

Inspection of Read Academy Education

36–38 Mansfield Road, Ilford, Essex, Ilford, Essex IG1 3BD

Inspection dates: 4 to 6 July 2023

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Outstanding**

Personal development **Outstanding**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection Good

Does the school meet the independent school standards? **Yes**

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are very happy to come to school. They described the school as a family where everybody looks after each other. Pupils happily mix with friends in other year groups. They are safe in school and they know that they can talk to any adult if they have any worries.

Leaders have high expectations for all pupils. They expect pupils to behave well so they can achieve high academic standards. Pupils study a broad range of subjects and take part in many rich and well-planned extra-curricular activities. This means that pupils are very well prepared for the next stage of their education or the world of work. However, in some subjects, leaders' thinking about the order in which topics are taught is not as clear as it could be. Where this is the case, it decreases how successfully pupils build on their prior learning.

Leaders have created a culture of mutual respect and reflection in school. The behaviour policy is based on the principles of rewarding good behaviour and giving time for reflection when behaviour does not meet expectations. Pupils are really motivated by the rewards they receive, for example the 'XPs' in the secondary phase. Pupils are encouraged to collect rewards to build their own self-esteem and to contribute to their house points. Bullying occurs very rarely. Pupils trust staff to deal with any issues quickly and effectively.

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

Leaders have designed a broad curriculum throughout the school. In early years, all seven areas of learning and development are covered effectively through an ambitious and well-designed curriculum. In the primary and secondary phases, the curriculum remains broad and ambitious. All pupils study Islamic Studies and Arabic in addition to subjects like English, mathematics, science, art and humanities. In most subjects leaders have thought carefully about the order in which they teach subject content. For example, in English in Years 7, 8 and 9, pupils explore in depth the language and wider context of Shakespeare's writing to prepare them for reading Macbeth at GCSE. In history, pupils are taught about the concepts of monarchy and empire in medieval England. These ideas are revisited when pupils learn about the Tudors and later the First and Second World Wars.

Leaders have designed the whole curriculum around five key strands that run across the academic year. In some subjects in the primary phase, these strands drive the order that key knowledge is taught in a subject. At times, this adherence to these strands means that pupils do not learn subject content in an order that is helping them to build knowledge step by step. As a result, pupils can struggle to understand new ideas as they lack appropriate prior knowledge to access the new learning.

Leaders make sure that teachers assess what pupils know and remember. Staff in the early years assess and track the learning of their key children carefully across the seven areas of learning. They use this information effectively in order to refine

what is taught and practised, and in turn, ensure that children are supported well to make progress through the curriculum. Staff also share this information regularly with parents so that they can be fully informed about how their children are learning and progressing. In the primary and secondary phases, teachers check pupils' understanding frequently in lessons. If they identify misconceptions or gaps in knowledge, they deal with them immediately. Pupils respond well to teachers' guidance and instructions. They are enthusiastic about developing their knowledge and the quality of their work, for example by redrafting their written responses.

Leaders assess pupils' prior learning when they join the school. This includes assessing children in the Nursery and Reception years. Leaders quickly identify any pupils who may have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They create individual education plans for these pupils and share them with staff. Staff use these plans to adapt their lessons so that all pupils have access to the same ambitious curriculum.

Leaders have made reading a priority. No time is wasted to assess children's prior learning in the Reception Year and phonics is taught from the very start. Leaders have high expectations for all children to become accurate and fluent readers quickly. Staff are well trained so they can deliver the phonics programme effectively. If any pupil falls behind, a range of effective extra help is put in place immediately, for example through one-to-one sessions. Pupils get lots of practice to get better at reading. They are also encouraged to do lots of practice at home. In a few instances though, the books that pupils take home with them are not closely matched to their stage of phonics learning. This reduces the effectiveness of this reading practice as pupils are unable to consolidate their fluency and accuracy.

Leaders have made sure that the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education covers all areas of the government's relationships and sex education guidance. Relationships education is taught in an age-appropriate way. For example, younger pupils learn about being a good friend, while older pupils learn about healthy relationships with their peers. This is then explored in more depth through well-planned arrangements for sex education.

Pupils receive independent careers guidance and all Year 10 pupils take part in well-matched work experience placements. Pupils are introduced to a wide range of education and training partners, and as such, they are well informed about future career options.

