

Inspection of Al Risalah Boys' School

145 Upper Tooting Road, London SW17 7TJ

Inspection dates: 11 to 13 July 2023

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection Good

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

What is it like to attend this school?

School leaders and governors put pupils first in everything they do. Leaders are ambitious for pupils to achieve academic excellence, learn about their faith and become confident citizens who can contribute positively to society. Leaders have constructed a curriculum and wider opportunities to achieve this. Pupils are typically well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Pupils are kept safe and feel safe in school. Pupils are mature and sensible. They behave well and contribute to making the school calm and orderly. For example, in football, pupils self-manage and often resolve any disputes themselves. There are very few instances of bullying. Adults take action if it happens.

There is a well-established rewards system recognising pupils' efforts to model the school's values and pupils' efforts and achievement in subjects. Pupils are immensely proud of their achievements and wear the reward badges they have collected with pride.

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

Leaders have ensured that the curriculum is broad and ambitious. Pupils experience all the areas of learning in all year groups. For example, pupils continue with art, even though the subject is not offered as a GCSE. All pupils are entered for the English Baccalaureate subjects at GCSE at the end of Year 11. Leaders put a high priority on reading and provide a wide range of literature to interest and engage pupils. Pupils achieve well in public examinations.

The curriculum is well designed. Leaders have identified the breadth and depth of knowledge pupils need to learn in each subject. Learning is logically sequenced so that pupils build well on prior learning. Staff are well qualified and have strong subject knowledge. Activities typically match the ambition of the curriculum and are designed to give pupils sufficient opportunity to practise and consolidate their understanding. Over time, pupils generally build up an extensive body of subject knowledge. Leaders check the curriculum is implemented thoroughly and give feedback to staff to further refine and improve their practice.

Leaders have developed a robust system of assessment. Teachers quickly identify any pupils who fall behind so they can be helped to catch up. However, support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is more haphazard. Pupils' needs are not as consistently well identified. This means leaders do not have a clear overview of this group of pupils. In some subjects, teachers make thoughtful adaptations to tasks to support pupils with SEND, but this is not routinely the case.

There is a pleasant atmosphere throughout the school. Pupils are generally keen to learn. Pupils' attendance is high. They enjoy school and behave well in class. Learning is not disrupted.

Some aspects of the provision for pupils' personal development are strong. For example, leaders provide opportunities for pupils to develop their character and leadership. They learn about other faiths and cultures and participate in a range of community activities, including inter-faith events. The proprietor has ensured that all the independent school standards are met and that the school complies with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010. Leaders have implemented the statutory guidance on relationships and sex education. Pupils learn about the protected characteristics and are well supported to understand the importance of respect, equality and diversity.

Extra-curricular activities, such as clubs, are limited. Pupils receive careers education, advice and guidance from Year 7 upwards, which meets the requirements of the independent school standards. Information about post-16 options is a particular strength.

Leaders value the positive contribution that staff in all roles make to the life of the school. Leaders ensure that staff training is a priority. They make sure new staff are carefully inducted into routines and expectations. Leaders also support staff who are studying courses that will lead to recognised qualifications. Leaders manage staff workload effectively.

Those with responsibility for governance have a strong vision for the school and fulfil their aim of balancing pupils' understanding of faith and academic excellence in practice. They hold leaders to account effectively.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders follow the statutory guidance to keep pupils safe and manage safer recruitment effectively. Safeguarding training is up to date and has a positive impact on staff, who know about the risks young people face and the procedures to follow.

Leaders take advice from external agencies and act on concerns to get pupils the help they need. Leaders have follow-up programmes to check on vulnerable pupils. The curriculum is designed to help pupils to keep themselves safe, including when online.

The school's safeguarding policy meets the requirements of the latest statutory guidance and is published on the school's website for parents.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and proprietor)

- The identification and provision for pupils with SEND is not consistently well organised. As a result, pupils are not typically well supported to access the curriculum. Leaders should ensure that they identify pupils' needs swiftly. They

should communicate this information to staff so that appropriate adaptations to teaching expertise and resources can be made to support pupils in securing and embedding the knowledge they need.

- The provision for extra-curricular activities is not well developed. As a result, pupils do not have access to sufficient opportunities to develop their talents and interests. Leaders should ensure that the range of activities to promote pupils' personal development is consistently well planned and coordinated across year groups.

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	146729
DfE registration number	212/6004
Local authority	Wandsworth
Inspection number	10283778
Type of school	Other independent school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Boys
Number of pupils on the school roll	111
Number of part-time pupils	None
Proprietor	Al Risalah Education Trust
Chair	Yunus Bobat
Headteacher	Suhayl Lee
Annual fees (day pupils)	£3,800 to £3,900
Telephone number	020 8767 6057
Website	www.alrisalahboysschool.co.uk
Email address	admin@alrisalahboysschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	3 to 5 December 2019

Information about this school

- Al-Risalah Boys School is an independent Muslim day school. It is part of the Al-Risalah Education Trust.
- The school is located in a cinema building which has been converted for educational use. Al Risalah Secondary School, the girls' school, is located in the same building. Pupils use Fishponds Playing Fields, Fishponds Road, London, SW17 for some physical education and recreation.
- The school's most recent standard inspection took place in December 2019, when the school was judged to be good. That was the first inspection of the new school, registered when the previous Al Risalah School was desegregated into two schools to meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.
- The school does not use any 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.

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.

- The inspectors met with the headteacher and other senior leaders. As well as teachers, inspectors met with groups of staff with other roles in school.
- The lead inspector met with a group of governors, who were also trustees of the proprietor body, including the chair of the trustees and the director of education of Al Risalah Education Trust.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: mathematics, personal, social, health and economic education, languages and history. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders and teachers, visited lessons, talked to pupils and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors considered the curriculum in other subjects.
- The lead inspector met with leaders responsible for safeguarding and safer recruitment and reviewed the record of pre-employment checks. Inspectors talked with staff about the impact of their safeguarding training. Pupils gave their views to inspectors about how safe they felt in school.
- The Department for Education commissioned Ofsted to carry out the standard

inspection earlier in the cycle than previously planned, with a focus on safeguarding, leadership and management and teaching.

Inspection team

Janet Hallett, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Nigel Clemens

Ofsted Inspector

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