

# Inspection of The Pioneers Academy

Sycamore Road, Aston, Birmingham, West Midlands B6 5UH

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Inspection dates: 25 to 27 February 2025

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
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The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
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Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Outstanding</b>
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Personal development	<b>Outstanding</b>
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Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
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Does the school meet the independent school standards?	<b>Yes</b>
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## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Leaders have created a truly special school where every pupil is valued, heard and respected. The school's values of personal growth, lifelong learning and diversity are shared by all members of the school community. Pupils say school is a safe and supportive place. They enjoy coming to school and rarely miss a day.

The curriculum is rich, varied and creative. There are high expectations that every pupil will achieve well. Teachers ensure that learning builds on what pupils already know. This helps pupils to know and remember more. This means that most pupils progress through the curriculum well and achieve academic success.

The curriculum is extended far beyond the academic. Pupils speak with enthusiasm about school trips. They enjoy learning about differences in faith and background. Pupils are respectful and tolerant. Uniqueness is celebrated. Pupils are prepared well for their next steps because they benefit from a high-quality careers programme. The school's work to develop pupils' character is exemplary.

Pupils behave impeccably well. They arrive to lessons on time and ready to learn. No time is wasted. Bullying and unkindness are rare. Pupils, and parents and carers, say that teachers are quick to respond to any concerns. There is always someone to talk to if they are worried.

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

The proprietor and school leaders are committed to providing the best possible education for their pupils. The school places high emphasis on making sure pupils are equipped to experience success in modern Britain. This vision is shared and practiced by all members of the school community.

The curriculum is rich and well designed across all subjects. It goes beyond the expectations of the national curriculum. Pupils are able to learn Arabic and study business.

Basic skills in English and mathematics are taught well. The mathematics curriculum is logically ordered. This helps to ensure pupils build their knowledge over time. Pupils learn reasoning and problem-solving skills and apply them confidently. Similarly in English, the order of learning is well considered. This means that by the time pupils reach key stage 4, they are constructing well written, extended pieces of work, applying a range of grammatical features. They articulate well, debate with confidence and most read widely and often. The school also engages with professional sports people who enrich the physical education curriculum with golf and archery lessons. These wider opportunities are attended well and develop pupils' focus and resilience.

Systems for assessment have been recently revised. On occasion, teachers do not use the information that they gain from checks on pupils' knowledge to design learning activities that are appropriate for pupils' starting points. These pupils are capable of achieving more and learning at greater depth.

The school identifies any special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) that pupils may have. It employs a specialist consultant who provides staff training. For the most part, learning is adapted well to meet the needs of pupils with SEND. A few pupils, however, would benefit from more support, particularly with early reading.

Pupils enjoy coming to school. Their attendance is exceptional. The vast majority of pupils attend every day. On the rare occasions that pupils' attendance becomes a concern, leaders take swift and appropriate action, working closely with parents and involving external agencies if necessary. This decisive action impacts positively on pupils' attendance.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary, both within lessons and during unstructured times of the school day. The high expectations reflected in the behaviour policy are understood by pupils and applied consistently well by staff. In lessons, pupils commit themselves fully to their learning. They show resilience, especially when new content is introduced. Pupils are curious and persistent in their learning. They consistently try hard. They value friendship and celebrate difference. Pupils care about one another. They say if they are worried about a friend, they would always tell someone.

Opportunities for pupils outside of the taught curriculum are exceptional. Pupils have access to a wide range of rich and valuable experiences. These are carefully considered and valued by pupils. For instance, pupils speak with enthusiasm about overseas residential trips, and visits to places of interest and places of worship. They are keen to learn about different faiths and cultures. Differences are celebrated throughout the school.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves physically and mentally healthy. They also learn about healthy relationships. Careers education is exemplary. The school's focus on future success starts early and continues through to Year 11. Pupils are well informed. They learn about a range of careers, regularly attend careers fairs and welcome external speakers from a range of sectors. Pupils speak enthusiastically about work experience and value the opportunities this provides.

Leaders are considerate of staff well-being. Staff say that leaders are approachable and responsive if they are struggling with demands of workload. They say that leaders provide them with additional time and support if needed.

The proprietor is committed to the success of the school. Rigorous systems are in place to monitor the quality of teaching and wider aspects of the school's work effectively. The proprietor is fully aware of its statutory responsibilities and ensures that these are carried out. The independent school standards are met in full. For

instance, a comprehensive accessibility plan ensures that the school meets its responsibilities under schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

Parents present a positive view of the school. They feel that communication is clear and frequent. The school is quick to resolve any issues, should they arise.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

- In some subjects the use of assessment is not consistently effective. This is because a few teachers do not use the information that they gain from checks on pupils' knowledge well enough. This means that some learning activities are not appropriately matched to pupils' starting points. The school should review assessment systems to ensure that teachers use them effectively to check understanding and inform teaching.
- In a few areas of the curriculum, pupils who are in need of more support do not get the help they need. There are inconsistencies around adaptation, to meet the needs of all pupils, particularly those who are at the early stages of reading. The school should ensure that staff are suitably skilled to develop pupils' knowledge, skills and abilities so that they can apply what they know and can do with increasing fluency and independence.

## **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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	150101
<b>DfE registration number</b>	330/6143
<b>Local authority</b>	Birmingham
<b>Inspection number</b>	10361095
<b>Type of school</b>	Other independent school
<b>School category</b>	Independent school
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Girls
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	99
<b>Number of part-time pupils</b>	0
<b>Proprietor</b>	Dr Saeed Al-Qadi
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sakhawat Ali
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	£3600,00
<b>Telephone number</b>	0121 572 1447
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.thepioneersacademy.com">www.thepioneersacademy.com</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:sakhawat@thewisdomacademy.co.uk">sakhawat@thewisdomacademy.co.uk</a>

## Information about this school

- The Pioneers Academy is an independent school located in Birmingham. The school offers places to girls aged 11 to 16.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision.
- This is an Islamic faith school.

## 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.

- 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, headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, science and citizenship. 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.
- 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.
- To check for compliance with the standards, inspectors reviewed a number of policies including those for admissions, curriculum, behaviour, complaints and anti-bullying. The standards relating to health and safety were also considered. The lead inspector toured the premises to check that they are suitable.

## Inspection team

Melanie Callaghan-Lewis, lead inspector    Ofsted Inspector

Caroline Hoddinott

Ofsted Inspector

Huw Bishop

Ofsted Inspector

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