Leaders have prioritised pupils' character development. They have identified the key character traits they wish pupils to develop. Staff assess these and implement activities to help pupils develop in areas where they might struggle. For example, this might mean supporting a pupil to develop their public speaking skills and giving them an opportunity to speak at an event. Pupils have a wide range of activities to pursue outside their subject studies, and participation rates are extremely high. Overall, the provision for pupils' personal development is exceptionally well planned and consistently of high quality.

Leaders and staff have very high expectations of pupils' behaviour and they make sure that pupils know these. Teachers apply the behaviour policy consistently and, as a result, pupils see the way behaviour is managed as fair. Leaders focus on rewarding good behaviour and asking pupils to reflect on poor behaviour. The impact of this approach has been that pupils take responsibility for their own behaviour and conduct themselves exceptionally well.

Leaders, governors and the proprietor, who is also the headteacher, demonstrate a sound understanding of all of their statutory responsibilities, for example with regard to the 'Prevent' duty. Together, they have ensured that all the independent school standards are consistently met. They also make sure that the requirements of the early years foundation stage are met.

Staff receive the training and professional development they need to deliver the school curriculum. Staff feel well supported by leaders and do not have concerns about their workload.

The school complies with Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders make sure that all staff receive safeguarding training each term. Staff also receive weekly updates in staff meetings. Staff know how to report concerns, and secure systems are in place to record these concerns. Leaders engage with outside agencies to understand and then respond to pupils' needs when appropriate. Leaders have planned further staff training on dealing with allegations about adults. This will be delivered by the local authority in September 2023.

Leaders ensure that all statutory pre-employment checks are carried out when recruiting new staff. The school's safeguarding policies and procedures take account of the latest statutory guidance from the Secretary of State and are regularly updated. The safeguarding policy is made available to parents on the school's website.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and proprietor)

- In some subjects, the sequence of the curriculum is determined by the curriculum strands rather than by the subjects themselves. This means that subject knowledge is not built up sequentially and pupils struggle to build their knowledge to attempt more complex tasks. Leaders should make sure that all subjects are sequenced in a way that allows pupils to build on prior knowledge.
- The books that pupils take home to read are not always sharply matched to their stage in the phonics programme. This reduces how well pupils develop their

accuracy and fluency in reading. Leaders need to ensure that pupils routinely have books that fully align with their phonics knowledge.

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	139826
DfE registration number	317/6000
Local authority	Redbridge
Inspection number	10286440
Type of school	Other Independent School
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	3 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	228
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Read Academy Education
Chair	Gulam Abbas Hussain
Headteacher	Gulam Abbas Hussain
Annual fees (day pupils)	£4,299 to £4,500
Telephone number	020 8554 9111
Website	www.readacademy.co.uk
Email address	headteacher@readacademy.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	30 April to 2 May 2019

Information about this school

- Read Academy is an independent Muslim day school for boys and girls aged three to 16. The school has a Nursery section for children aged three to four.
- The school's last standard inspection took place in May 2019, when the school was judged to be good in all areas.
- The proprietor of the school is different to the one listed on 'Get information about schools' (GIAS). The proprietor listed on GIAS is Gulam Abbas Hussain.
- The chair of the proprietor body is also the headteacher. There is also a governing body with delegated responsibility for overseeing the work of the school.
- The school is located at 36–38 Mansfield Road, Ilford, Essex IG1 3BD.
- The school does not use alternative providers.

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.

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

- 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 headteacher, the deputy headteacher and other leaders. Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation provided by the school to check compliance with the independent school standards. They also toured the school's premises.
- Inspectors did deep dives in these subjects: early reading, English, mathematics and PSHE. Inspectors visited lessons, reviewed pupils' work, met with pupils to discuss their learning and met with subject leaders and teachers. Inspectors also considered pupils' learning in art, physical education, history, geography and science.
- Through discussions with leaders, pupils and staff, inspectors considered how effectively pupils are safeguarded. Inspectors also looked at records relating to safeguarding, including records of employment checks carried out before staff are appointed.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils. Pupils' behaviour in lessons and at playtimes was observed.
- Inspectors spoke to a range of staff about safeguarding, pupils' behaviour and staff workload. Inspectors looked at parents' responses to Ofsted's surveys.

Inspection team

Mark Smith, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Simon Conway

His Majesty's Inspector

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