone is clear about what pupils need to learn and when. This clarity helps pupils to develop their knowledge and build on what they have been taught previously. However, in a few subjects, the most important knowledge that pupils need to learn in each topic or unit of work is, at times, not clearly identified. This sometimes makes it harder for staff to know what knowledge to prioritise and reinforce. Sometimes, this affects how well pupils learn in these subjects.

The school's reading programme is well established. It all begins in the Reception Year, where children waste no time in getting to grips with their daily phonics sessions. For example, children really enjoyed spotting the different letter sounds around the classroom. They particularly like the songs that help them to remember how to form different letters correctly. Over time, pupils become fluent and confident readers. Pupils who need extra help to keep up with their peers get the

support that they need. Staff keep a close check on pupils' progress through the reading programme. They provide parents with advice and information about how to support their children at home.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported overall. They benefit from well-planned, one-to-one or small-group sessions, which focus on their individual targets.

Occasionally, teaching is not adapted well to meet pupils' different needs and abilities. Sometimes, tasks do not take into account what pupils already know and can do. When this happens, some pupils struggle with their learning.

Teachers help pupils to learn and use key words accurately. For example, in early years, children discussed the meaning of words, such as 'bat' and 'autumn', in their play. In Year 6, teachers encouraged pupils to explain and use accurately different art terminology when they evaluated the work of South American artists.

Lessons are calm and purposeful. Pupils are keen to learn new things. For example, pupils in Year 2 enthusiastically worked in teams to create abstract sculptures of different people. They shared their ideas and reflected on how to improve their attempts, such as making the different body parts stronger or more life-like.

The school's personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum is planned and sequenced to allow pupils to become increasingly familiar with different concepts. For example, pupils in Year 1 learn about using money to pay for things, including the different values of coins. By the time pupils reach Years 5 and 6, they learn about enterprise, profit and loss, and the importance of savings. Pupils play a key part in organising school events. For example, older pupils manage the summer fair. They come up with ideas for fundraising, design advertisements and organise how the day will run.

Pupils are keen to do everything that they can to win the school's special awards. They particularly like nominating their peers when they observe acts of kindness. Pupils have the opportunity to contribute to their local community. For example, pupils baked bread in school and served this to those less fortunate than themselves at the local foodbank.

The school works effectively with parents to ensure that pupils attend regularly. The before- and after-school clubs are well attended. Pupils get the chance to do coding, cookery and football, for example. In addition, pupils take part in a variety of competitions. The school has developed partnerships with other settings which, among other things, has enabled pupils to visit schools with a different religious ethos. Pupils said how much they like their Islamic studies lessons, where they learn important messages from different stories. They equally enjoy religious education lessons because they learn about a range of religions, people and places.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve? (Information for the school and proprietor)

- In a few of the foundation subjects, the school has not identified the most important knowledge that pupils need to learn and remember in each topic or unit of work. This sometimes affects how well pupils' knowledge develops. In these subjects, the school should identify precisely the essential knowledge that needs to be taught. The school should refine the checks on pupils' learning in these subjects to ensure that pupils have learned and remembered the important subject content.
- Occasionally, teaching is not adapted well to meet pupils' various needs and abilities. Sometimes, pupils are expected to complete tasks without having secured the prior knowledge that they need to be successful. This can hinder pupils' learning. The school should ensure that staff have the training and support that they need to be able to adjust teaching to meet pupils' needs. The school should ensure that activity choices help all pupils to achieve success.

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	147184
DfE registration number	306/6020
Local authority	Croydon
Inspection number	10322600
Type of school	Other Independent School
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	286
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Imam Qasim Ahmed
Headteacher	Almas Iqbal
Annual fees (day pupils)	£4,760
Telephone number	020 8662 8664
Website	www.alkhairschool.org.uk
Email address	primary@alkhairschool.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	10 to 12 March 2020

Information about this school

- Al-Khair Preparatory School is registered to admit up to 320 pupils between the ages of four and eleven years. The school has an Islamic religious ethos.
- The school does not use 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.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the proprietor, chair of governors, headteacher and deputy headteacher. They also held meetings with leaders responsible for safeguarding.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, art and history. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some 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, including PSHE, physical education and science.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors looked at documentation and toured the premises to check the school's compliance with the independent school standards.

Inspection team

Gary Rawlings, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Nick Hitchen

Ofsted Inspector

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