

# EDEN GIRLS' SCHOOL, SLOUGH

Inspection Report

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**Local authority:** Slough  
**Inspected under the auspices of:** AMS UK  
**Inspection dates:** 9 July 2018  
**Lead inspector:** Hasina Varachia

This inspection of the school was carried out under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Academy Free School
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11-18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Girls
<b>Number on roll</b>	389
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Star Academies
<b>Chair</b>	Dot Thompson
<b>Head Teacher</b>	Karim Murcia
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Address</b>	Eden Girls' School, Slough 183-187 Bath Road Slough SL1 4AA
<b>Telephone number</b>	01753 351 010
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:info@edengirlsslough.tetrust.org">info@edengirlsslough.tetrust.org</a>
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# Introduction

## Inspection team

Lead Inspector: Hasina Varachia  
Team Inspectors: Mona Mohamed and Mohammad Asad

This inspection was carried out by a team of three inspectors. They visited lessons or parts of lessons including observing registration, break time and lunch time. One lesson was jointly observed with a senior leader. Inspectors held meetings with members of the senior leadership team, the vice chair of governors, the faith ethos lead governor, staff, parents and a group of pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation, including pupil's written work, planning of the RE (Religious Education) and PSHCE (Personal, Social, Health, Citizenship Education) curriculum, various school self-evaluation documents, the schools' RE Development Plan and parent questionnaires. In accordance with the protocol that exists between DFE and AMSUK (Section 48), the lead inspector reviewed the school's recent Ofsted inspection report.

The inspection team looked in detail at the following:

- The Religious Education (RE) curriculum
- The progress pupils make in religious education
- The quality of teaching in religious education
- Leadership and management for religious education
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, including collective worship.

## Information about the school

Eden Girls' School, Slough opened in September 2015 and is an Islamic free school. It is run by Star Academies and has a local governing body. The school is a small secondary school and currently has pupils from Years 7-10. A sixth form is due to open in 2019. There is no published information for the school because no pupils have completed Key Stage 4. Almost all pupils are of Muslim faith. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is slightly above the national average and those with special educational needs is in line with the national average.

## Inspection judgments

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>1</b>
The achievement of pupils in their religious education.	1
The quality of teaching and learning.	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of religious Education, including the role of the school's governing body in RE.	1
The extent to which the religious education curriculum meets pupils' needs.	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development including the daily act of collective worship.	1

### **Overall effectiveness: the quality of religious education provided at Eden Girls' School, Slough is outstanding because:**

The school aims to enable each pupil to '*develop an outstanding character and understand the importance of self-discipline, care and compassion and tolerance.*' The school is highly successful in meeting this aim.

Secure teaching supports pupils to achieve extremely well. It ensures pupils develop robust and independent learning skills and draws on teachers' high levels of subject knowledge and their knowledge of the pupils they teach results in pupils' making excellent progress. Much of the teaching provides opportunities for pupils to work together and support each other.

Pupils have a very positive attitude to learning, are attentive, interested in what they do, curious and diligent. Pupils take pride in their work and are eager to do their best. They value the opportunities given to them.

Pupils' personal development is excellent, reflecting the importance the school places on spiritual and moral education. They are articulate, high achieving pupils who have a strong sense of right and wrong, and a deep-rooted respect for other faiths and cultures. Pupils willingly take on positions of responsibility and are happy to play their part in the life of the school and the wider community.

The school helps pupils to become socially aware as a result of the diverse range of activities that they experience which promotes deep-rooted understanding of other cultures. The pastoral care, notably the schools' *tarbiyyah* mentoring programme provided by the school is excellent, resulting in confident and happy girls who reflect the very high standards of behaviour set by the school. Relationships between staff and pupils and

among the pupils are relaxed and friendly. Good communication between home and the school demonstrates the care and interest shown by the staff. Pupils' views are routinely sought through the *Shura* (Student) Council.

Daily activities and Spirituality Days contribute securely to pupils' spiritual development. Collective worship including recitation of *Surah Al-Fatihah* (Opening chapter of the Qur'an) is an essential part of school life and engages the whole school community whilst other opportunities allow pupils to reflect on Islamic values and how these relate to their own lives. As a result, it makes a good contribution to the spiritual development of the whole school community. However, the school does not have opportunities for pupils to partake in *Salah* (prayer) during the school day in the summer months which would add to pupils' spiritual development.

Safeguarding arrangements are secure demonstrating that safeguarding the welfare of the pupils is of utmost concern. As a result, pupils report that they feel safe in school.

Attendance is given very high priority and as a result, attendance in 2016 was 97%.

The RE curriculum is well planned reflecting rich and exciting and invaluable opportunities for pupils to develop as British citizens. Relationships with other schools, local faith groups and the wider community are strong.

Pupils demonstrate their respect and learning of Islam through the many practical experiences the school provides. Annually, charity work raises significant funds for local, national and international communities and supports a number of important causes. Pupils deeply value these opportunities with one pupil sharing with inspectors that she welcomed the opportunity to share the *Winter Wow Packs* to those who are suffering out in the cold when she was in the warmth of her home.

