

Inspection of Normanton House School

Normanton House, Village Street, Derby, Derbyshire DE23 8DF

Inspection dates: 22 to 24 March 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Good

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Requires improvement

Does the school meet the independent school standards?

Yes

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at Normanton House School are proud of their school. They gain from a range of opportunities that support their personal development. They fondly recall school trips and enriching activities. They take a keen interest in the newly hatched chicks.

The school's values of 'nurturing, honouring, and serving' are lived out daily. Mutual respect is evident. Pupils are supportive and considerate of each other and staff. They learn about equality and diversity.

Pupils behave themselves well. They play cooperatively at break and lunchtimes. Bullying rarely occurs. When it does, the bullying ambassadors and staff deal with it swiftly and appropriately. Pupils are happy to be part of the school family. They feel safe.

Leaders have high expectations of pupils. These expectations are realised in some subjects but are not consistent across all subjects.

Parents speak very positively about the school. They recognise that it has improved. Typically, one parent commented, 'This school focuses on developing and nurturing young minds to be good citizens of the area they live in.' Older pupils value the encouraging and supportive environment.

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

Leaders have broadened the range of subjects taught since the previous inspection. They give pupils opportunities to learn human, social and creative subjects. They have ensured that some subject curriculums are very well planned. For example, the mathematics curriculum is ambitious and delivered in a well-sequenced way. Pupils practise and build on previous learning. They become fluent in using their mathematical knowledge and skills. They deepen their learning through the spiral mathematics curriculum. However, leaders have not made sure that all subject curriculums are ambitious enough. The secondary English curriculum is too narrow. Teachers do not provide pupils with enough breadth and depth in their learning of literature.

Teachers have identified key learning in their curriculum planning. For example, in Arabic and textiles pupils know more, remember more and acquire new skills because the curriculum in these subjects is well planned. However, teachers do not consistently identify the key knowledge that pupils need to learn, or when they will learn it. Leaders have developed a clear assessment policy. However, teachers do not spot the errors and misunderstanding in some learning. Teachers' subject knowledge is not secure in all subjects.

Pupils are encouraged to read for pleasure. They appreciate having school libraries. However, leaders have not made sure that reading books closely match the phonics

sounds that pupils in Year 1 and 2 are learning. This means that pupils do not become as fluent in their reading as quickly as they could.

Pupils mostly show positive attitudes to their learning. They mostly take pride in their work. Pupils' overall attendance is high. Leaders continue to work with some parents whose children do not attend regularly enough.

The school is exceptional in promoting pupils' personal development. Leaders ensure that the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum is well thought through. They give pupils structured opportunities to learn about physical and mental health. Pupils learn about age-appropriate relationships and sex education. Pupils are supported in developing their strength of character.

Pupils gain from many rich and coherently planned experiences. For example, they visit museums and different places of worship. Pupils contribute positively to the local community. They willingly engage in charitable work and fundraising. They understand the rule of law and learn to respect different cultures and religions. Pupils are well prepared for their next steps in education and/or training. Leaders provide a well-structured careers programme. They broaden pupils' horizons and raise aspirations.

Leaders provide rich opportunities to enhance pupils' spiritual and moral development. Pupils have many opportunities to reflect on their own beliefs and values, and those of others. They learn to understand right and wrong. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Staff appreciate a range of professional development opportunities. Teachers new to teaching are well supported. Leaders are receiving training to improve how well they identify and support pupils who may have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff feel supported by leaders. They say that morale is positive. They are proud to be part of the school.

Trustees and senior leaders know the school well. They work strategically and are focused on improving the right aspects of the school. They understand their responsibilities. They have a good understanding of the independent school standards, and make sure that they meet them consistently. Leaders make sure they comply with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010. The premises are well maintained. Risk assessments reflect the school's policy. Leaders make sure that policies and key information are readily available on the school's website.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding. Leaders ensure that staff are well trained and know their responsibilities. Staff know to pass on any concerns related to a pupil's welfare to safeguarding leaders. Leaders work with external agencies to

make sure pupils get the help they need. Safeguarding records are thorough and are well maintained.

Leaders ensure that all pre-employment checks are completed before an adult starts working with pupils.

Trustees fulfil their responsibilities and regularly monitor safeguarding processes. The school's safeguarding policy reflects statutory requirements. It is published on the school's website. Pupils are taught to be aware of risk, for example when online and in the community.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and proprietor)

- Leaders have ensured that some subject curriculums are well developed and are taught well. However, some subject curriculums are not ambitious enough. Leaders have not clearly identified the key knowledge that pupils need to learn. Teachers' subject knowledge is weaker in some subjects. As a result, teachers are unclear about what they are teaching, and pupils do not benefit from a well-sequenced and ambitious curriculum. Leaders must strengthen teachers' subject and pedagogical knowledge. Leaders should make sure that all subject curriculums identify the key knowledge they want pupils to learn and when. They need to ensure that learning is well sequenced to build on previous learning, enabling pupils to know more and remember more in all subjects.
- Leaders have recently adopted a new Department for Education-approved phonics scheme but have not ensured that the books pupils use to read are closely matched to the sounds they are learning. As a result, younger pupils do not learn to be as fluent in their reading as they could be. Leaders must make sure that pupils are provided with resources that support their reading, enabling them to become confident and fluent readers.

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.

If you are the provider and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

School details

Unique reference number	134294
DfE registration number	831/6006
Local authority	Derby
Inspection number	10204905
Type of school	Other independent school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	5 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	108
Number of part-time pupils	None
Proprietor	Al Akram Trust
Chair	Arshad Piracha
Headteacher	Asma Ahmed
Annual fees (day pupils)	£2,400 to £2,700
Telephone number	01332 769333
Website	www.alakramtrust.org.uk/normantonhouseschool/
Email address	admin@alakramtrust.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	25–27 June 2019

Information about this school

- Normanton House School is an independent Islamic day school. The school is registered to teach 180 pupils aged five to 16. There are currently 108 pupils on the school's roll. Boys and girls attend the primary phase of the school. The school provides secondary education for girls only.
- The school is owned by Al Akram Trust and provides an Islamic curriculum as well as a secular curriculum.
- The school's headteacher was appointed in September 2021.
- The trustees appointed a director of school in December 2020.
- There are no pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The school does not make use of alternative providers.
- The school's last standard inspection was in June 2019.

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 school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher and director of the school. They met with other members of staff. Inspectors met with two trustees.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in reading, PSHE, science and geography. For each deep dive inspectors met with teachers and curriculum leaders, visited sample lessons, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. They listened to pupils read. Inspectors looked at a range of other subjects, including, mathematics, Arabic, art, computing, English, and textiles.
- Inspectors met with the designated safeguarding leader and the special educational needs coordinator.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils and staff informally about different aspects of school life.

- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documents. These included policies related to curriculum, teaching, health and safety, and complaints. Inspectors reviewed the single central record. They reviewed safeguarding records.
- Inspectors toured the premises to review the suitability of the accommodation.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents who completed the Ofsted Parent View questionnaire. They reviewed responses to the staff questionnaire. They analysed responses to the pupil questionnaire.

Inspection team

Chris Davies, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Liz Moore

Ofsted Inspector

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