

Andalusia Academy Bristol

Independent School

Inspection report

DfES Registration Number	801/6130
Unique Reference Number	130391
Inspection number	301490
Inspection dates	3-4 July 2007
Reporting inspector	Jill Bainton

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 162A of the Education Act 2002 (as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005).

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Purpose and scope of the inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005, in order to advise the Secretary of State for Education and Skills about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Information about the school

Andalusia Academy Bristol is an independent Muslim school, for boys and girls aged 4 to 6 and girls only from 11 to 16 years. The school plans to expand until all year groups to Year 11 are represented and will include boys to the age of 11. It was set up in 2005 to serve the Muslim community of Bristol. A Year 2 class will open in September 2007. The oldest pupils are currently in Year 10. There are 68 pupils on roll. A number of pupils have limited English on entry.

The school aims to *'create a centre of excellence which fosters children who demonstrate high academic achievements, develop confidence and pride as Muslims and as individuals, and who develop respect and tolerance for others.'*

Evaluation of the school

Andalusia Academy Bristol provides good quality education and care and successfully meets its aims. Through good teaching and a well-balanced curriculum the pupils make good progress. The school has a caring ethos that fosters very positive relationships, good behaviour and positive attitudes to learning. The provision for the pupils' spiritual and moral development is outstanding and is clearly reflected in their attitudes to school. They say that they enjoy school and the Islamic environment is conducive to their learning. The headteacher provides positive leadership for the school, which is reflected in the high standard of provision. Parents are committed and involved in the life of the school. This is the first inspection of the school under s162A of the Education Act 2005 and there are a small number of regulations they do not meet.

Quality of education

The curriculum is good and meets the needs of the pupils. It successfully balances a broad range of secular and Islamic subjects. The younger pupils are taught using the National Curriculum (NC) Foundation Stage guidance, although there are some limitations in delivering the full curriculum due to the lack of outdoor space. Pupils from Year 1 and above are taught the NC. In Key Stage 3, pupils study English, mathematics, science, religious education (RE), information and communication technology (ICT), physical education (PE), art and design technology, Arabic, history

and geography. In addition, pupils have lessons in Islamic and Qur'anic studies. There is a good balance of subjects throughout the week. Pupils take the national tests in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 9. In Key Stage 4, they follow courses at GCSE level and the first examinations will be taken in 2008. Currently personal, social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship is taught by the headteacher, who cannot always fulfil this commitment due to pressure of work, but much of this is incorporated into Islamic studies. An adequate range of resources supports the curriculum, including an ICT suite and a science laboratory. However, the use of ICT in all subjects is under-developed. The school has recognised this and has plans to expand the provision. The oldest pupils, who are currently in Year 10, were all participating in work experience during the inspection. They have careers support from the Connexions service to provide them with guidance on the next stage of their education. Pupils who may need additional help, especially in improving their spoken English, are identified at an early stage and given appropriate support through the school employing teaching assistants who speak their language.

A range of after school activities such as circus skills and creative arts extends pupils' skills and educational visits further enrich their experiences. The younger pupils have recently visited Berkeley Castle as part of their topic work.

The learning, teaching and assessment are good. This owes much to the dedication of the staff, their high level of commitment to developing each pupil's potential, and the school's recent emphasis on professional development. Staff foster positive relationships in the classroom resulting in a productive learning atmosphere and mutual respect between individuals. Staff plan their lessons well and have a clear lesson structure which enables pupils' new learning to be built on prior understanding and knowledge. The pace of lessons is good and the tasks given to the pupils are purposeful and support what they are learning. There is good checking of learning at the end of most lessons where staff assess what the pupils have learnt and understood. Most of the staff are part time but this is in no way detrimental to pupils' learning.

Pupils are keen to learn, have a positive attitude, generally settle well in lessons, concentrate and persevere with their task. They work well both independently and co-operatively. Older pupils report that they like the school, saying. *'I like the teachers and they give you advice'...* *'you get one-to-one support.'* Where the teaching is at its best, it communicates knowledge effectively, encourages pupils to think independently and promotes good intellectual development. For example during a geography lesson pupils were challenged to plan a journey around Bristol which they did competently, using previous map reading skills. The lessons in Arabic and Qur'anic studies are delivered in a formal style. The pupils sit and listen attentively, reciting the verses and learning to memorise the Qur'an.