Fundamental British Values are promoted effectively throughout the curriculum, assemblies and displays. Pupils demonstrate an excellent understanding of these values with one pupils sharing, 'that *it was good to learn about other religions so that we learn not to offend others.*'

## **The achievement of pupils at the school in their religious education is outstanding because:**

Pupils achieve exceptionally well. Their knowledge, understanding and skills are very well developed in both curricular and extra-curricular activities including school musical and dramatic performances which demonstrates their creative skills.

Pupils are shown high levels of knowledge, understanding and skills across subjects and the many activities they are involved in. They are mature, articulate and confident learners who relish taking full advantage of the opportunities available to them resulting in pupils making excellent progress. The teaching of reading, writing and understanding in RE is extremely effective. Cohesively planned and implemented, teachers have used the Teach like a Champion, 'Write Now' strategy to promote the literacy skills of pupils. As a result, pupils write fluently and take pride in the work they produce, which is always of a high standard.

Pupils frequently demonstrate initiative. For example, when responding to marking feedback or organising school events. Pupils have achieved many significant successes at both regional and national level including recently when a group of year 8 pupils won a local drama competition, raising awareness of Child Sexual Exploitation.

Pupils work extremely well together, both in and out of lessons. Pupils with SEND are supported extremely well in lessons and as a result make excellent progress.

Predicted GCSE RE results show that pupils are on course to achieve exceptionally well and exceed national figures when they sit examinations next year.

Teaching is strongly supported by assessment systems which ensures that all pupils' progress is carefully monitored and swift action is taken when it is identified that extra support is needed. Regular pastoral meetings are held with parents to support those pupils struggling to meet their targets. This action leads to pupils achieving very well and this reflects the school's strong teaching and its careful focus on each individual pupil.

The main library has a limited number of RE and Islamic books and is recognised by senior leaders who plan to increase provision including the setting up a 'scholarly library.'

Parents are kept informed of their daughter's progress through the school planner, review meetings, phone calls, reports and parents' evenings. They are provided with timely information on how well their daughter is progressing in relation to expected standards.

## **What needs improvement?**

- Increase the number of Islamic studies and RE books for pupils in the school library.

**The quality of teaching and assessment in the school is outstanding because:**

The quality of teaching ensures that the school fulfils its' aims to promote academic excellence and nurture a love for learning. Teachers are secure in their knowledge of the subjects they teach. A particular strong feature of teaching is the mutual respect and strong rapport between pupils, and between pupils and their teachers. This gives the girls the confidence to ask questions and produces an atmosphere highly conducive to study resulting in high levels of achievement.

Pupils all agree that they feel well supported by their teachers. Parents who met with inspectors also agree that their daughters are well supported, particularly one parent who was pleased to share how much progress her daughter had made since joining the school.

Teaching builds successfully on previous learning. A variety of teaching methods and resources fosters interest and ensures progress. In some lessons, infectious enthusiasm and the highest expectations result in high levels of achievement. These lessons ensure that pupils think and learn for themselves and speak with confidence and pride about their work.

The teachers' excellent subject knowledge allows interesting and focused lessons. Teaching in the best lessons uses a variety of resources and strategies to challenge pupils and allows them opportunities to develop and articulate their own ideas.

Teachers are enthusiastic and committed, with girls learning also supported by the teaching of additional lessons which either resolve any areas of difficulty or provide the opportunity for pupils to further deepen and extend their knowledge and understanding.

Parents' responses in the questionnaire agree that pupils make at least good progress.

Marking of work is mostly positive and thorough. In the best examples seen, teachers' comments actively encourage pupils to consider ways to improve their learning and challenge them to develop their application of knowledge to a higher level. Pupils respond well to the challenge and take the opportunity to progress in their learning.

**The effectiveness of leadership and management of Religious Education is outstanding because:**

Leadership and management at all levels make a strong contribution to the school's vision to be a school of excellence. There is an unrelenting commitment to achieving the school's ambitious aims and ensure the care and safeguarding of pupils. The principal and other senior leaders provide strong educational direction and support resulting in high quality outcomes for pupils. Leaders are dedicated to the efficient operation of the school ensuring continuous improvement. They are reflective and have a shared vision for the future of the school, clearly reflected in several self-evaluation documents viewed as part of the inspection.

The strength of pupils' educational experiences and the quality of care provided is testimony to the management and leadership of the school.

The curriculum is reviewed by governors and senior leaders to ensure it provides breadth and balance whilst meeting the needs of all pupils. The wider curriculum, including form time and extra-curricular activities, have a positive impact on the personal development of pupils ensuring they are ready to fulfil their future aspirations.

Leaders have worked very hard to ensure there is a clear focus on improving teaching and learning at all levels and providing excellent professional development opportunities for all teaching staff. As a result, teaching is outstanding.

Pupils' awareness of other cultures is strong. There are numerous opportunities afforded by the curriculum and by visits for pupils to explore cultures different from their own. External speakers further enrich pupils' experiences and relationships with other schools strongly promotes their cultural awareness.

Each year, the pupils participate in activities that celebrate key cultural events in the British calendar including Remembrance Day and Holocaust Memorial Day. These experiences have enabled the school to strengthen and develop the Fundamental British Values already taught to pupils throughout the curriculum.

Governors are effective in overseeing the work of the school. They bring a good range of expertise to the school and take their responsibilities seriously. They conduct regular monitoring of the impact of policies and procedures including the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements. As a result, the safeguarding of pupils is ensured by the effective measures in place.

Governors visit the school regularly by observing lessons, attending social and other functions and are further informed by reports from the principal on school development. This results in governors having a very good insight into the working of the school. Their

involvement ensures that governors can both challenge and support the work of the school.

### **The extent to which the religious education curriculum meets pupils' needs is outstanding because:**

Because there is a rich and relevant curriculum in place. The curriculum is built around the Slough SACRE model. The curriculum includes the teaching of Islam and Christianity. Time is also allocated to the teaching of other major world religions. Pupils learn about similarities and differences, particularly within Islam and Christianity through topics of study such as Isa ibn Maryam (as) (Jesus) and Old Testament prophets.

The school's RE curriculum provides an array of highly positive experiences and rich opportunities for high quality learning. The main curriculum, frequent trips and visiting speakers produce a positive impact on all pupils and contribute strongly to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The RE curriculum is extended beyond the classroom through the annual Interfaith Exhibition which collates the work of pupils and presents it to parents and visitors from the community. These include poetry and Islamic calligraphy.

The carefully selected and planned *Hadith* (sayings of the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him) of the week promotes universal human values and good character, applicable to all faiths and none. Various *Hadiths* are displayed around the school and in each classroom which further raises awareness of their centrality in life.

Assemblies have a faith input and focus on how the teachings of Islam could be applied in the pupils' lives. These assemblies are delivered in an inclusive manner, making them accessible to pupils of all faiths and none. Examples of assembly topics include, *Hajj* (pilgrimage), Remembrance Day, Christmas and Disability Awareness Day

During the inspection, *Salah* was not observed. The longer summer days means that there is no provision for pupils during the school day, but available only to pupils who remain at school to engage in extra-curricular activities. The organisation of *Salah* throughout the year would provide pupils with additional opportunities for reflection as a whole school community. The school is aware of this limitation and have plans in place to timetable *Salah* throughout the year.

### **What needs improvement?**

- Improve the provision for daily *Salah* by dedicating a specific time in the timetable for the whole school to pray throughout the year.

## **The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding because:**

The quality of the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is integral to the work of the school. It guides the school ethos, systems and policies with opportunities for spiritual development embedded across the whole day and curriculum.

Pupils' social development is excellent. They show a strong sense of responsibility through the many leadership opportunities the school offers. Pupils have an excellent understanding of those less fortunate than themselves and have played a very active role in fundraising for charities both locally and nationally. Over £18,000 has been raised for various charities over the last three years demonstrating pupils' clear empathy for those in need. Pupils have also contributed to collections for the Winter Gift Packs, local homeless charities and foodbanks. This work has been recognised as the school has been nominated in the 'School of the Year' First Give national award both in 2016 and 2017.

Pupils are proud to contribute to the society of the school and use their imagination and creativity to help plan, organise and deliver assemblies, fundraising activities and Great Get-Together Eid Fair.

Pupils' moral awareness is excellent. Their behaviour is excellent, and they have a mature sense of right and wrong. For example, pupils have been keen to take up leadership opportunities including Student *Shura* (Council), Sports Leaders and as members of the Slough Youth Parliament.

Pupils' moral and ethical views are developed across the curriculum through debate and discussion, particularly in RS, PSHCE, science and the pastoral programme. The *Hadith* of the Week encourages pupils to be reflective of their actions and recognise the difference between right and wrong. National safeguarding events such as Anti-Bullying and E-safety weeks are embedded securely into school life and pupils speak with confidence about these areas.

Pupils' cultural development is excellent. They have many opportunities to develop their social skills in different contexts and with a diverse range of people in and outside the school. For example, pupils regularly take part in sporting events that involve other schools. They have taken part in the Eton College debate and the school has invited pupils from this school to support and mentor pupils in mathematics. There are further plans in place to work with Eton and other schools in the new academic year.

The school fosters exemplary standards of behaviour, with respect for all members of the community emphasised and universally shared. The school rewards pupils for their positive attitudes and consideration for others including the monthly character awards. One pupil spoke at length with inspectors about her award for bravery and patience. Measures to guard against bullying are highly effective. Pupils believe any bullying is taken seriously and dealt with quickly.

In discussion with inspectors, pupil report they are consulted about initiatives and are given opportunities to propose changes which are then effectively implemented. Examples include, changing the service provider for lunches, changing the material and colour of the *hijab* (scarf) and the introduction of school lockers.

## Glossary

What inspection judgments mean

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Judgment</b>	<b>Description</b>
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Requires Improvement	A school requiring improvement is not providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. AMSUK inspectors will make further visits until it improves.