The older pupils' presentation and content of their written work is good and they take a pride in it. The work is well marked with positive comments enabling pupils to extend their understanding. Some of the younger pupils' handwriting is not well

formed as there are insufficient opportunities for developing handwriting skills. There is a good range of strategies for testing and assessing pupils. The school records identify pupils' levels of attainment and chart their progress, which is good, as they move through the school.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils

The provision for the spiritual and moral development of pupils is outstanding and that for social and cultural development is good. The school places a high priority on pupils' acceptance of the values of Islam. These values are evident in the attitudes of pupils who respect each other, as well as their teachers. The behaviour of older pupils is outstanding and they have a good sense of what is acceptable. Elsewhere in school pupils' behaviour is good. They enjoy being at the school and their punctuality to lessons is good. They form good relationships with each other and these enable them to work effectively as members of groups. The self-confidence of pupils is such that they are developing well as independent learners and they show significant confidence in discussing what they have achieved and understood. They communicate with visitors in a confident, friendly and relaxed manner. One older pupil said, *'We are all friends together here.'* Discussion with pupils indicates there are no instances of bullying in the school and where friction may occur they *'quickly get it sorted'*. A wider community and social responsibility is developed through various fund-raising activities and also through the Islamic belief in *Zakah* (contributions to the poor and needy). Social responsibility to the school community is further promoted through initiatives, such as the school council and enabling pupils to become house captains. Pupils say that the school management is responsive to ideas and suggestions they put forward as well as through the 'suggestion box'.

The pupils enjoy being within an Islamic environment and the school effectively promotes understanding of other cultures. Pupils clearly show they have a good appreciation of and regard for these. Displays around the school educate and inform younger pupils about the place and value of Islam within a multi-cultural background. The school also looks to the wider world for the education of its pupils; for example, visits to the Natural History Museum and Regents Park Mosque in London are planned. Through the curriculum and educational visits pupils are prepared well to take their place in a multi-cultural and multi-faith society.

Welfare, health and safety of the pupils

Overall the provision for the welfare, health and safety of the pupils is good. The school is a safe place in which to work and learn. The school has devised and implements effective anti-bullying and behaviour policies. They are aware of the importance of safeguarding children but staff have not yet attended up-to-date training. The school carries out vigilant checks on fire safety and fire drills are carried out regularly. There are trained first aiders on site and accidents are diligently recorded. When pupils go on visits outside school, an appropriate policy is implemented and risk assessments are carried out. Attendance is good overall, but

taking an extended holiday period within the school term, which some pupils currently do, can hinder their progress. The pupils are well supervised at all times. The attendance and admission registers are not kept according to regulations. The school has fulfilled its duties under the Disability Discrimination Act 2002.

Suitability of the proprietor and staff

The school has appropriate procedures in place to check the suitability of the staff to work with children.

School's premises and accommodation

The premises and accommodation are satisfactory. The school is held in a group of temporary buildings in the St Pauls' area of Bristol. The classrooms are welcoming learning environments with specialist rooms for ICT, art and science and a room used as a hall and for PE. The premises are clean and well maintained. The outside play area is too small and play times are staggered to avoid overcrowding. The playground surface is rather uneven and the school is taking steps to rectify this. The lack of playground space restricts the full delivery of the Foundation Stage curriculum. The older pupils also report that the outdoor play space is boring and they would like it to include some grassed areas. There is sufficient classroom space for the immediate expansion of the school but further expansion will be difficult in the current premises. However, the trustees are constantly striving to improve the premises. There are at present no facilities for pupils who are ill but the school has identified a suitable space.

Provision of information for parents, carers and others

The school provides parents, carers and others with a good range of information through the prospectus, parents' information sheets, newsletters and the school website. Parents are provided with two detailed reports each year on their child's progress and confirm in the pre-inspection questionnaire that they are kept well informed. They are overwhelmingly supportive of the school, one noted '*I am very happy with the school...my child is doing very well*'. Another wrote that '*The school shows and teaches the proper aspect of Islam...understanding and respecting differences*.' The parents are supportive in very many ways both financially and offering help when they can.

Procedures for handling complaints

The school has a set of procedures which meets the regulations.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school meets all of the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 as amended January 2005, with the exception of those listed below.

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety (standard 3) and must:

- ensure that all staff receive safeguarding training in line with Department for Education and Skills (DfES) guidance *Safeguarding children and safer recruitment in education (2007)* (paragraph 3(2)(b))
- maintain attendance and admission registers to comply with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (paragraph 3(9))

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of the premises and accommodation (standard 5) and must:

- provide facilities for pupils who are ill in accordance with the Education (School Premises) Regulations 1999 (paragraph 5(l))

What the school could do to improve further

While not required by the regulations, the school might wish to consider the following points for development:

- ensure that the planned provision for PSHE is taught as planned
- continue to build up resources and develop the use of ICT across subjects
- ensure that younger pupils' handwriting skills are sufficiently developed
- improve and extend the premises whenever funds allow, especially the outside play areas.

School details

Name of school	Andalusia Academy Bristol
DfES number	801/6130
Unique reference number	130391
Type of school	Muslim
Status	Independent
Date school opened	2005
Age range of pupils	4-16
Gender of pupils	Mixed in Reception to Year 6. Girls from Years 7-11
Number on roll	Boys: 12 Girls: 56 Total: 68
Annual fees (day pupils)	£ 1,500 - £2,500
Address of school	Halston Drive Bristol Avon BS2 9JE
Telephone number	0117 9426457
Fax number	0117 9426457
Email address	Headteacher@bist.org.uk
Headteacher	Mrs S Maqsood
Proprietor	Bristol Islamic School Trust
Reporting inspector	Jill Bainton
Dates of inspection	3-4 July 2007